The benefits of developing car clubs in Scotland

NOVEMBER 2013
About car clubs in Scotland

Since November 2010, the Developing Car Clubs in Scotland (DCCS) programme, which is funded by Transport Scotland, has been providing technical and financial assistance to support development of urban and rural car clubs across Scotland.

To date the DCCS programme has supported expansion of the Scottish car club network from three car clubs in 2010 to 16 car clubs supporting 21 communities today.

Scottish car club membership has grown from around 4,000 members in April 2011 to over 7,000 members in August 2013. On average, 102 people join a car club in Scotland every month. If growth continues at this rate Scottish car club membership will grow to over 8,000 by August 2014, doubling in just over three years.

Scottish car club locations set up since 2010 with support from the DCCS programme

102
PEOPLE JOIN A CAR CLUB IN SCOTLAND EVERY MONTH

24/7
CAR CLUB VEHICLES ARE AVAILABLE TO HIRE
What are car clubs and how do they work?

What is a car club?
A car club is a member-based organisation that provides access to pay-as-you-drive vehicles. Car club vehicles are available for hire on an hourly or daily basis, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Vehicles tend to be parked in dedicated and clearly marked parking spaces close to the homes and workplaces of car club members. Members can access car club vehicles via a smart card or by a key, which is accessible via a key safe.

How do car clubs work?
Car clubs typically own or lease vehicles that are then made available to their members for short term use. The club covers all the costs of owning and operating the vehicles, such as insurance, tax, fuel, cleaning and servicing.

Members usually pay an annual membership fee to be part of a car club and then pay an hourly charge (typically between £3 and £6) to hire a vehicle and a mileage charge (typically around 21-23p per mile) that covers fuel and vehicle wear and tear.

Members can join and book vehicles online or over the phone and are usually billed for their use monthly in arrears.

Who uses car clubs?

- **OCCASIONAL DRIVERS**
  People who do not own or have access to a car but who require access to one occasionally

- **MONEY SAVERS**
  People who own a car but only use it occasionally and who could do without the expense of owning one

- **MULTIPLE CAR OWNING HOUSEHOLDS**
  Households with access to more than one car interested in giving up one or more of their vehicles

- **COMMUTERS**
  People looking to utilise car club vehicles to ride-share rather than commuting to work alone

- **EMPLOYEES AND LOCAL BUSINESSES**
  People making use of car club vehicles for business travel

With no public transport in Fintry, residents have a high dependency on cars. We sold our second car when both my husband and I joined the car club. This has been ideal for our needs. We’ve saved considerable sums on the costs of maintaining and insuring another vehicle. The car club offers us a choice of car size to suit need and preference. Being car club members discourages lazy, unnecessary car use and benefits users and the environment.

*Kay Howell
FEET Car Club member
Fintry, Stirlingshire*

We decided not to buy a new car, partly to encourage ourselves to walk regularly. Spare Wheels Car Club gives us the opportunity of having an alternative means of transport when trains or buses are not a convenient option.

This scheme is an excellent solution for us. We have economy and flexibility. We make at least a small contribution to helping the environment by not using a car to go everywhere while still having the convenience of having a suitable alternative means of transport when we want it.

*Colin Barnes
Spare Wheels Car Club member
Dunbar, East Lothian*
A convenient, cost-effective alternative to car ownership

Car clubs provide access to new or nearly new vehicles. They offer significant savings compared to car ownership, especially where a member only requires a vehicle occasionally and where a privately owned car is no longer required as a result of membership.

The RAC calculates that the average cost of owning a new car is £6,689 per year. Charges for car clubs vary but a typical cost is £3-£6 per hour or £25-£50 per day with a mileage charge of 21-23p and annual membership of £15-£60.

Carpus estimates that car owners who travel less than 8,000 miles per year could save up to £3,500 a year by using a car club instead.

Scotland’s car clubs make an important contribution to reducing transport related CO2 emissions by providing their members with access to newer and more fuel efficient vehicles.

WestWheels Car Club has enabled me to take up to four children away on school trips which I would struggle to do as public transport options are limited. Because of the car club we no longer need to keep a car on the mainland which means our costs are reduced. I think the car club is a great asset to our area.

Sue Holland
Island resident and WestWheels Car Club member
Mallaig, the Highlands

Access to fuel efficient vehicles

Almost all club vehicles in Scotland are in the lowest three Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) emission bands.

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<th>Scottish car club fuel economy CO2 emissions including vans (g/km)</th>
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<td>&lt;100 A</td>
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<td>101-120 B and C</td>
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<td>121-140 D and E</td>
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<td>141-165 F and G</td>
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<td>166-185 H and I</td>
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<td>186-225 J and K</td>
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<td>226&gt; L and M</td>
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Average CO2 emissions (g/km): 117

We joined Easywheels Car Club when we needed to replace our old car. We managed to persuade ourselves to try to live without owning a car. It’s been much easier than expected, walking and cycling locally is now routine and we book the car whenever we need to go further.

The biggest surprise is the way it makes you realise the hidden costs of owning a car, all those random journeys to nowhere in particular. It’s been about half the cost of owning one and I feel healthier too. It’s a great scheme.

Ben Hall
Easywheels Car Club member
Haddington, East Lothian
Scottish car club vehicles are, on average, 29 per cent more fuel efficient than the average car in the UK. The car club fleet in Scotland is 92.5 per cent Euro 5 air quality standard compliant, helping to address issues of air quality in Scotland’s cities.

### Comparative fuel economy CO2 emissions excluding vans (g/km)

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<th>Average Scottish car club car</th>
<th>Average UK car</th>
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<td><strong>CO2 emissions</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>160</td>
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Scotland’s car clubs can play an important role in encouraging the uptake of Electric Vehicles (EVs) by providing their members with access to an EV without the need to own one.

2013 will see a number of Scotland’s urban and rural car clubs add EVs in their fleets with support from the DCCS programme.

By the end of March 2014, Scottish car clubs will operate 11 EVs in eight different communities across the country, providing over 5,700 local car club members with convenient and affordable access to an EV. The DCCS programme aims to build on this and continue to support the introduction of EVs into car clubs, increasing both awareness and use of EVs across Scotland.

City Car Club’s selling point for me is that it’s 100 per cent self-service. There’s no faffing around in a rental office filling out copious reams of paper. Using the website to make bookings is very straightforward. I’m impressed with the quality and choice of vehicles available. They’re all new and very well looked after. I can’t recommend City Car Club highly enough and I chose it over owning my own car which, for me, would be a huge waste of money.

**Giles Redman**  
City Car Club member  
Edinburgh

As a Co-wheels member I’m really pleased to be able to hire car club EVs in Aberdeen. Being both a pensioner and an environmentalist I find the EVs easy on both my pocket and the environment. They’re great to drive and I particularly like how quiet they are. They’re also easy to recharge when you’ve finished with them. EVs are definitely the way of the future when it comes to driving.

**Mark Clayton**  
Co-wheels Car Club member  
Aberdeen
More walking, cycling and public transport use

Member survey results show that car club members are more likely to walk, cycle and use public transport than the average car user in Scotland.

Feedback from car club members suggests they are more aware of the cost of car use and therefore more likely to consider all travel options for completing a journey.

“...We use LEAP Car Club every month. With three small children and just one car, the car club has given our family access to a much needed second car. We can afford a second car but have resisted buying one because the car club presents a cheaper and more environmentally friendly alternative.”

Nancy Hillenbrand
LEAP Car Club member
Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire

The benefits of developing car clubs in Scotland

Fewer cars on Scotland’s roads

Survey results show that over half of Scotland’s car club members owned a car before joining a car club, and just over a quarter after becoming members.

For each car club vehicle in Scotland, around five private cars are taken off the road. That’s 900 vehicles off the road thanks to Scotland’s 180 car club cars.

Car clubs also reduce the number of cars purchased. A quarter of members said they would have bought a car had they not joined.

For each car club vehicle, 12 fewer cars are purchased. That’s up to 2,160 car purchases deferred due to car clubs. This helps reduce congestion and parking pressures, particularly in urban areas.

Membership also results in an overall reduction in car travel. Around 30 per cent of Scottish car club members decreased their annual mileage by an average of 3,546 miles, while 22 per cent increased it by on average of just 1,051 miles. For the remainder, their mileage stayed the same.

Members’ average car mileage is 4,085 miles a year, including about 1,060 miles in car club cars. This is 52 per cent lower than the UK average of 8,430 miles."
Reducing dependency, improving accessibility

In large parts of Scotland the car is often the only practical and convenient transport option for many journeys.

In car-dependent rural communities car clubs can provide a practical, cost-effective alternative to car ownership, reducing dependency on privately owned vehicles, whilst providing access to a car when it is the most appropriate transport choice.

To date the DCCS programme has supported the development of car clubs in Scotland’s towns and cities and has also funded development of 12 car clubs in small towns and rural communities which would not otherwise be serviced by a car club.

The DCCS programme has also supported a trial introducing a wheelchair accessible vehicle to the car club fleet in Aberdeen, to cater to a wide range of users and enhance inclusivity.

“ I’m the only driver in my family and there are two family members who require care support daily. They live in opposite directions from my home 18 and 22 miles apart, so having access to a motor vehicle is essential. As a pensioner I have to watch the cost of providing this support and the car club car gave me the means to provide this care. The peace of mind knowing that in an emergency I can still be mobile is difficult to put into words.”

Stuart MacVicar
LEAP Car Club member
Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire

“ My mother lost her leg about a year ago due to illnesses and now relies on a wheelchair to get about. The Co-wheels WAV helps me give my mother the freedom to visit places she would like to visit when she wants to, without having to wait around for an ambulance or taxi.

The car club is very easy to use. You can book the WAV with just a few clicks of a mouse and you’re billed once a month. It couldn’t be simpler. The biggest benefit for me is it helps us enjoy a normal family life and puts a smile on my mother’s face. She appreciates the outdoors so much more now.”

Ian Massie
Co-wheels Car Club member
Aberdeen

ENDNOTES

i Car club membership data provided by Scottish car club operators
iii Based on manufacturer derived combined test cycle data and car club fleet composition on April 1 2013
iv DTI Statistics: Table VEH0206. Licensed cars by CO2 emission band, Great Britain, annually 2001 to 2012
v Based on local car club membership data in each location in July 2013
vi Department for Transport (2011) National Travel Survey Tables NT50312 and NT50313, last accessed online June 4 2013 at www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets
vii Department for Transport (2011) National Travel Survey Table NT50901: www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets

All figures Carplus Annual Survey of Car Clubs 2012/13 Scotland unless otherwise stated: www.carplus.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Carplus-Annual-Survey-2012_13-Scotland-FINAL.pdf. Where the UK average has been quoted it refers to the average for England, Scotland and Wales. Where Scotland specific data has been used, it is labelled as such.
Further Information

For more information on car clubs, the DCCS programme and Carplus, visit the Carplus website: www.carplus.org.uk

Develop a car club in your area

If you would like to find out more about developing a car club in your area of Scotland, or wish to discuss any other aspect of the DCCS programme, please contact:

Matthew Eastwood
Car Club Development Manager (Scotland)

Telephone: 07572 464 753 / 0131 243 2734
Email: matt@carplus.org.uk

Carplus
Thorn House
5 Rose Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PR

Carplus is a not-for-profit, environmental transport NGO that promotes accessible, affordable and low-carbon alternatives to traditional car use in the UK. Carplus is leading the way towards a new era of shared car ownership and use, and works with others to explore ways to capture the benefits of new technology and support behavioural change.

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This report was prepared by Matthew Eastwood and Marie-Claire Kidd, with the help of the Carplus teams in Edinburgh and Leeds, and staff and volunteer board members of the car clubs featured.

Printed by Colour Copy on recycled paper. Designed by Simon Kenworthy at KnownAim.

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