GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

YOUR BUSINESS. OUR ENVIRONMENT

The Galleries Shopping Centre
Washington

January 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Green Travel Plan for The Galleries Shopping Centre. The overall objective of the plan is to seek to ensure that staff and visitors use more environmentally friendly alternatives than driving alone.

The plan contains five specific objectives:

- Objective 1: Increase awareness of the travel plan to both visitors and staff of The Galleries.
- Objective 2: Work with local transport providers to improve the provision of public transport to and from the Shopping Centre.
- Objective 3: Manage vehicle use at the site.
- Objective 4: Continue to enhance facilities and infrastructure for cycling and walking to and from the site.
- Objective 5: Monitor the effectiveness of the travel plan.

The travel plan covers journeys made by both staff and visitors travelling to and from the Shopping Centre.

What are the benefits of a green travel plan?

Corporate responsibility: The plan aims to make changes to the way staff and visitors travel to and from the centre. This can result in a better local environment for pedestrians and cyclists; result in cleaner air and less congested local streets.

Positive publicity: Producing a travel plan and generating positive publicity could improve The Galleries environmental image.

Increased travel choice: A wider range of travel options, savings and benefits may enhance the recruitment and retention of staff working at the centre. The plan may lead to greater social inclusion enabling those who do not have access to a car to travel to the centre more easily.

Health benefits: Many alternative forms of travel include an element of exercise that could lead to a healthier workforce, possibly leading to improved morale and a reduction of health related absences.

A more accessible site: Improving accessibility to the site for those individuals without access to a car as well as a decrease in the number of cars arriving at the centre used by staff. This should assist in easing congestion both at the site itself and on the approach roads to the centre. The centre will become more accessible and safer for all staff and visitors.

Financial savings: A travel plan can provide individual cost savings and benefits for travellers.

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NATIONAL AND LOCAL TRANSPORT POLICY

The Green Travel Plan for The Galleries has been written within the context and appreciation of both national and local policy in relation to sustainable travel, as outlined below.

National Policy

The original stimulus for the consideration of greener travel originated from the White Paper produced by the Commission of the European Communities entitled 'European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide' (September 2001). This document detailed commitments to reducing congestion and pollution by encouraging travel by modes other than car.

In 2008 the Department of Transport (DfT) published a report 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System' which laid out national goals; specifically to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2011 a further White Paper was presented 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen', with the focus on taking action to deliver sustainable forms of transport at a local level and coincided with the launch of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. A key statement in the paper is that around two out of every three trips we make are less than 5 miles in length, many of which could be easily cycled, walked or undertaken by public transport.

Local Policy

The five local authorities within Tyne and Wear (Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland) plus Nexus, the local Passenger Transport Executive have collaborated to produce the plan 'Keep Tyne and Wear Moving, LTP 3: The Third Local Transport Plan for Tyne and Wear, Strategy 2011 – 2021 (March 2011)'.

The overall vision for transport in Tyne and Wear is to 'have a fully integrated and sustainable transport network, allowing everyone the opportunity to achieve their full potential and have a high quality of life.' That the 'strategic networks will support the efficient movement of people and goods within and beyond Tyne and Wear and a comprehensive network of pedestrian, cycle and passenger transport links will ensure that everyone has access to employment, training, community services and facilities.

The 'Vision' has subsequently been presented as five main objectives, which mirror those in the 2008 Draft report and include:

1 To support the economic development, regeneration and competiveness of Tyne and Wear, improving the efficiency, reliability and integration of transport networks across all modes.
2 To reduce carbon emissions produced by local transport movements and to strengthen our networks against the effects of climate change and extreme weather events.
3 To contribute to healthier and safer communities in Tyne and Wear, with higher levels of physical activity and personal security.
4 To create a fairer Tyne and Wear, providing everyone with the opportunity to achieve full potential and access a wide range of employment, training, facilities and services.

5 To protect, preserve and enhance our natural and built environments, improving quality of life and creating high quality public places.

Further information on LPT3 can be found at www.tyneandwearltp.gov.uk

SITE DETAILS

Background

The Galleries Shopping Centre is a 66.4 acre development forming a significant part of Washington's town centre. Comprising 550,000 sq ft Shopping Centre and 158,000 sq ft Retail Park, there are in excess of 150 shops within The Galleries and at the Retail Park. As the centre acts as a focal point for the local community a number of banks, building societies, estate agents and housing schemes also have a presence. A site plan providing an overview of the centre is provided in Figure 1.

The centre was constructed in 1974, with Sainsbury's and Asda retail space added in 1978. Refurbishment works were completed in 1993, with further improvements made in 2008 which included the provision of a new bus station and extension to the existing adjacent Retail Park. Since 2009 additional works have included new entrances and improvement works to the atrium.

In addition to the retail space, a number of local services are located in the immediate vicinity of the Shopping Centre these include; a leisure centre, health centre, library and police station, AMF bowling, KFC, Frankie & Benny's and Gala Bingo.

Opening Hours

The opening hours of the Shopping Centre are as follows:

Monday to Friday	9:00 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday	9:00 am to 5:30 pm
Sunday	10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Bank Holidays	10:00 am to 4:00 pm

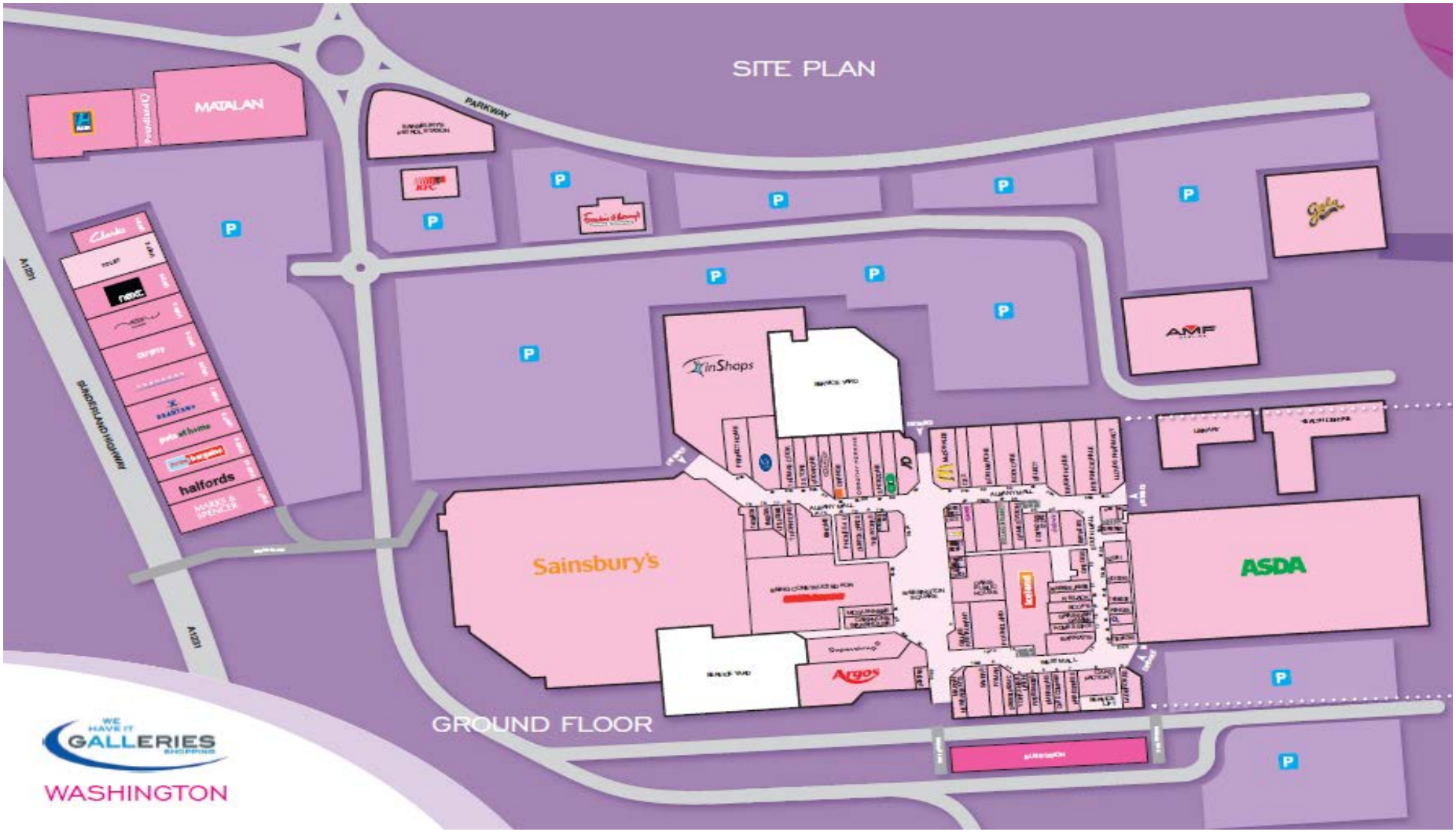
Footfall

The estimated annual footfall at The Galleries Shopping Centre is approximately 14 million per annum.

Employees

Approximately 2,000 people are employed at the Shopping Centre, a mix of full and part time personnel, with a slight increase in staff numbers during the Christmas period.

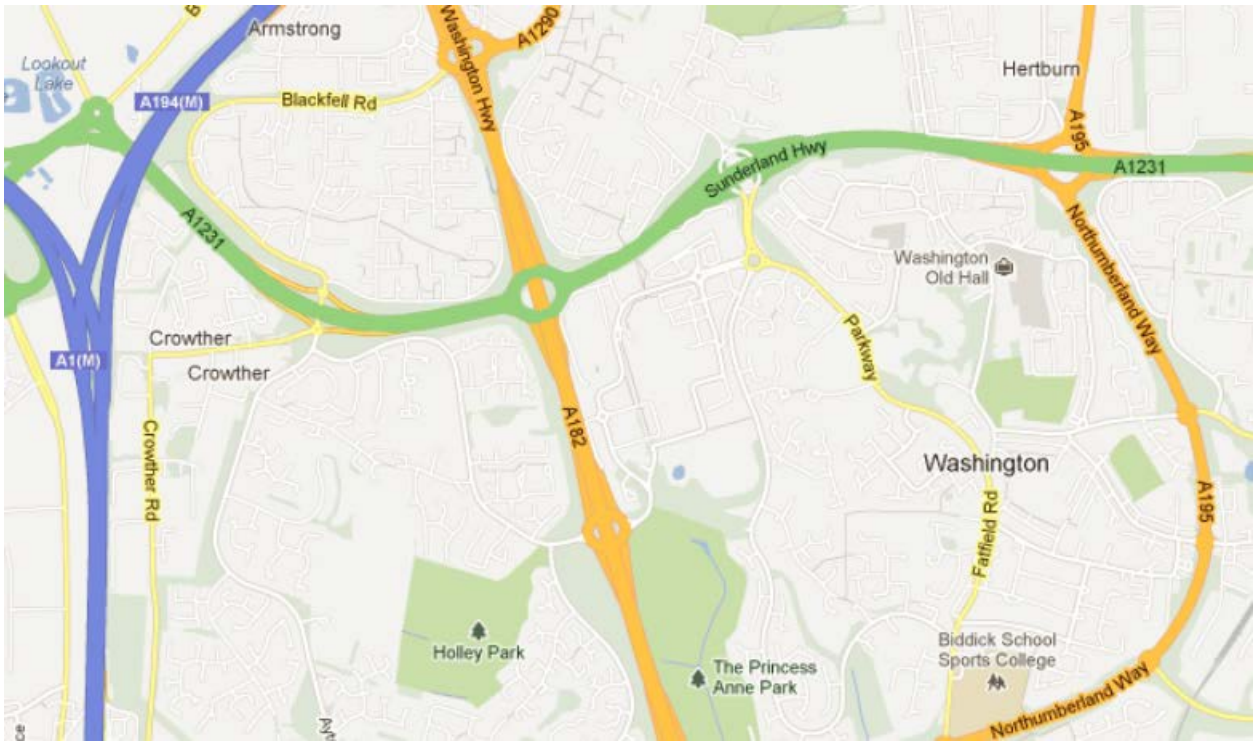
Figure 1


SITE PLAN
MATALAN
PARKWAY
A1231
SUNDERLAND HIGHWAY
A1231
halfords
MARKS & SPENCER
inShops
Sainsbury's
ASDA
Argos
AMF
GROUND FLOOR
WE HAVE IT
GALLERIES
SHOPPING
WASHINGTON

Location

The Galleries is located in the Washington town centre, see Figure 2 below. The site is bounded by Sunderland Highway (A1231) to the north beyond which is the Albany residential area. Washington Highway (A182) runs along the west of the site, beyond which are the Oxclose and Lambton residential areas. Princess Ann Park is to the south and the Glebe residential area is present to the east.

Figure 2



IMPLEMENTATION

The travel plan is owned by CBRE the management company of The Galleries Shopping Centre. However, in order for the travel plan to be effective the on-site centre management is required to oversee and implement the actions derived from this document. Centre management roles include:

- Acting as a central contact for the travel plan to both internal and external interested parties, providing information on transport related subjects.
- Day to day management of the travel plan ensuring actions within this document are worked towards and implemented.
- Facilitating regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the travel plan.

OBJECTIVES

As part of The Galleries commitment to reduce its environmental impact due to travel, five specific objectives have been drawn up.

Objective 1: Increase awareness of the travel plan to both visitors and staff of The Galleries.

The travel plan and subsequent measures implemented as a consequence of its development must be communicated effectively to both staff and visitors to maximise its effectiveness. Shopping Centre management will explore new and innovative means of communication and awareness raising techniques of the travel plan, its objectives and sustainable transport options at the site to facilitate this objective.

Objective 2: Work with local transport providers to improve the provision of public transport to and from the Shopping Centre.

The Galleries centre management will continue to work with the local transport providers, e.g. Go Northeast, to assess the provision of public transport options at the centre. By ensuring that public transport is meeting the needs of both staff and visitor could help to both improve employment retention rates and visitor satisfaction, for those who do not have access to a private vehicle.

Objective 3: Manage vehicle use at the site.

Recent surveys at The Galleries have demonstrated that car use is the most popular form of transport for both staff and visitor travel to and from the site. To help reduce congestion on the local road network and reduce the centres impact on the environment, the travel plan will help to develop a strategy to reduce car use. A 2010 travel survey identified that around 68% of staff at the Shopping Centre travelled less than 4 miles to reach the Galleries. Therefore in addition to managing car use the plan will promote more sustainable forms of transport to staff, to ensure parking spaces are available for visitors.

Objective 4: Continue to enhance facilities and infrastructure for cycling and walking to and from the site.

Centre management at The Galleries will continue to assess the adequacy of walking and cycling facilities to the centre. Improvements to any associated infrastructure will be made as and when required to benefit both visitor and staff.

Objective 5: Monitor the effectiveness of the travel plan.

The measures implemented by requirements of the action plan, of this Green Travel Plan, need to be monitored at regular intervals. This is required to demonstrate progress made in the objectives, identify lessons learned and to ensure that the plan evolves to meet the future needs of the site.

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SITE AUDIT

In recent years The Galleries has implemented many improvements to increase the accessibility of the site through sustainable means. A recent survey carried out at the centre identified that since 2009 visitor numbers arriving by car have reduced, with an increased proportion arriving by bicycle/foot in the same time period. The current transport infrastructure and recent improvements are detailed here.

Public Transport

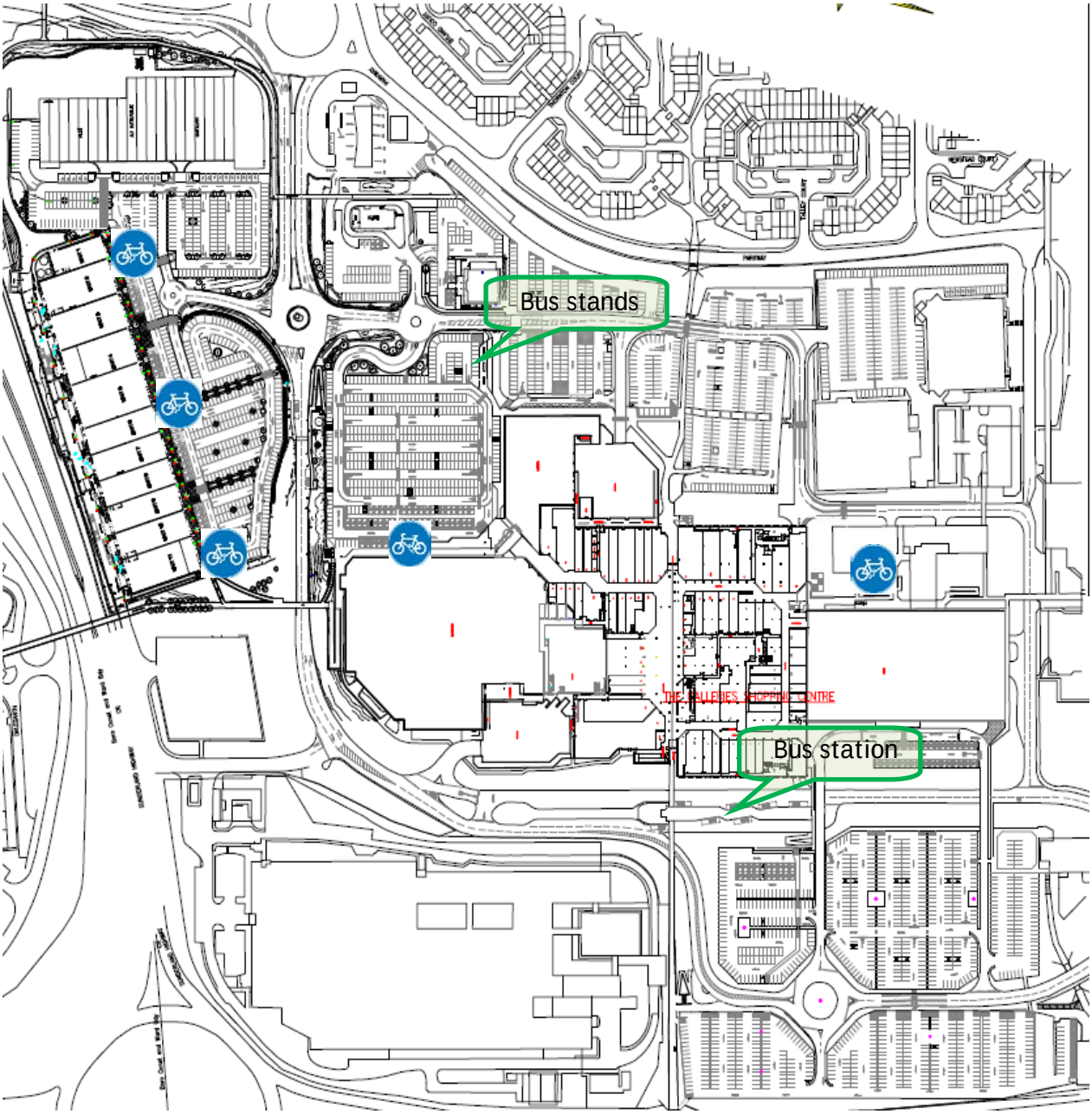
Bus

The Galleries has its own bus station, accessed by lift, escalator and stair from the elevated walkways leading directly from centre entrances. The bus station was extensively refurbished in 2008 and is a well-lit, fully enclosed area, comprising six stands. Electronic messaging boards have been installed displaying real time arrival and departure times of buses. A second set of three bus stands is present in the northeast of the site, situated near to Sainsbury's and the Retail Park, indicated in the site plan provided in Figure 3.

Within the main bus station the local travel company Go Northeast operates a travel shop, open 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday and 8:30 am to 2:00 pm on Saturdays. The travel company also has a website which can be accessed at www.simplygo.com. In addition the travel company has launched a free phone application 'the key mobile' for iPhone and android smartphones (more information can be found at www.simplygo.com/thekeymobile). The app allows the purchase of some bus tickets online, provides live travel information, allows the download of the bus routes on Google Maps and provides live help through Facebook or private web chat.

It is estimated that there are over 1,100 buses passing through the Shopping Centre each day, with over 15 bus routes operating from around 5:55 am till 11:45 pm. In addition there is a weekend night bus service operating between 12:40 am and 3:40 am. Given the opening hours of the Shopping Centre (detailed in site details) the current bus provision seems to be adequate for both staff and visitor. Copies of the bus route maps available from Go Northeast are provided in Appendix A of this report.

Figure 3

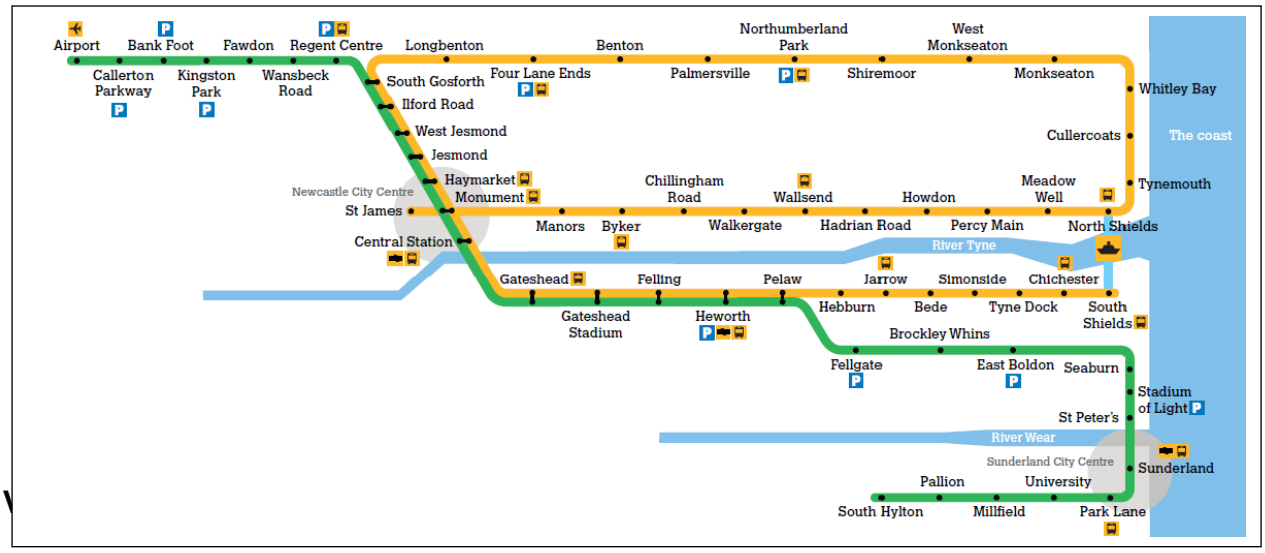


Metro

Local bus services also link to the Tyne and Wear Metro. The Metro is a light rail system with 60 stations in Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside. The Metro system is connected to mainline rail stations, including Newcastle and Sunderland.

Heworth Metro Station is the closest interchange for The Galleries, as seen in Figure 4. The remaining journey can be made by the M1 bus service which takes approximately 16 minutes.

Figure 4



Private cars

The site can be easily accessed by road; along the Washington Highway from the road island to the southwest of the site. The centre can also be accessed from The Parkway, connected to the Sunderland Highway, which runs along the northern boundary of the site.

The Galleries provides 2,591 free car parking spaces across 18 car parks, this includes 105 disabled parking bays for disabled users and 74 child and parent bays across the site. The provision for further bays for disabled users is being considered at the centre. Seven dedicated bays for motorcycles are also distributed around the Shopping Centre car parks.

Car parking spaces are for use of centre visitors and staff. In addition the car parking facilities are also used by employees and visitors of other local facilities and amenities including the local police station, leisure centre, health centre etc.

The Galleries has implemented a new car parking control system, which requires the issue of permits. The scheme is helping to provide reliable data on numbers of staff and non-staff (e.g. employees of local businesses) that use the centres car parking facilities. Following on from the issue of permits it is proposed during 2014 to install an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system at the centre. It is anticipated that this system will help to control car visits to the centre as well as providing other useful information e.g. dwell time of visitors.

Visitor Parking

Visitors to the site are able to use the Shopping Centres car parking facilities free of charge for up to 4 hours, with a 'no return within 1 hour' policy. This is enforced by a private parking company engaged by centre management.

Staff Car Parking

A parking permit system has been introduced to manage the levels of staff parking. Those individuals where The Galleries is their main place of employment must apply to the centre for a free permit to allow parking for periods longer than 4 hours. The permit gives the individual permission (not a right) to use the Shopping Centres car parks, specifically car parks 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14 which equates to around 22% of the centres car parking capacity. These are car parks located furthest from the Shopping Centre entrances, therefore giving priority to centre visitors.

Non-Staff Car Parking

Non-staff, those employed by other local business in the Washington town centre area, who use the car parking facilities of The Galleries. The provisions are the same as for Galleries staff however, an administration fee will be charged for the issue of the permit.

Taxi

There are two taxi ranks at The Galleries Shopping Centre, located at the entrances to Asda and InStore. A number of local taxi provider's details are listed on the Shopping Centres website.

Click and Collect

The Shopping Centre recognises the growing popularity of internet shopping. To ensure that the Shopping Centre still forms a part of the shopping experience the aspiration is to ensure that visitors can plan their purchases in advance, by purchasing on-line and then collect them from a store on their next visit. Sainsbury's and Asda have designated areas within their control for 'click and collect' customers.

Walking

The site can be accessed on foot via two pedestrian underpasses and three bridge links leading from the surrounding residential areas. Much of the pedestrian route from the residential areas to the Shopping Centre is traffic free, with the use of elevated footpaths over some roads. There is an extensive network of dedicated pedestrian walkways around the entirety of the site.

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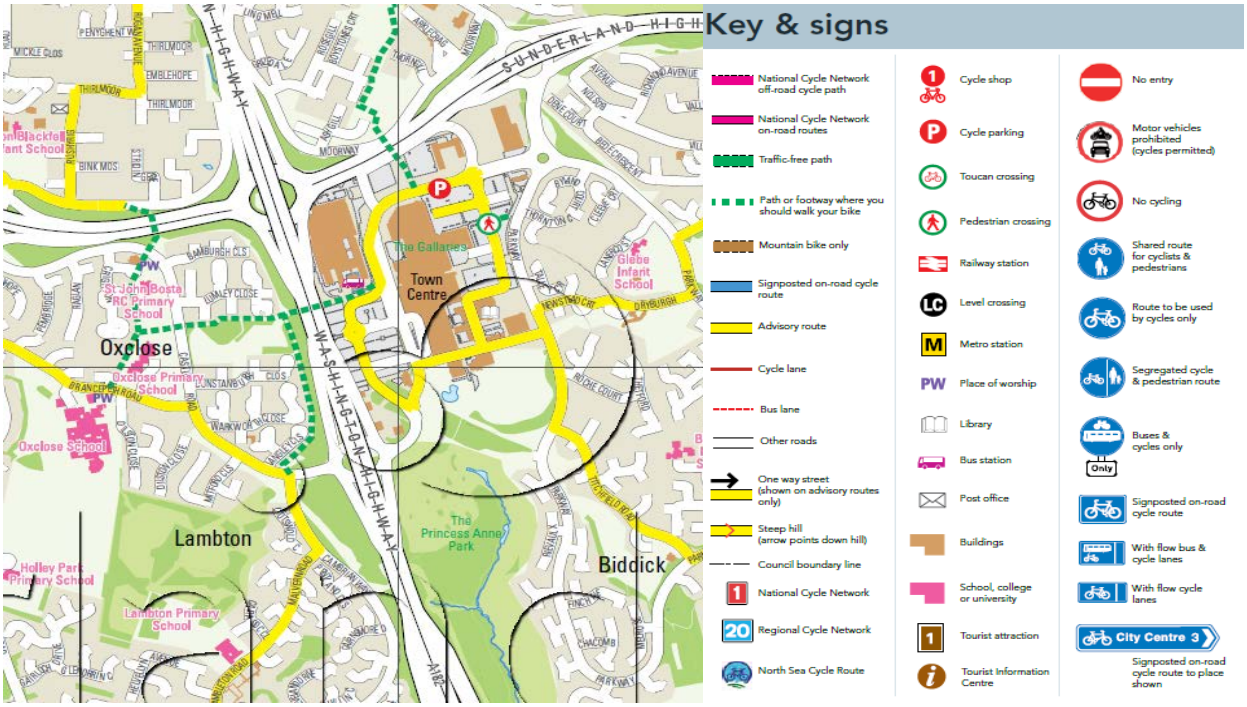
Cycling

Cycle racks are present at multiple locations around The Galleries: located near the entrance to the Sainsbury's supermarket; in the square between the Shopping Centre and NHS clinic; outside individual units at the Retail Park and near the public library. The cycle racks are all U shaped racks which provide space for two bikes on each; cyclists are required to provide their own locks. Figure 3 demonstrates the location of these cycle racks.

While there are no adopted National Cycle Network routes present or leading to The Galleries, the cycle map provided by Sunderland City Council (see Figure 5) categorises the road network around the Shopping Centre as an Advisory Route. The Cycle Network and Public Rights of Way Officer at Sunderland City Council advised that the Council is currently seeking to improve the cycling infrastructure in the Washington area. Possible extensions to the current cycle network in and around The Galleries, improved signage and road markings are anticipated to be completed in the next 3 years, in an attempt to make cycling a more popular transport choice.

Figure 5



SURVEYS

The key findings, in the context of travel, of surveys completed at the Galleries are discussed below.

Travel Plan Survey 2010

A travel survey was completed at The Galleries during April 2010 to provide a baseline assessment of staff travel patterns. Of those staff who took part 54% of respondents travelled to work by car, with 32% travelling by bus. Walking and cycling comprised the remaining 14% of respondents. Notably 68% of those that took part in the survey travelled less than four miles to reach The Galleries.

Shopper Survey, 2012

The survey completed in November 2012 identified that overall the use of car for travel to the Shopping Centre and retail-park was the most popular amongst those visitors surveyed.

Since 2009 the proportion of those visitors at the Retail Park using public transport has increased. At the Shopping Centre the number of visitors walking and cycling to the centre has increased.

The survey demonstrated that overall only 6.6% of visitors have accessed the Shopping Centres website in the three month period before the survey was completed.

The survey identified that 43% of visitors regularly used social networking; with Facebook Google+ and Twitter the most popular forms.

The dwell time of the average shopper at The Galleries is 71 minutes. This information has contributed to the development of the car parking strategy for visitors at the centre.

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ACTION PLAN

The action plan detailed below provides a summary of the work being carried out or to be carried out at the Shopping Centre to progress on the achievement of meeting the travel plan objectives:

Objective 1: Increase awareness of the travel plan to both visitors and staff of The Galleries.			
Measure	**Detail**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Update website	Centre management should ensure that the travel information available on The Galleries website is up to date and details all forms of sustainable transport to the site.	On going	The website is regularly reviewed. The travel plan is available on the website for public access https://www.gallerieswashington.co.uk/environment.aspx
Investigate Facebook/Twitter as a medium to communicate the travel plan.	A recent survey completed at the centre identified that 87% of visitors aged 16-24 and 72% of visitors aged 25-44 used social networking. Therefore the centre management should investigate the use of Facebook and Twitter (the more popular forms amongst visitors) to share key travel information.	Complete	The Galleries is utilising the social media site Facebook to provide transport updates, when appropriate.
Investigate QR codes	Centre management should consider the use of QR codes to link to the centres travel plan.	Complete	The use of QR codes was investigated but was not considered to be appropriate at this time.

Environment week	Centre management should utilise the annual environment week as a platform to educate both staff and visitor about the travel plan and sustainable methods of transport.	Ongoing	The Environment Week in September 2013 involved a number of local stakeholders to showcase the success of the centre to date. Invitees included Nissan and Sunderland Council.
General communication of the Green Travel Plan	Centre management will continue to raise awareness of the travel plan to all appropriate parties. This includes through tenant meetings, on-site marketing events and through social media forums.	Ongoing	

Objective 2: Work with the local transport providers to improve the provision of public transport to and from the Shopping Centre.			
Measure	**Detail**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Real time travel information	To promote bus use by all at the centre, real time travel information should be made readily available. Centre management should investigate the provision of further 'real time' screens within the Shopping Centre itself (in addition to those already in the bus station).	Complete	Additional 'real time' screens are not considered appropriate for the Shopping Centre at present. This proposal may be re-visited in the future if the technology is less cost prohibitive.

Discounted bus travel for staff	Discounted bus travel should be offered to staff to promote alternative forms of travel. Centre management should approach the local public transport providers to provide a discounted ticketing scheme.	Amended to Q3 2014/15	Proposal still under consideration.
Incentives for public transport use	Working with the local public transport provider (Go North East) to identify marketing opportunities.	Ongoing	

Objective 3: Manage vehicle use at the site.			
Measure	**Detail**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Electrical vehicle projects	There are currently no electrical charging points at The Galleries. Centre management will approach the local car manufacturer Nissan to investigate if the Company would consider sponsoring an electrical charging point.	Amended to Q3 2014/15	

Understand car journeys to the centre	The centre is working with a local authority funded organisation 'Go Smarter to Work' to help reduce traffic levels in the local area.	Ongoing	
Staff and non-staff car parking	Through the introduction of the car parking permitting system centre management will be able to monitor the non-visitor car use. A review of the current car parking arrangements can then be undertaken, to identify further improvements to manage vehicle use at the site.	Ongoing	Permit data for all staff parking has now been collected. The Galleries is now investigating the installation of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition system. It is anticipated that this system will help to control car visits as well as provide a clearer picture of staff and visitor parking.
Click and collect	Centre management is mindful of the increase in internet shopping. Therefore The Galleries will engage with key tenants about provision for Click and Collect parking bays, in particular at the Retail Park.	Ongoing	Asda has been permitted to install a 'click & collect' point at the centre.
Motorcycle parking	Centre management will continue to monitor the use of motorcycle parking facilities. The Galleries will look to enhance the provision if needed.	On going	

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Reduce cost motorcycle lessons	To reduce pressure from staff use of car parking bays motorcycle use could be promoted. To facilitate this the centre may investigate obtaining reduce cost motorcycle lessons for staff at the site from local suppliers.	Amended to Q3 2014/15	This proposal is still under consideration.

Objective 4: Continue to enhance facilities and infrastructure for cycling and walking to and from the site.			
Measure	**Detail**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Promoting walking	The Shopping Centre should continue maintenance and improvements to the dedicated pedestrian walkways around the centre site.	On going	
Cycling parking facilities	Centre management will continue to monitor the use of cycle parking facilities. The Galleries will look to enhance the provision if needed.	On going	

Cycle to Work scheme	As part of the centres environment awareness week the Cycle to Work scheme should be promoted to tenants to encourage staff uptake. Increased cycle use by staff would help to reduce pressure on car parking capacity for centre visitors.	Environment week annually	
Dedicated cycle ways	The Galleries should work closely with the Cycle Network and Public Rights of Way Officer to ensure that future cycle routes and infrastructure in the area are designed with the Shopping Centre in mind.	On going	The centre is consulting with the local authority on the new 'Open Spaces' plan. In particular linking The Galleries with new cycle routes and increase the amount of cycle paths within The Galleries footprint.
Cycle week	The Galleries should consider inviting local cycle organisations to the centre to hold an awareness raising event.	Ongoing	
Cycle workshop	Centre management should consider liaising with a local cycle business to arrange monthly workshops. The workshops may involve basic maintenance checks of bikes.	Q3 2014/15	

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Objective 5: Monitor the effectiveness of the travel plan.			
Measure	**Detail**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Staff and visitor travel survey	The Galleries should complete regular staff and visitor travel surveys to identify the means of transport used and areas which individuals are travelling from. This should help to demonstrate improvements and enable centre management to focus further improvements to the travel infrastructure.	Annually	

APPENDIX A