

ACTIVE TRAVEL

HOW TO PRODUCE ACTIVE TRAVEL DIRECTIONS FOR YOUR VISITORS AND STAFF

WALKING

CYCLING

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

CAR



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Health Scotland is a WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion and Public Health Development.

INTRODUCTION

This guide aims to help people to be physically active by encouraging them to travel actively when they visit your organisation. It will help you to produce travel directions for visitors, and for new staff as part of their induction.

Most people now recognise that healthy food is important, and many organisations now offer healthy menu options in their catering. Physical activity is equally important for our health. This information will help you to provide travel directions that encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Organisations have a lot to gain from encouraging active travel, from a healthier workforce which takes less sick leave, to less pressure on car parking space.

WHY ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRAVEL?

At present, two thirds of adult Scots are not active enough for their health. Inactive people are at higher risk of many serious health conditions including obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes. The minimum adults need to build up is 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days – the equivalent of brisk walking. Walking and cycling for everyday trips can play a big part in helping people get the physical activity they need, and organisations can help by encouraging their visitors and staff to choose physically active travel.

As our society has come to rely more and more on the private car, people are walking and cycling far less, even for short trips. Often the car feels like the automatic choice, especially when people are travelling to premises they are unfamiliar with.

Providing the right information can help people choose a healthier way of travelling. Doing so can also contribute to the development of a travel plan for your premises.

Healthy and active travel brings other benefits too. By reducing car use it helps to reduce congestion and pressure on car parking, and benefits the environment by cutting down on noise and air pollution, including reducing carbon dioxide emissions which contribute to global warming.

HOW TO PRODUCE TRAVEL DIRECTIONS TO YOUR PREMISES

Principles

Start with the assumption that people should not have to use a car to get to your premises; and remember, some people are not able to drive and others choose not to. Think about how people can get to you on foot, by bicycle or by public transport from the local area and from the nearest train or bus station. Then think about what information visitors will need to reach your area by public transport if they are coming from far afield.

Put your travel guidance in the healthiest order – start with walking and cycling, then public transport (because there is usually a walk at each end of the journey) and finally car travel. Of course some people will need to drive, but put information about driving and parking last, so that the healthier ways to travel are most prominent.

As a rule of thumb, a distance of about two miles is walkable for many people and up to about five miles is reasonable to cycle.

See the section *Finding Information* for how to find out about public transport, maps and the National Cycle Network.

Travelling within the local area

How much detail you give will depend on the area. Different approaches will be appropriate for urban and rural premises. For an urban location, people could be coming from many directions, so you might just provide a map showing the local area including train stations, plus a list of bus routes. For a rural location information about the route from the nearest public transport should include:

- distance
- description – is it hilly or flat, is there pavement, is it lit?

Always:

- include walking instructions and/or a map if your premises are in a town centre or within about two miles of a station, bus stop or parking
- include cycling instructions if your venue is in an urban area or within about five miles of a station, the National Cycle Network or other cycle route
- tell people where they can park bicycles securely, preferably protected from the weather
- tell people about local public transport, such as which bus routes the premises are on and, if there are only a few buses, their approximate frequency
- include numbers for local taxi services.

Getting there from other places

Start with public transport. Where do train and bus services connect to? How much information you need to give will depend on your location. In a major city you do not need to list connections. For premises in smaller places, you should explain where trains and buses connect to; for example: ‘There are trains every hour from Glasgow and the journey takes an hour and a half’ or ‘There are regular buses from Perth and Dundee’.

To help people plan their journey by public transport, include details for Traveline and the National Rail Enquiry Service (see *Finding Information*).

Instructions for travelling by car should start with park and ride facilities where these exist. If possible, offer a ‘park and stride’ option too – is there a place people could park that would allow them 10 to 30 minutes walk to your premises, so that they can fit some physical activity into their day?

If you include information about air travel, give public transport options from the airport to your location.

Active travel facilities at your premises

Explain where visitors can lock their bicycles. If you don’t have bicycle racks, are there metal railings they can use? Or is there an indoor area where bicycles could be securely stored? Make sure you tell people where your bicycle facilities are if they are not immediately obvious, and that your reception staff are briefed.

If your premises do not have bicycle parking, consider installing secure and weather-protected racks and signs to help visitors find them.

FINDING INFORMATION

Public transport information

Traveline (www.travelinescotland.com, 0870 608 2 608, minicom 0870 241 2216, 7am–10pm) offers public transport information including all buses and trains, with personalised door-to-door journey planning.

National Rail Enquiry Service (www.nationalrail.co.uk, 08457 48 49 50, minicom 0845 60 50 600) provides information on train fares and up-to-the-minute details of any service changes.

National Cycle Network and cycle parking

Sustrans (www.sustrans.org.uk, 0845 113 0065, 9am–5pm) provides information on cycle routes and online maps – enter your postcode to see if there are local routes. Also provides information on cycle racks.

Maps

Online maps searchable by postcode are available from www.streetmap.co.uk and www.multimap.com; you can buy the use of maps from these sites for a royalty fee.

Make sure you include your postcode on the travel directions, so that people using these websites can search for your exact location.

Check with the copyright owner of any map you want to reproduce.

More resources

Active travel and healthy workplaces (2005) Sustrans

Further information about the benefits to employers of active travel. Available free from Sustrans information line, 0845 113 0065 or www.activetravelscotland.org.uk

Walk in to Work Out (1999) NHS Health Scotland

A pack aimed at encouraging active commuting. Available from your local Health Promotion Department (see your local Health Board entry in the phone book).

Travel Plan Resource Pack for Employers (2002) Transport Energy Best Practice

Comprehensive guidance for any organisation contemplating undertaking a travel plan. Available free from the Transport Energy Helpline on 0845 602 1425 or www.transportenergy.org.uk/developtravelplan

TEMPLATE FOR YOUR TRAVEL GUIDANCE

This checklist and the attached example will help you to produce your own travel directions.

General

- Statement encouraging healthy travel.
- Brief description of where your premises are situated.
- Address, including postcode, telephone, email, fax and textphone if you have one.

Travelling within the area

- Description of the location, for example, 'in the city centre' or 'in a country setting three miles from town'.
- Street map and/or description of walking route from train or bus station, parking or town centre if within 2 miles, or further if it's a nice walk.
- Distance from nearest bus stops and bus route numbers and frequency.
- Distance from National Cycle Network or other cycle route if within 5 miles.
- Cycle parking information.
- Taxi phone numbers.

Getting to the area

- Information on train and bus connections to the area, as appropriate.
- Traveline and National Rail Enquiry Service details.
- Directions for park and ride where facilities available.
- Directions for ‘park and stride’ where possible.
- Directions and map if required for car travel to premises and car parking information.
- Air travel information if required, with public transport directions to premises.

This information was produced in partnership by Health Scotland and Active Travel Scotland, Sustrans’ programme to promote physical activity.

www.healthscotland.com

www.activetravelscotland.org.uk

▶ EXAMPLE

How to find Hotel Dynamic, Aberinver

Hotel Dynamic encourages our visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport where possible, as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Hotel Dynamic is just over two miles from the centre of Aberinver, in a quiet rural riverside location – see the attached map or www.multimap.com.

On foot

The pleasant, mostly flat, walk from Aberinver takes 30-40 minutes. Starting from the station, follow the High Street to your right and turn left at the church onto River Road for about a mile. At the sharp right-hand bend go through the gate to the left onto the riverside path, which brings you into the hotel grounds. Go up the 20 steps and follow the path round to the front entrance.

As the path is not lit you may prefer to return by bus or taxi on darker evenings.

By bicycle

Aberinver is on National Cycle Route 79. Cyclists can follow the walking route above, or stay on River Road for a further 100 yards and then turn left on the B3456, which is slightly longer but avoids the steps. There is a cycle rack to the right of the front entrance of the hotel.

By bus

Local bus 1A passes the hotel. It leaves hourly from outside the butcher's shop on the High Street, 5 minutes walk from the station. Contact Traveline (see opposite) for a current timetable.

Taxis

A taxi from Aberinver will cost about £5 and take 10 minutes:
Aberinver Cabs 01555 1234567.

Getting to the area

By public transport

Aberinver is on the main line from Edinburgh to Inverness, although not all services stop. More frequent trains stop at Inveraber, 10 miles away, and there is a bus every 30 minutes between the two.

For a personalised journey plan by public transport go to Traveline (www.travelinescotland.com, 0870 608 2 608, minicom 0870 241 2216, 7am–10pm).

For information on train fares and up-to-the-minute details of service changes go to National Rail Enquiry Service (www.nationalrail.co.uk, 08457 48 49 50, minicom 0845 60 50 600).

By car

There is free all-day car parking at Aberinver station for those who would like to fit a walk into their day.

See the attached map for directions to Aberinver and to Hotel Dynamic. The hotel has a clearly-signposted car park.

Hotel Dynamic

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