Easysaver10 offer a runaway success

At the end of January we had a great offer from Reading Buses, where for a limited period of 2 hours we sold the Easysaver10 smartcards for £10 (normal price £16). These smartcards give you 10 single trips and can easily be topped up with more journeys online. You never need to have the exact change. The offer on the day gave a single bus journey for £1, almost half price (£1.80). To say this was popular was an understatement! The queue was out of the door of Palmer and Reading Buses kept having to send back to base for more passes! We hope you're finding these tickets easy to use and recharge – look out for a discounted University specific version at the start of next academic year.

Bicycle maintenance kit available

The Introduction to bicycle maintenance courses are proving very popular, with five courses having been run and one more left this term. It is already fully booked but if you’d like to be added to the waiting list for future courses please email. With many people now having completed the courses it's great that the Chaplaincy have decided to keep a selection of tools which you can use yourself to fix your bike. They now have a pump, a small selection of spanners, allen keys, and a puncture repair kit. Just pop along to the Chaplaincy if you need to use them.

Hertz On Demand on campus hirecar

Remember that if you do need a car for occasional trips we have two Hertz on Demand cars outside Whiteknights House that you can hire by the hour. They are very handy and easy to use once you've signed up to be a member of the scheme. Open to anyone aged 19 and over. We do just want to flag up the quite high excess charges though, because we're not convinced they highlight these very well on their website. So do use the cars but be careful and check all the terms and conditions.

Bus information on the go

One of the comments from the recent student travel survey was that people would like to have more bus time information available on the go, for smartphones etc. We'd like to introduce a brilliant new app for Reading

My bus reading which is available free for Android users. You can select any bus stop in Reading from a map and see when buses are due. So search for it in your app store. A version is also available for Apple products but it only has limited functionality and there is no news on when this is likely to improve (the map locations don't work for one thing). In fact the data behind these apps is freely available so if anyone would be interested in a project writing a better version for iphones or other systems, or adapting it for university specific use get in touch.
Student Travel Survey 2013

A massive thank-you from the Sustainability Team (formerly the EEST Team) to all those students who completed the Student Travel Survey in February. We received a fabulous 1340 complete responses which gives us lots of information to work with. You also had lots of comments and ideas which is great. A full report is available online but here is a quick summary of some of the results. The prize draw winner was Hannah Pettit from Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy who won a pair of Eurostar tickets to Brussels, Lille or Paris. We hope you enjoy your trip Hannah!

Who responded?

We had responses from students in every department across the University, although only one from a student based at Greenlands. Undergraduates, postgraduates and full and part time students all replied. Most of the respondents currently live in University/ UPP Halls of residence (55%), with 30% in private rented accommodation.

How you travel

Most students (65%) travelled onto campus at least 5 days a week. Walking and cycling were by far the most popular methods to get here with a massive 78% of you walking. In last years’ travel survey 68% of students walked to the campus, so this is an increase of 10%. It’s great that so many of you live close enough to choose the cheap and healthy options of walking and cycling! In fact many students who reported they didn’t want to cycle said it was because they could walk to everything they needed.

Walking was also a popular mode for other journeys including for groceries or into town for leisure or shopping. The most used form of transport to get into Reading was the bus, with 60% of the students respondents saying they used the bus at least a few times a month. A number of you had comments about improving bus travel in Reading which we’ve hopefully addressed below.

Feedback on some of your comments and requests

We’ve taken your survey comments to the University, local Councils, and Reading Buses, and here are some of the responses.

You wanted to see more bus discounts for students – We already have discounted termly and yearly simplyuni passes for staff and students, but not everyone uses the bus often enough to take advantage of these, so look out for the new ‘Unisaver’ coming for the start of next year, a discounted version of the Easysaver ticket discussed overleaf is one of these. We will be working hard to make sure new students are aware of these before they arrive in Reading.

You wanted to see more bus information available on the go for smartphones etc. – see the separate article in this newsletter about the fabulous my bus Reading app.

Buses should give change: A number of you commented that buses not giving change was very irritating. Reading Buses do this to save time on the bus journey and have no plans to introduce giving change. They do however have a range of smartcards, like the Oystercards in London, that are really handy even if you only use the bus every now and then as they never run out of date. You just keep the card in your wallet and never need to worry about needing change again. The Easysaver ticket discussed overleaf is one of these. We will be working hard to make sure new students are aware of these before they arrive in Reading.

Concerns over cycle security. This is a problem everywhere and we have a number of initiatives and campaigns concerning bicycle security coming up including the bicycle passport and labelling scheme and discounted locks all available from Security.

Cycling and walking improvements. More requests for separate paths on and off campus. On campus it’s a challenging issue, but look out for guidance on use of the campus paths coming soon. Off campus look out for some improvements along Redlands Road being installed over the summer.

We hope this addresses some of your concerns but if you do have more suggestions, comments or questions

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Students main mode of travel onto campus.