

4. Car Club

What is it?

A Car Club is a pool of cars for the use of local people. Members of the club can hire the vehicles, as and when they need from an hour to a weekend, or longer. It gives members the flexibility of using a car for private or business journeys, without the costs or worry of owning or maintaining one. Car Clubs are run by commercial organisations and 'not for profit' groups that own or lease the cars. The cars are usually parked in dedicated on-street parking bays where you live or work, and the schemes are therefore usually run in partnership with local authorities.

A Car Club can be useful for people in a community who:

- only use a car occasionally and perhaps cannot justify the expense of owning one
- are thinking about getting a second car or giving up a second car but are concerned about making certain journeys
- find a lift sharing scheme, that is dependent on others, not suitable

Evidence shows that if you drive less than 6,000-8,000 miles per year then a Car Club could save you up to £3,500 a year. Replacing a second family car with Car Club membership can bring even more cash savings.

There are Car Club schemes in Portsmouth and Brighton and one is being established in Chichester (see Case Study below). There are also a number of rural schemes.

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<p>How does it operate?</p>	<p>Each Car Club either owns or leases cars that are then made available to the local community for short-term use. The club covers the cost of the insurance, tax and servicing of the vehicles.</p> <p>Members pay an annual fee to join the club and then pay per hour to hire a vehicle, as and when required. There is also a mileage charge, but fuel is included in the cost of the hire. Bookings can be made via the Internet or over the telephone. Scheme membership is usually valid for Car Clubs run by the same operator in other locations. Individual membership is restricted to over 21 year olds with conditions applied for those under 25 years old; corporate membership is also available.</p> <p>Car club vehicles are stationed at convenient or highly visible locations within easy reach of a large section of the community and are accessed via key safes or individual smart cards. At the end of the booking, the car is returned to the same designated bay they were picked up from.</p>
<p>Legal requirements</p>	<p>Scheme members will need to have a valid driving licence but there may be restrictions regarding users under 25 years old or those with penalty points on their licence.</p> <p>All other aspects are dealt with by the Car Club, including insurance which is covered by the membership fee.</p>

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Resources

The resources will all be provided by the Car Club organisation, working with the local authority.

If you are looking to convince an existing operator to establish a Car Club in your community then an indication of the likely demand will be needed, together with the identification of suitable parking bays and you should approach your local authority for support.

It is important to note that 'not-for-profit' organisations require funding in order to pump-prime the initiative until a sufficient number of members have been recruited to make that the club self-sustaining. It may also be worth noting that, to keep costs down, it is possible for members of the public/community to gift their cars to the club. Car Clubs work best in places where businesses can make use of the cars during the day and residents use them at weekends and in the evenings.

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Case Study	<p>Chichester Community Car Club It is planned to start a Community Car Club in Chichester. A community run project team has been formed to bring forward the Community Car Club. The results of a survey of residents and business employees are in a scoping study (see the link below).</p> <p>The project is still in the early stages and Chichester District Council wants to ensure that the cars, their locations and availability fulfil the needs of the community.</p> <p>A scoping study of the Chichester Car Club Scheme can be downloaded here: www.chichester.gov.uk/</p> <p>Norfolk Car Club The Norfolk Car Club provides new Volkswagen cars and vans for members to drive on a pay-as-you-go basis. Norfolk Car Club vehicles are operated by Commonwheels – a not for profit community interest company which is establishing a network of car clubs across the UK.</p> <p>By joining Norfolk Car Club, car club members can not only use the car club cars based in Norfolk, but also use any car club cars operated by Commonwheels across the UK. Norfolk Car Club is funded by Norfolk County Council and other partners such as Norwich City Council and the Department of Energy and Climate Change.</p>
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Further Information	<p>There is a national Car Club network Carplus www.carplus.org.uk Phone: 0113 234 9299</p> <p>There are a number of well-established Car Club providers, including: Zipcar www.zipcar.co.uk City Car Club www.citycarclub.co.uk</p>