



Sustainable Travel Plan

Our environmentally and socially responsible approach to travel



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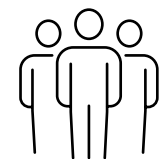
Sustainability at Leeds

Framework for environmental and social responsibility

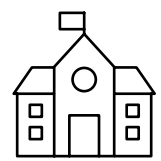
Our vision is to be a university where sustainability is truly embedded through knowledge, engagement, and collaboration.

Where, through our teaching, research, and operations, we maximize our potential to address local and global challenges and to help achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals; and where all our people have the skills and knowledge to bring about positive, sustainable change, beyond campus and in the future.

The Sustainable Travel Plan aligns with, and will help enable, the University’s commitments to environmental and social responsibility.



Our People
Goal: Enable students and staff to make sustainable choices and contribute to positive local and global change.



Our Campus and Operations
Goal: Be an environmentally and socially responsible institution, aligning to the needs of students, staff and the wider community.



Beyond Campus
Goal: Positively contribute to public life, environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic resilience locally and globally.

Our environmentally and socially responsible approach to travel

This Sustainable Travel Plan will help us achieve our strategic travel aims and work towards embedding sustainability across the University; maximizing the potential to address local and global challenges to help achieve UN Sustainable Development Goals.

This travel plan will help us to achieve our strategic aim to foster a student and staff body where sustainable travel is the norm enhancing the connectivity of our institution while reducing the associated negative impacts of travel such as congestion, carbon emissions and air pollution.

“It shapes the rhythm of daily life—how a parent reaches a clinic, how a farmer brings food to market, how a student gets to school. These stories remind us that transport is about people first — and when we improve transport systems, we improve lives at scale.”

— United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Deputy Executive Secretary Dmitry Mariyasin

What is a Travel Plan?



The University of Leeds Sustainable Travel Plan is a strategic document that outlines the university's commitments to changing behaviour, operations and infrastructural developments towards more sustainable modes of travel, by staff, students, and visitors to the university.



University life where travel is key:

- **Staff commuting** – how staff get to and from work
- **Student commuting** – how students get to and from their place of study
- **Business Travel** – global, national, or local travel undertaken for business or research purposes
- **University Vehicle Fleet** – the vehicles the University owns and operates
- **Visitors** – this can include a range of people from contractors, deliveries, conference delegates, and prospective students and their families
- **Student relocation** – the travel undertaken by students to move from their home address to their term-time address, in order to undertake their studies
- **Course-related travel** – fieldtrips, for example
- **Co-curricular travel** – as part of student society activities, travel might be necessary

Why do we need a Travel Plan?

The University of Leeds is one of the largest universities in the UK. It is a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities and is one of the largest employers in Leeds.

The campus, located on the edge of the city centre, provides world-class facilities, innovative global research and a wide range of employment opportunities for the local community. Travel is essential to the everyday activities of the University’s staff and students, as well as connecting local research with the global academic community.

However, transporting thousands of people to-and-from the university inevitably contributes to total carbon emissions, puts pressure on transport networks and local communities, and impacts air quality and noise levels. It is therefore vital to have a structured plan in place, which sets out future targets and actions in order to ensure travel is accessible, efficient, and resilient, while minimising the negative environmental and social impacts.

Leeds City Region

Efficient and accessible transport networks are one of the fundamental components of creating liveable, prosperous, and sustainable cities. As one of the largest institutions in Leeds, the University has a responsibility to promote and operate using sustainable travel methods.

There are major developments taking place in the Leeds city region over the next few years that will transform the transport landscape. It is important that the University works collaboratively with the organisations delivering these changes to ensure that any campus developments are aligned as well as providing vital stakeholder consultation to influence the developments.



Monitoring travel

Travel activities at the University are monitored through multiple different sources, including the annual travel survey, travel providers, financial systems and the uptake of staff benefits.

The data collected enables us to understand our travel impacts, as well as setting targets to make positive change and observing progress against these.

In line with Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, any new developments at the University, that **require planning permission, are obligated to have their own** building specific Travel Plan. These travel plans will refer to this larger strategy document to ensure a consistent approach across University facilities.

Current reporting mechanisms:

- Estates Management Record
- Environmental Management System
- Annual Sustainability Report
- Climate Plan Annual Progress Review
- Net Zero data reporting
- Sustainable Travel Plan annual highlights report

Key Performance Indicators

Over time, these high level KPIs will help us track progress and inform future work to support the University’s Sustainable Travel Plan Strategic Aims and Focus Area priorities, up to 2030.

Travel emissions

Emissions baselines and targets are set in line with our net zero ambitions through our University’s Climate Plan.

Infrastructure

Both soft and hard travel infrastructure is baselined and tracked collaboratively across different areas of the University. Examples of hard infrastructure include cycle storage provision, shower provision, EV charging infrastructure, the University vehicle fleet, the Bike Hub fleet, and walking and wheeling provision. Soft infrastructure includes policies, guidance, and standards that can embed sustainable travel. Performance in this area includes both quantity and quality.

Mode split

For commuting, a reduction of single occupancy car use is the main target, with a mode shift towards more sustainable modes like active travel, public transport, and car sharing.

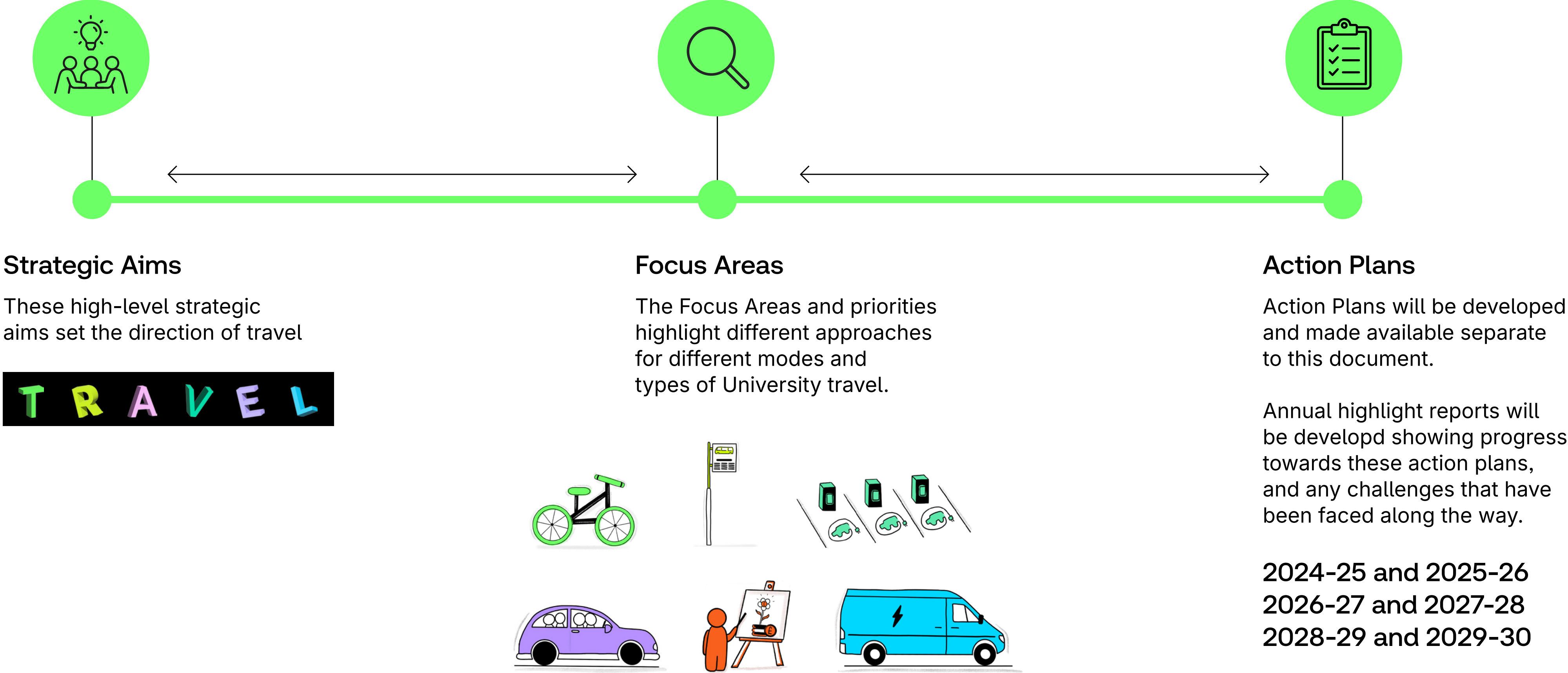
Engagement

Engagement baselines and targets span a vast array of projects, programmes, services, and incentive offerings. They are monitored across the University through various mechanisms, including the Environmental Management System. Engagement examples include Bike Hires, Bike Hub visitors, Cycle to Work scheme users, and Travel Survey response rates.

A holistic, detailed, and tracked list of Sustainable Travel KPIs is coordinated by the Sustainability Service and progress against these will be highlighted in the annual Sustainable Travel highlights report.



A strategy for environmentally and socially responsible travel



Governance and coordination

The University’s Sustainable Travel Plan reporting and reviews are led by the Sustainability Service; however, it is the responsibility of the entire University community to push forward and help deliver our travel commitments.



Sustainability Steering Group

The Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) will provide leadership, coordination, and guidance to embed environmental and social sustainability across the University’s activities, including teaching, research and operations. It will ensure the University meets the goals and objectives set out in the Framework for Environmental and Social Responsibility.

SSG is sponsored by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who holds accountability for delivery against the Framework for Environmental and Social Responsibility. It will be chaired by the Head of Sustainability and report to University Executive Group via the Strategic Planning and Performance Committee.



Sustainable Travel Climate Principle Programme

The Sustainable Travel Steering Group (STSG) strategically manages the delivery of the scope for Sustainable Travel. It’s role is to direct, drive, shape and manage projects and activity within the focus areas for Sustainable Travel, ensuring that the stated outputs and benefits are delivered (and that action is taken where this is not the case).

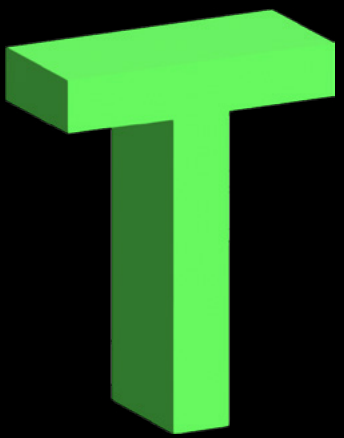
The STSG is supported by Sustainable Travel Delivery Working Groups. The Climate Plan carries out Annual Progress Reviews related to the work of the entire Climate Principles Programme.

Transport Management Group

The University’s Transport Management Group (TMG) supports the University Strategy by facilitating the convenient movement of people and vehicles on and around our estate and local communities in a way that is safe, secure, sustainable and accessible to all. The TMG does this through effective coordination of activities and keeping key stakeholders informed.



Strategic aims



Transform
campus
mobility

Prioritise accessible
and sustainable
transportation for all
students and staff.



Reduce
emissions
and pollution

Undertake actions
and policies that
decarbonise University
travel-related activity
and reduce air and
noise pollution.



Advance
awareness
and education

Improve information
about public transport,
shared mobility,
and active travel,
highlighting the
benefits for health,
well-being, justice,
safety, the environment,
and the climate.



Validate
progress

Encourage diverse
voices in travel planning,
policy, and decision
making, as well as
using qualitative and
quantitative data to track
emissions, commuter
habits and policy
impacts to help us
achieve our objectives.



Evolve and
embrace
innovation

Promote systems change.

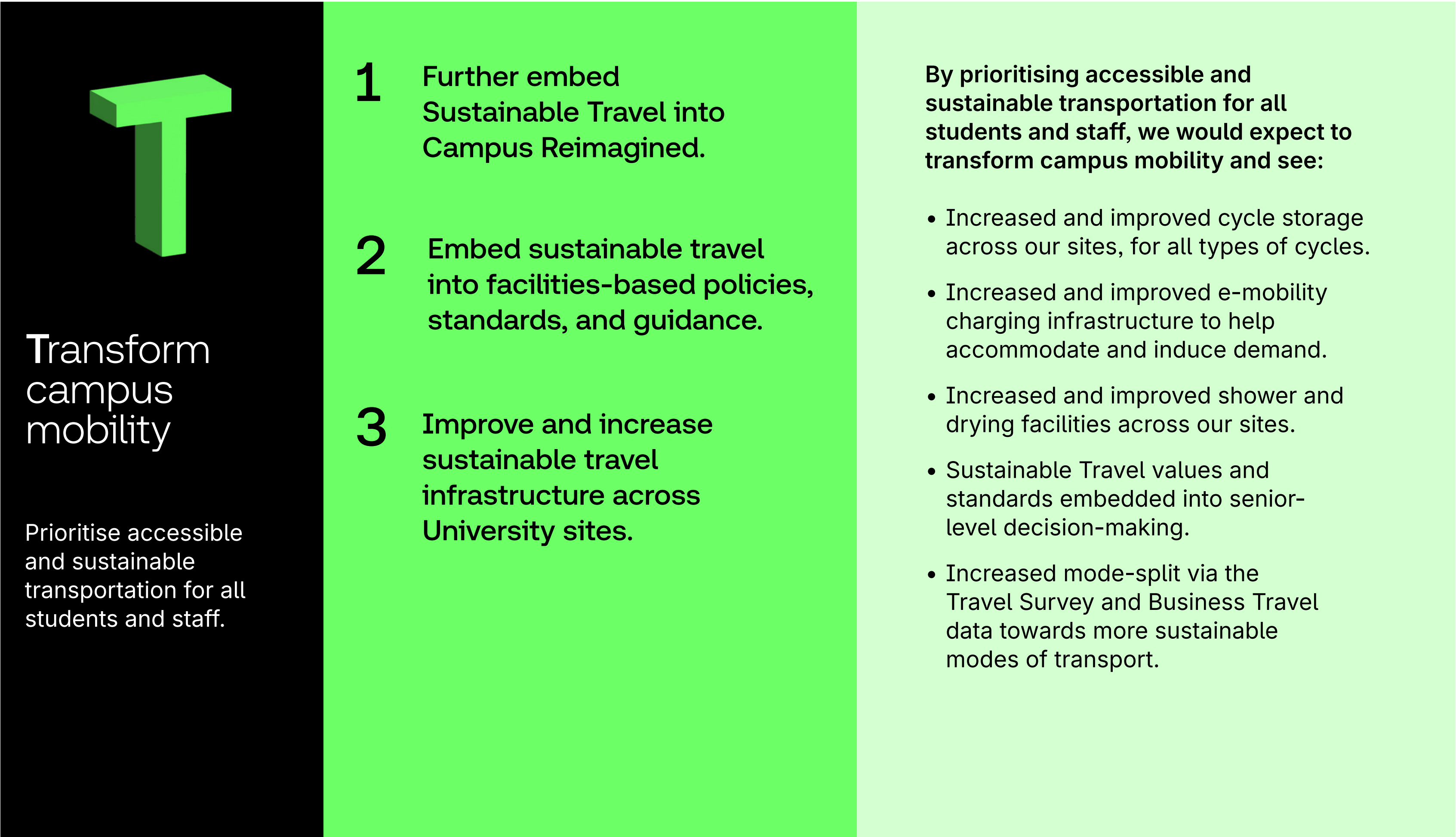


Lead by
example

Influence institutional
commitments,
partnerships, and
research on sustainable
mobility and a
Just Transition.

Strategic aim: Transform campus mobility

By ensuring the Sustainable Travel Plan’s strategic aims are embedded throughout operations and senior-level decision making in both short- and long-term projects and programmes will help transform our campus, and our other sites, into places where sustainable travel is the default option for getting around for staff, students, and visitors.



Strategic aim: Reduce emissions and pollution

Travel is the largest emitting sector in the UK. It is imperative that we make progress towards reducing these emissions. The University Vehicle Fleet contributes to our Net Zero targets and ambitions, as do staff and student commuting, and business travel. Homeworking emissions, Student Relocation emissions and course-related travel emissions are areas to work on as we understand more about the extent of these.



Reduce emissions and pollution

Undertake actions and policies that decarbonise University travel-related activity and reduce air and noise pollution.

- 1 Reduce and maintain travel emissions in line with our transition to net zero emissions.
- 2 Consolidate our approach to travel emissions reduction across all scopes and categories.
- 3 Decarbonise the University’s Vehicle Fleet.

By reducing emissions and pollution, we would expect to see:

- Cleaner air and improved ambient air quality and noise.
- Improved health and wellbeing.
- A more stable climate.
- The targets the University has set being met.
- A more resilient reputation on climate leadership from the University.

Strategic aim: Advance awareness and education

Feedback received from students and staff shows that there is a gap in awareness about what sustainable travel incentives are available. By raising awareness of how we currently support staff and students, we can expand upon this support.

Through further educating our University community on why sustainable travel is important, we can encourage people to take up sustainable modes and support them in doing so.



Advance awareness and education

Improve information about public transport, shared mobility, and active travel, highlighting the benefits for health, well-being, justice, safety, the environment, and the climate.

- 1 Increase Sustainable Travel presence and opportunities for staff and students to get involved.
- 2 Respond to and highlight public consultations related to travel, transport, and mobility.
- 3 Develop more readily accessible travel resources and guidance, including how to use digital means in place of travel.

By advancing awareness and education, we would expect to see:

- Mode-split shift towards sustainable travel options.
- Increased uptake of student and staff engagement opportunities.
- Increased uptake of travel-related staff benefits.
- Increase patronage at the Bike Hub.
- Improved understanding of the health and wellbeing impacts of travel choices amongst staff and students.
- Increased awareness from staff and students on how to use the digital infrastructure on campus to reduce travel.

Strategic aim: Validate progress

Using a data-led approach to inform planning and decision-making will help ensure we are making progress against our ambitious targets.

Ensuring that the data is accurate, and representative of our University community is of utmost importance as it will help us understand the complexities of people’s travel behaviours and how we can better support people switching to more sustainable modes.



Validate progress

Use qualitative and quantitative data to track emissions, commuter habits and policy impacts to help us achieve our objectives.

Use diverse voices in travel planning, policy, and decision-making.

- 1 Engage and work closely with the Just Transition Taskforce.
- 2 Create data visualisations to help empower decision-making at all levels of the organisation.
- 3 Increase opportunities for staff, student, and wider community engagement and feedback.

- By validating progress, we would expect to see:
- More confident operational decision-making.
 - More empowered staff and students making sustainable travel choices.
 - Delivery of targeted and equitable interventions on sustainable travel.

Strategic aim: Evolve and embrace innovation

To support the transition to a green economy, acknowledging that travel affects every aspect of our lives and interconnects with a vast array of other University programmes; co-evolution is necessary.

Evolving and engaging with new technologies, ways of working, and organising, will be key in creating a green and Just mobility system, for our staff, students, city, region, and beyond.



Evolve and embrace innovation

Promote systems change.

1 Improve and encourage the use of digital infrastructure in place of travel.

2 Explore news ways of working in academia to reduce the impact of travel.

3 Improve e-mobility infrastructure on campus.

By evolving and embracing innovation, we would expect to see:

- Increase in EVs, e-bikes, and other e-mobility options on our sites.
- Increase in digital ways of working.
- Successful international collaborations which have needed less travel to achieve.
- A reduction in travel emissions.
- A reduction in business travel trips taken.
- Cleaner air and ambient air quality.
- Mode-split shifts towards more sustainable options.

Strategic aim: Lead by example

As a large institution with a global reach, we have the opportunity to influence substantial change, both socially and environmentally.

Our values of collaboration, compassion, inclusivity, and integrity have helped develop our Framework for Environmental and Social Responsibility and ambitious Climate Plan, and these values will help deliver them.

By utilising a Living Lab approach, our position as an Anchor Institute in the City, and as a research-led institution we can ensure that research is fed back into University operations, that we hold ourselves and others accountable, and to help push for and lead change within sustainability.



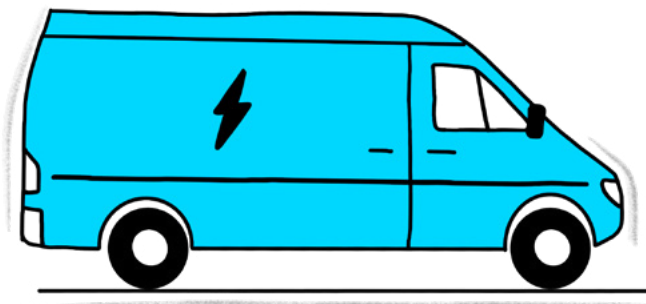
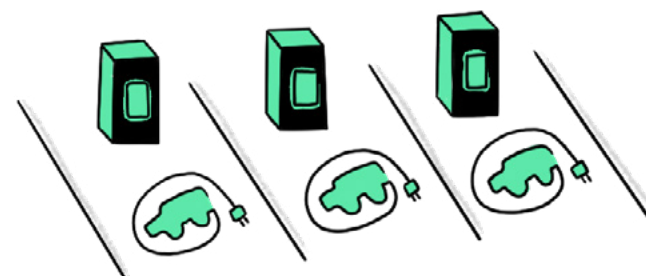
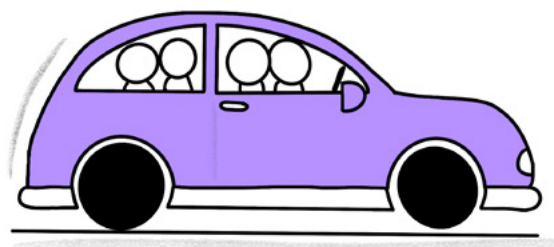
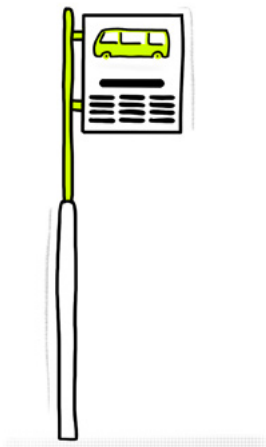
Lead by example

Influence institutional commitments, partnerships, and research on sustainable mobility and a Just Transition.

- 1 Trial solutions to sector-wide challenges.
- 2 Continue extensive civic engagement through working with local organisations, authorities, and communities.
- 3 Strengthening the links between our world-class academic research and the way the University operates on a day-to-day basis.

- By leading by example, we would expect to see:
- An increase in partnerships, collaborations, and knowledge-sharing.
 - Shared ownership of responsibility and pride amongst the University community around sustainability commitments.
 - The University remain a competitive and sought-after place for future students and employees.

Our focus areas and priorities



Active Travel

Engage, educate, and incentivise staff on the benefits of active travel.

Improve active travel infrastructure on University sites.

Encourage and invest in active travel infrastructure improvements in the City and Region.

Public Transport

Work with external partners to improve access to public transport services.

Work with external and internal partners to encourage and incentivise public transport use.

Deepen engagement with Local Authorities on travel planning within the City and Region.

Shared Mobility

Encourage and incentivise the switch from Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) to carpooling, car sharing, and car clubs.

Improve on-site facilities for shared mobility, including Car Club availability, car sharing parking bays, Leeds City Bikes, and the Bike Hub.

Explore digital infrastructure improvements to support and encourage car sharing.

Private Mobility

Improve electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure on University sites.

Embed Sustainable Travel and Net Zero ambitions through an updated and ambitious Car Parking Policy.

Educate staff and students on the social, environmental, and climate impacts of mass private car dominance.

Business Travel

Embed a culture of ‘avoid, shift, improve’ when it comes to business travel trips.

Embed a culture of understanding that where business travel is necessary, sustainable modes should be the default option chosen.

Create an accessible Data Hub for business travel so Faculties, Schools, and Services can take ownership of their own impact.

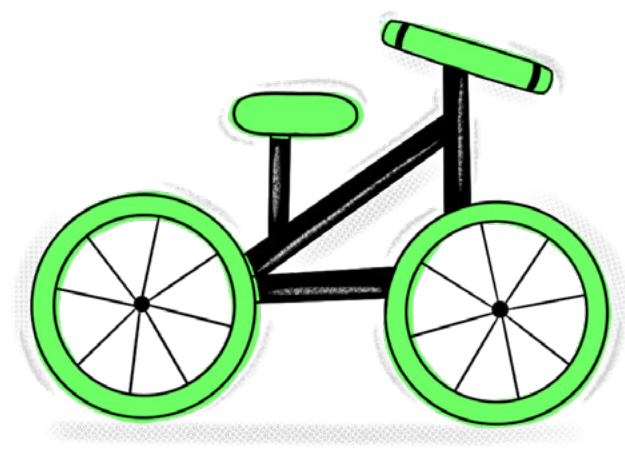
University Fleet

Use Living Lab values to research opportunities to decarbonise the fleet where switching to EV might not be available or appropriate yet.

Decarbonise the University Fleet.

Encourage, incentivise, and improve the bike fleet at the Bike Hub.

Active Travel



Active Travel includes things like walking, wheeling, and cycling – anything that gets your body moving!

Progress so far:

- Bike Hub
- LNER Bikes on campus
- Travel Staff Benefits
- Sustainable Travel Map of campus
- Active Travel infrastructure upgrades
- Cycle maintenance points
- E-bike charging points
- Living Lab projects

- 1 Engage, educate, and incentivise staff on the benefits of active travel.
- 2 Improve active travel infrastructure on University sites.
- 3 Encourage and invest in active travel infrastructure improvements in the City and Region.



Active Travel: Bike Hub spotlight

The Bike Hub is a visible civic asset at the heart of campus – an anchor for active travel within the City and Region which sees hundreds of people through its doors each year.

Visit the Bike Hub for our:

- Welcome Desk: where you can get advice, support, and sign-posting
- Cycle Commons: where you can buy cycle parts and borrow tools
- Skills Workshop: where are qualified mechanics will help you fix your own bike

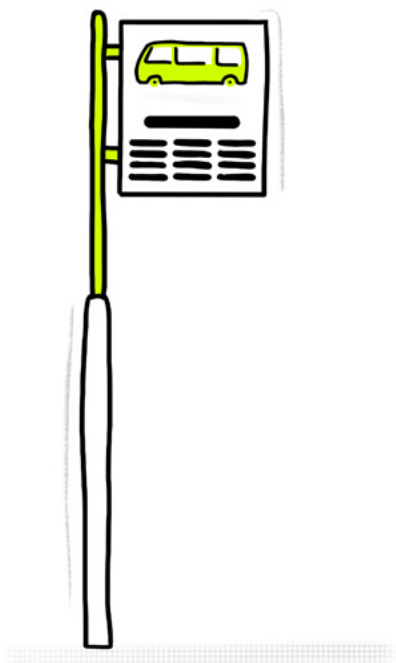
Take part:

- Build your mechanical skills and boost your CV by completing our Cycle Repair Pathway
- Be part of our University Bike Hire programme
- Become a Velo Volunteer – active travel champions who lend a helping hand in our workshop

The Bike Hub is a partnership with Leeds Beckett University, and the team are key members of peer support and advocacy groups; we fosters networks, connections, and pathways between local organisations all working towards shared goals.



Public Transport



Public Transport includes things like buses, trains, and trams – anything that’s available to the public for a set fare and runs on a set route. Equitable Public Transport is key to ensuring an environmentally and socially responsible mobility system can be delivered.

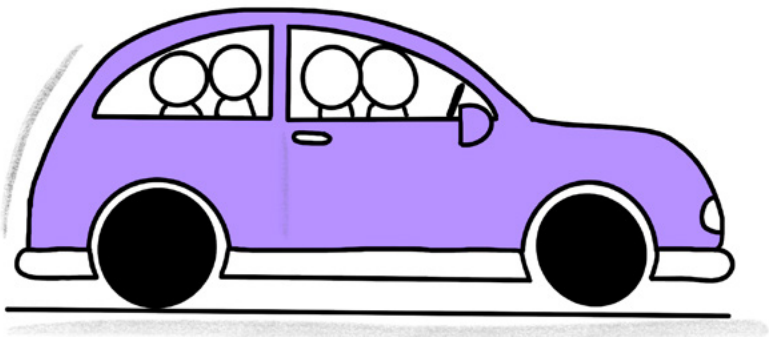
Progress so far:

- Discounted public transport is available for staff through Staff Benefits.
- As a key stakeholder, we input on city-wide developments that will impact our staff and students. Recent examples include the Bus Franchising proposals, A660 development, and the Woodhouse Lane Gateway development.

- 1** Work with external and internal partners to improve access to public transport services.
- 2** Work with external and internal partners to encourage and incentivise public transport use.
- 3** Deepen engagement with Local Authorities on travel planning within the City and Region.



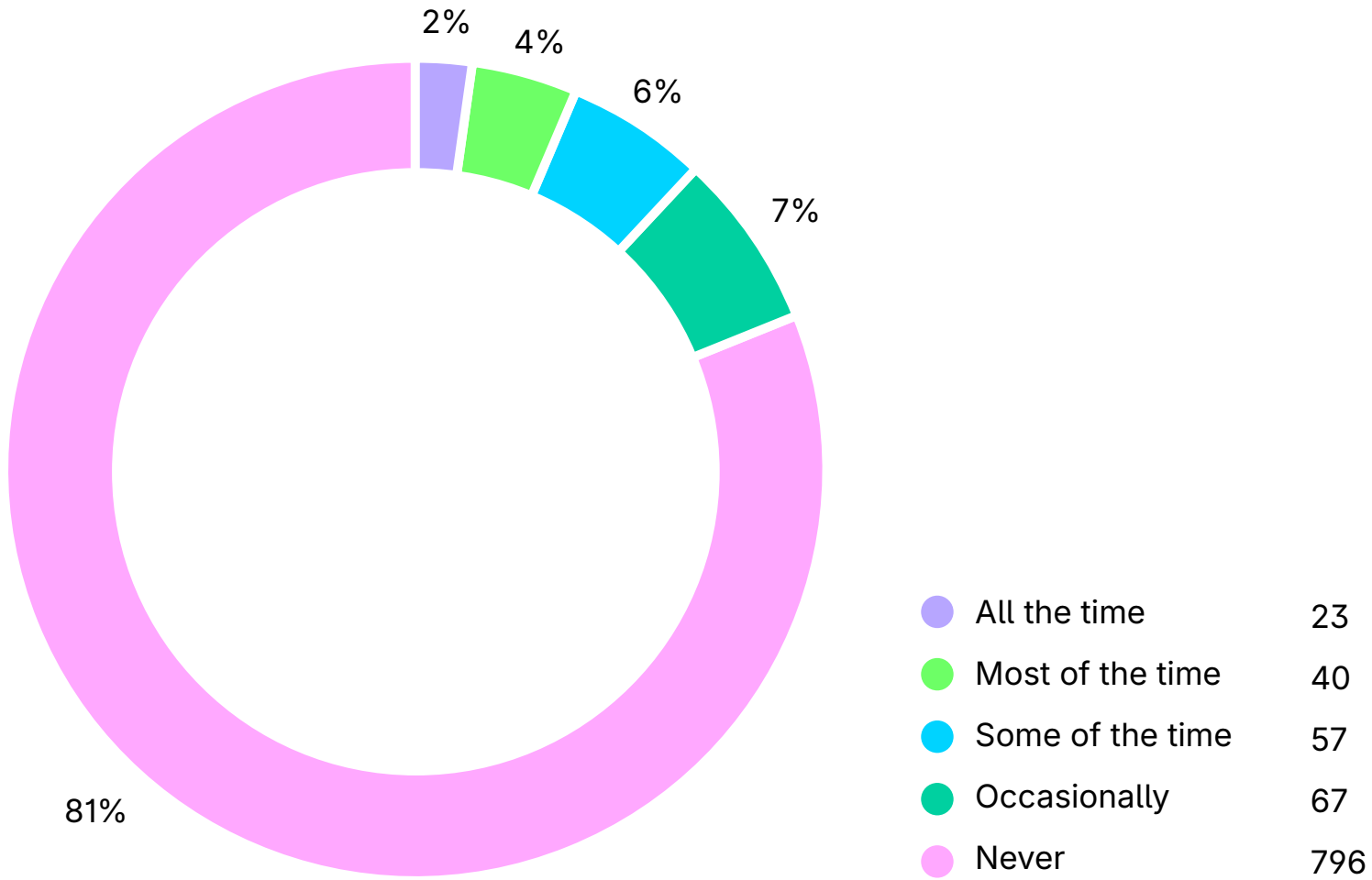
Shared Mobility



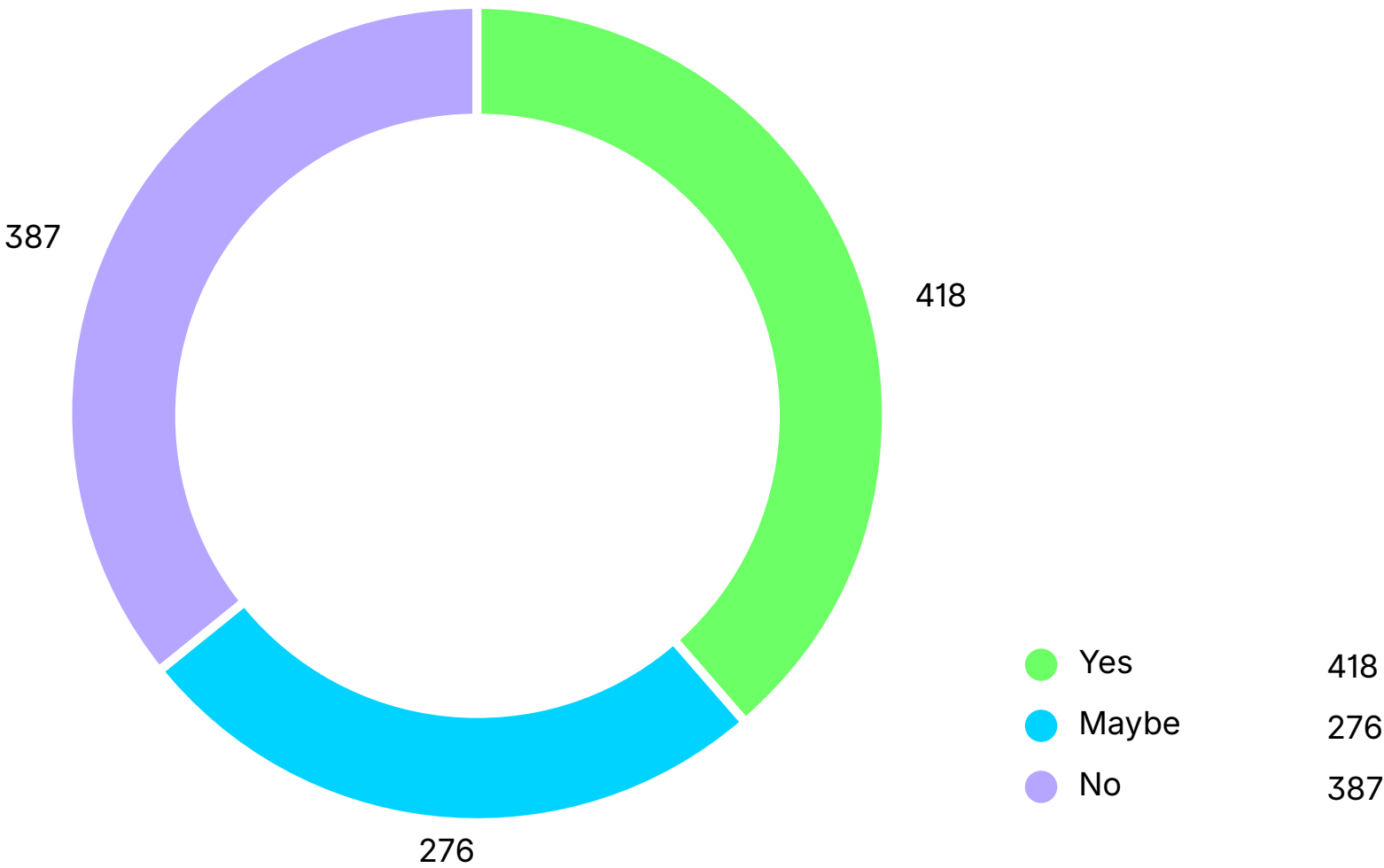
- 1
- Encourage and incentivise the switch from Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) to carpooling, car sharing, and car clubs.
- 2
- Improve on-site facilities for shared mobility, including Car Club availability, car sharing parking bays, Leeds City Bikes, and the Bike Hub.
- 3
- Explore digital infrastructure improvements to support and encourage car sharing.

Shared mobility is a term which encompasses things like Car Clubs, carpooling, and the shared e-bike scheme the city operates - transportation that is shared amongst users.

The Annual Travel Survey results suggests there is appetite amongst the University community for Car Sharing. Building upon this momentum will be key as car sharing could be an easy way to reduce environmental impacts.

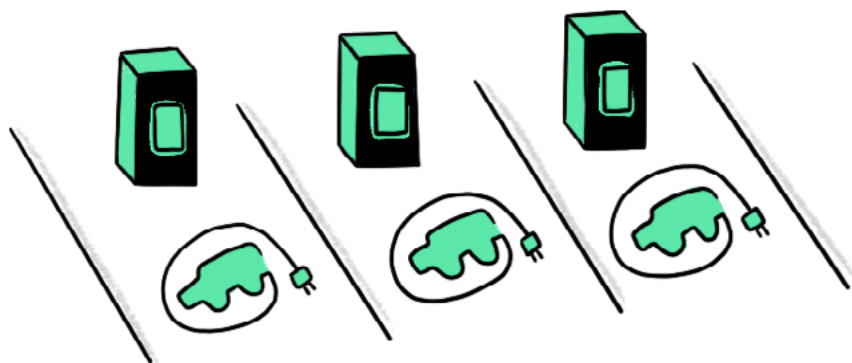


Over the last 12 months, how frequently have you travelled to your usual place of work using **Shared Mobility** for the majority of your journey?



Would you consider using car sharing on your commute in the future?

Private Mobility



- 1 Improve electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure on University sites.
- 2 Embed Sustainable Travel and Net Zero ambitions through an updated and ambitious Car Parking Policy.
- 3 Educate staff and students on the social, environmental, and climate impacts of mass private car dominance.

Private mobility is a term that covers transportation for private or individual use.

For those people who need a private vehicle, the University is committed to encouraging the most environmentally-friendly and socially responsible options possible.

Progress so far:

- Over 20 Electric Vehicle Charging Points across our sites in five different key locations.
- A Cycle to Work scheme with a £3000 limit.
- Continually reviewing and updating Car Parking Policy to encompass Sustainability and Net Zero ambitions.
- The University has signed the WYCA Vision Zero pledge, committing to play its part improving road safety.

Business Travel



As part of the University’s Climate Plan, a key tenet of the University Strategy, we have committed to delivering net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2024-25, business travel was responsible for over 7,551 tonnes of CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent) emissions.

To help reduce business travel emissions, we aim to:

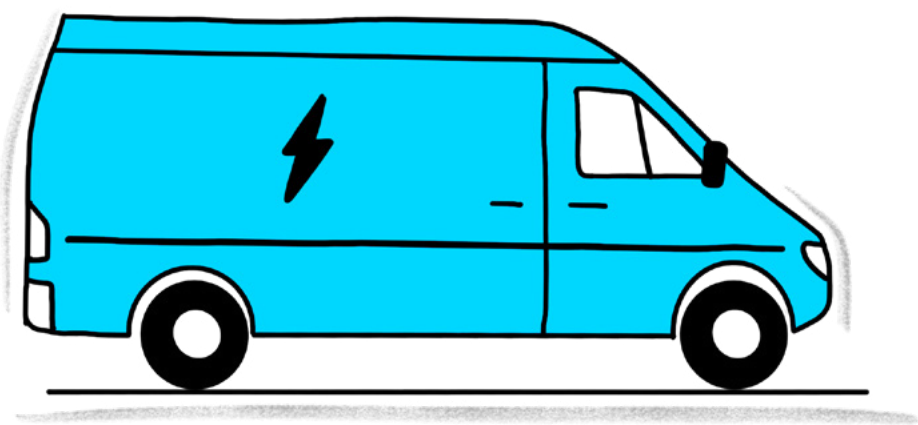
- Establish a Business Travel Resource Hub including Sustainable Business Travel Guidance, emissions dashboard and sustainable travel stories
- Encourage and facilitate behaviour change through providing tailored learning and raising awareness on how to reduce business travel emissions
- Increase visibility and transparency of business travel emissions through reporting. Our approach is grounded in the travel hierarchy - a framework to empower and encourage and support staff to make sustainable decisions when travelling on University business.

- 1 Embed a culture of ‘avoid, shift, improve’ when it comes to business travel trips.
- 2 Embed a culture of understanding that where business travel is necessary, sustainable modes should be the default option chosen.
- 3 Create an accessible Data Hub for business travel so Faculties, Schools, and Services can take ownership of their own impact.

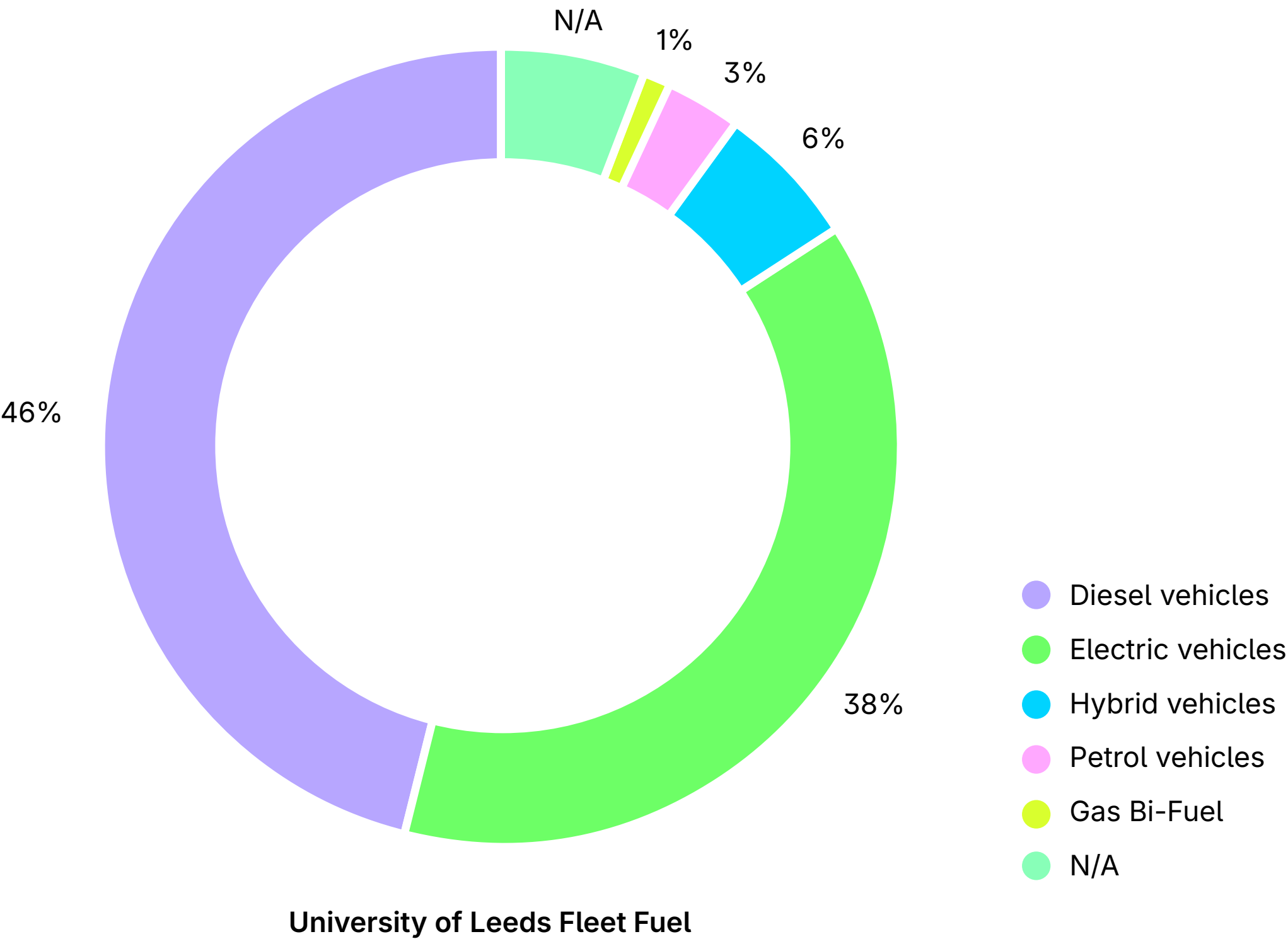


Travel hierarchy adapted from Leeds University Business School (2024), Slow Travel Policy

University Fleet



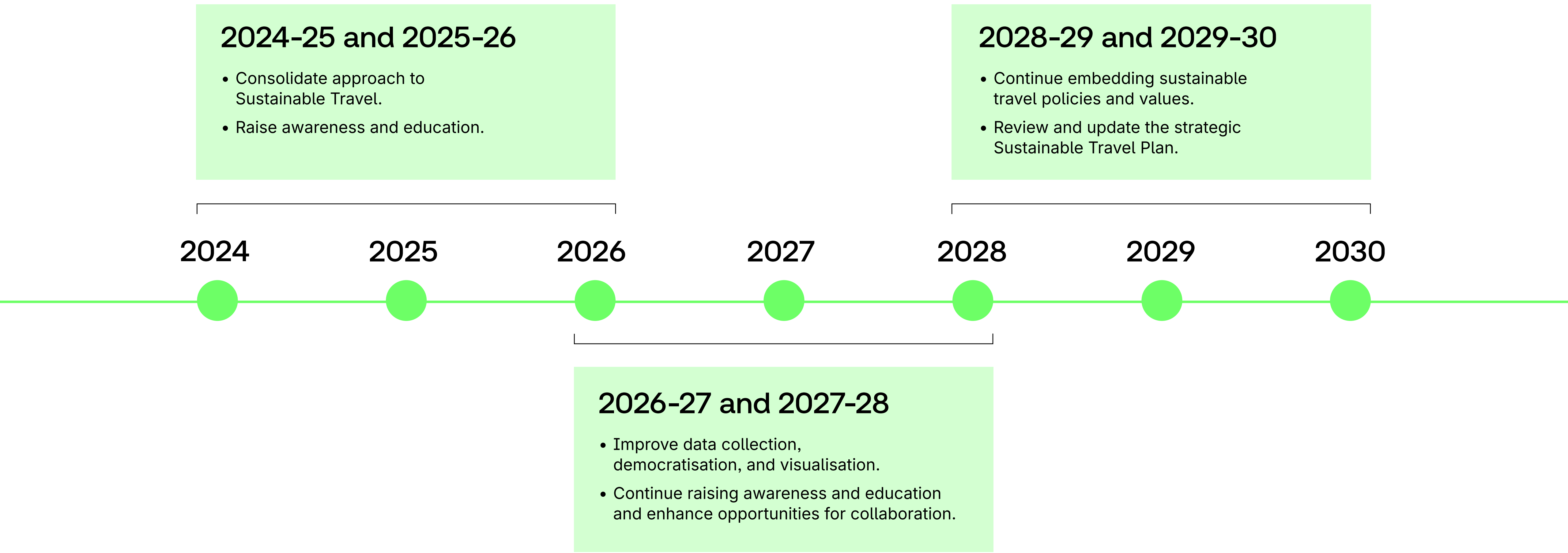
As part of our Climate Plan’s net zero ambitions, we aim to decarbonise our University fleet; the vehicles that the University owns and operates.



- 1 Use Living Lab values to research opportunities to decarbonise the fleet where switching to EV might not be available or appropriate yet.
- 2 Decarbonise the University Fleet.
- 3 Encourage, incentivise, and improve the bike fleet at the Bike Hub.



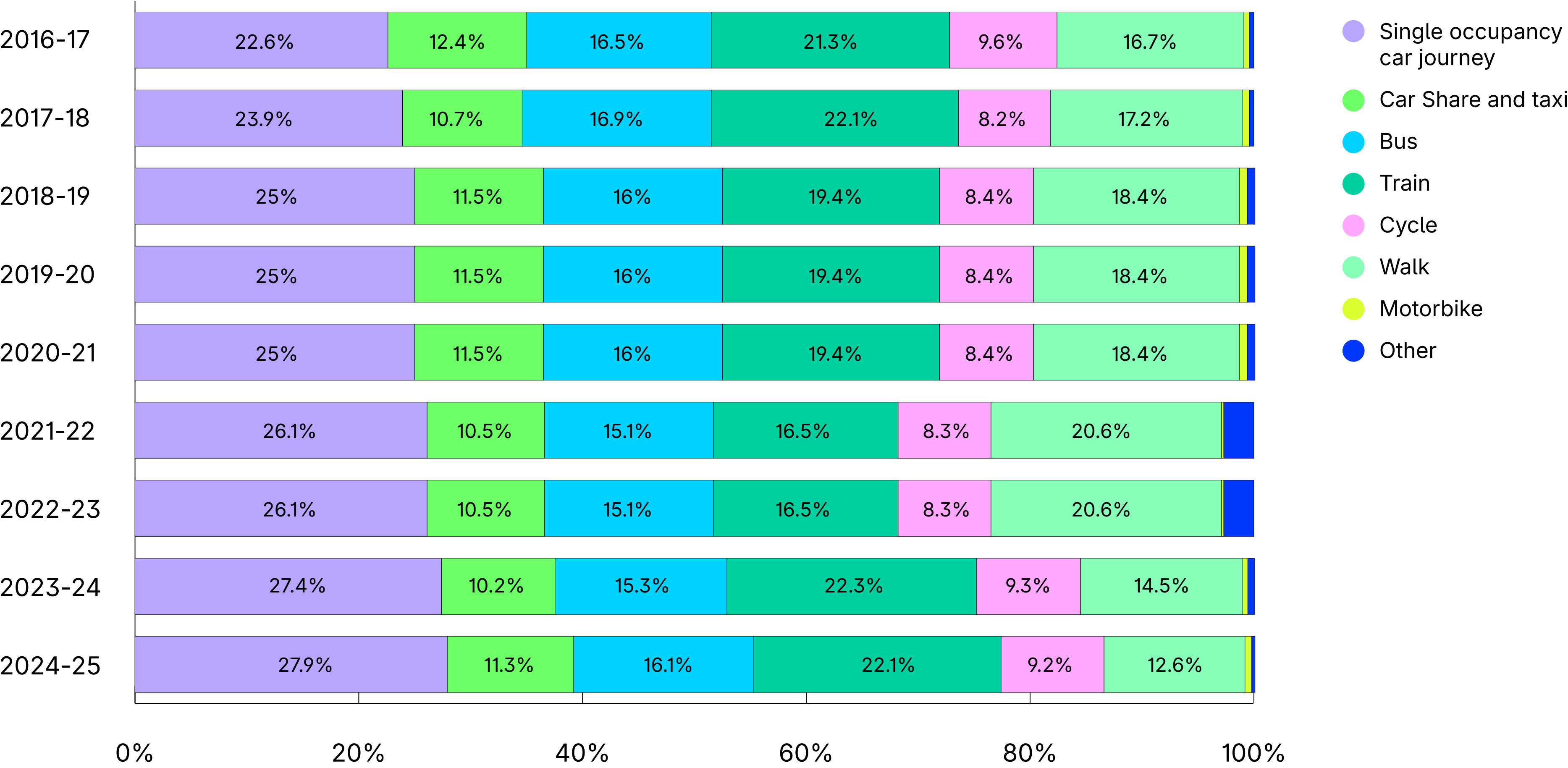
Action plan timeline overview



Travel Data

Staff commuting mode

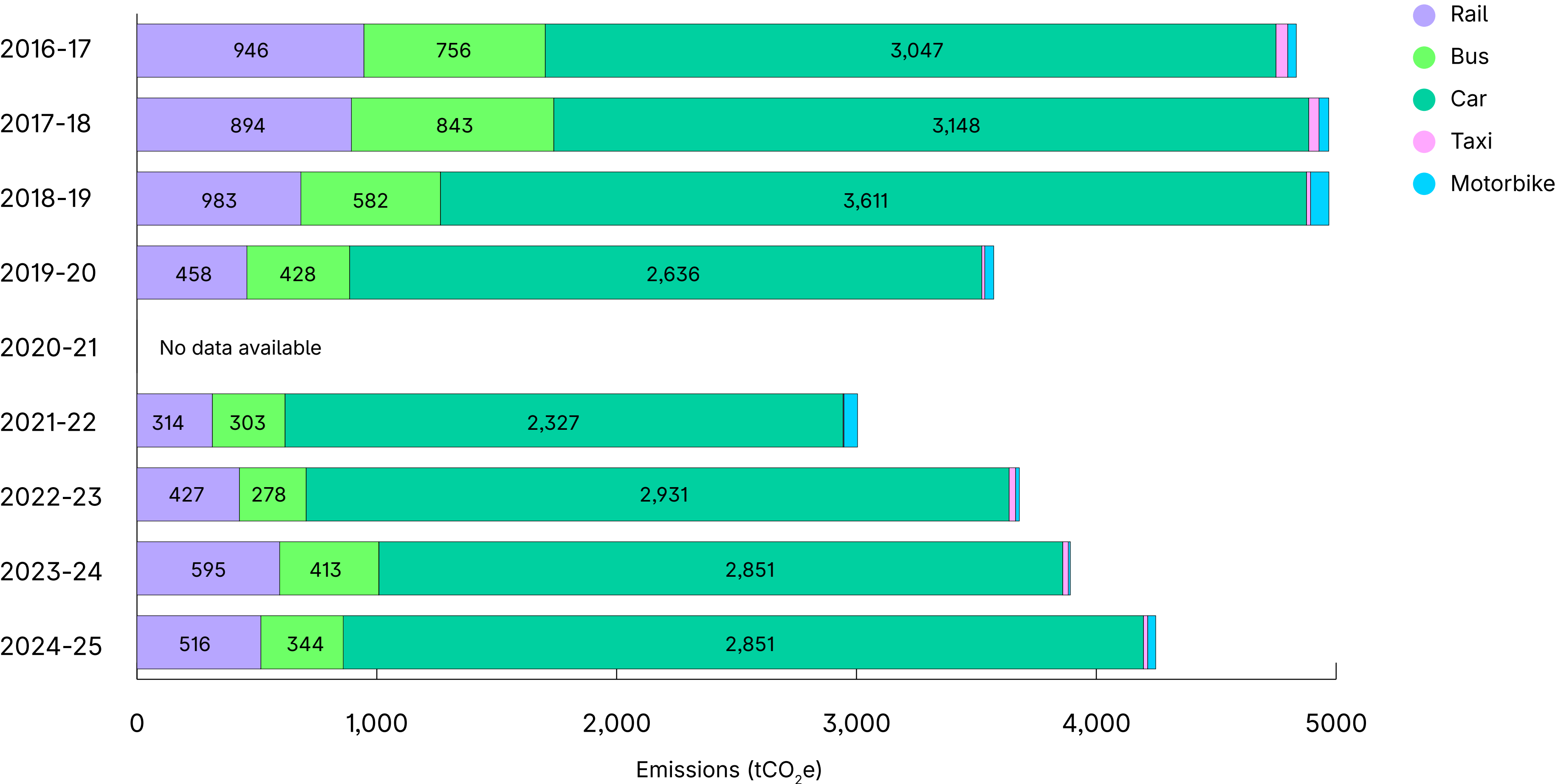
Data source: annual travel survey



Travel Data

Staff commuting emissions

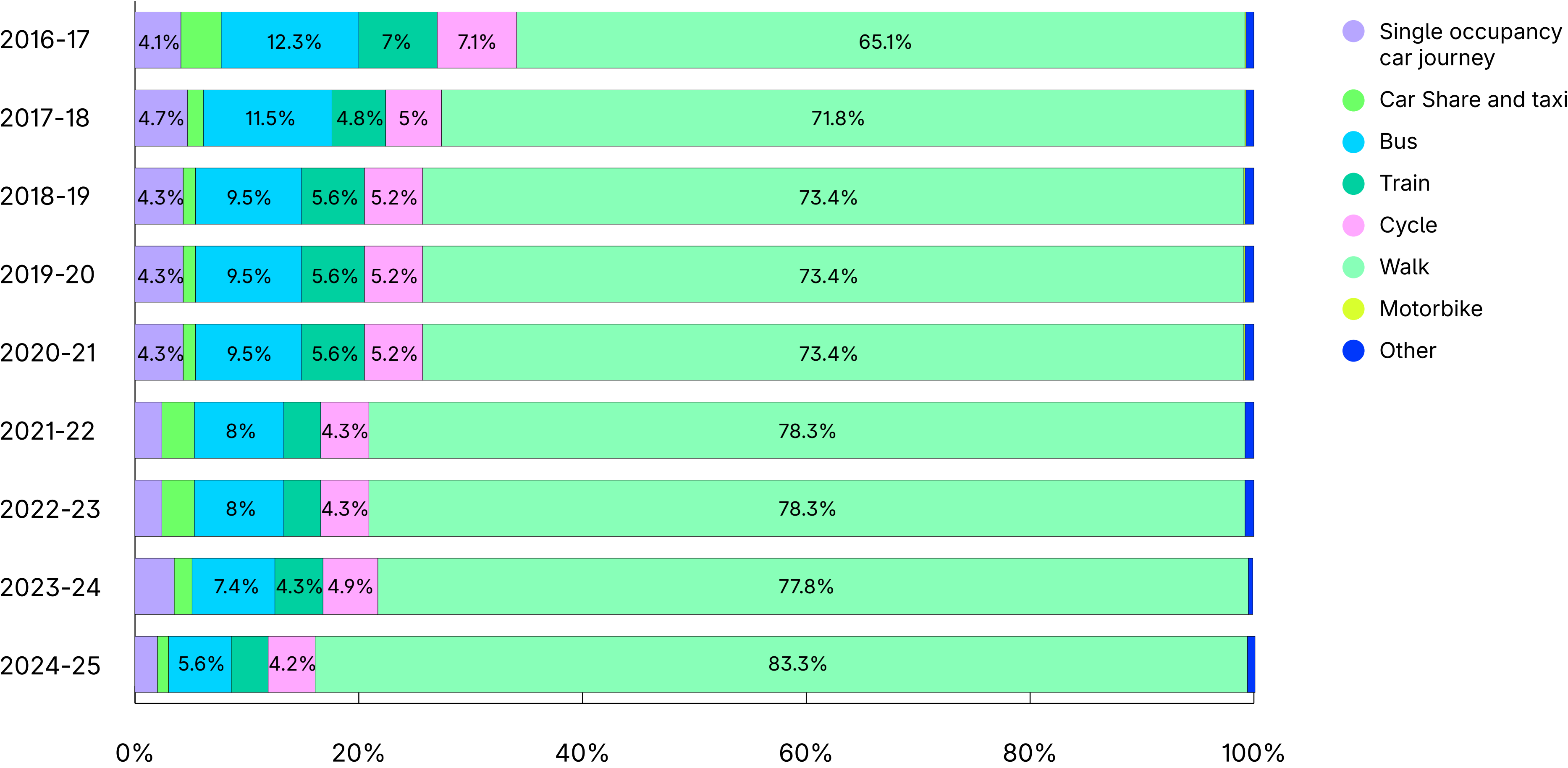
Data source: annual travel survey



Travel Data

Student commuting mode

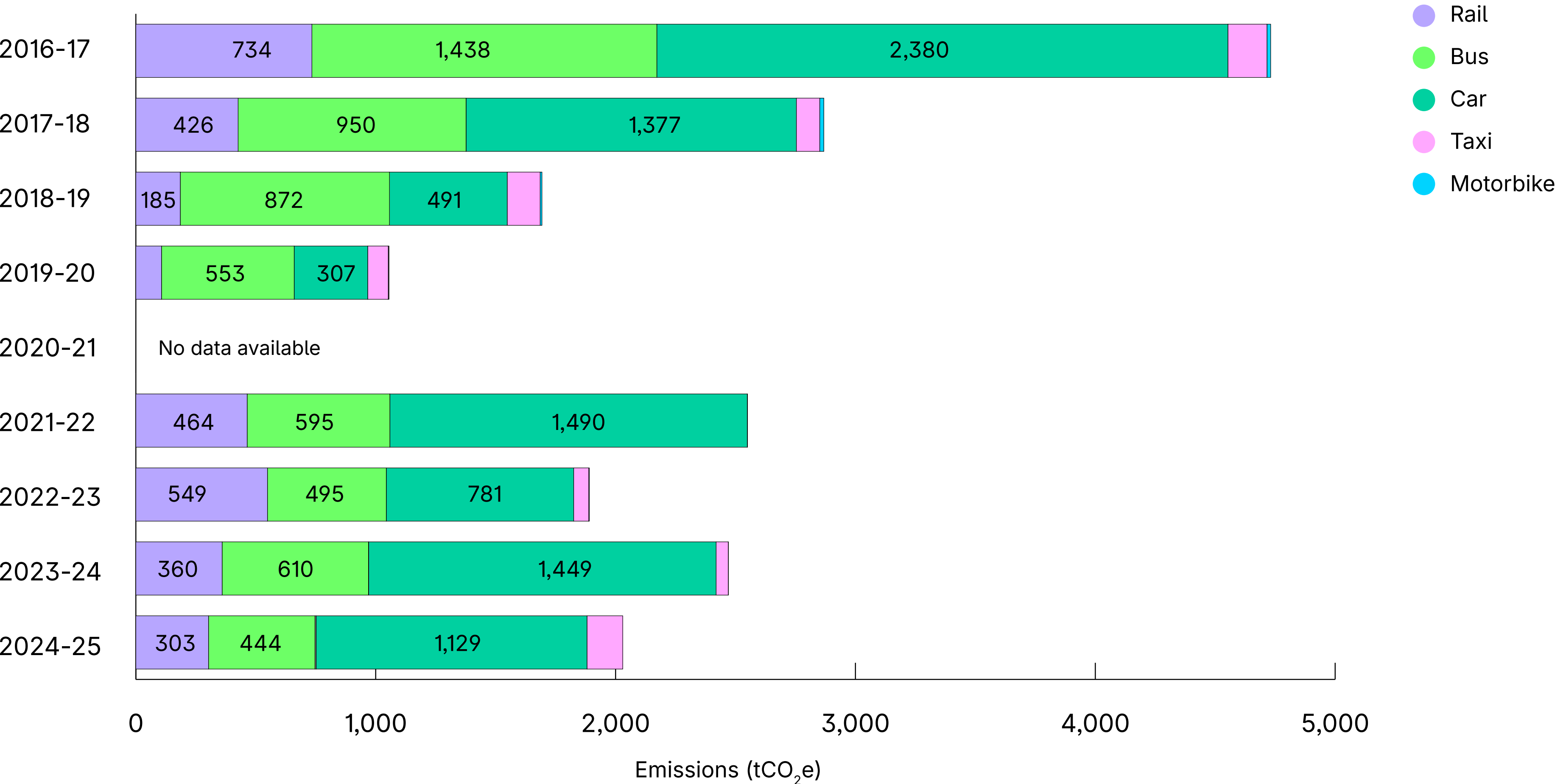
Data source: annual travel survey



Travel Data

Student commuting emissions

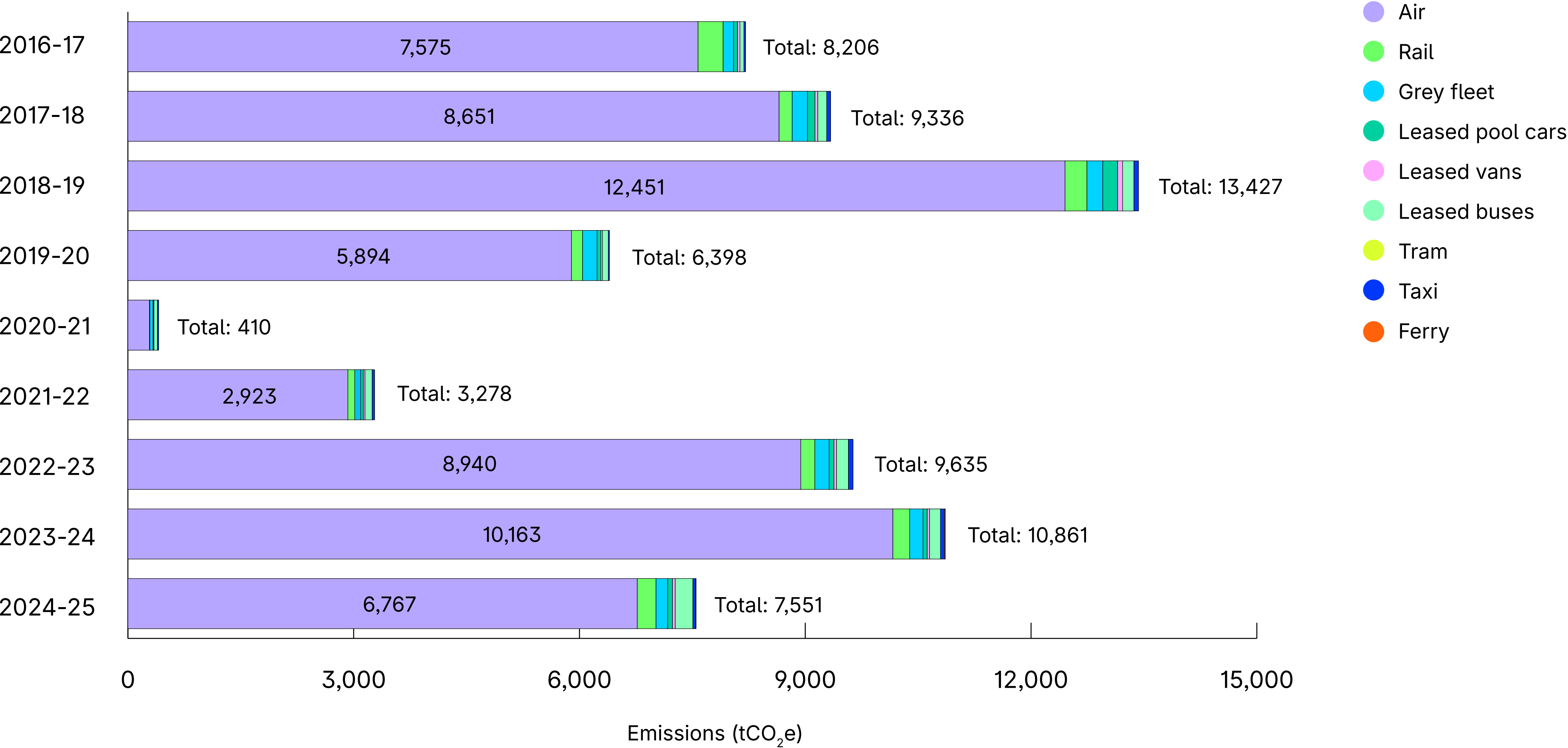
Data source: annual travel survey



Travel Data

Business travel emissions over time

Data sources: travel providers, financial systems, and the University's travel management company





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