

SUSTAINABLE COMMUTING & BUSINESS TRAVEL

A FU⁺UREPLUS GUIDE

WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS AND COMMUTING TRAVEL POLICY?

A standard **business travel policy** is usually put in place in order to formalise company policy and related processes around domestic and international work-related travel, addressing issues such as **compliance, risk-assessment, insurance, expense procedures**, or potential **crossovers with other policies**.

A commuting and business travel policy that more specifically addresses **sustainability** issues can form part of your overall business travel policy, can be presented as a stand-alone policy, or form part of a sustainability statement.

YOUR POLICY



What should the policy cover?

For many companies, business travel is a necessary part of the way they work. Although the covid-19 pandemic has proved that it is possible to operate successfully using conferencing technology as a substitute for travel, for many organisations the need to build in-person relationships and visit different locations is still vital.

Travel has a range of **environmental and social impacts**, the principal of which is greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Emissions not only contribute to climate change and global biodiversity loss, but can quickly push up the carbon footprint of your organisation and contribute towards your **scope 3 emissions**.

Setting out a sustainable commuting and business travel policy is an opportunity to **challenge the need, frequency, and mode of travel** for business purposes that your organisation engages in.

Steps to reduce GHG emissions caused by **employee commuting** are also important and may include flexible working schemes, setting up a cycle to work or electric car scheme, or encouraging the use of public transport.

YOUR POLICY



Managing social impact

Travel has a **social impact** as well as an environmental one - both for members of your **workforce** as well as the **communities** impacted by your company travel decisions.

Things to consider:

- For members of staff required to travel long distances or carry out prolonged periods of international travel for business purposes, how might this impact their **mental** and **physical well-being**, and what could be done to address these impacts?
- For employees required to carry out international travel, is the company providing adequate insurance cover, as well as guidance on how to behave or dress in a **culturally sensitive** manner?
- Travel can be a great catalyst for **positive social impact**. Think about how your organisation could use any necessary company travel as a force for good, supporting local businesses and positively impacting the communities that you visit.
- Think about your company logistics. Are you considering how deliveries or logistical operations might impact communities in terms of **noise, disturbance** and **air pollution**?
- Are you considering how the **GHG emissions** you produce as a result of your company travel add/ effect global emissions and therefore the health and well-being of communities in general?

MANAGING TRAVEL EMISSIONS

- + Do you need to travel? Would a webinar or conference call be an acceptable alternative?
- + Consider lower-carbon travel methods – could a train journey be an alternative to a domestic flight?
- + If you have to fly, could you opt for a low-emission airline?
- + Could you fly economy? On average, first and business class seats generate up to twice the amount of carbon emissions than an economy seat.
- + One flight is better than two – avoid layovers and choose hotels that are close to the airport.
- + If your organisation has a company fleet, are you considering electric or lower fuel consumption models when selecting vehicles?
- + Could you encourage your employees to consider the emissions produced by their daily commute?
- + When scheduling business meetings or logistics, consider travel blending (planning more than one meeting or drop-off for one trip) and avoid times of the day when these is likely to be congestion on your route.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1

Keeping **accurate records** of your business travel data, including employee commuting, is vital for calculating your **scope 3 emissions**. We can help: team@future-plus.co.uk

2

Use your policy to explain how you are considering the climate and environment when making travel choices. **Be transparent.**
Explain how you plan to measure, monitor, and reduce your travel-related emissions.

3

Consider **carbon offsetting**. Offsets should not be viewed as a pass to carry on 'business as usual' but they do provide the opportunity to compensate for any emissions you cannot eliminate.

NEED MORE HELP?

We can provide guidance on offsetting, or measuring and reducing your scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions as part of your FuturePlus subscription.

We can supply a structured template for a Commuting and Business Travel Policy and we also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support, such as writing the policy from scratch.

Please let us know if you would like more information – we would be happy to provide a quote for either service: team@future-plus.co.uk

