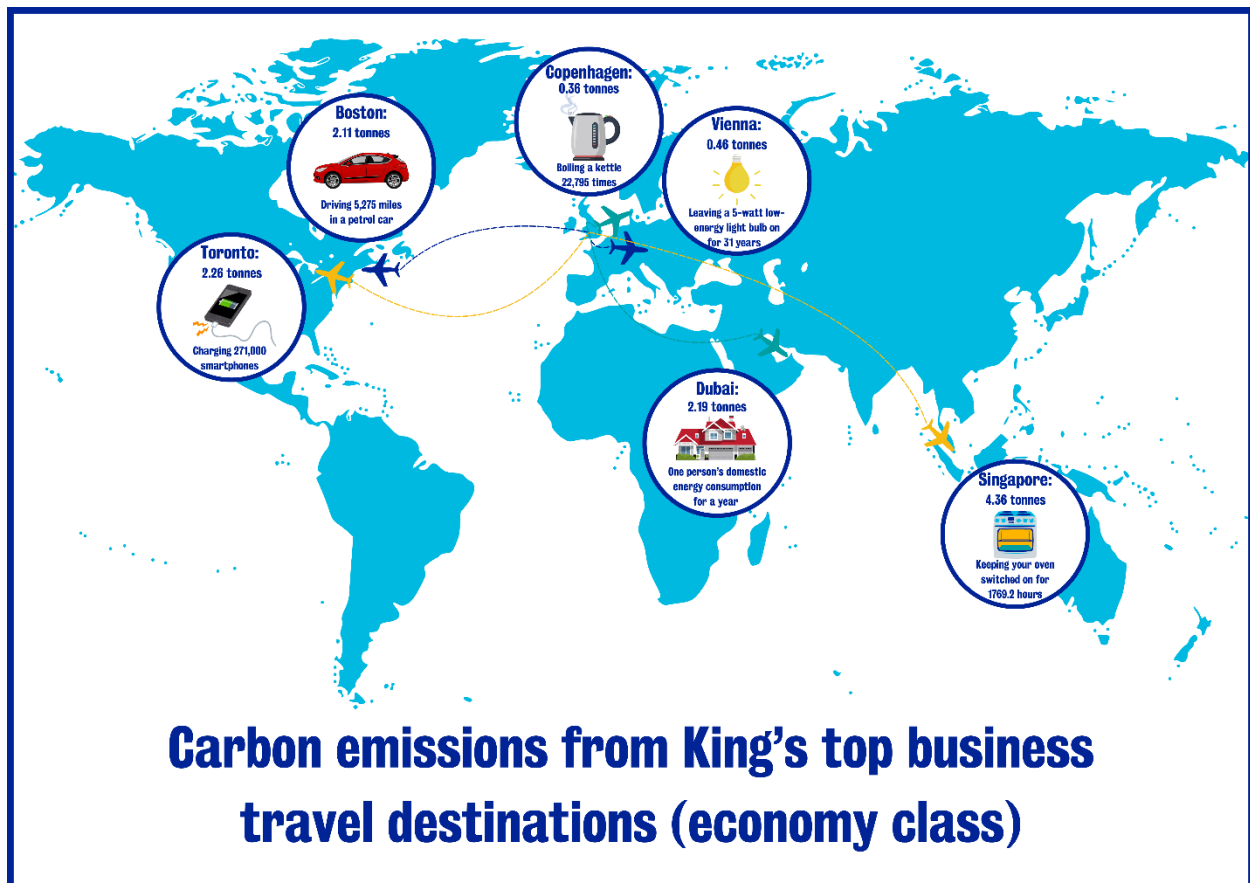# INTRODUCING A NEW SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL POLICY – KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

This document summarises the plans for piloting the new Sustainable Travel Policy and processes at King's College London, which are due to be implemented University-wide in autumn 2024.

Context

The King's Climate & Sustainability Action Plan commits us to reducing business travel emissions by 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 (compared to 2018-19). The biggest source of business travel emissions comes from air travel: well over 90% of total travel emissions in 2018-19. This makes air travel the key target area to reduce our travel emissions. The below infographic shows top King's business travel destinations and their equivalent emissions (economy class).

Carbon emissions from King's top business travel destinations (economy class)

Boston: 2.11 tonnes — Driving 5,275 miles in a petrol car

Toronto: 2.26 tonnes — Charging 271,000 smartphones

Copenhagen: 0.36 tonnes — Boiling a kettle 22,795 times

Vienna: 0.46 tonnes — Leaving a 5-watt low-energy light bulb on for 31 years

Dubai: 2.19 tonnes — One person's domestic energy consumption for a year

Singapore: 4.36 tonnes — Keeping your oven switched on for 1769.2 hours

New Sustainable Travel Policy

A new Sustainable Travel Policy was approved by University Executive in May 2024, after consideration at academic and professional services leadership committees. The policy is due to be published in autumn 2024, after a 2-month pilot in August/September.

The main policy changes implemented in 2024-25 include:

1. **Restricting flights for business travel within mainland UK**, permitting them only in exceptional circumstances.

2. **Strongly encouraging and incentivising land-based travel** to destinations reachable from London **within 5 hours** including the introduction of a pilot in several departments for such train travel.
3. Introducing a range of **enabling measures for business travel**, aiming to simplify the booking of all business travel and making sustainable options more easily available:
   a. **Simplified travel booking process** – see the below infographic for a process overview;
   b. **Delegation of approvals** on exceptions;
   c. **Enhanced information** on travel options provided (including rail options);
   d. **Allow extra time** for low carbon travel, including approval of overnight accommodation.

King's Business Travel Booking Process Overview

1 — Use the Travel Decision Tree and Travel Hierarchy to make an informed choice about how and if you will travel

2 — Check the Procurement Travel website for guidance
- Read King's Sustainable Travel Policy
- Read King's Expense Policy

3 — Complete the Travel Authorisation Process Part 1 Form in Helix
This covers:
Sustainability; Global Mobility (staff only); Travel Risk Assessment

4 — Seek formal Financial Authorisation

5 — Book your travel
- Use the relevant suppliers depending on the FCDO advice for the destination country
- Book in line with King's Sustainable Travel Policy and King's Expense Policy

6 — Complete the Travel Authorisation Process Part 2 Form in Helix
This covers insurance

7 — Submit related travel expense claims if required

Purpose of the pilot

The policy is due to be published in autumn 2024 after a 2-month pilot in August/September to test implementation of the policy, associated processes and guidance, with several departments/faculties. Web pages have been set up in preview mode for the pilot participants to use:
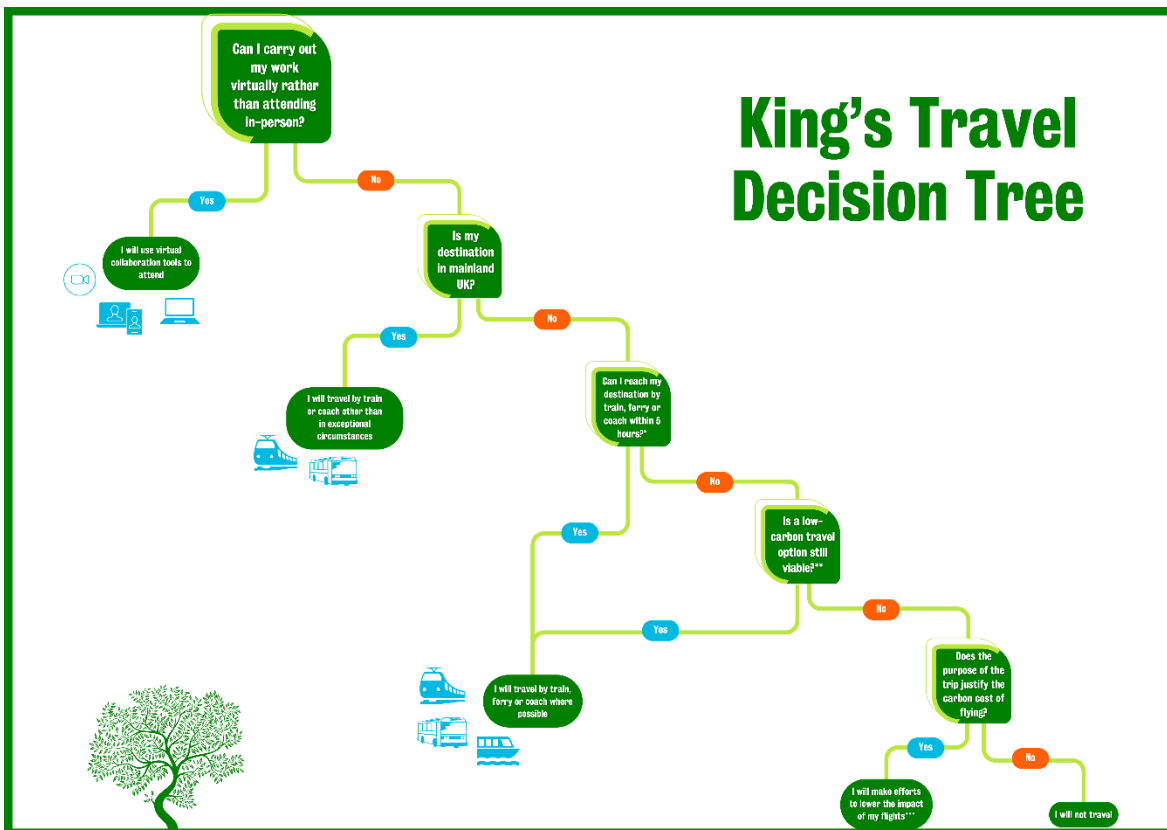

Communications and engagement

Alongside a tighter policy on sustainable travel, we recognise the need for behavioural/cultural change to meet our target. We are therefore developing communications, engagement and change management support. As part of effective and impactful communications with our community, we have developed a range of infographics, as seen throughout this document.

The below sustainable travel hierarchy is a useful tool to help colleagues think about improving the impact of journeys. The higher up the hierarchy, the more sustainable and greener the travel option.

The King's Travel Decision Tree can be used to help colleagues decide whether to travel, and how:

Contact

For questions relating to this document, contact the Sustainability Team: sustainability@kcl.ac.uk.