

# Coronavirus Travel Advice for Businesses (March 2021)



Following government advice and the gradual easing of the lockdown restrictions, we are advising people to be prepared for a different travel experience when they return to work.

## Travel Advice



Only use public transport if you have no other travel options. This keeps our services safe and available for those who need them most.



Walk, cycle or drive if you can.



Avoid peak times, maintain social distancing and if you're making shorter trips, try cycling or walking to prevent any further spread of the virus.



For further advice, watch and share our video at [wmnetwork.co.uk/networkoverview](https://wmnetwork.co.uk/networkoverview)

## Stay Safe



## Stay Apart

Social distancing measures mean capacity on public transport is reduced and there may not be room for everyone who usually travelled on public transport services before.



Please wear a face covering, unless exempt



Keep space between yourself and others



Carry hand sanitiser and wash your hands before and after travelling



Allow others to get off the bus before getting on



Pay for your ticket in advance or use contactless where possible



For further advice, watch and share our video at [wmnetwork.co.uk/networkoverview](https://wmnetwork.co.uk/networkoverview)

# Support For Businesses

## Working from home and flexible working hours

The government advice is for staff to work from home and avoid travelling to their place of work where at all possible. We encourage you to sign up and read the [Agile working guide](#) developed by Solihull Council through the Smarter Working Solihull Partnership. The guide will help support both you and your employees with this new way of working and to overcome some of the barriers you may now be facing.

As capacity is reduced on our public transport network, we are also asking businesses to be more flexible in their way of working to reduce the number of people travelling at peak times and encourage active travel when it is potentially quieter on the roads.

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## Encouraging Walking and Cycling for short trips

More people cycling and walking will see improvements to local air quality, improved physical and mental health, greener, more resilient communities and happier places to live, work and play. Vitally, more people walking and cycling will enable employees to access employment safely, and allow space for those who need to use public transport to help prevent the spread of the virus.

During the lockdown people have been cycling more for leisure and in some places, there has been a 70% rise in the number of people using bicycles for exercise or travel. Now that people across the country are getting back to work, they are starting to think about the journeys they need to make.

We encourage staff making trips to work to walk and cycle where possible. There are some ideas below to get you started to encourage your employees to cycle to work. This includes supporting employees to buy a bike through the cycle to work scheme, free cycle parking for businesses, support for key workers and journey planning advice.

### Cycle to work scheme

Cycle to Work scheme is a UK Government tax exemption initiative introduced in the Finance Act 1999 to promote healthier journeys to work and to reduce environmental pollution. It allows employers to loan cycles and cyclists' safety equipment to employees as a tax-free benefit with the option to buy outright at the end of the loan term.

This is a great way to encourage your workforce into a healthier lifestyle and many employers already promote this scheme to their staff.

The details of the scheme are in a Government advice booklet [here](#).

## Cycle Parking Grants for businesses

West Midlands Cycle presents Park That Bike, who are offering free cycling parking to SME's with over 50 staff to encourage employees to cycle to work. The cycle parking and advice given by Park That Bike is completely free of charge with the business responsible for installation. With so many people now taking up or renewing their enthusiasm for cycling this is a great opportunity for businesses to play their part in supporting staff who wish to cycle to work now and encouraging these shorter trips to be made by bicycle rather than car. Click [here](#) for more information.

### Free services for Key Workers

Great offers from across the region are available for frontline staff. Please click on the links for more information and promote to your staff.

- **#Cycles4KeyWorkers:** Sustrans have pulled together some great offers from across the region for frontline staff. These include FREE bike hire, repairs and equipment
- **Big Bike Revival:** Cycling UK is helping keep key workers pedalling – or getting them cycling if they don't have access to a working bike. From bike safety checks and repairs to bike loans – this scheme will ensure that key workers can get to where they need to go on pedal.

## Journey Planning Advice

Cycling and walking journey planners are useful tools to find the best route to take, whether it be the most direct or a quieter more cross-country route. Please promote the weblinks/apps for: [walkit.com](http://walkit.com) and [cyclestreets.net](http://cyclestreets.net) to your staff and visit our weblink for more information about how to travel safely when social distancing click [here](#).

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## Driving to work

Even journeys by car will now be different. We encourage everyone to check before they travel for traffic levels and road closures. Changes to road layouts, especially in town and city centres, may mean staff cannot access key car parks, or will need to take a different route. If more people choose to drive, they may need to leave extra time for journeys as congestion will increase.

DfT is currently advising people who normally share a vehicle with people from other households for essential journeys to find a different way to travel where possible and to walk, cycle or use your own vehicle where you can. Where this is not possible, the advice is to try to share transport with the same people each time and keep to small groups of people at any one time. Wearing face coverings is recommended as a precautionary measure as evidence shows face coverings may project others if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms.

If you need any further support or information on any of the above please do not hesitate to contact the Travel Choices Team who will be happy to help:  
[travelchoices@tfwm.org.uk](mailto:travelchoices@tfwm.org.uk)