



## **Energy efficiency: hospital transport**

### *Hospital transport strategies*

#### **Narrator**

Derriford Hospital is a major hospital in southwest England, serving Plymouth and the surrounding rural area.

The hospital reputedly has the largest surface car park area in Plymouth. Currently, there are 2,124 parking spaces. 770 of these are solely for use by patients and visitors.

The hospital initiated a staff commuter strategy in 1998. And is currently developing a broader travel strategy that aims to influence the travel patterns of patients and visitors as well as staff.

#### **Carey Newson**

There are two things that seem to be really critical in making sure that the travel plan works, and one of them is having the support of senior management. People who are working in travel planning often say 'well if you don't have that kind of support you really can't get this off the ground'.

The other key thing is that you have really hands on coordination from a travel coordinator. So that means that you need dedicated staff time. You need somebody who is appointed to manage travel on that site.

#### **Andrew Davies, Transport and Environment Manager, Derriford Hospital**

The first step is to manage the car parking resources you have. And then look to reasons why people come by car. Once you've established why you're staff, patients and visitors travel to the hospital by car, you can then begin to offer incentives to try and encourage them not to travel by car.

#### **Narrator**

Plymouth City Council has put an upper limit on the number of parking spaces on the site, so it's a question of how to make best use of those they have. For staff parking permits are a key part of the strategy. And the strict criteria for issue mean that not everyone who wants to come in by car is allowed to do so.

#### **Narrator**

Staff who are eligible for a parking permit still have to pay fifty pence a day to use the car parks. But there's a financial incentive for those who choose to car share.

#### **Male (hospital staff)**

Two of us actually drive and we alternate using each others' cars, which saves wear and tear, also healthy on the environment as well and we park for nothing.

#### **Narrator**

A dedicated team of car park attendants plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of the hospital's parking policy.

#### **Car Park Attendant**

We check that there are no staff parking in public, which they're not allowed to. Staff have their own car park at a cost of fifty pence a day. And we need every ounce of space that we can possibly use for the public.

#### **Narrator**

Each attendant has a hand-held computer, and if they spot a car that they think belongs to a member of staff, they can check against the central database. There's a scale of penalties for those who break the rules.

Visitors also have to pay to park. As in many other public car parks, drivers have to punch in the digits from their cars' number plate before the ticket can be issued.

The system makes ticket swaps between vehicles more difficult, and increases revenue from the parking charges. For much of the day there's a huge demand for visitor parking.

**Car Park Attendant**

We get a lot of irate people. Obviously they've got appointments. They've got a tendency to turn up with five minutes to go, and expect to park. There are certain times of the day when they could do that. But during the peak times, parking is almost impossible. So we do our best, particularly with disabled drivers to find them somewhere to park as close to the hospital as possible.

**Car Park Attendant (*speaking on walkie-talkie*)**

How many spaces have you got mate?

**Car Park Attendant 2 (*speaking on walkie-talkie*)**

About three.

**Car Park Attendant (*speaking on walkie-talkie*)**

....thank you.

**Narrator**

But short stay spaces need to be kept for imminent arrivals. The travel strategy also includes cut rate parking vouchers for patients and visitors, who have to attend the hospital regularly, either for treatment or for visiting relatives.

**Andrew Davies**

It's our way of at least saying although you have to use your car, and you do use your car, we recognise you have to come here on such a long term basis, that it's obviously unfair to charge you full rate every single time.

The hospital always tries to ensure that within its travel strategy, specific care is taken to make sure that patients and visitors are not penalised by the restrictions we have on car parking. What the travel strategy provides for is allowing us to try and encourage those that can make a difference, by not using their car, to actually do so.

**Narrator**

The favoured alternative for visitors and staff is of course public transport. Before the transport strategy was initiated, roughly 22 buses an hour served the hospital at peak times. Now there are twice as many buses serving the site.

**Jonathan Bayliss, General Manager Plymouth Citybus**

Well Derriford is probably one of the best-served hospitals in the country in so far as bus service is concerned. Mainly because it's geographic position is actually on one of the main radial routes into and out of the city, and as part of the development it is becoming used not only as a location which passengers board and alight for business at the hospital, but also to interchange between the services to various suburban points.

**Narrator**

Making bus travel a more attractive option requires an ongoing partnership between the hospital, the bus companies and the local council.

**Andrew Davies** It's one of the key elements that we try and cooperate with the local council as well as the local bus operatives. Because it fits into the local authority's view that public transport is seen as a major alternative to the car.

**Narrator**

Janette Hipsey has worked at Derriford ever since it opened. When the hospital first implemented its travel plan she was one of the first to change her mode of transport.

**Janette Hipsey**

I used to come in with my Morris Minor, but the hospital made me an offer I couldn't refuse, in that I would have to pay to park my car or else I got a very subsidised bus pass. And it's much more convenient for me to come in on the bus.

**Narrator:**

Derriford's travel passes offer very substantial savings for staff who come in by bus.

**Andrew Davies**

As far as buses are concerned and public transport in general, we offer a variety of major discounted bus passes, ranging from a standard 25% all the way up to actually a 70% discounted bus pass, to again try and give people the incentive to use buses, but at the same time making it affordable for people to use. And again just trying to convince people that catching the bus can be cheaper than using and running your car on a continuous basis.

**Janette Hipsey**

I think it's most important that as many people as possible come to the hospital on the bus, both employees and visitors, because the hospital is going to run into the position when people just could not park. There was going to be gridlock. And I'm very happy with the arrangement, that I now manage to come to work on the bus, and I get here actually earlier than I would in my car.

**Jonathan Bayliss**

The staff discount arrangements are very much part of the green travel plans, which although they started at Derriford with it's staff because of particular problems with car parking, have been rolled out as a local authority initiative in which both the major operators are actively involved, and now extends to Plymouth City Council, University of Plymouth, and some of the major employers in the city.

**Narrator**

Public transport is also important for many patients and visitors. Information about bus routes is readily available at the hospital and doctors surgeries. And cut-price fares are being trialled on certain routes which serve the hospital.

**Jonathan Bayliss**

Clearly one of the key issues in any form of modal transfer, is the question of price and these services have been operating for over twelve months, with a special fare of a pound and that is to give us an indication of the extent to which price is a critical element in terms of the decision making as to whether public transport or the private car are used. Now clearly that needs to be set against car parking charges within the hospital and so forth.

**Narrator**

Good public transport benefits the hospital by reducing the number of cars coming on to the site. And because the good service means increased usage, the bus companies also reap the rewards in increased revenue.

**Andrew Davies**

We recognise at the same time that not everyone can use public transport because of their disability or simply because there are no public transport services in their areas and so for those we still much cater for their car parking need.

**Narrator**

The Derriford strategy also includes incentives for travelling on two wheels rather than four.  
Hospital worker

I think the incentives for cycling at Derriford are very good changing facilities and also the knowledge that your bike is going to be there when you come back. It is a very secure area.

**Narrator**

Two-wheel travellers park for free and there's another incentive available to pedal and motorcyclists.

**Andrew Davies**

We actually provide interest free loans for three years for people to actually purchase these vehicles or purchase the equipment that goes with it.

**Narrator**

And for cyclists there are health advantages as well.

**Hospital worker**

You can arrive at home at the end of the day knowing that you've done your little bit of exercise for the day. And you don't have to go down to the gym if you don't want to.

**Narrator**

But the two-wheel scheme has not proved quite the success that was hoped.

**Andrew Davies**

Certainly as far as cycling is concerned, because obviously we're at the top of a very big hill. And therefore incentive for cycling isn't exactly very great.

**Narrator**

Setting up and maintaining an effective travel strategy needs good management and a guaranteed source of income.

**Andrew Davies**

The Derriford traffic strategy is actually funded from car parking revenue; specifically staff car parking revenue. All the funding is actually ring fenced from the car park and actually used solely for the use of the travel strategy initiatives so therefore the subsidies from bus bases for instance are actually all funded from car park revenue. As much as anything else, apart from providing a solid continuous income stream for the travel strategy, it also shows that people who do bring their cars to the hospital and have to use them, or choose to use them, are paying and helping other people who choose not to bring their cars to actually have alternative means of travel so therefore it's those that don't help the environment, helping those that do help the environment. So it proves a very good way of actually funding it. And if we didn't have that funding, then the travel strategy would probably not be as successful as what it is at the moment.

**Narrator**

The next phase of the Derriford travel plan will offer further incentives to encourage people to swap from cars to other modes of travel, to and from the hospital.

**Carey Newson**

It's been found that generally the plans that are most effective are those that have lots of positive measures. Because obviously if you're taking away something that people have taken for granted, for whatever reason then you need to be able to offset that, and to say look we're offering you a lot of support about the way that you get into work. There are a lot of alternatives here and there are a lot of benefits.