

UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

TRAVEL PLAN HITCHIN ROAD SUPPLEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

The University of Bedfordshire was formed in August 2006 from the merger of two institutions; the University of Luton and the Bedford campuses of De Montfort University.

As well as the University's main sites in central Luton and Bedford, the University has specialist centres off the A505 Hitchin Road, at Putteridge Bury and at Butterfield Park.

1.2. BACKGROUND TO DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN

In addition to the environmental and policy concerns described in the Travel Plan Overview, there are a number of issues particular to Butterfield Park and Putteridge Bury driving this travel plan supplement.

Butterfield is a new site, opened in 2008. It is part of a new business and technology park, and has very limited car parking availability.

Putteridge Bury has very different occupancy patterns to the rest of the University, with a high proportion of visitors, as it is the University's conference centre. As the University's oldest (and only Grade 1 listed) site, any access alterations that involve changes to the infrastructure have to be handled extremely sensitively.

Both sites have a similar location (both are found just off the A505 Hitchin Road, on opposite sides) hence both are covered by this one supplement to the University travel plan.

2. CURRENT SITE INFORMATION

2.1. BUTTERFIELD PARK

Butterfield is located on the north east outskirts of Luton, just off the A505 (Hitchin Road). It is the home of the University's Bedfordshire- based medical (nursing and midwifery) courses.

Students studying at Butterfield are also required to attend hospitals (Bedford Hospital and Luton and Dunstable Hospital) for practical placements.

Butterfield Park is also home to the Luton Institute of Research in the Applied Natural Sciences (LIRANS), which focuses on postgraduate training and research. LIRANS carries out research in three broad areas: cryobiology, environmental change and sensors.

Facilities at Butterfield include simulation laboratories (with fully-functional virtual theatre, ward & clinics), and a Learning Resources Centre with digital

library; students also have access to the main Learning Resources Centre in Park Square and NHS libraries at hospitals. There is no campus canteen, but a café is available elsewhere in Butterfield Park, and there are vending machines on-site. Some people go to Putteridge Bury from Butterfield Park at lunch time to use the canteen facilities there; numbers doing this are not known.

250 & 260 Butterfield Park were opened in September 2007, and 270 Butterfield Park was opened in September 2008.

2.2 PUTTERIDGE BURY CAMPUS AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

Putteridge Bury is a grade one listed mansion, built around 1910. It is located just outside Luton, off the A505 (Hitchin Road) not far from Butterfield.

It is the base of the Postgraduate Business School, and is used by the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Postgraduate Medical School for some MSc. and Continuing Professional Development courses.

It is also the home of the University's conference centre, used for events such as corporate away-days, product launches and social occasions. It is licensed to host weddings and serve alcohol, making visitor access a key issue.

Facilities at Putteridge Bury include a Learning Resources Centre; canteen; and extensive grounds including Gertrude Jekyll gardens. Students studying at Putteridge Bury also have access to facilities at Park Square, including the main Learning Resources Centre. Academics lecturing at Putteridge Bury normally have offices in Vicarage St., so students wanting private meetings with their tutors are not easily able to arrange this at Putteridge Bury.

It does not include accommodation, either for conference delegates or for students.

2.3 NUMBERS AND UTILISATION

Total staff numbers (as of October 2008) are as follows:

Putteridge Bury	73 staff
Butterfield Park	47 staff

Putteridge Bury also has students as follows:

Full time	425
Part time	280, including 40 on evening-only courses.

Visitor numbers vary, but average 150 conference centre customers daily, and 12 other visitors daily.

Butterfield Park students are as follows:

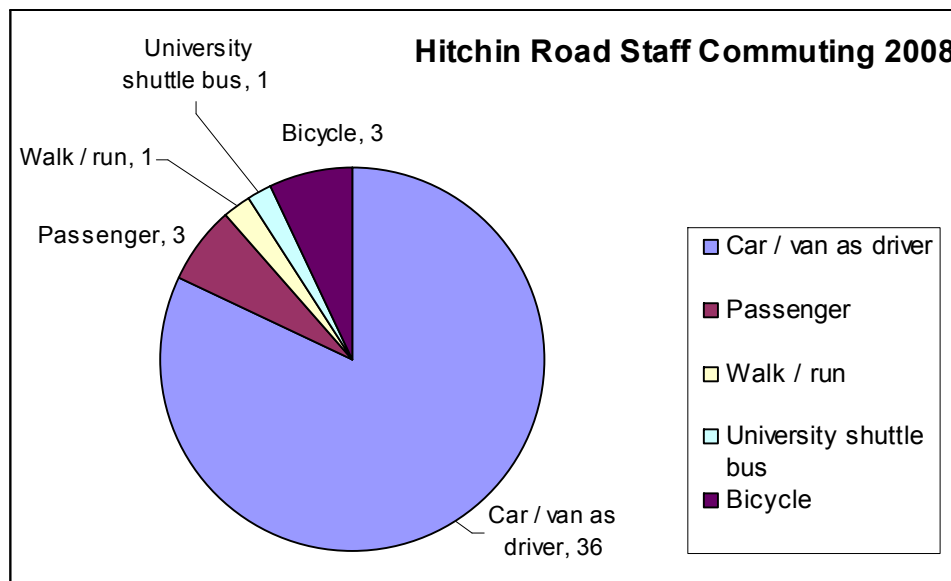
Full time	600
Part time	100
LIRANS	14 postgraduate research students

In addition there are regular short courses for post-registration nurses and midwives.

2.4 STAFF COMMUTING

From the travel survey of November 2008, it is clear that the majority of staff travel to work by car, and that most of these (22 respondents) park on University car parks.

The travel survey of May 2007 predates the opening of Butterfield Park, and only had six responses from staff based at Putteridge Bury, too small a sample from which to draw any safe conclusions.



2.5 STUDENT MOVEMENTS

Students based at Butterfield Park are also required to attend placements at Bedfordshire hospitals.

Facilities for student support services are limited. Neither Butterfield Park nor Putteridge Bury has its own Student Union centre. Students therefore access these facilities in Luton. Likewise, the Learning Resources Centre at Putteridge Bury does not include social learning space, meaning that students wanting space to discuss work in small groups have nowhere appropriate on site. Some students are understood to attend morning lectures, head into town, and return for later lectures.

Academics lecturing at Putteridge Bury normally have offices in Vicarage St., so students wanting private meetings with their tutors are not easily able to arrange this at Putteridge Bury.

2.6 RESIDENCES

There are no halls of residence associated with Butterfield Park, but accommodation for students on hospital-related courses is available at partner hospitals.

Post-graduate accommodation is available in central Luton, at James Court (46 rooms, reserved for post-graduates only) and Wellington Court (48 rooms, reserved for post-graduate and mature students).

2.7 VISITORS

As a conference centre, Putteridge Bury has a large number of visitors. Most conferences do not make special transport arrangements. Some conferences include accommodation at nearby hotels; these usually also arrange coaches to transfer delegates between the conference centre and their chosen hotel.

3 ACCESSIBILITY

3.1 ROAD ACCESS

Putteridge Bury and Butterfield Park are situated on opposite sides of the A505, the Hitchin Road, on the outskirts of Luton. The A505 is a major road, dual carriage way and national speed limit by Putteridge Bury (with a break to allow cars to cross the road, but without any safe pedestrian or cycle crossing). Access to Butterfield Park is from a roundabout.

3.2 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The nature of the A505 makes pedestrian access by this route unpleasant. However Butterfield Park can be reached by a short walk from the cemetery, and Putteridge Bury can be reached on foot by back roads and footpaths from Stopsley. Both sites are about three miles from the town centre, making this form of access unsuitable for anyone who does not live nearby. There is no pavement along the A505 between Butterfield Park and Putteridge Bury.

3.3 CAR PARKING

The University has the use of 51 spaces at Butterfield Park, with further public car parking available five minutes walk away at the cemetery.

Putteridge Bury has 145 spaces along the drive for staff, students and visitors, including 6 disabled spaces.

3.4 CAR SHARING

There are currently no specific measures in support of car sharing. Some informal car sharing arrangements have been made privately.

3.5 PUBLIC BUS SERVICES

Arriva services 101 and 102 to Luton, Stevenage and Hitchin both stop at Butterfield Park. These run twice an hour during the day, between 6:30am and 8pm on weekdays.

Although these services have stops next to and across the road from the entrance to the drive to Putteridge Bury, the lack of a safe pedestrian crossing over the A505 is a major deterrent from accessing Putteridge Bury by public bus service. Also, the drive is 700 metres long, so the bus stops are not particularly close to the buildings.

3.6 SHUTTLE BUS SERVICES

There are regular free shuttle buses for members of the University between central Luton and Butterfield Park and Putteridge Bury during term time. These run from Vicarage St., on the main campus, and also call at the railway station. In addition, a reduced staff service runs between central Luton and Putteridge Bury during the vacation.

Comments from the November 2008 travel survey suggest that the shuttle bus service is well used and popular with staff, with several requests for the service to be extended.

For shuttle bus timetables, see appendices Eight and Nine.

3.7 MOTORCYCLE PARKING

There is currently very little specific provision for motorcycle parking.

3.8 BICYCLE PARKING

There is currently little provision for safe bicycle parking at Putteridge Bury. The absence of a safe crossing on the A505 by the entrance to Putteridge Bury acts as a powerful deterrent to approaching Putteridge Bury from this direction by bicycle; there is also a back road (Putteridge Road) from Stopsley and Cockernhoe.

Butterfield Park has sheltered bicycle stands for up to 12 bicycles in front of reception.

4 PROPOSALS FOR REDUCING CAR RELIANCE

4.1 JOURNEY REDUCTION

The University will continue to support home working by staff when not required on site.

4.2 CAR PARKING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

The University will continue to provide some car parking for the foreseeable future, but given the limited supply, will discourage car use. The extent of provision of car parking, any charges and any direct form of rationing will be reviewed annually.

4.3 BICYCLE PARKING

The University will review provision of cycle storage annually, and will ensure that sufficient suitable stands are made available.

Maps will be made available on-site of local cycle route facilities in the area.

4.4 SHUTTLE BUSES

The University will review provision of shuttle buses annually.

4.5 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The University will continue to promote the use of public transport, and will make timetables available on-site.

5 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Provision of parking spaces is being reviewed annually.

The University will conduct a site audit and survey into travel choices annually.

Car parking, cyclists' and other facilities will be inspected annually to ensure that they are in good condition and to see if further improvements are needed.