

Sustainable Work Travel Policy

17 September 2023

Introduction

1. As a conservation and education charity the Scottish Seabird Centre is committed to promoting sustainable travel options to visitors, and our team (employees and volunteers). This policy document sets out the principles within our general travel hierarchy and approach. Alongside encouraging sustainable travel, we also encourage people to consider value for money and their personal safety (especially when travelling alone) when making decisions about their travel mode.

Why sustainable travel matters

2. Society is facing the twin challenges of a climate and nature loss crisis – we see the effects through increased frequency and severity of storms, warming, acidification and deoxygenation of our seas and declines in marine habitats and wildlife, not least some of our most precious seabirds such as Atlantic puffins and black-legged kittiwakes. Every day we work to protect our marine environment and so it is important that our business practices also contribute to this too.
3. Scotland's Climate Change Plan¹ recognises the significant contribution that transport makes to Scotland's overall carbon emissions noting that it is the biggest emitting sector, accounting for 35.6% of emissions in 2018 and that cars currently account for almost 40% of transport emissions.
4. You can find out what your carbon emissions are for every journey you make using a carbon footprint calculator such as [Sustainable Travel.org - carbon footprint calculator](https://www.sustainabletravel.org/carbon-footprint-calculator) or [Climatehero.me - calculator](https://climatehero.me/calculator). We are looking at ways in which the Charity might link more formally to carbon sequestering projects to offset business travel as part of our Net Zero planning. At present these markets are still developing but options to sequester carbon include investing in peatlands, native woodlands or blue carbon habitats (e.g. saltmarsh, seagrass meadows, kelp beds).

Business Travel Hierarchy

5. We operate a travel hierarchy whether this is for getting to work or travel for work. The recent upgrading of our digital infrastructure has also enabled us to open up more options for remote hybrid working although this is not possible for many of our roles

¹ [Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 - 2032: Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/update-to-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-a-green-recovery-on-a-path-to-net-zero/pages/10/)

due to the customer-facing in person nature of being a visitor attraction and undertaking events and activities (many of which are outdoors) with people.

6. We ask you to consider what the objective of the meeting is, whether it is necessary to travel to meet or whether you can link digitally. You should always way up if it is safe to travel and ensure that, if you are travelling alone, that you follow our lone-working procedures.

7. Our travel hierarchy is as follows:
Local: digital connection → walking → cycling → public transport → car share option → solo car.
National: digital connection → public transport → care share option → taxi shared → car or taxi alone. We do not generally support internal flights within the UK.
International: digital connection → public transport → ferry → air transport.



Image: © Energy Saving Trust

8. Exceptions to the travel hierarchy should be discussed and agreed with your line manager. These may include:
 - a flight to an island may be the only practical way to connect.
 - health-related reasons or disability that informs the best option for travel.
 - you may have childcare or other caring responsibilities which mean that you need to travel by the most time-efficient mode.
 - Solo-travellers or travelling late at night may also point towards a different mode of travel to for personal safety.
9. If there is a need to hire a vehicle for work based travel, for example a van to transport goods, then we encourage the hierarchy for hire of an electric vehicle → hybrid vehicle → fuel vehicle.
10. Locations of vehicle electric charging points can be found at [Zap-Map.com](https://www.zap-map.com).

Business Operating Core Hours

11. Many of our team live within the town and can get to work by foot and cycle which we encourage for health and well-being reasons.
12. If you are using public transport to get to work, we recognise that the timings of this may not align directly with the core opening hours of our business. We operate a flexi – system which can be used to operate out with our core hours if this makes the use of public transport more viable. Many of our roles are customer-facing within our visitor attraction and this leads to less flexibility on timings for starting/finishing the day. We ask you to speak to your line manager if you have a particular travel need that needs to

be incorporated in the rota. We will carefully consider such requests in line with operational needs.

13. We also encourage individuals and teams to carefully consider options for car share when public transport is not being used. This is a great way to reduce C-emissions, reduce costs and to get to know different team members along the journey.

Travel Expenses

14. We will re-imburse all reasonable travel expenses on production of a valid receipt. Current UK Government rates are:
 - Bike @ 20p/mile
 - Motorcycle @ 24p/mile
 - Car @ 45p/mile
15. If you are using your car for business travel, you must have appropriate business travel insurance and provide proof of this to your line manager before using your vehicle.
16. When you are using public transport, you are encouraged to search for the best value fare that you can find for the mode of transport you are using, including flexi or seasonal passes. Note that it may be more economical to purchase 2 single class tickets rather than a return and there will usually be off-peak discounts that you can find.
17. Remember that there are different discount schemes available too, including:
 - [Young Scot card - mygov.scot](https://www.mygov.scot/young-scot-card)
 - [Under 22s bus pass - mygov.scot](https://www.mygov.scot/under-22s-bus-pass)
 - [Railcards a & discounts - ScotRail](https://www.scotrail.co.uk/railcards)
 - [60+ or Disabled Traveller National Entitlement Card - Transport Scotland](https://www.transport.scot.nhs.uk/60-or-disabled-traveller-national-entitlement-card)

Approved by: Senior Management Team

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