

June 2010

Allstate Northern Ireland is committed to reducing CO2 emissions by encouraging employees to choose sustainable methods of transport. An effective GTP should have positive benefits for all.

Reducing congestion should lead to improved access to the workplace, potentially causing staff less stress and improving the health of the work force; less need for car parking spaces; the environment should also be enhanced by having less noise and pollution. There should also be real cost savings benefits for all participants.

Increased prosperity has resulted in increased car ownership which leads to more congestion on roads already heavily used. Motor traffic is a major source of pollution and “greenhouse” gases. Traffic is responsible for 25% of carbon dioxide emissions. Alongside this, nitrogen dioxide, low level ozone and particulates are associated with health problems, particularly respiratory ailments.

We have adopted a package of measures to promote more sustainable modes. The aim is to reduce the number of trips made to the sites by car in favour of other modes. We will increase walking, cycling and passenger transport use to the sites; a reduction in the number of single occupancy car journeys undertaken by employees for their journeys to work and on works business, etc.

Pedestrians

Walking as the main method of travel is probably best for journeys of less than two miles. Walking can be combined with, for example, passenger transport to cover longer distance journeys. There are obvious health benefits for staff, and savings on car running costs, as well as benefits for business in terms of a reduced need for more car parking spaces.

We have introduced the following measures to encourage walking to work:-

- Encouraging discussion of the health benefits (less stress/improved fitness)
- Encouraging staff to walk when travelling less than 2 miles to work
- Providing shower and storage facilities

Cycling

The benefits for cycling are similar to those for walking, with health and cost reduction being the major consideration for users. Again encouraging this mode will lead to the requirement for fewer car parking spaces.

The following measures are provided to encourage cycling:-

- Cycle to Work scheme where the employer finances the purchase of a bike, loans it to the employee for twelve months and then sells it to the employee. The employee saves in the region of 40% on the purchase price due to VAT and tax breaks and so far Allstate NI has supplied over 400 bicycles.
- Providing a bicycle cage with an electronic lock at our Belfast office
- Providing shower and storage facilities
- Cycling Club with regular cycling events for fun, competition, fitness and charity

Train

The train offers “A Better Way to Get There” according to a recent Translink marketing campaign. The commuter benefits by beating traffic, cost savings, a relaxed journey, meeting up with friends and an environmentally preferred method of transport.

An annual commuter card from Translink will save you 20% compared with purchasing 12 monthly tickets. Allstate NI now provides employees with a 12 month interest free loan to cover the purchase of the annual commuter card and makes the deductions from their payslip.

Bus

Northern Ireland has an extensive bus network supplied by Ulsterbus and Metro services. Using a bus is an ideal way to reduce traffic congestion, pollution and our carbon footprint. On a per kilometre basis, bus and rail services operated by Translink are significantly more environmentally friendly than journeys undertaken by other transport modes.

An annual commuter card from Translink will save you 20% compared with purchasing monthly 40 journey tickets. ANI runs a scheme that allows employees take advantage of the 20% discount and pay monthly via your payslip. Tax and national insurance savings are also available which can save you approximately an additional 31%.

Car

Sometimes car use is unavoidable and therefore Allstate NI has set up a car sharing website for employees wanting to locate colleagues who travel the same route each day. We currently charge employees for use of car parking at our Belfast and Derry sites

Homeworking

Where is it both beneficial for both employee and the business

Inter-Office Travel

Some travel between our three sites (Belfast, Derry & Strabane) is required for business purposes. We have purchased Polycom units which allow face to face communication between our three Northern Ireland sites. All travel between Northern Ireland and our head office in Chicago, USA is currently scrutinised and approved only when necessary.

2010 Targets

- Supply a further 100 bicycles to employees through the cycle to work scheme – Complete.
- Supply loans to 100 employees to allow them to purchase annual train and bus passes from Translink.
- Reduce car parking space requirement at our Belfast office by 5% and now all employees have to pay car parking charges at our Northland location
- Inter-Office Travel targets to be confirmed.