

TRAVEL PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022 – 2023

Contents

1.	UPDATED TRAVEL ACTION PLAN	2
2.	USAGE DATA FOR TRAVEL INITIATIVES	2
A.	STAFF HR BENEFITS	2
B.	BUS USAGE	3
C.	PARK AND RIDE SERVICE	5
D.	GWR RAIL DISCOUNT	5
E.	CO-WHEELS CAR CLUB	6
F.	ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGE POINTS (EVCP)	6
G.	EASIT DISCOUNT CARD	8
H.	CYCLE SAFETY PROJECT OVEVIEW	9
I.	BIKE MAINTENANCE SESSIONS	10
J.	CYCLE EVENTS	11
K.	UNICYCLE BIKE HIRE	11
L.	WEBSITE HITS	12
M.	BUSINESS TRAVEL	12
3.	COMPLETED TRAVEL PROJECTS	13

1. UPDATED TRAVEL ACTION PLAN

The [University's travel plan for 2023-24](#) sets out our plans and targets to support sustainable travel.

2. USAGE DATA FOR TRAVEL INITIATIVES

This section provides an update on the usage of travel initiatives over the period between 1st August 2022 - 31st July 2023, where data is available. The first of these reports was written for the 2016-17 academic year.

A. STAFF HR BENEFITS

The University offers several salary sacrifice schemes and offers, to encourage staff to use sustainable modes of travel. The schemes include My-Car, Cycle 2 Work, Bus 2 Work & season ticket loans for rail travel. All schemes promote low or no carbon modes of transport to work. **Table 1** below shows how many participants are using the schemes per year.

Table 1: Number of participants enrolled onto/ are using the low carbon transport schemes between 2018-2023.

Scheme	2018-19 data (as of 31 July 2019)	2019-20 data (as of 31 July 2020)	2020-21 data (as of 31st July)	2021-22 data (as of 31st July)	2022-23 data (as of 31st July 2023)
	Participants	Participants	Participants	Participants	Participants
My Car *	18	4	8	6	1
Cycle2Work	14	32	25	39	27
Trains season ticket loans	7	3	1	2	0
Bus to Work participants	246	186	57	109	132

**The My-car scheme was removed as a staff benefit during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

There is 1 remaining participant in the My Car scheme which has continued to decline due to the halting of the scheme by HR.

The number of participants in the Cycle 2 Work scheme has declined since last year, with 27 people utilising the benefit this data period.

There are currently no participants that have train season ticket loans. However the number of participants in the Bus to Work scheme has increased again this year, but has not returned to pre Covid 19 pandemic levels. Both these schemes would benefit from targeted promotion but are likely to not be as economically attractive now that hybrid working practices have become embedded across the University.

B. BUS USAGE

During the period of 2022/23, the Reading Bus services 21/21a, 19a, b & c saw a combined total of almost two million passengers (1,942,223), which is more than a 300,000 increase in total passengers compared to 2021/22. These bus services are assessed as they stop at the University campus or nearby. **Figure 1** illustrates a comparison of the total number of passengers using the 21 & 19 bus services over the past year. The 21/21a services are used extensively more than the 19 services, and the most popular months for bus usage are October, November, January and February and less in the summer months. People may prefer to walk or are off campus during warmer months, causing a decline in usage from April – August, when the services also run less frequently. December shows less bus users on these services as a lot of students will return home for Christmas.

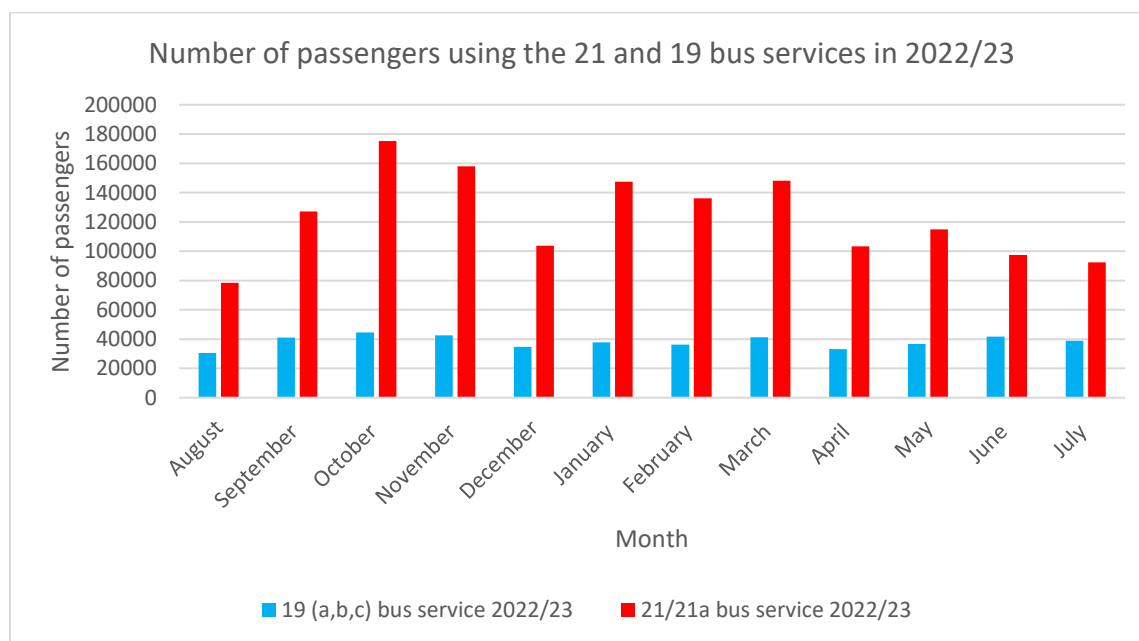


Figure 1 – Comparison of the total number of passengers using the 21 & 19 bus services in 2022/23

Bus journeys on the 19 a/b/c routes (which services Earley Gate and Bridges Hall) have increased compared to the 2021/22 academic year, with every month seeing an increase in year-on-year usage (**Figure 2**). Overall, there were 459,594 journeys made on the services in 2022/23, compared to 321,720 in the previous year demonstrating a 43% increase in usage over the past couple of years since the COVID-19 pandemic.

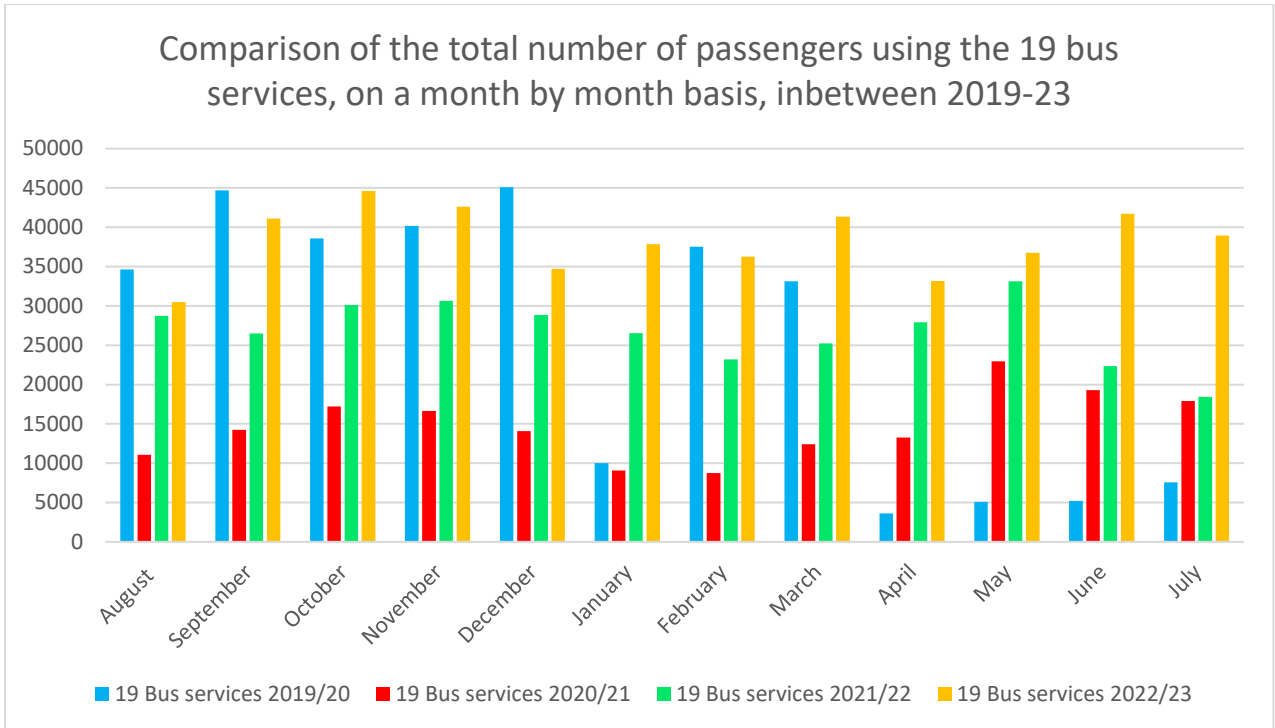


Figure 2 - Total 19a/b/c bus journeys made each month, during the 2019/20- 2022/23 period.

There is a similar trend in data for the Claret 21/21a services (**Figure 3**). There were 1,482,629 journeys in the 2022/23 reporting period, a 14% increase on the 1,292,585 journeys made in 2021/22. The 21/21a services are utilised more than twice as much per year than the 19a, b & c services and utilisation levels are now back to pre Covid 19 levels.

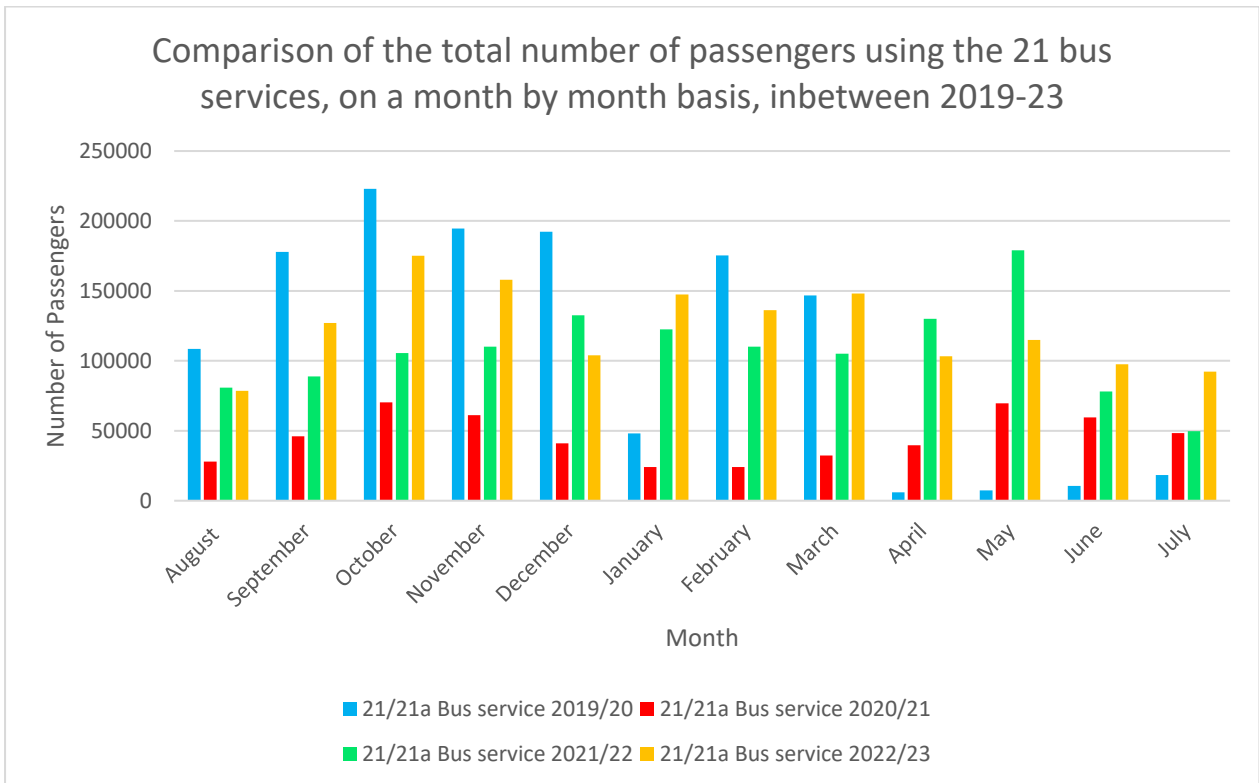
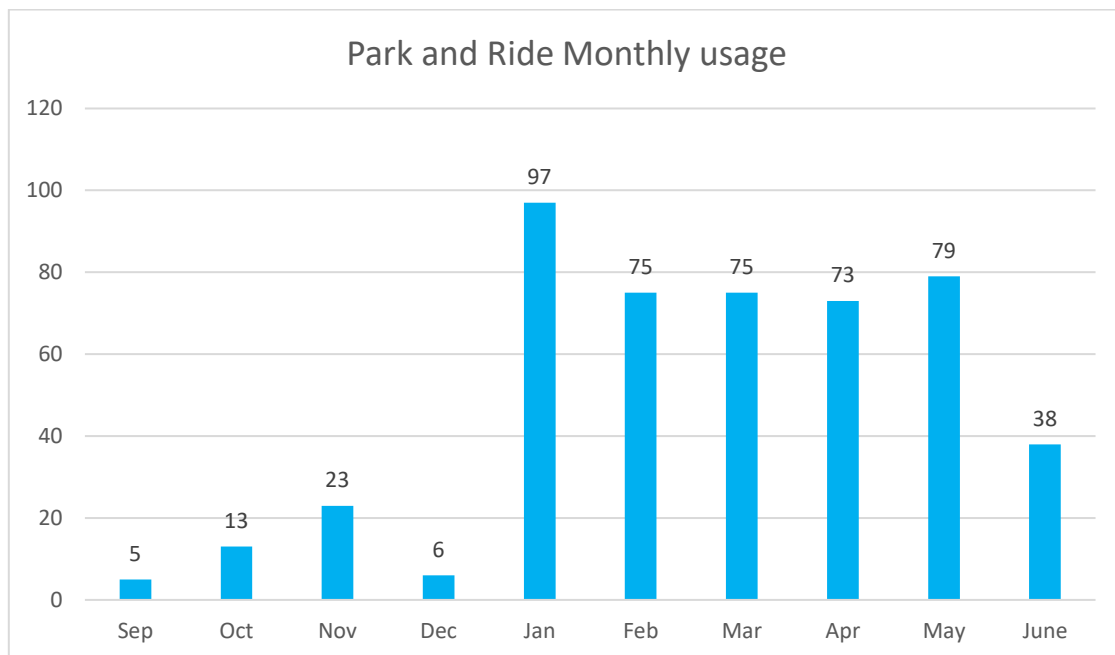


Figure 3 - Total 21/21a bus journeys made each month, during the 2019/20- 2022/23 period..

C. PARK AND RIDE SERVICE

In September 2022, a new free park and ride bus service for staff departing from Mere oak (Junction 11 of the M4) to campus was launched. The service has increased in popularity over the course of the 2022/23 year, most notably during the spring term when the service became available for students. The Park and Ride service was most heavily utilised by 97 passengers in January 2023, which is due to leafleting at on campus car parks and other forms advertisement of the service by members of the Sustainability team. The service has built a core group of users and there will be further promotion of the service at the beginning of the 23-24 academic year.



**Data is currently unavailable for July 2023*

D. GWR RAIL DISCOUNT

Sustainability Services are continually seeking to develop partnerships with sustainable travel providers and began working with GWR in 2022 to develop incentives to increase use of train services for the University Community. GWR have developed a specific portal for the University which enables people attending our Open, Visit and Graduation days to access a 20% discount on advance fares to encourage them to travel by train. This discount can be combined with a young persons railcard which allows those traveling on eligible routes to access up to a 50% discount on fares.

32 people utilised this offer from April 2022 to July 2023. The availability of this offer would also benefit from targeted promotion.

E. CO-WHEELS CAR CLUB

There are two Co-Wheels Car Club cars available for hire on-site at the University. One based at Dunsden Crescent (Car 1) and one at St. Patricks Hall (Car 2). The cars are available to be booked out for a small charge, reducing the number of people bringing their own car to campus. Co- Wheels also encourages car sharing, which will be beneficial for carbon emission reduction. In 2022/23 there was 512 overall bookings, which is greater than last year's figure of 437 bookings, with an overall annual increase of 75 bookings. However, the number of bookings over each of the past two years have both been lower than in 2020/21 as 625 bookings were made in that year. A comparison of the total number of bookings from years 2020-23 are shown in **Figure 4**. There will be a continuation of pushing staff to use the Co-Wheels service, and hopefully this will increase the number of bookings going forward.

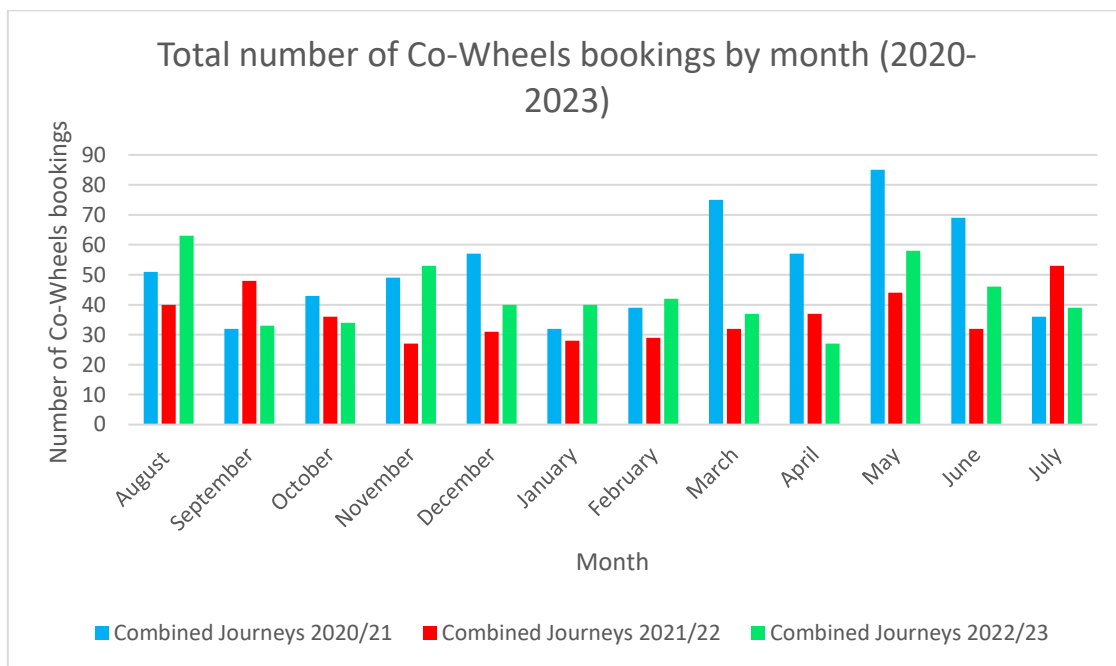


Figure 4 - Total annual Co-Wheels bookings made per year.

The utilisation rate of both cars combined between 2022-23 (percentage of the total time that each car is in use) was the highest during the months of October, December & April. Higher utilisation in these months relates to half term and holiday periods, meaning people may have booked the cars for outings. Overall, in 2022/23, Car 2 (St. Patricks Hall) was slightly more utilised on average at 26.49%, compared to Car 1 (Dunsden Crescent) at 25.57%. The overall utilisation rate of both Co-wheels cars in 2021/22 was 22.6% which is just slightly lower than this year (2022/23), which is 26%. As a result, even though there were more bookings this year, the cars have used similarly over the past 3 years.

F. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGE POINTS (EVCP)

The University has 2 EVCPs (Electric Vehicle Charging Points) installed at the Sports Park pay and display car park on the Whiteknights campus and 1 EVCP installed at Henley Business School (HBS) on the Greenlands Campus.

They are all managed via the BP Chargemaster system. The most used EVCP is at Sports park, and it has been used more than twice as much as the Greenlands EVCP in 2022/23. The total number of recharges in 2022/23 from all sites was 1204.

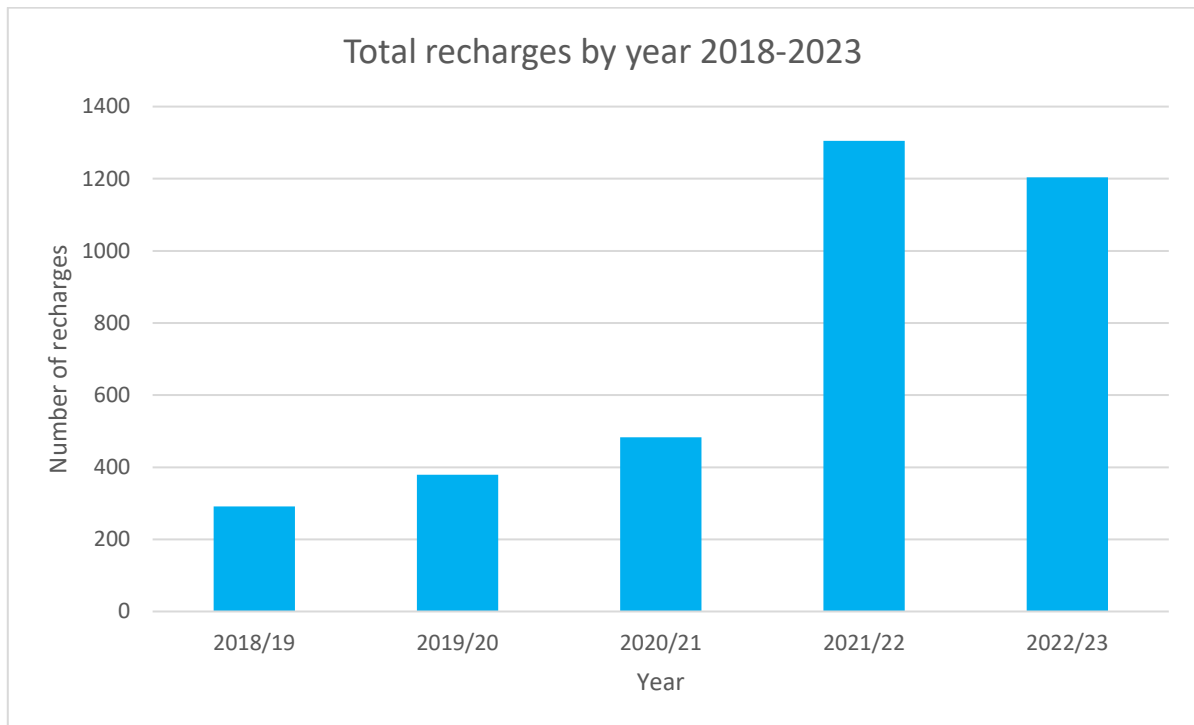


Figure 5 – Total number of recharges at all 3 EVCPs, by academic year (August – July) 2018 to 2023

The total use of EVCPs has decreased by 8% over the past year since 2021/22 (**figure 5**), although this small decline in usage may be due to an increase in staff working from home, or from changing working patterns from staff and students.

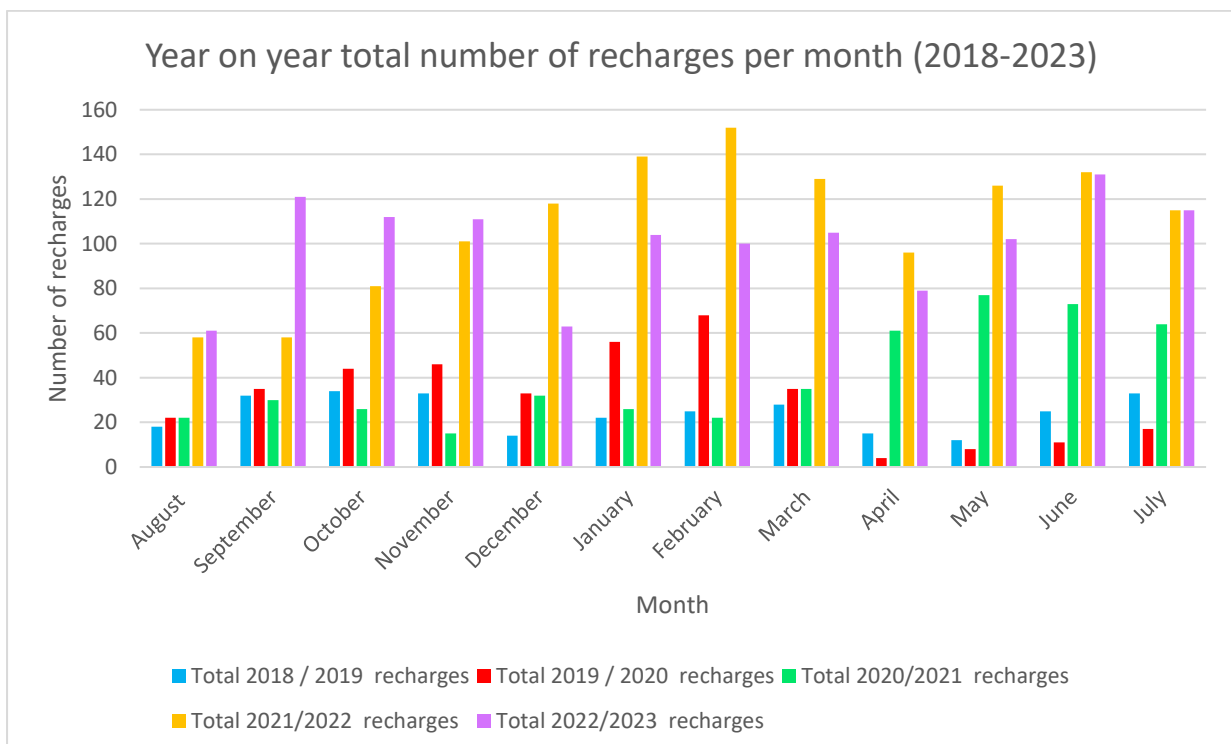


Figure 6 – Combined total monthly recharges at all EVCPs over the 18/19, 20/21, 21/22 & 22/23 data periods

The comparison between the monthly data for the past two academic years (2021-23) and the previous years (**figure 6**) demonstrates a huge increase in the number of recharges per month. The increase shows that there is a consistently increased demand for electric vehicle charging. The continuing high figures outside of term time suggest that there may be usage by the general public as well as University staff/students.

The most popular day of the week on average for car recharges are Tuesdays, and the least amount of people use car recharging points on Sundays

G.EASIT DISCOUNT CARD

The Easit network provides travel-related discounts, which are available through registering online, and others require the purchase of an Easit card at £5.35 per year (2023 pricing). The Easit card allows access to a range of benefits and discounts. **Figure 7** illustrates the usage data of Easit.

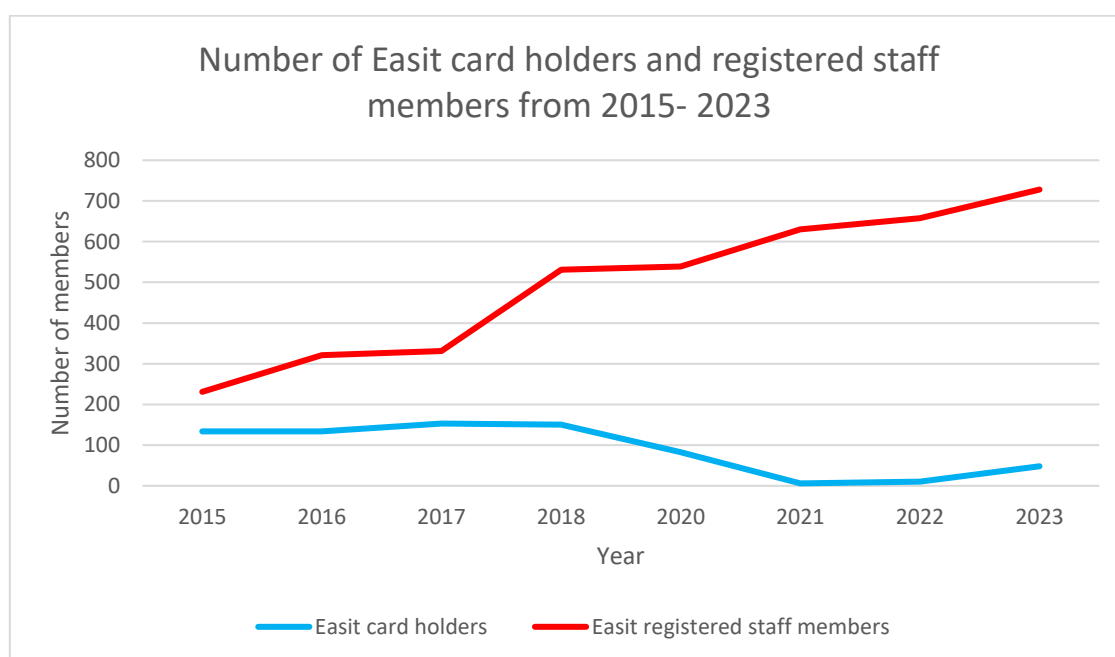


Figure 7 – Numbers of Easit card holders and Easit registered staff members by year

There has been an increase in the number of Easit card holders, with 48 University affiliated members as of 31/07/23, compared to just 10 card holders between 2021-22. In addition, there has been a rise in Easit registered members, with 728 as of 2023, and 658 in 2022. 30 members of staff are registered on the EasitSHARE scheme, which is a service that allows car sharing journeys to university affiliated sites. The drop in Easit card holders drops from 2020, as this was the year that GWR rail discounts were withdrawn.

As a result, the overall trend of Easit users has been positive since the launch of the scheme in 2015, and more recently, the increase in the number of Easit card holders that had depreciated last year in 2022.

H. CYCLE SAFETY PROJECT OVEVIEW

The new academic year for 2022/23 has been an enormous success with a massive uptake in participation across all activities with the return of campus-based study for all students, and an increase in staff working back in the office. This enabled University funded activities to support and encourage cycling to be ran from the outset, along with participation in Welcome Week and other promotional events.

The full range of activities, initiatives, and projects managed by our training provider Avanti Cycling include:

- Cycle skills sessions
- Dr Bike safety checks and fixes
- Reading Bicycle Kitchen (RBK) Maintenance pop ups
- The Unicycle hire bike scheme
- Managing on-campus bike recycling and resale (with support from RBK)

Participation has been strong, and there has been engagement and good attendance at activities, as people are now fully back to attending live events post Covid. As the University was still operating some Covid restrictions, we continued with the approach of operating more frequent events to avoid crowds, queues, and lots more 1:1 – 1:3 training.

Cycle skills / training sessions

Over 120 training sessions were held; comprising of seventy-six individual participants (average of two people per session and typically 1-3 sessions per individual, some complete beginners needed more). This was a mix of students and staff who already cycle but needed support in building confidence and techniques for cycling on roads or in traffic (including international students/ staff wanting to learn UK Highway code rules, and those taking out a hire bike). Also, those who needed a refresh of skills – such as signalling, use of gears and quite a large number of complete beginners, who some were attempting cycling for the first time. Participants were 1:1s or some 1:2 to ensure adequate distancing throughout and flexibility to fit around people's work schedule / tuition commitments.

The session breakdown for 2022/23:

- 30 'Road confidence / Commuting techniques' sessions
- 50 'Back on bike / Rusty Rider' sessions
- 45 Learn to Ride/ basic beginners' sessions

Over twenty students and staff took on 'Learn to Ride lessons,' with the majority of these being females who had not ever had the opportunity to learn as a child. Adult beginners can need up to 3-4 sessions before grasping balancing but then move on very rapidly. It is very encouraging to note that many participants progressed through all the levels of training and now cycle regularly for study, work, or leisure. A handful of leisure rides were run for newcomers, international students and as part of wider Sustainability Department initiatives such as: Green Week in November, Clean Air Day and 'Show Your Stripes' in June.

Attributes to the continued interest:

- Flexibility on the timetable and structure of sessions to fit individuals' availability and experience – particularly being able to offer out of term and evening sessions.

- Moving to weekly Dr Bike events where the Cycle Training manager is present and cycle training / safety information is actively promoted to anyone getting their bike fixed.
- Incorporation of cycle training with the bike recycling and Unicycle bike hire schemes.
- Continued momentum in communication and spreading of word by attendees / social media & variety of internal comms.

I. BIKE MAINTENANCE SESSIONS

Dr Bike free maintenance

This year we invested further in Dr Bike – checks, maintenance, and size of the project (for a longer duration). The new and even more popular Dr Bike, who is a qualified mechanic and Reading Bike Kitchen (RBK) volunteer, provides free at point of use cycle checks, basic maintenance with tips on own work and advice on further repairs needed. The Dr Bike sessions increased to weekly during term time, from previously fortnightly, on Whiteknights Campus. In addition, we held three promotional ‘On your bike days’ where Dr Bike was in attendance. There is consideration of holding events on other sites in 2023/24.

The increased frequency ensured that queuing was minimal and that more time was available for fixes to have been conducted on site (on top of the general puncture repair / brakes and gear adjustments). The improved weekly structure also contributed to attendance and awareness by ‘word of mouth’.

Typically, between eight and ten people attended each 2–3-hour session with the most populous being sixteen at one event (supported by an additional Avanti Mechanic and Reading Bicycle Kitchen).

Overall, there were thirty-six sessions and over two hundred participants (many people attended more than once). On rare occasions the sessions had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

Reading Bike Kitchen (RBK)

We also welcomed RBK back onto campus where experienced mechanics delivered eight ‘pop-ups’ providing safety checks. These were for basic repairs but with more of an emphasis on giving people guidance and support to help maintain their own bike (there is a cross over between Dr Bike and RBK attendees). RBK is also supporting the upcycling of abandoned bikes to enable low-cost second-hand bike sales.

These repair sessions continue to be extremely popular and are ran over lunchtime or towards the end of the day to maximise potential for those working and studying to attend. The engagement with RBK has strengthened over the last few years and helps to increase aid to those who need more support and continues to influence self-sufficiency across more cyclists.

The tools bought in 2018 by this project are helpful to have onsite. The tools were securely stored in locations at Whiteknights, in London Road Security offices, and spares / replacements had been replenished when needed, with the addition of several more track pumps. The basic maintenance equipment purchased by RUSU in 2019 (located by the Library & Agriculture) was sadly vandalised quickly, and the pump has been repaired several times but still has limited use. Alternative fixed equipment facilities are under investigation, but they will collectively cost several thousand pounds.

J. CYCLE EVENTS

Engaging with our project provider, Avanti Cycling, from early August 2022 meant we restarted some but not all of the usual programme of pre-term and welcome week activities, along with 'On Your Bike Days' in October and January.

- During the Green Festival in November 2022, cycle-based events ran as part of the programme including 'Light Up' promotions and bike repair / recycle events.
- Plans are now in place for 2023/24 year including the previously popular 'Cycle to Work' day in September (potentially as part of staff 'Well-being Week' if taking place then) and further active participation in the RUSU organised events during the 2023 Welcome Week.
- A larger 'On Your Bike' day is in planning for October, which will offer safety and security advice as well as promotion for the entire range of cycle activities and facilities available.
- Second hand bikes for sale and hire scheme will be attended by third parties (Thames Valley Police / My-Journey Wokingham / The Reading Cycle Campaign / RBK / Cycle 2 Work partners, and others).

A key part of the cycle project expansion has been the improved recycling of abandoned campus bicycles, which developed further in 2019/20 and run by RBK, ensuing full lifecycle reuse of bikes and spare parts. Over forty second hand / recycled bikes were sold during 2022/23.

K. UNICYCLE BIKE HIRE

Demand this year was exceptional with all the scheme bikes having been taken out in the first week of term with a massive waiting list. Therefore, Avanti Cycling and RBK were asked to supply more bikes which they duly helped with, meaning more students could benefit from this low cost and risk scheme. The hire fee (£30/ term or £75/ year) includes lights and a high-quality D-lock with return secured by way of a minimal deposit. All hirers must attend a cycle safety assessment held by the qualified Avanti Cycling training Instructor and further sessions are recommended when necessary.

There has been a steady increase in participation over the years, although this took a significant downturn during years with Covid restrictions and a huge reduction in students on campus – especially international students.

The Cycle Project Manager now runs the scheme on behalf of RUSU which enables firsthand support for the hire bike and recycled sales schemes - fitting students and staff to appropriate bicycles, going over safety tips and information as well as providing basic riding training.

The volume and availability of hire bikes for 2022/23 expanded massively, and the scheme now requires considerable time and effort to administer. Based on prior years' success and overall benefits, resource / funding support is expected to continue in full momentum. As of the end of June 2023 there are now only twenty Raleigh hire bikes available from the original fleet of thirty-six acquired in 2018/19 with twelve stolen and four scrapped or used as parts due to amount of damage. Avanti Cycling and RBK have collectively supplied another twenty-four bikes which are now part of the available pool.

Table 2: Number of unicycle hires per year.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Number of Unicycle hires	11	48	20	12	26	60 (Including 24 bikes from Avanti / RBK and re-hires)

L. WEBSITE HITS

The following section refers to the number of people accessing/ viewing the Sustainability Services website (website hits). **Figure 8** illustrates the total number of website hits annually over the past five years. The number of website hits from 2018-19 had decreased year on year, however this year website hits are at their highest level to date (August 2022- July 2023). It should be noted that there was a technical issue with the website in 21-22 which meant that it stopped collecting hit data for a number of months which lead to the very low figures that year.

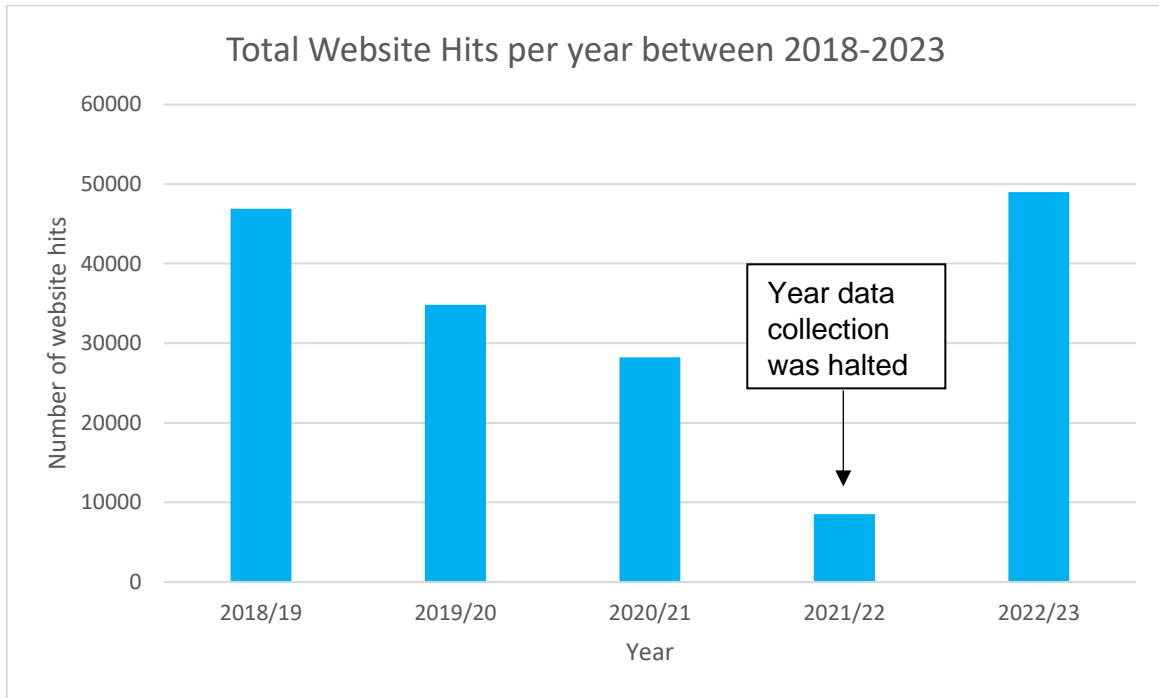


Figure 8 – Total website hits per year between 2018-2023

M. BUSINESS TRAVEL

For business travel discussion, see the monitoring of the University’s Carbon Management Programme.

3. COMPLETED TRAVEL PROJECTS

Project	Impact	Travel Plan budget cost
Contribution to new School of Art cycle shelters	Enhanced cycle parking for new building	£20,000
Design for Library cycle shelter upgrade	Improved cycle security	£5,820
Feasibility for installation of electric chargepoints at London Road	Expanded EV charging	£4,000
Feasibility for electric CoWheels car at London Road		
Total Spend		£29,820.00