



Car Club Accreditation

Carplus set up an accreditation scheme for car clubs in 2004 in order to ensure a uniformity of basic standards whilst nurturing the growth of car clubs in the UK.

Local authorities are increasingly supporting car clubs with funding and provision of on-street parking. The Carplus accreditation scheme has been launched as a tool for authorities to use in assessing which clubs to support. With an official scheme in place it will be quicker and easier to vet clubs and to be consistent.

The scheme is also be useful for planning authorities. Where they request car club provision in a development they may be able to specify an accredited car club. Public transport operators will benefit from a system which allows them to vet who they work with on joint promotions and discounts.

Accreditation standards

The requirements to be met by all accredited operators are split into four sections.

- **Business requirements**
This section checks the legal structure of the operator and their financial and operating record.
- **Service provision requirements**
The car club must meet the agreed definition (see box below) and provide extra standards of operation to be accredited.
- **Safety requirements**
The scheme sets out certain standards for the vehicles safety and support for members when things go wrong.
- **Data collection requirements**
Carplus requests the collecting of UK wide statistics on car clubs for the benefit of all those working in the industry.

Carplus definition of a car club

- Vehicles available to be booked in hourly (or shorter) segments, for as little as one hour (or less) per booking
- Vehicles available to customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This rule allows for block bookings by corporate members.
- A system by which the customer will not sign a new hire or rental agreement contract with each booking
- Vehicles which are accessible at the time of the booking commencing without assistance from a member of the car club staff
- Vehicles which are located within residential or commercial areas close to a cluster of members
- Trips must be charged by a combination of mileage and / or time used
- Customers should pay according to a fixed price structure to which they have signed up.
- Pricing must include all aspects of vehicle usage (e.g. insurance, tax, fuel etc).
- A recognised booking system (e.g. telephone and/or internet) accessible to all their customers.

*NB accreditation requires more than meeting this definition.

Maintaining standards

Principally the standard of operators will be checked through a renewal of the accreditation status each year. However if operators do not maintain standards throughout the year then a process has been put in place to address this.

Local authority involvement

As the scheme has been set up for the benefit of public bodies, it was designed with their input. A working group of local authorities currently developing car clubs was convened by Carplus and a full consultation exercise took place. The same group will meet to carry out an annual review of the scheme every twelve months.

If you would like full details of the accreditation criteria or have further questions please call 0113 234 9299 or log on to www.carplus.org.uk.