



An Introduction to the “Cars Cutting Carbon” project

This document is designed as an explanatory note to show more of the detail of the Cars Cutting Carbon project, and its methodology and aims. It explains who will be our major partners, and the likely results and outcomes of the project.

It should be read by anyone who has an interest in our work in the region, especially Local Authority officers, transport professionals, property developers, employers and community leaders.

Preface

Carplus is embarking on a major three year project to create a network of car clubs across the Yorkshire and Humber region. We will work to ensure that all the new car clubs will be integrated with each other, as well as working closely with car clubs that are already operational.

As the network of car clubs develops, we will ensure that its operations are fully integrated with the services already provided by existing public transport, thus ensuring that people can smoothly switch between car use, bus travel, train travel, walking and cycling in whatever combination best suits them for any particular journey.

What is a Car Club?

Car clubs are a means by which people can use the flexibility of a car without having to own one. They offer affordable, flexible, convenient access to a choice of vehicles parked close to home or work.

- Members pay a monthly fee and then ‘pay-as-they-drive’
- Cars can be hired for as little as an hour or for a few days
- They are parked in reserved parking spaces convenient to where people live or work
- Bookings can be made by phone or internet – weeks ahead or as you need it
- Access to cars is by smart card
- All vehicles are serviced and maintained by the club

Car clubs help to reduce car dependency, solve parking problems and increase walking, cycling and public transport use. They can make low car housing more viable, help tackle social exclusion by improving accessibility, and form part of workplace travel plans.

Who are Carplus?

Carplus is based in Yorkshire, and is the national umbrella charity that supports the development of car clubs in the UK.

Carplus is not anti car. We see the car as an essential tool that enables people to have the mobility they need. The creation of car clubs close to where people live and work gives everyone the chance to use the obvious benefits of the car, but as car clubs encourage sustainable and careful use of the car, many of the disadvantages of car use, such as pollution, congestion, parking problems etc are diminished.

Yorkshire Forward – The Regional Development Agency for Yorkshire and the Humber, has provided funding for Carplus to encourage the development of a network of car clubs for the region as part of its commitment to promoting sustainable economic growth in the region.

Our Aims in the Region

Our main aim in the Yorkshire and Humber region is to provide a means whereby people can break their reliance on the private car. By giving people the opportunity to join a car club and have an alternative to their own private car or cars they may be able to make very large financial savings. They will then be in a position where they can choose the transport mode that best suits their needs for any particular journey. Rather than the car simply being the default and automatic choice when needing to travel, there will be the opportunity to make informed choices as to the way they travel.

We aim to ensure that as many people as possible are within a short walk from their nearest car club vehicle to make membership more attractive, and we will ensure that members can switch between transport modes as easily as possible by careful positioning of car stations. The aim is to locate cars as close to railway stations and bus/tram nodes as possible, in order to create a seamless join between car club and public transport.

Carplus will work with:

Carplus will provide direct development support to as many authorities, property developers, employers, community groups etc as possible, that request our help.

The role of Carplus will be to provide training and information on all aspects of car clubs – their benefits, their uses, implementation, operational issues etc. This work will be directed at any officer or organisation that we feel will benefit, or who may have a part to play in creating the network of car clubs. Carplus will work closely with any interested agencies or bodies, which will lead to the creation of working partnerships that will control the formation process of operational car clubs. We will continue to support these partnerships by offering direct officer input and expertise whenever it is required.

Carplus staff will, via the press departments of Local Authorities, provide support to ensure that each individual project within the programme is fully publicised both to the public and potential stakeholders.

Carplus will give advice on all matters relating to the shape of the eventual operational car club, including size and scope, parking issues, vehicle types, technology matters, etc. Carplus will also guide each individual development

partnership on the best way forward regarding the operational management of the car club, and whether that will be best carried out by the existing commercial car club sector, a new or existing social enterprise, a community transport or local development body etc. Carplus will provide advice and direct help when preparing any tender documents or business plans.

Key Partners

Local Authorities

We intend to work with Local Authorities in a corporate manner to ensure that their interest in car clubs, and their efforts to help create the network, are maximised.

The potential for car clubs differs between various departments within Local Authorities. For instance, planning control may want to reduce the parking provision at a new development while transport planning may be looking to reduce existing car use, while at the same time, air quality officers may be trying to design measures to meet emission targets.

Whatever their needs, Carplus intends to show how car clubs can help meet a range of policy targets.

- Transport and Travel Plan officers already understand their local needs, and we intend to help identify where car clubs can help solve problems. Carplus will then proceed, with the help of officers, to design and implement a car club to provide practical solutions.
- Planning officers will be asked to provide us with the details of any new or existing housing and/or commercial developments (especially in town and city centres). Many of the problems that beset such new developments are car related, being a combination of lack of parking space, a desire to increase housing density and adverse traffic impact on the surrounding area. Carplus will show how a car club placed in, or close to a new development can help minimise these barriers to a successful housing scheme.
- Sustainability officers will be important to the success of any individual car club project as sustainability is at the heart of the development programme in both financial and environmental terms.
- Carplus will also work with elected members to promote the political acceptance of car clubs, as well as working with other important officers such as pool car management, air quality officers etc.

Property Developers

In conjunction with Local Authority planning officers, we will encourage property developers to include car clubs at an early a stage as possible in the design of a housing scheme. This will include providing dedicated car club parking bays, lighting and fixed security equipment, and in the case of large developments, concierge assistance.

Evidence has shown that the provision of a car club on a development can reduce the need for general parking space. This parking space can therefore be replaced with a higher density of build, or the provision of green spaces. Both these advantages would be impossible without the provision of a car club.

Carplus will suggest ways in which the “lifestyle” aspects of city centre living and the sales potential of the development can be enhanced by a car club.

Public Transport Providers and Public Transport Executives (PTEs)

It is clear from evidence from existing car clubs in the UK, that members of car clubs increase their use of public transport after joining their local club. We intend to encourage and maximise this trend by working closely with public transport providers both to offer financial incentives via reduced price travel for car club members, and to establish car club parking close to public transport nodes. Meaningful partnerships in this area will lead to a greater uptake of public transport, and a greater reduction in the use of the private car.

Employers

There is evidence from city centre car clubs in the UK, that employers are beginning to understand the financial and environmental benefits of car clubs.

Corporate use of the car club can provide an alternative to expensive and unwieldy car pools, short term car hire, or staff car allowances. Employers can encourage their staff to use public transport to commute to their place of work, and then use the car club vehicle for daytime business purposes, rather than driving to work in their own car. The employer can easily take out block corporate membership of the car club and enrol individual staff members who are essential car users. A car club used in this way can lead to significant cost saving for the employer, and also contribute to any social responsibility targets that the company may have.

Corporate daytime use will lead to greater potential for financial success for the car club operator, as employers will make use of the car club vehicles at times when private individual members use them the least.

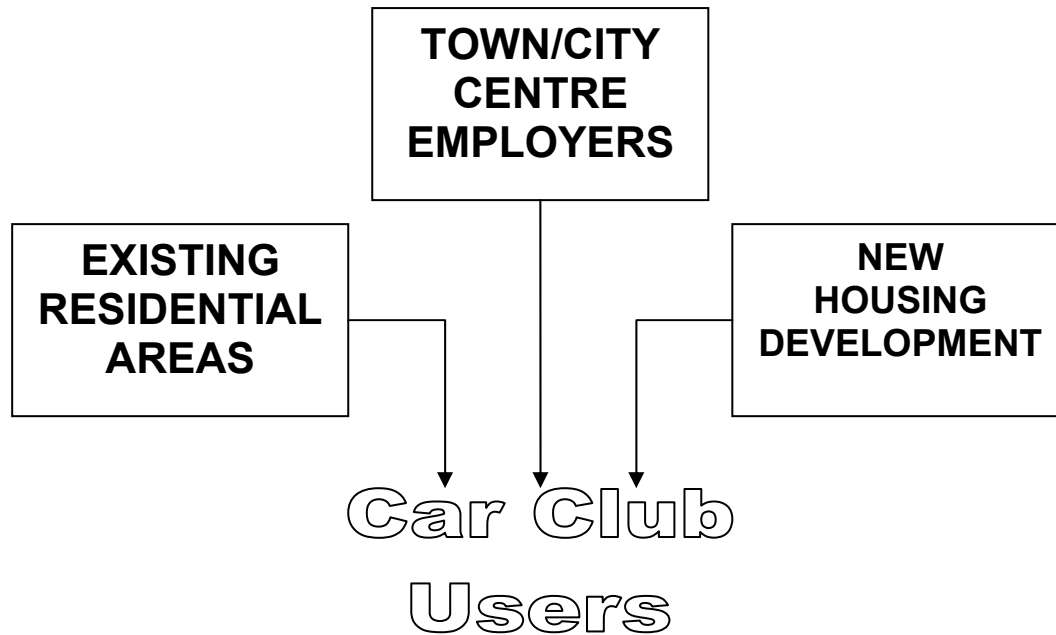
Carplus intend to encourage corporate use by informing employers of any potential car clubs in their area, and showing how they can benefit from membership, and by working with workplace travel planners to include car clubs in their plans.

Car clubs can be applied to any large employer that have a need for staff mobility, such as Local Authorities, Hospitals, Universities and city centre companies.

Identifying potential for car clubs

By building meaningful partnerships with all the above, and helping them to bring car clubs into their planning processes, we intend to ensure that all potential car club users in any locality are aware of the concept, and further, will become active users of a scheme.

We intend to ensure that the eventual operator of a car club can draw upon our preparatory work to ensure that the vehicles placed in the town or city are used to their full potential.



By ensuring that a wide range of different users as possible are present, then the vehicles of the car club can be used to their best advantage.

We intend to provide a mix of potential users – employers and corporate users who will use the vehicles during working day hours, and private individuals both in new developments and existing residential areas who are more likely to use the cars during evening and weekend periods.

This will ensure a greater possibility of success for the car club project in any one location, and will therefore lead to rapid growth of the car club. This will then mean that the benefits of car clubs (of fewer private cars on the road, fewer environmental problems, more use of public transport etc) will accrue to a location much more rapidly.

What will be the results of the project?

- **Growth in the numbers of operational car clubs**

Currently there is only one large city based car club in Yorkshire and the Humber. This is based in Leeds, and operated by one of the national commercial car club operators. Our first objective will be to establish large scale projects in the region's major cities. Within a year, we expect operational car clubs to be established in York and Sheffield, and further development work will be progressing in Bradford and Hull.

As car clubs are established in the large cities, we expect interest in the concept, in the smaller settlements surrounding these areas to begin to grow. Carplus intends to continually monitor this interest and take every possible opportunity to create new development, or to include the interest in the nearby city car club.

We will therefore be working in all the Metropolitan Districts in South and West Yorkshire as well as extending the project to other large towns in the region. Smaller towns will form a secondary wave of development work as resources allow.

However, we will be constantly searching for opportunities to include *any* area in the region that shows potential for the establishment of a car club, and we are committed to examining any possibility wherever it may arise.

- **Integration with Public Transport**

Integrating sustainable forms of transport with each other is a central theme of the Yorkshire Forward programme. By creating real integration we can increase the likelihood of success of both the car club and public transport, as it creates a synergy between the two that increases the business of both. This will then clearly lead to the positive aspects of both being enhanced. We intend to encourage co-operation between public transport providers and the car club operators to explore such ideas as cross marketing and ticketing, single individual billing for transport costs, smartcard integration, etc.

- **Integration with each other**

The effective integration of separate car clubs in the region is central to our plans. It is our intention to encourage the operators to create reciprocal rights, to allow members from clubs belonging to other operators to use their vehicles in locations where their own club is not present. This will mean that individuals travelling within the region (and those from outside) will have a much greater chance of being able to use cars at a larger number of locations than if they were restricted to their “home” operator.

Although there are technical difficulties and insurance barriers to overcome, and pricing structures will need to be developed, the benefits to the operators, their members and the region could be significant.

Conclusion

By putting in place the network of car clubs, as described above, the region will eventually possess a unique system of seamless personal mobility, without the need for the private car. It will mean that individuals who currently choose the private car by default for their personal and business transport will have a viable and inexpensive alternative. Journeys both across the region and within smaller local areas will be possible using a blend of buses, trains, and car club vehicles.

All who live and work in the region will be the beneficiaries of the project, as our environment will be less polluted and traffic congested. Those that choose to use the car club will benefit from cheaper mobility, while at the same time giving greater support to our public transport system.

Contacts and further information

The above document is designed as an introduction to the work Carplus intend to carry out in the region. If you need to learn more about any aspect of car clubs, or the “Cars Cutting Carbon” project, please contact a member of our team.

Please call 0113 234 9299, or email us on ccc@carplus.org.uk