

FACT SHEET: Travel

Bicycle

Keep safe on the roads

Richmond Council is running Adult Cycle Training courses this summer for only £15. Each course consists of 4 x 90min sessions.

For more information or to sign up, visit: www.richmond.gov.uk/cycling_courses_for_adults

Improve cyclist facilities

Installing showers, lockers and bike racks for cyclists can support and encourage more staff to cycle in to work. Guides on different bike rack types, the security measures they afford and price guidelines can be found at the Transport for London website: www.tfl.gov.uk/businessadpartners/publications/2766.aspx

Through Go Green Richmond upon Thames and Transport for London support you may also be eligible for bicycle stands, signage and merchandise for your staff, such as water bottles, cycle clips, towels, puncture repair kits and rucksacks.

Cheaper ways of buying bicycles

'Cycle to work schemes' allow employers to implement a tax free loan scheme for their employees to buy a bicycle that will be used mostly for work purposes.

- Electrically assisted pedal cycles can also be included under the scheme.
- Safety equipment is also covered, although it is the employer's choice as to exactly what equipment is offered.

There are two options to follow in taking advantage of the tax and National Insurance exemption.

1. An employer can buy a cycle and cyclists' safety equipment, reclaim the VAT, make use of the capital allowances and loan it to an employee for qualifying journeys to work.
2. An employer can recover the cost of providing the cycle and safety equipment loaned to the employee through a salary sacrifice arrangement.

In total, the schemes may save as much as 50% on the cost of a bike and equipment. Detailed financial information on these schemes is available from the Department of Transport website: www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/cycling/cycletoworkschemeimplementat5732?page=1#a1000

Rather than spending a lot of time and effort setting up this scheme, it may be simpler for your business to engage the services of a company that specializes in providing these services. A list of such companies is available at the Transport for London website:

www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/workplacetravelplanning/2459.aspx#Tax_exemptions

Public Transport

Richmond Council has a webpage at

www.richmond.gov.uk/home/transport_and_streets/public_transport.htm that links to numerous transport operators in the borough, all journeys within and around the borough can be planned from here. Traffic updates can also be found here:

www.richmond.gov.uk/home/transport_and_streets/public_transport.htm

Transport for London also have an online travel planner available at: www.tfl.gov.uk/

Car Share

Car sharing will allow your employees to minimise transport emissions in their journeys to or for work by reducing the number of vehicles they travel in. This may also save on travel costs for your company.

LondonLiftShare is one of a number of car sharing schemes in London. This one, run by Transport for London, is an online service for individuals or companies to join. A company group on LondonLiftShare will allow staff to plan and co-ordinate their journeys online. If only a few staff are interested, they can join the scheme as individuals to find other Londoners with whom to travel share.

To join the scheme, or for more information, visit:

www.liftshare.org/securesites/londonliftshare//companies.asp

Walking

Walking route maps of London are available at: www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/gettingaround/walkfinder

Awareness

You can pick up free London cycling guides and promotional posters on walking, cycling, public transport, and car sharing from Go Green Richmond upon Thames at many of the summer fairs and business specific events (www.richmond.gov.uk/gogreen/gg_work/gg_support/gg_support_events.htm).

Videoconferencing - An alternative to travel

Video conferencing may be a good substitute for travelling to meetings. It consists of a two way interactive visual communication using electronic equipment and network systems. This could save both time and costs of travel, and will be especially cost-effective for long-distance conferencing. Your current phone service provider may be able to advise you specifically, however there are many companies offering these services so it might be worth shopping around for the best deal.

Alternative fuel sources for fleets

If your business runs a vehicle fleet, it may be worth investing in alternative fuel technologies to lower your emissions caused through petrol or diesel fossil fuel combustion. This could also save you money in the long run.

If business activities take your vehicles into London regularly, it is also important to note that efficient or alternative fuelled vehicles are eligible for exemption from the London congestion charge (the cost is a £10 annual registration fee, payable to Transport for London).

The main commercial options (at present) for alternative fuels are outlined below. Further information is available from The Energy Saving Trust, at:

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/fleet/technology/alternativefuels/.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

This fuel source is considered suitable for smaller vehicles, such as cars and light vans, that have high mileage or operate mostly in city centres. LPG gives a 10-15% CO₂ reduction in comparison to petrol and is on a par with diesel. LPG also delivers 80% lower nitrous oxide emissions than diesel, along with zero particulate emissions. Significant additional reductions can be achieved if the LPG system is fully integrated at manufacture rather than through conversion.

An LPG vehicle can be obtained by:

1. (Most common) Converting your existing petrol engine to run on LPG. This will cost you somewhere from £1,200 - £2,700.
2. Purchasing a new car and having a manufacturer approved conversion.
3. Buying an LPG van directly from the manufacturer.

LPG vehicles cost approximately 30% less to run than their petrol equivalents, and approximately the same as diesels.

Natural Gas

This is an option for goods vehicles with depot-based refuelling sites. Natural gas vehicles can run on a dedicated gas engine or be dual-fuel, which means they can burn both diesel and natural gas simultaneously in the engine. Alternatively, natural gas vehicles can also be bi-fuel, which means they operate on natural gas, using petrol as a reserve fuel.

Due to the weight and cost of on-board gas tanks, conversions of existing vehicles have been limited to mainly trucks, buses and larger vehicles.

The initial outlay for a natural gas vehicle is more than for a conventionally-fuelled vehicle. For example, new natural gas heavy goods vehicles are around £25,000 to £35,000 more expensive, whilst new natural gas vans cost approximately £4,000 more.

However, in terms of fuel costs alone, natural gas is cheaper than most fossil-based fuels, which means that running costs for natural gas vehicles can provide savings.

A map of natural gas refuelling locations is available at:

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/fleet/technology/refuellingstations/

Biodiesel

Biodiesel is a renewable fuel that is produced from the oil of crops including oilseed rape, sunflowers and soybeans, as well as from waste cooking oils. It can be mixed with conventional diesel fuel in up to 5% blend for use in a normal diesel engine, and used in higher blend percentages if the engine undergoes modification.

Because the crops used to make biodiesel take in carbon dioxide when they grow, biodiesel is considered a renewable fuel. It gives a 60% reduction in CO₂ well to wheel. Also, because it is highly biodegradable, biodiesel does not accumulate and pollute soil and waterways if it is spilt.

Biodiesel is currently available only from a limited number of manufacturers, but interest in cooking oil collection and reuse schemes is growing in the London area, so this may increase availability.

A map of biodiesel refuelling locations is available at:

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/fleet/technology/refuellingstations/

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Battery EVs are the most common zero emission vehicle, and suitable for short journeys. They produce no vehicle tailpipe emissions in the course of their operation. Furthermore, if the electricity used to recharge them is obtained from renewable energy sources, they are as close to being zero emission as possible (there are emissions associated with their manufacture). Even when EVs are charged using standard grid electricity, they are still cleaner than all other cars on the road.

Hybrid-electric vehicles

Hybrid-electric vehicles, commonly referred to as 'hybrids', are powered by a combination of petrol or diesel and electricity. Typically, the electric motor is used to provide initial momentum, and will drive the engine up to about 25mph, at which point the fuel engine automatically starts. The fuel engine will also kick in automatically when hard braking is required. Because the electric motor is used so much at low speeds, hybrid-electric vehicles tend to get better mileage in the city than on the highway. Overall, this operating system reduces the amount of fuel needed per mile, meaning drivers will produce fewer emissions and spend less on petrol.

A new hybrid electric vehicle costs around £1,000 - £3,000 more than a conventional vehicle. Since hybrids can run in excess of 55 miles per gallon of petrol (5.1 litres per 100 km) fuel costs will be around two thirds of those for an equivalent petrol fuelled vehicle.

