

Carbonbusting: Travel

Household travel has increased & now makes up 25% of a typical UK household’s carbon footprint, with the majority arising from car travel and flights – but it can vary enormously between households. Travel is often an enjoyable luxury, but it can be a high-carbon activity. Most people love going places, but we need to think about how we travel if we want to get CO₂ emissions down. Driving and flying are often the easy way to travel, but there’s often a lower carbon alternative.

If driving is a necessity, one of the biggest improvements you can make is to go electric (now 2% of new cars sales, and 50% in Norway!). See the separate info sheet for electric cars, and be wary of being directed to diesel/petrol by car sales people who may not be familiar enough with EVs yet. There’s some great information available out there - and record numbers of the public are now seriously considering making the switch.

Transport is responsible for producing CO₂ carbon in two different ways – first, when making the vehicles and then running them. For example, one study suggests that across its lifetime, a car is responsible for 57 tonnes of CO₂e. Of this over 80% is due to the fuel used driving the car, the remaining 5 tonnes from its production and manufacture. Different forms of transport result in different carbon emissions – depending in part on the number of passengers, as this comparison table shows:

Least emissions per passenger mile			Most emissions	
Cycling	Shared hire car	Sole-use hire car	Sole-use car	Plane
Walking	Peak bus/train	Shared car		
Off-peak bus/train				

TAKE ACTION

Travel to work

Finding an alternative to driving to work will lead to a substantial drop in your carbon. Oxford residents have the lowest rate of driving to work of any city in the country (42%), so you’ll be in good company. Unless you work in the countryside, or need to move about during the day, it’s usually possible to get to work by some combination of trains, buses and bike.

Travel with children

It sometimes requires a bit of planning and ingenuity to travel locally with children, but with some of the best bus services in the country, and quiet cycle routes, it can be done. Your local bike shop can give advice and supply bike seats for children that go at the back, the front or on the crossbar, trailers, trailer bikes & tandems.

Shop online

In these days of internet shopping, it’s easy enough to get the bulk of your groceries delivered. As well as the conventional supermarkets, you can get things like dried goods and detergents through local buying schemes, weekly fruit and veg boxes and doorstep milk deliveries

Hire a car when you really need one

For some journeys, there really isn’t a practical alternative to driving, and sharing a hire car is fairly low-carbon. Hiring a car also makes you think about alternatives. Car share schemes allow members to hire by the hour. For longer hire periods, check out one of the many car hire companies based locally. The Environmental Transport Association run a scheme to encourage neighbours to rent their cars to each other - www.eta.co.uk.

Foreign travel without flying

Sunshine is accessible by train! You can get to the south of France (or the French alps) in an easy day’s travelling by train. Eurostar offer through fares to major destinations in France, with many only requiring a simple change of trains in Lille. “The Man in Seat 61” www.seat61.com is a very useful source of information for European train travel.

HELP AVAILABLE TO YOU

Cars

A number of car pool schemes now operate, including Common Wheels which has recently added more cars in West Oxford, allowing you to hire a car by the hour. In Oxfordshire the County Council have set up a lift share scheme to encourage people to share journeys. www.oxfordshirecarshare.com

Cycling

Oxford has (probably) the least hostile roads for cycling of any city in the UK. Cycling on main roads is mostly about being able to look behind you and judge when it's safe to pull out. You should take care around buses and lorries, but if drivers can see you and it's clear what you're doing, they're generally quite patient. If you can't face the traffic, there are quiet routes to most parts of Oxford.

The Cyclox website (www.cyclox.org) has information about cycling in Oxford, and gives access to a map and Journey Planner. On the Journey Planner map, just click on the start and end, and press "Plan this Journey" to give you a fast route, a quiet route and a "balanced" route.

The Claudia Charter for Safer Cycling – www.claudiacharter.uk

This charter is one response to the tragic death of Claudia Comberti, who was killed on Botley Road while cycling on 9th May 2017. The intention is to spark conversations, support dialogue, and create positive change - things that Claudia was always working towards. The PDF charter is available on the website. Some key points:

- ▶ **Share the space:** every road user is a person, pedestrians people on cycles, and drivers are people in cars
- ▶ **Report:** incidents to the police, bus and taxi companies, i
- ▶ **Chat:** with someone who doesn't cycle regularly about yo
- ▶ **Speak up:** on social media, engage with local politicians
- ▶ **Join:** a cycling club (*Condors, Wheels For All*), advocacy

Buses

The County Council produces a local bus map (which is posted at all the local bus stops) and is available on their website (there's also a link at the bottom of the Cyclox map page). Google provide a good bus and train journey planner (go to Google Maps, click on Get Directions, type in an origin and destination, plan it as a car journey, then when it shows you the result, click on Public Transport). For **London**, look at <https://tfl.gov.uk>.

There are two main operators: Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach Oxford. Both operate modern low-floor buses. Tickets are available by paying the driver, and there's a discount for getting a return. It's worth discovering where the fare boundaries change as the cost of a journey can almost double for one stop either side, and it may be worth walking a little way at each end. Both companies offer day passes, and Oxford Bus Company smart card lets you buy 5 day passes for a discount.

Trains

There may be twenty different train operators in the UK, but for many things they still work together. You can plan journeys using www.nationalrail.co.uk. Tickets are reasonably priced if you avoid one-off trips in the peaks, and there are discount railcards for families, students, over-60s, and generally for travel in the south-east (www.railcard.co.uk).

Really cheap tickets are available for long-distance journeys, though this commits you to using specific trains, and may require booking the journey in sections.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Can I be a green driver?

It does not make nearly so much difference as cycling, walking or using public transport, but you can improve matters by avoiding congestion, switching off when stationary, not over-revving or speeding, and keeping your tyres properly inflated. See http://www.eta.co.uk/green_driving

Aren't trains expensive?

They are if you make one-off journeys at peak times. You can save hundreds of pounds by not running a car – enough to pay for trains, the occasional hire car and taxis. Buying train tickets in advance can also save you money. Also consider websites that split tickets to reduce costs e.g. www.raileasy.co.uk/home/split-ticketing

FIND OUT MORE - WWW.SUSTRANS.ORG.UK

Sustrans is the charity that enables people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make.

This work is part of the Street by Street Programme Toolkit and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License. If you have any questions or tips to suggest please email them to us at info@lcwo.org.uk v6.18



Whilst we have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this leaflet, this information should not be relied upon as a substitute for formal advice. LCWO will not be responsible for any loss, however arising, from the use of, or reliance on this information. Low Carbon West Oxford is a registered charity 1135225.

