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Switching to Greener Vehicles

There may be aspects of your work that can only be done by car. If this is the case, there are steps you can take to reduce the environmental impact of car travel.

The first step is to consider whether there are journeys that you don't need to make e.g. can you replace some meetings with 'phone – or video conferencing? Or – are there journeys that could be made by public transport – or perhaps by bike or on foot? What would you need to provide to staff in order to help them to make these changes in how they travel?

However some journeys do need to be made by car. There are strategies for reducing the environmental impact of car travel.

When you are thinking about greener vehicles there are three areas to address:

1. Vehicles used by your staff for work travel
2. Fleet vehicles run by your organisation
3. Vehicles used by your suppliers

You can look at reducing environmental impacts by using these vehicles more efficiently – or considering alternatively fuelled vehicles with lower emissions.

1. Vehicles used by your staff for work travel

You can reduce the impact of car travel for work by your staff through encouraging car sharing or the use of car club vehicles.

Car sharing to meetings and events can be organised informally, or via web-based car sharing services. These enable you to set up 'private' car sharing groups which will only make journey sharing matches with other members of your group. If there are a number of organisations based in the same building, you could establish a private car sharing group for staff from these organisations.

Alternatively you could set up organisational membership of a car club. Car clubs provide short term car hire of vehicles parked locally. Staff can book a car by the hour for work journeys – with the costs billed directly to your organisation.

Sometimes staff drive into work because they need their car for work during the day. Making car sharing or car club services available for work travel can allow staff to leave the car at home and choose alternative options to get to work.

2. Fleet vehicles run by your organisation

The Energy Saving Trust's 'Powershift' website provides a comprehensive guide to greening your vehicle fleet. This includes information on efficient fleet management and running vehicles on cleaner fuels such as LPG or bio diesel.

3. Vehicles used by your suppliers

Taxi and courier businesses using greener vehicles are increasingly an option. Cycle couriers or taxi companies using cleaner fuel vehicles allow you to extend your green travel policy beyond the direct use of vehicles by your staff.

Sources of advice and information:

- Energy Saving Trust: Powershift – www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/fleet/
Carplus – umbrella body for car clubs and lift sharing schemes – www.carplus.org.uk