

Annual Travel Monitoring Report 2024/25

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1. Introduction

This report sets out the travel related activities undertaken through the academic year 2023-24 (August 2024-July 2025) by the University of Reading's sustainability team, and particularly the Sustainable Travel Officer, appointed in September 2023.

2. Travel Plan

The University's current Travel Plan, covering the period 2024–2029, was published in July 2024 and has now been in active delivery for one year. The Plan sets out the University's commitments to supporting sustainable travel for staff, students, and visitors over the five-year period, and is available [here](#).

The Travel Plan supports Principle 3 of the University's 2020–2026 Strategic Plan ("play our part in tackling climate change and [be] recognised as a University that leads on global environmental sustainability"). It also forms a key element of our ISO14001 Environmental Management System, the Carbon Management Plan, and the wider sustainability vision.

Covering the University's three main UK campuses, the Plan addresses:

- Staff and student commuter travel;
- Business travel;
- University fleet and operational travel; and
- Visitors and deliveries (where travel can be managed or influenced).

The Travel Plan includes clear targets for increasing the percentage of journeys made by sustainable modes. These were developed using results from the most recent travel survey, alongside historic trends, available budgets, and realistic delivery timescales. The targets are supported by a set of objectives that reflect both the challenges and opportunities identified through our experience of travel at the University and through feedback from the last survey.

These objectives have been translated into a detailed Action Plan, setting out specific measures, timescales, responsibilities, and indicative costs. Over the past year, delivery has been actively progressed across a range of initiatives, from infrastructure upgrades to behavioural change campaigns, with measurable progress in some key target areas (see Section 4).

Delivery of the Travel Plan is coordinated by the Sustainable Travel Officer with input from colleagues across the University. Progress is reviewed and monitored through biennial travel surveys and ongoing performance tracking to assess the effectiveness of the measures implemented and to inform any necessary adjustments.

3. Travel Survey

The University conducts staff and student travel surveys on a biennial basis to monitor travel behaviours and inform the delivery of the Travel Plan. The most recent surveys were

undertaken in January 2024, with the next round scheduled for December 2025 to align with the closest two-year window.

Although no new survey data has been collected during the 2024/25 academic year, the January 2024 results remain the most up-to-date and continue to provide valuable context for monitoring progress and shaping interventions.

The aims of the travel surveys are to:

- Establish where staff and students live, how often they travel to campus, and at what times;
- Identify primary and secondary modes of travel used for commuting to and from campus;
- Understand the reasons behind mode choice, including factors outside the University's influence as well as areas where intervention may be possible;
- Gauge openness to changing travel modes and identify measures that would support such a switch;
- Explore views on potential future changes, such as switching to an electric vehicle; and
- Provide an open forum for further feedback on travel-related matters.

The January 2024 surveys were the first to be run separately for staff and students, allowing for tailored question design. Additional questions explored working-from-home patterns for staff, and start/end-of-term travel for students.

A total of 1,215 staff responses were received - the highest staff response rate since 2016 - and 503 student responses, the highest since 2018.

The upcoming December 2025 surveys will aim to achieve an even higher level of engagement, ensuring results are robust and representative. They will also be used to assess the effectiveness and awareness of the measures delivered through the Travel Plan so far, helping to confirm whether actions are suitable, realistic, and genuinely effective in influencing travel behaviours. Insights will directly inform future delivery, ensuring that interventions align with the real-world needs and preferences of the staff and students we aim to support in travelling more sustainably.

A full report detailing the 2024 travel survey results is available [here](#).

4. Usage Data for Travel Initiatives

This section provides an update on the use of the University's various travel initiatives over the period 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025. Where available, usage data has been compared to previous years to identify trends, including - where possible - some pre-COVID benchmarks for longer-term context.

As the 2024–2029 Travel Plan has now been active for a full year, this is the first annual usage dataset that reflects its delivery in practice. The data presented here helps to

assess the uptake, effectiveness, and awareness of the measures implemented so far, and will inform future actions and priorities under the Plan.

A. Staff HR Benefits

The University offers several salary sacrifice schemes and offers to encourage and support staff to use low or no-carbon modes of travel to work. Table 1 below shows how many participants use the schemes each year.

Scheme (all as of 31 July)	Cycle to Work	Bus To Work	Rail Season Ticket Loan
2018-2019	14	246	7
2019-2020	32	186	3
2020-2021	25	57	1
2021-2022	39	109	2
2022-2023	27	132	0
2023-2024	59	152	3
2024-2025	68	181	4

The above table demonstrates a reasonable increase in staff utilising the HR Travel benefits available to them. Significantly, this includes the 'Bus to Work' and the 'Cycle to Work' scheme. For both schemes, 2024-25 represents the highest level of utilisation since COVID-19. Whilst the rail season ticket loan also remains low, usage still represents an increase in comparison to the previous five academic years.

The university will continue to promote the above schemes to staff, to encourage low or 'no carbon' methods of travel to and from the university.

It is noted that the University previously ran a 'My Car' scheme which gave staff the opportunity to sacrifice a fixed amount of their monthly salary in exchange for a leased vehicle. The benefit was removed during the COVID-19 pandemic and has not since resumed. There is potential to explore similar schemes in the future, if there is demand to do so.

B. Bus Use

The University of Reading Whiteknights campus is served by a number of bus routes, providing staff and students with convenient, sustainable travel options. These include the Reading Buses 21 and 19 services, which have traditionally been the primary routes used

by the University community, as well as routes that pass near campus, including the Buzz 9, Lion 3, and the 17, which is within a five-minute walk of some main halls and provides a 24-hour service into the town centre. The 21 also routes down Kendrick Road, with a pedestrian route connecting to London Road Campus.

In September 2024, the University collaborated with Reading Buses to launch a new service, the White Knight (No. 20), replacing the 21a service. This non-stop service runs directly between Whiteknights Campus and the town centre every 15 minutes during term time, approximately from 07:30 to 23:30. Since its launch, the service has received positive feedback from staff and students, with high engagement and usage levels noted by Reading Buses. This new route has streamlined travel to the town centre and enhanced the attractiveness of public transport as a sustainable alternative to private car use.

Reading Buses continue to provide data on passenger numbers for the 21, 19 services, and now can include the 20 in their reports. Data is refined to focus on journeys originating or ending near Whiteknights campus to best reflect staff and student use.

Figure 1 demonstrates monthly usage across all services, demonstrating a significant peak in October for both the 20 and 21 services respectively.

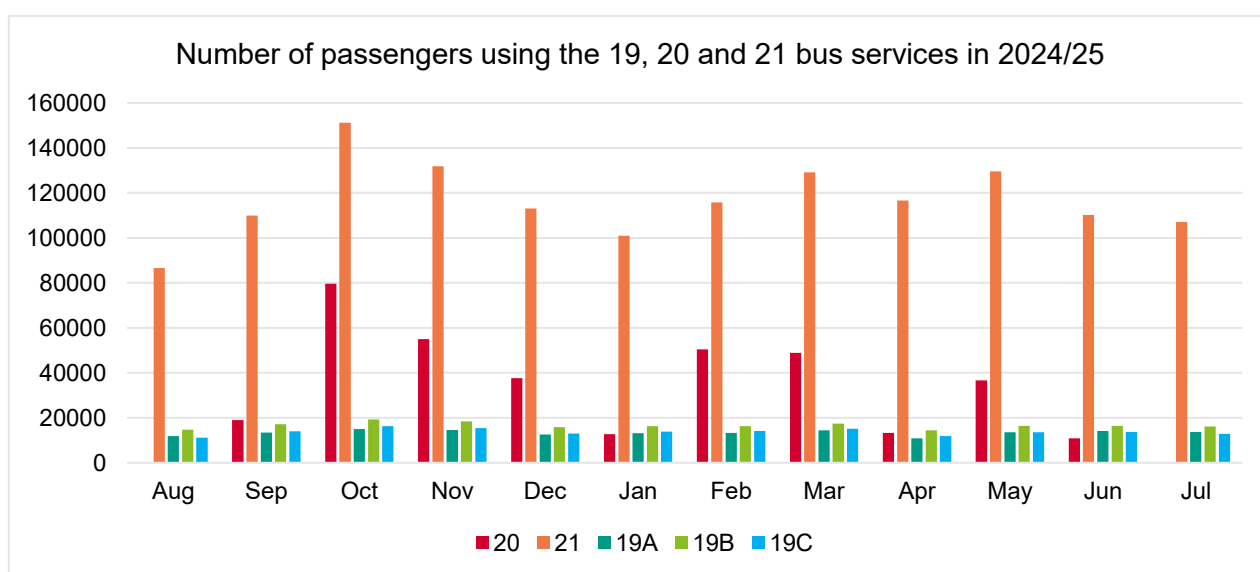


Figure 1 - Comparison of the total number of passengers using the 20, 21 & 19 bus services in 2024/25

Bus journeys on the 19 a/b/c routes (which services Earley Gate and Bridges Hall) have slightly decreased compared to the 2023/24 academic year (Figure 2). Overall, there were 524,639 journeys made on the services in 2024/25, compared to 553,062 in the previous year demonstrating a 5% decrease in usage. Since the Covid-19 pandemic however, this usage has increased by over 60%.

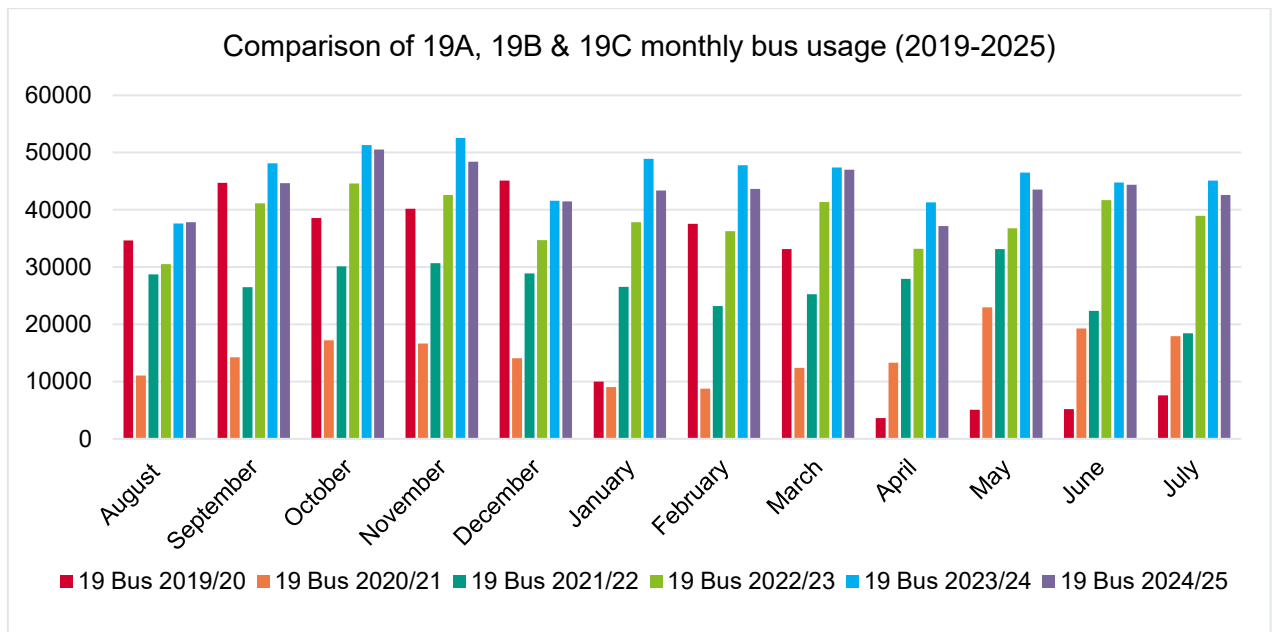


Figure 2 - Comparison of passengers using the 19 bus services by month (2019-2025)

There is a similar trend in data for the Claret 21 service (Figure 3). There were 1,402,136 journeys in the 2024/25 reporting period, a 14% decrease on the 1,622,156 journeys made in 2022/23 (though it is noted that the 21a has been discontinued, with the 20 acting as a replacement and monitored separately). The 21 service is utilised almost three times as much per year than the 19a, b & c services and utilisation levels are now exceeding pre COVID-19 levels.

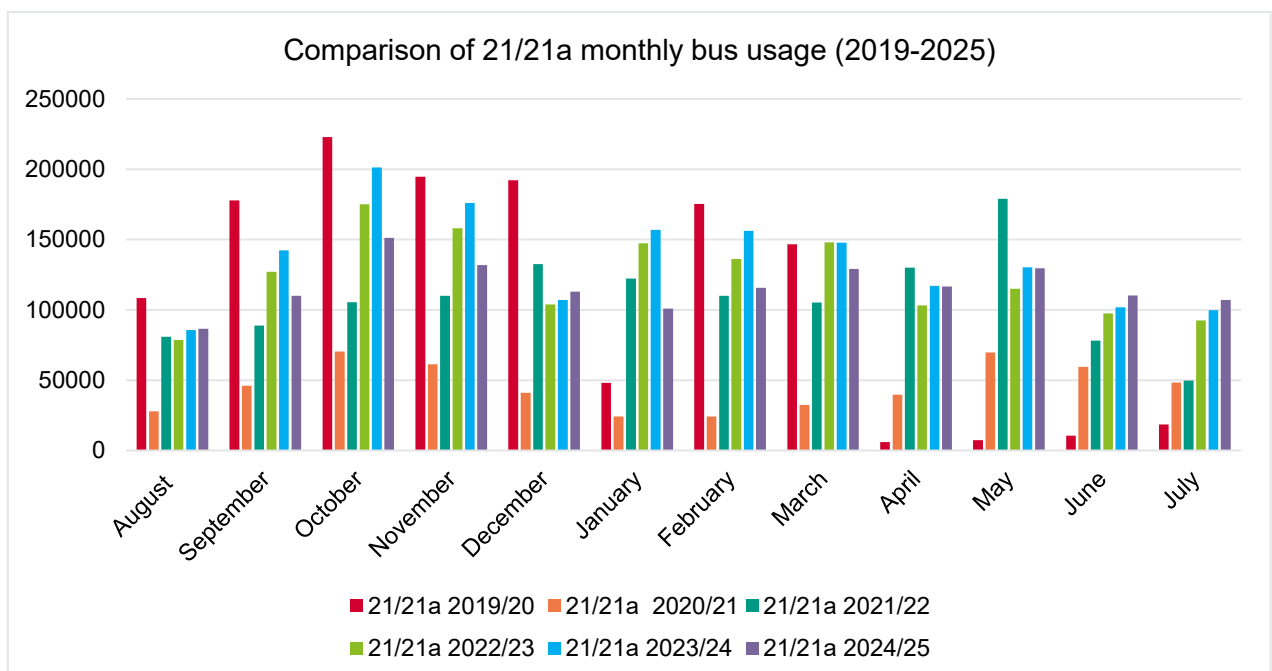


Figure 3 - Comparison of passengers using the 21/21A bus services by month (2019-2025)

The University has collaborated with Reading Buses to launch a new service which commenced operation in September 2024. The new service, the 'White Knight' (no.20) has demonstrated consistent usage during it's first active year, with a significant peak in

October (Figure 4). In future years, this report will be able to compare the usage of the 20 over time.

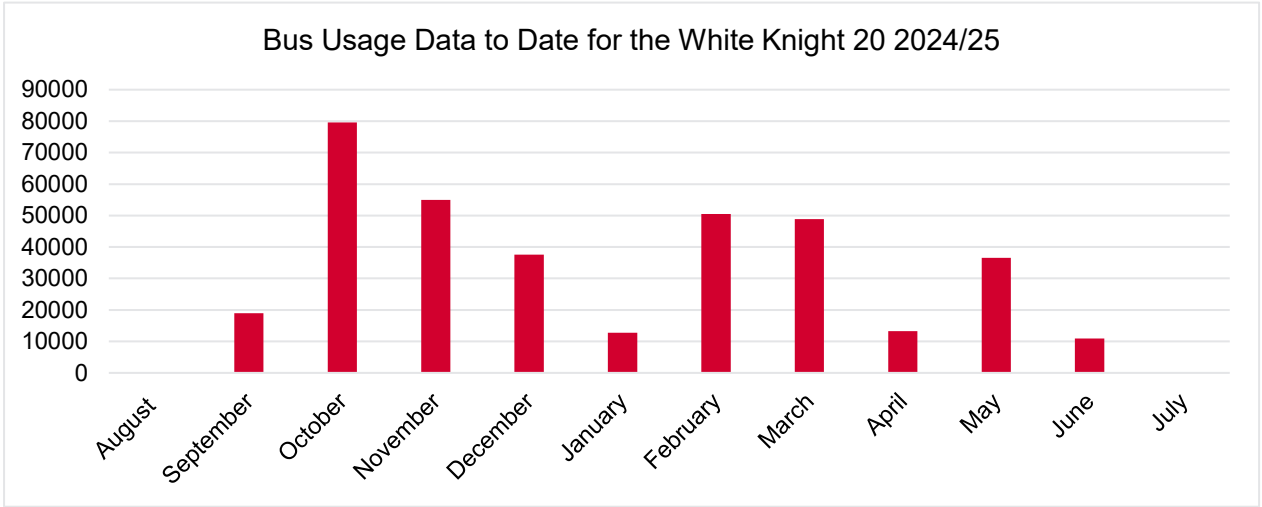


Figure 4 – Passenger usage on the 20 bus service by month since launch (2024-2025)

C. Park and Ride

The University offers free Park and Ride travel between MereOak Park & Ride (Junction 11 of the M4) and Whiteknights campus. The 300 Park & Ride service also travels beyond to Royal Berkshire Hospital, and so also serves the London Road campus.

The free service, launched in September 2022 has maintained it’s popularity, with 3776 trips made in the 2024/25 academic year, compared to 3782 trips during 2023/24. At the start of the year, the service was heavily promoted with blog posts and flyers, ensuring that staff and students were aware of it’s availability. It is noted that October 2024 presents a ‘peak,’ with the lowest monthly usage in July and August. The varied peaks and troughs in usage compared to previous years could also be attributed to the university moving to Semesters, as opposed to terms at the start of the academic year.

Figure 5 demonstrates Park & Ride uptake in comparison to previous academic years.

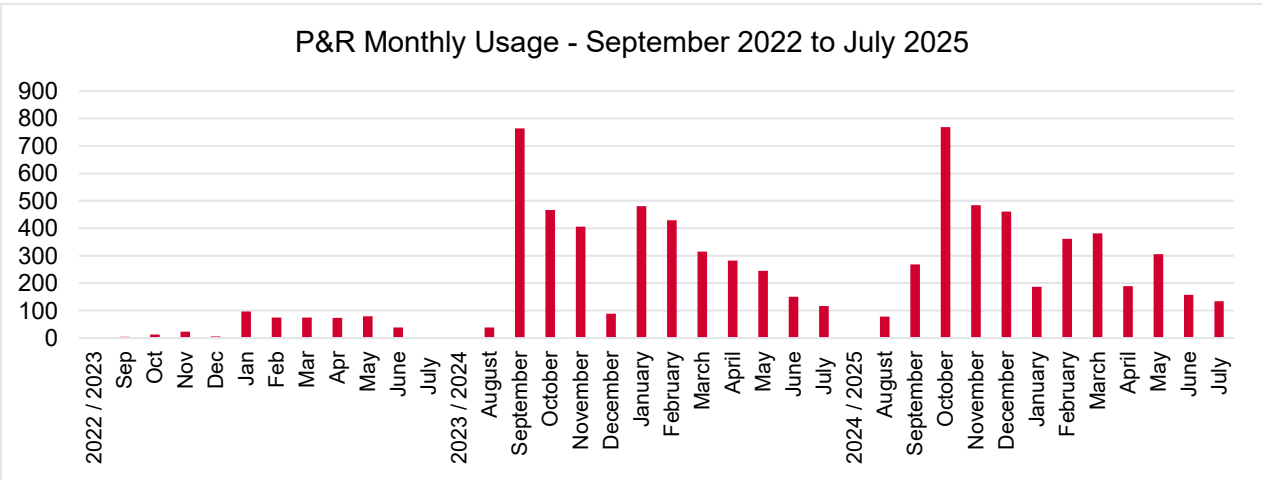


Figure 5 - Comparison of P&R usage by month (2012-2025) *Note: no data available for July 2023

The 2024 travel survey indicated that bringing the service onto campus would encourage further take up. This has been discussed with Reading Buses, but it is not currently viable to do so as the service heavily serves staff at Royal Berkshire Hospital (who have a similar offer in place for their staff). Re-routing the bus onto campus would increase journey time for these users.

Aside from the MereOak offer, discussions are ongoing surrounding the potential introduction of a Park & Ride service operating between Reading East (Thames Valley Park) and the university. As of September 2025, this has been approved and implementation will occur during the upcoming academic year.

D. Great Western Rail Discount

Sustainability Services began working with Great Western Railway (GWR) in 2022 to develop incentives to encourage greater use of train services among the University community. GWR created a dedicated booking portal enabling visitors attending Open Days, Visit Days, and Graduation ceremonies to access a 20% discount on advance fares. This discount can also be combined with a Young Persons Railcard, enabling eligible travellers to save up to 50% on fares.

During the 2024/25 period, the portal was used 33 times, with a total of 85 discounted fares purchased - a substantial increase from the 6 uses recorded in 2023/24, and slightly above the 32 uses recorded in 2022/23. This improvement reflects increased and more targeted promotion of the scheme during the year.

In addition to existing events, 2024/25 also saw the introduction of a new discount offer for Offer Holder Days, providing another incentive for prospective students to travel sustainably. Looking ahead, the University will monitor the uptake of this and other discounts and explore opportunities to negotiate similar offers for additional key events where suitable. This approach aims to both broaden the reach of the scheme and further embed rail travel as a convenient and cost-effective option for University-related journeys.

E. Co-Wheels Car Club

There are currently two Co-Wheels Car Club cars available for hire on-site at the University; one at Dunsden Crescent (Car 1) and one at St. Patricks Halls (Car 2). The cars are available to be booked for a small charge, reducing the number of people bringing their own car to campus.

Figure 6 shows the number of bookings made for both cars since 2021/22.

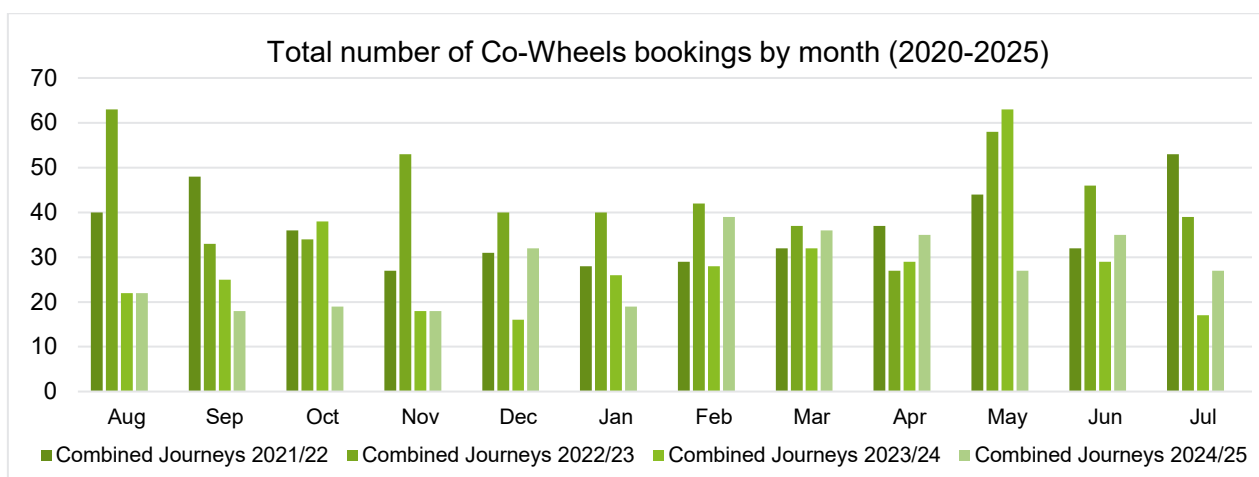


Figure 6 – Car Club utilisation between 2021 and 2025

Figure 6 shows that the utilisation rate (percentage of the total time that each car is in use) of both cars combined during 2023-2024 was the highest during February, March and April. Higher utilisation in these months could primarily relate to promotions that ran during that semester, including the launch of a video tutorial, blog posts and direct dissemination of information through Staff Talks.

Throughout 2024-2025, the usage rate for Car 1 (Dunsden Crescent) was 19.96%, a decrease from the 2023-2024 usage rate of 20.47%. Similarly, the usage rate for Car 2 (St Patricks Hall) decreased from 14.05% to 11.33% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Whilst overall usage has decreased in comparison to previous years, it is noted that certain months demonstrate a significant increase in usage, particularly for Car 1 during May and June (this is consistent with the aforementioned “highest use” months).

There are currently plans to introduce a further Co-Wheels car club vehicle; at the London Road campus. It is proposed that the vehicle will be electric, in line with the wider aspiration goals to appropriately provide further electric vehicle infrastructure. There is also opportunity to further promote the car club scheme throughout the year, to create a more consistent increase in usage, and reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles that are driven onto campus.

There is also the potential to move the existing vehicles to a more attractive or accessible location on campus, to increase visibility of the cars and improve awareness of the Car Club as a viable alternative to the private car.

F. Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs)

2024/25 saw significant progress in expanding and improving the University’s electric vehicle (EV) charging provision. As part of the Five-Year Travel Plan, a significant infrastructure project was delivered in Summer 2025 to both expand capacity and consolidate all chargers under a single provider, Amp EV.

The project included the installation of new public chargers at Whiteknights Car Park 1A and London Road Campus, and the replacement of the existing chargers at the SportsPark and Greenlands with upgraded units. All public chargers are now operated

through Amp EV, offering a more reliable and consistent service. Users can access the chargers via the Amp EV app or by scanning the QR codes displayed on each unit. It is expected that additional chargers will be commissioned in Whiteknights Car Parks 6 and 7 in October 2025, further expanding capacity.

This expansion directly responds to feedback received in the January 2024 Staff and Student Travel Survey, which highlighted limited EV charging provision as a key barrier to EV adoption on campus. It also reflects the consistently increasing trend in charger usage over recent years, with demand remaining high even outside of term time. Together, this feedback and usage data demonstrated a clear need to expand capacity and improve reliability. The upgrades aim to make low-emission travel easier and more accessible for staff, students, and visitors.

Figure 7 shows the total number of recharges across all public EVCPs since 2018/19, illustrating year-on-year growth.

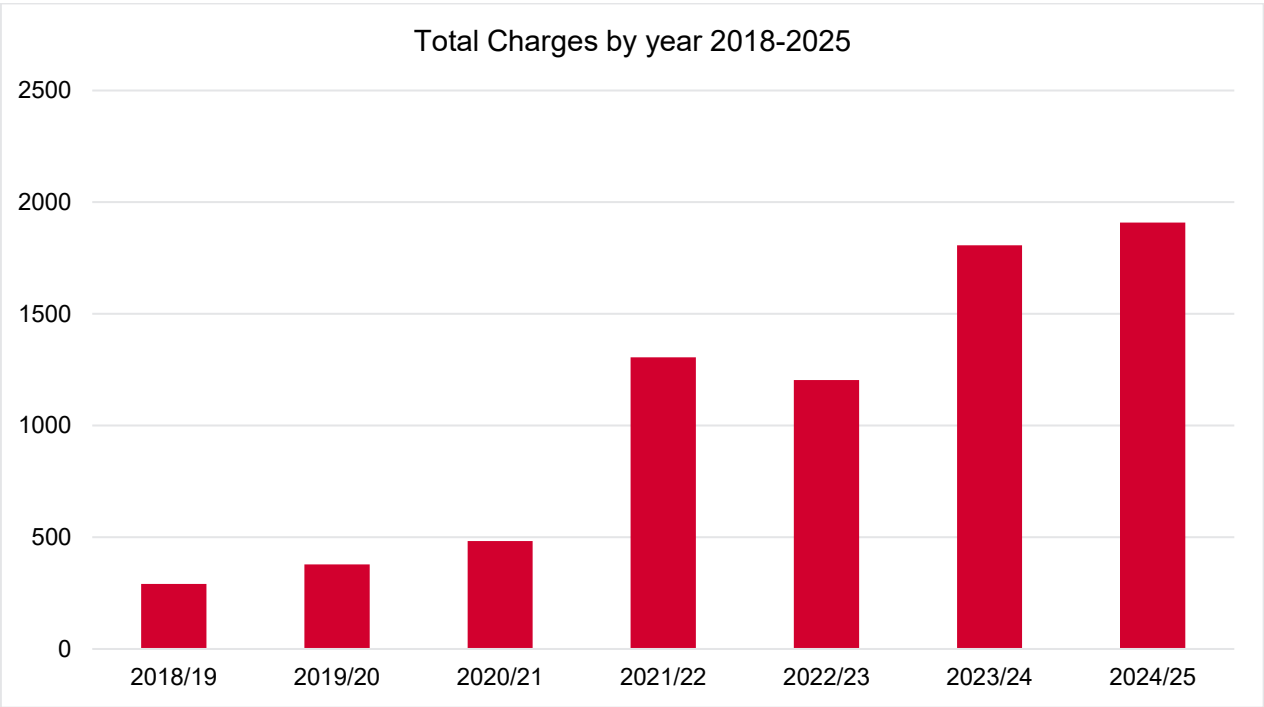


Figure 7 – Total number of recharges at all 3 EVCPs, by academic year (August – July) 2018 to 2025

The total number of recharges in 2023/24 from all sites was 1909, an increase from 1807 recharges in 2023/24. With the introduction of several new charging sites across three campuses in Summer 2025, it is expected for this trend to continue into 2025/26.

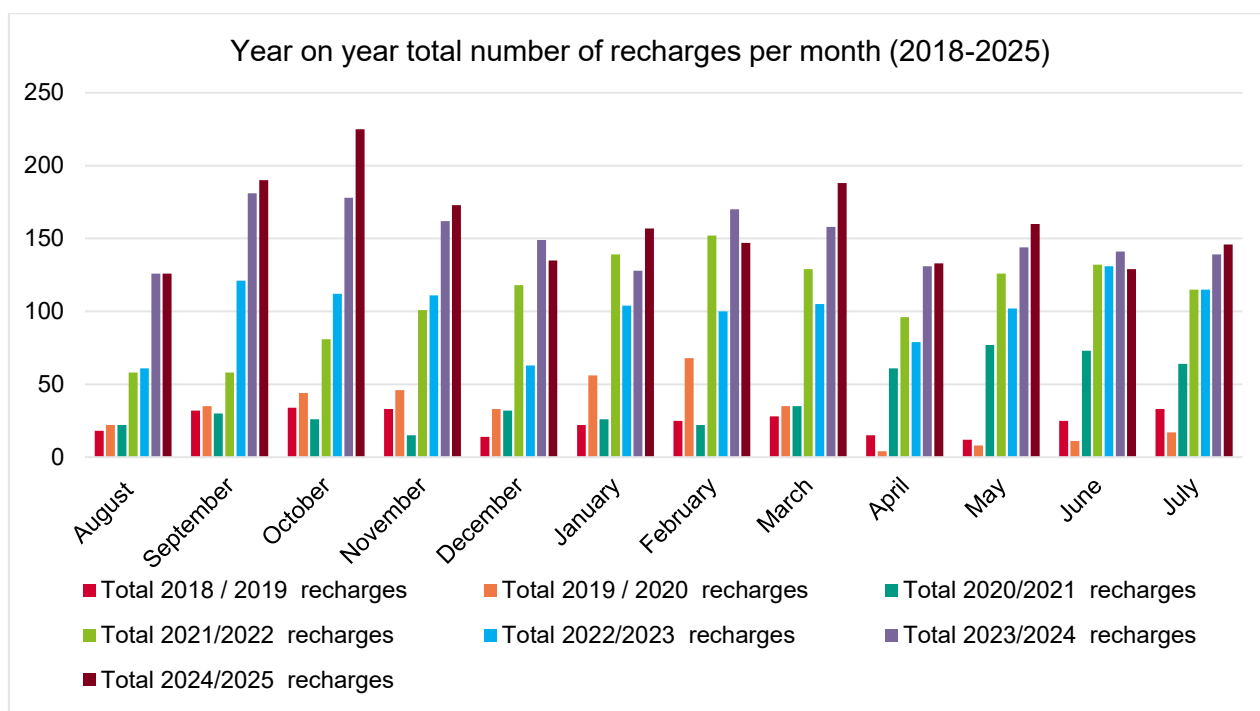


Figure 8 – Combined total monthly recharges at all EVCPs between 2018/19-2024/25

The comparison between the monthly data for the past two academic years and the previous years (Figure 8) 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, though significant peaks during September and October also indicate high usage at the start of the year. It is noted that the usage in June / July may be lower than expected due to construction and the changeover to a new EV provider.

G. Other Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs)

The University also operates a network of EVCPs for its fleet and operational vehicles. In 2024/25, this infrastructure was upgraded and partially expanded as part of the EV expansion project, with work commencing and new units going live in June and July 2025. Fleet charging points are now located at:

The University also operates a network of EVCPs for its fleet and operational vehicles. In 2024/25, this infrastructure was upgraded and partially expanded as part of the EV expansion project, with work commencing and new units going live in June and July 2025. Fleet charging points are now located at:

- Car Park 5 (for Campus Services vehicles)
- Estates Compound (for Estates maintenance vehicles)
- RSU Yard (for Catering vehicles)
- Security Car Park

Fleet and operational vehicles continue to access these chargers via RFID cards, ensuring reliable provision for University operations.

As the original fleet vehicle charge points were installed by individual Schools and Directorates, they have historically been managed by various providers and Sustainability Services did not receive usage data from these sites. The transition to a single provider under the 2025 expansion project represents a significant step towards improved management and monitoring of this network. However, as some fleet chargers were still under construction during the summer of 2025 and into the start of the 2025/26 academic year, usage data has not been included in this report. A full year's dataset is expected to be available for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Sustainability Report, providing a more comprehensive picture of fleet EVCP utilisation across the University.

H. Easit Discount Card

The Easit network provides travel-related discounts, which are available by registering online and purchasing an Easit card at a cost of £5.90 per year (2024 pricing). The Easit card allows access to a range of benefits and discounts including (but not limited to):

- Discounts and rail season tickets
- Access to easitSHARE
- Taster tickets for Arriva and Reading Buses
- Savings and driving credit with Enterprise Car Club
- Free Co-wheels Car Club membership
- Discounts with Halfords, Hovertravel, EcoMove, Chargebase, and more
- Brompton Bike Hire and other cycle loan discounts
- Free Co-wheels Car Club membership
- Access to information on walking and cycling routes

Figure 9 demonstrates the usage of Easit since 2015.

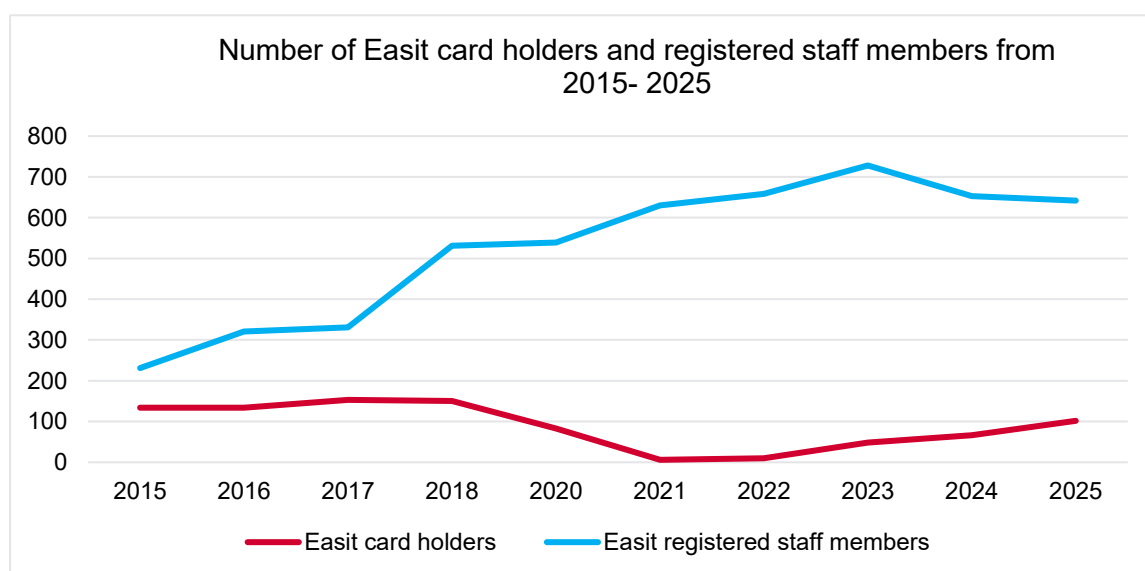


Figure 9 – Recorded Easit usage between 2015 and 2025

There has been an increase in the number of Easit card holders, with 102 University affiliated members as of 31/07/25, compared to just 66 card holders between 2023/24. There are also 35 members of staff registered on the EasitSHARE scheme, which is a

service that allows car sharing journeys to university affiliated sites – this is a slight decrease from the 37 registered staff during 2023/24. Overall however, there has been a 2% decrease in Easit registered members, with 642 in 2024/25, and 653 in 2023/24.

As a result, though there has been a reduction in registered Easit members, there has been a positive increase in the number of users that are active card holders, and further promotions will be launched in the new academic year to increase awareness of the scheme.

I. Cycle Safety Project Overview

The 2024/25 academic year has been a significant success for the University's cycle safety and active travel initiatives, with high levels of participation across all activities. The full return to campus-based study for students, combined with increased staff attendance on site, has contributed to a strong uptake in training sessions, maintenance events, and hire schemes.

All activities to support and encourage cycling have been delivered throughout the year by the University's contracted cycle training provider, Avanti Cycling, with additional ad-hoc summer bike hires and training sessions provided for new starters, international students, and postgraduates.

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

- Cycle skills sessions
- Dr Bike safety checks and basic repairs
- Reading Bicycle Kitchen (RBK) maintenance pop-ups
- The "Unicycle" hire bike scheme
- Management of on-campus bike recycling and resale (with support from RBK)

Participation has remained strong, with good levels of engagement and attendance at all activities. The continuation of an increased number of events has helped minimise queues and provide additional flexibility, with many 1:1 and small-group sessions (1:3) offered to accommodate participants' schedules.

Cycle Skills and Training Sessions

Between September 2024 and June 2025, more than 60 training sessions were held, with additional sessions planned for the summer holiday period. These sessions supported 42 individual participants, most of whom attended an average of two sessions, although some complete beginners required four or more before progressing confidently.

Participants included a mix of staff and students, some of whom already cycled but wished to improve their road confidence or learn UK Highway Code rules. Others were looking to refresh skills such as signalling or gear use, and many were complete beginners learning to ride for the first time. Several out-of-hours 1:1 sessions were also delivered to fit around work and teaching commitments.

Breakdown of sessions delivered in 2024/25:

- 14 Road Confidence / Commuting Techniques sessions (mostly in the first term)

- 24 Back on Bike / “Rusty Rider” sessions
- 22 Learn to Ride / Basic Beginners’ sessions

More than 20 students and staff took part in Learn to Ride lessons, with the majority being women who had not previously had the opportunity to learn as children. Participants typically required three to four sessions before progressing from basic balance skills to cycling confidently on paths and then roads — the ideal outcome of the programme. It is encouraging that many participants successfully moved through all levels of training and are now cycling regularly for study, work, and leisure.

Factors that contributed to this year’s success include:

- The tailored design of sessions to meet individual experience levels
- Flexible scheduling, including evening and out-of-term availability
- Weekly Dr Bike events, where training opportunities were actively promoted
- The integration of cycle training with the Unicycle bike hire and resale schemes
- Ongoing communication and promotion through social media and internal channels

Dr Bike free maintenance checks and repairs

The University continued to invest in weekly Dr Bike sessions, delivered by two Cytech-qualified mechanics from Avanti Cycling. These events provide free safety checks, basic maintenance, and advice, with parts such as brakes, chains, and tyres supplied at cost when replacements are needed.

Sessions frequently overran to meet demand and ensure that staff and students could access safe, roadworthy bicycles, including in cases where urgent repairs were needed. There are plans to explore hosting events at other University sites in 2025/26, including London Road and the Thames Valley Science Park.

Sessions consistently attracted good attendance, with 12–18 participants per session and a peak of 26 attendees at a large “On Your Bike” event supported by Reading Bicycle Kitchen (RBK). Across the year, 36 sessions were delivered, engaging more than 200 participants (many attending multiple times).

Reading Bike Kitchen (RBK)

We also welcomed RBK back onto campus with experienced mechanics and volunteers delivering six ‘pop-ups’ providing safety checks and advice. These were for basic repairs but with more of an emphasis on giving people guidance and support to help maintain their own bike and additional time. 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.

It is worth noting however, that there the University is currently delivering several new 'secure cycle shelters' across Whiteknights Campus, including upgrades to the store located at the library (this has now completed, with two new sites under construction at the start of the new academic year in 2025/26). The upgraded cycle store at the library has replaced the broken cycle repair stand that was located in the old shelter.

Cycle Events

Engagement with Avanti Cycling from early August 2024 enabled a full programme of pre-term and Welcome Week activities, plus "On Your Bike" days in October, January, and April.

Highlights included:

- Green Festival (November 2024): featured "Light Up" cycle safety promotions, repair events, and recycling activities. Security were in attendance at several of these events to sell subsidised cycle locks, and undertake free tagging of cycles.
- Upcoming plans for 2025/26: include the popular Cycle to Work Day in September, expanded participation in RUSU Welcome Week events, and a larger October On Your Bike Day promoting safety, security, bike sales, and leisure rides.

Recycling abandoned bikes remains a core part of the project, with RBK and the project manager ensuring bikes and parts are reused wherever possible. Around 50 recycled bikes were sold during 2024/25, with some high-quality bikes added to the Unicycle hire fleet.

Unicycle Bike Hire

Demand for the Unicycle bike hire scheme remained very high, with all bikes taken out in the first week of term and a waiting list in place. Avanti Cycling and RBK supplied additional bikes to meet this demand.

The hire fee (£40 per term or £80 per year) includes lights and a D-lock, with a small deposit required. All hirers undergo a cycle safety assessment with a qualified Avanti Cycling instructor, and additional training is available when needed.

As of June 2025, 20 Raleigh hire bikes remain in the fleet, supplemented by 20 additional bikes provided by Avanti Cycling and RBK. Around 50 hires were recorded during the year, with many participants extending their hire for multiple terms — a particularly useful option for visiting staff and students.

The scheme continues to require significant administration and resource but remains a key part of the University’s sustainable travel offer.

Year	Number Of Unicycle Hires
2017-2018	11
2018-2019	48
2019-2020	20
2020-2021	12
2021-2022	26
2022-2023	60 (including 24 bikes from Avanti/RBK and re-hires)
2023-2024	48 (including re-hires)
2024-2025	50

5. Business Travel

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

Version control

Version	Keeper	Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date
2.0	Sustainability	Annually	Head of Sustainability	September 2025