

Sustainable Transport

All Eco n'Home participants were provided with advice about reducing their dependency on the car, and about practical alternatives.

This abstract highlights some of this advice and gives examples about transport initiatives in each of the partner areas.

Walking and cycling

Walking and cycling are an excellent way to get fit and stay active. Ideally, to keep our hearts healthy, we should aim to use 2000 Kcal a week through physical activity. If you walk 1 mile you will burn, depending on your weight, between 70-100 Kcal.

The health benefits of walking and cycling include:

- Higher energy levels
- Higher stamina levels
- Reduced stress levels
- Decreased levels of illness
- Improved feeling of well-being

Walking or cycling to the shops or to work will allow you to get some exercise, while helping to reduce your carbon footprint. Many cities have plenty of flat, attractive walking and cycling routes and provide maps and useful information.

Public Transport

Encouraging use of public transport is seen as a vital way of reducing dependency on the private car. Here are some examples from the project partners:

Bus use in Leicester is growing and many routes benefit from top of the range vehicles, modern shelters, level access kerbs and dedicated priority routes that can make bus journeys almost as fast as car journeys in the urban area and less stressful.

Turin's new underground system transports up to 24,000 passengers per hour, resulting in a considerable reduction in private car use.

Eco n'Home is a 3-year project taking place under the SAVE field of the European Commission's "Intelligent Energy Europe" programme.

Project partners are from France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.

Aim: reduce energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions in a minimum of 1000 households. Target reduction of 10 to 20% in energy per household followed and 1 tonne in emissions, (*half of which to come from transport*)

Reducing the Impact of the Car

1. Car share

Car share schemes promote the use of privately owned vehicles more sustainably. There are many benefits to the users of the scheme including financial savings, opportunities for social interaction, improved social inclusion for access to jobs and benefits to the local and global environment. In Leicester, Leicestershare.com was launched in 2007 and is available for all businesses and residents of Leicestershire.

[Insert more examples from partner areas]

2. Eco-driving

By driving more efficiently (or “eco-driving”), emissions and fuel consumption can be reduced by up to 25%.

Eco –driving recommendations:

Don't leave the engine idling for a long time before driving away.
Journeys of less than two miles create up to 60% more pollution than longer journeys (this is because cold engines are less effective).
Generally speaking, engines are more 'eco-friendly' when driven between 40 and 60 MPH (road conditions and speed limits permitting). Higher speeds produce more emissions, greater tyre wear and increased fuel consumption.
Regular servicing and maintenance reduces emissions.
Switch your engine off if you are in a long queue, as it takes less energy to restart your engine than to leave it idling for ten seconds or longer.
Correctly inflated tyres make a vehicle safer – and can also reduce gas emissions by up to 5%.
Carrying unnecessary loads in the boot or on the roof increases fuel consumption, leading to reduced efficiency and higher fuel bills.
Hard acceleration, excessive braking and aggressive driving all use more fuel – as well as being potentially dangerous.
40% of UK trips last less than three miles and catalytic converters take up to six miles to become effective. This means that a huge number of journeys are inefficient in terms of energy use. Locally run schemes such as Park & Ride help to reduce excessive fuel usage and emissions - and mean you don't have to pay parking fees in congested urban areas.
Plan your journey ahead to reduce unnecessary mileage. Think about joining a car sharing scheme, or link car journeys together, rather than take a number of smaller trips.

Further information is available on the project website: www.econhome.net.