

Staff Travel – Site Audits Review

Introduction

The site audits were conducted as part of East Staffordshire Borough Council's (ESBC) initiative to develop a Sustainable Staff Travel Plan. The purpose of these audits was to assess the current facilities and accessibility of four key ESBC sites: Burton Town Hall, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Millers Lane Offices, and Stapenhill Cemetery.

It should be noted that information related to the Market Hall site was unavailable at the time of writing and may be added later to complete the full picture of ESBC's facilities.

The audits aimed to evaluate various aspects of each site, including car parking, bicycle facilities, public transport access, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and accessibility for disabled staff and visitors. These audits were carried out by site managers or designated auditors in June and July 2024, using a standardised audit form to ensure consistency across sites.

Audit Findings

Car Parking:

- All sites have staff parking spaces, ranging from 9 shared spaces at Stapenhill Cemetery to 52 at Burton Town Hall.
- Visitor parking is available at most sites, with Burton Town Hall having 24 dedicated visitor spaces.
- Disabled parking is present at all sites except Millers Lane Offices.
- Electric vehicle charging points are limited, with only Millers Lane (4 for fleet use) and Stapenhill Cemetery (1 for work van) having on-site facilities.

Bicycle Facilities:

Burton Town Hall has 8 bicycle parking spaces, while Millers Lane has 10. Brewhouse Arts Centre and Stapenhill Cemetery have no dedicated bicycle parking.

The condition and security of bicycle parking vary, with Burton Town Hall's facilities described as poorly located and underutilised.

Shower and Changing Facilities:

Burton Town Hall and Brewhouse Arts Centre have shower facilities (2 and 3 respectively), while Millers Lane has one shower. Stapenhill Cemetery has no shower facilities.

Further assessments of the sites taking into considerations around potential limitations for welfare improvements like shower facilities due to space constraints and, for example the fact that the Millers Lane depot building is leased.

Lockers are only available at the Brewhouse Arts Centre (100 lockers).

Public Transport Access:

All sites are well-served by public transport, with bus stops within 100-130 meters. Burton Town Hall has the best public transport connectivity, being only 100m from the train station.

Pedestrian and Cycling Access:

Walkability scores range from 6-10 for Burton Town Hall, Brewhouse Arts Centre, and Millers Lane, while Stapenhill Cemetery's score varies depending on the direction of approach.

Cyclability scores are generally lower, ranging from 1 (Stapenhill Cemetery) to 8 (Millers Lane).

Accessibility for Disabled Staff & Visitors:

All sites have step-free access to the main entrance. Disabled parking is available at all sites except Millers Lane Offices.

Analysis and interpretation

The audits reveal varying levels of sustainable travel infrastructure across ESBC sites:

1. **Car dependency appears high**, with substantial parking provision at most sites. However, the limited EV charging infrastructure may hinder the transition to electric vehicles.
2. **Bicycle facilities are inadequate** across all sites. Even where bicycle parking exists, it's either underutilised (Burton Town Hall) or in poor condition (Millers Lane).
3. **Public transport accessibility is generally good**, particularly for Burton Town Hall and Brewhouse Arts Centre, which are centrally located.

4. **Walkability is strong for most sites**, but cyclability lags behind, indicating potential barriers to cycling as a commute option.
5. **Basic accessibility for disabled staff and visitors is in place**, but there's room for improvement, particularly in parking provision at Millers Lane.
6. **Shower and changing facilities are limited**, which may discourage active travel, especially for sites like Stapenhill Cemetery where no such facilities exist.

Recommendations

- **Improve bicycle infrastructure:** Consider installing secure, convenient bicycle parking at all sites, particularly at Brewhouse Arts Centre and Stapenhill Cemetery where none currently exists. Relocate and improve the bicycle parking at Burton Town Hall to encourage use.
- **Enhance EV charging infrastructure:** Investigate the feasibility of EV infrastructure at Burton Town Hall and Brewhouse Arts Centre, and increase awareness of existing public charging points within a close radius of each site
- **Upgrade shower and changing facilities:** Further scoping exercise is needed to identify the need/demand for shower facilities at sites. Considerations should be made for space constraints and building ownership.
- **Provide lockers:** Further scoping exercise is needed to identify the need/demand for lockers at all sites.
- **Improve cycling routes:** Work with tier one local authority responsible for maintaining roads, highways and pavements, Staffordshire County Council, to enhance cycle lanes and paths around all sites, particularly Stapenhill Cemetery where cyclability is poorest.
- **Accessibility improvements:** Review the adequacy of disabled facilities across all sites.
- **Promote sustainable travel:** Use the good public transport links, particularly at Burton Town Hall and Brewhouse Arts Centre, to encourage staff to use buses and trains for commuting.
- **Conduct a follow-up audit for Market Hall:** To ensure a comprehensive view of all ESBC sites, complete an audit for the Market Hall location.

These recommendations aim to address the key issues identified in the audits and support ESBC's goal of promoting sustainable staff travel.

Implementation should be prioritised based on potential impact and available resources.