

Car Club Parking

Carplus good practice guidance

July 2014



Car Club Parking

Carplus Good Practice Guidance

July 2014

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Transport for London and Transport Scotland for their support and feedback in developing this document.

Thanks to all those who contributed to this document including: Aberdeen City Council, London Borough of Hackney, London Borough of Islington, Cheshire West and Chester Council, City Car Club, Co-Wheels and E-Car Club.

This document will be reviewed and updated regularly. Please send any comments or feedback to info@carplus.org.uk.

Contents

| Section | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Contents | 2 |
| Glossary | 3 |
| 1. Introduction | 4 |
| 2. Car clubs: an introduction | 5 |
| 3. Types of parking bay | 7 |
| Case study – Off street bays and EV charging points in Aberdeen | 10 |
| 4. Processes and procedures | 11 |
| Use of experimental TROs for car club bays | 12 |
| 5. Parking: issues and solutions | 16 |
| 6. Parking bay design | 20 |
| Appendix A – Carplus Accreditation scheme | 25 |

Glossary

Car club - A pay-as-you-drive car club offers members access to a vehicle or range of vehicles without ownership.

Car club operator - This refers to a private company, community enterprise, cooperative or other body which manages the setting up and operation of (a) car club/s, either independently, or in conjunction with one or more other organisations.

On-street parking bay - A parking option for car club cars. This refers to a demarcated area at the side of a general highway that has been legally allocated for the specific purpose of parking a car club car. The area will usually be signified by the use of road signs and painted lines and wording.

Traffic Management Order (TMO) or Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) - These are legal documents, drafted and approved by the relevant local authority, which regulate the use of highways and off street parking areas by vehicles and/or pedestrians. The orders are usually implemented using signs and lines marked on the highway surface. The local authority must consult the police, emergency services, representative organisations and the public before any Traffic Management Order can be implemented.

Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) - An area of controlled parking spaces. Its main aim is to discourage commuter and long stay parking by vehicles from outside the area. Areas of controlled parking are usually signified by painted lines and a system of resident parking permits may be in operation.

Section 106 Agreement (in England and Wales) - This refers to section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990), as amended by the Planning & Conservation Act 1991. Applied to car clubs, it consists of a planning agreement between a local authority and another body (often a developer) to ensure that the provision of car club facilities become an integral part of a facility. It could include up-front costs, for example the provision of signed parking bays.

Section 75 Agreement (in Scotland) - This refers to section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. Revised sections 75 75, 75A, 75B and 75C deal with planning obligations and can play a similar role to Section 106 Agreements in England and Wales.

RPA – Residents parking area or zone.

1. Introduction

This guide is designed for the use of transport planners, road traffic engineers and other officers in local authorities throughout the UK who are concerned with planning and transportation. It is intended as a best practice reference point on the topic of parking provision for car club vehicles. The aim is to provide a walk-through guide of the process required to implement parking bays from initiation to completion. This advice is accompanied by relevant background information on car clubs, car club operators and the benefits and issues related with on-street parking. There is also an appendix containing examples of relevant documents relating to the process of obtaining an on-street parking bay in addition to a list of relevant links.

What is Carplus?

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

While recognising the benefits that cars can bring to society, we believe in enabling access rather than ownership and believe new approaches to car use and ownership are needed in order to mitigate the financial, environmental, social and health costs of motoring today.

As a member of the UITP (the International Association for Public Transport) we support the use of shared cars as a mobility option that complements public transport, cycling and walking.

Carplus provides an accreditation scheme for operators that can assist local authorities and developers in selecting suppliers (see Appendix A for further details).

Further Carplus Good Practice Guidance

1. TMO/TRO Consultation Guidance for Local Authorities
2. Local authority car club starter pack
3. Car clubs at work
4. Car clubs in property developments
5. Meeting policy objectives with Low Carbon Car Clubs
6. Guidance on setting up an Informal Car Club
7. Electric Vehicles in Car Clubs

These documents are available from <http://www.carplus.org.uk/resources/best-practice-guidance/>

2. Car clubs: an introduction

How do car clubs work?

A car club provides its members with quick and easy access to a car for short term hire. Members can make use of car club vehicles as and when they need them. All they have to do is:

- **Book** - for as little as half an hour at a time, using telephone or internet. The booking can be made well ahead of time or with a few minutes notice.
- **Unlock** - cars are located at designated parking bays in the local area and accessed using the member's smart card or mobile phone.
- **Drive** – Once inside the driver enters a pin and drives away, returning the car at the end of the journey. It is possible to request an extension of the booking from the car or by phone if necessary.
- **Pay** - Pay-as-you-go charges include fuel.

For a detailed breakdown of charges, see the Car Clubs/ Cost benefits of car clubs section on the Carplus website.

Benefits of car clubs

Car clubs reap a variety of benefits, both for the individual member and within the wider community.

- **Benefits to the individual**

Car clubs have a proven record of influencing travel behaviour as they provide their members with access to a car when they need one and encourage them to walk, cycle or use public transport when they do not. Car clubs typically offer a choice of vehicles for different purposes. Most clubs use cars less than a year old and all offer full breakdown cover. Drivers who do not need access to a car every day can usually make significant savings by paying to use car club cars when they need to instead of paying the full cost of owning a car.

- **Business benefits**

By becoming a corporate member of a car club, you gain all the convenience of operating a fleet of cars, but without the fixed costs, depreciation and hassle. Car clubs can remove the need for pool cars or for paying mileage to staff for using their private vehicles or add to your capacity. Either way, you can reduce the dependency on "grey fleet" vehicles as well as the associated risks and administrative burdens. Simultaneously, you can cut the demand for parking spaces and ensure that you are paying for lower emission (car club) vehicles, which will inevitably be newer and greener than the average employee owned car.

- **Benefits to the community and the environment**

Car clubs have a vital role to play in reducing society's dependence on the car by

giving members access to a car for essential journeys without the need to own one. Car clubs have been operating successfully in mainland Europe since the early 1990s. The Carplus Annual Survey suggests that one car club car in London replaces up to 17 privately owned vehicles that are sold, disposed of or purchase deferred in the past 12 months. In England and Wales outside of London the comparable figure is 11 vehicles¹. Car club members also make significant changes to their travel behaviour, with members in London travelling 57% fewer miles than the London household average. Car club members are more likely to travel by other modes rather than use the car – in London 32% of car club members are regular cyclists and 74% regularly travel by bus (these figures compare with London wide averages of 12% and 61% respectively)².

Car club use can therefore contribute towards achievement of the following policy objectives:

- **Reduced congestion / parking problems**
Fewer cars on the road means less congestion and fewer parking spaces required. Car clubs can support the introduction of a CPZ (Controlled Parking Zone) by given residents a cheaper option than paying out for a parking permit for their private car. If local businesses join the car club, their staff may no longer need to commute by car, further reducing daytime parking pressures.
- **Reduced local pollution**
Car club members often give up older polluting cars upon joining the car club. Car club vehicles produce on average around 33% less carbon than the national average car and general produce less NOx and PM₁₀ than the average car. Members tend to reduce their mileage upon joining, which also helps to contribute to an improvement in local air pollution³.
- **Increased viability of low-car housing and 'Home Zones'**
Car clubs enable developments without parking provision or with 'capped' provision to be viable, by providing access to a pool of cars for when people need them. An area with a car club will have a reduced need for private parking and will therefore create opportunity for a Home Zone by providing space on the streetscape for features such as benches, trees and street art.
- **Improved Neighbourhoods**
In addition, the existence of a car club can increase utilisation of local services, promote neighbourhood co-operation and help combat social exclusion by providing access to vehicles to people who previously had none.

¹ England and Wales figures from the Carplus Annual Survey of car clubs: England and Wales summary report 2013/14 – see <http://www.carplus.org.uk/resources/annual-survey-of-car-clubs/>

² London figures from the Carplus Annual Survey of car clubs: London report 2013/14 – see <http://www.carplus.org.uk/resources/annual-survey-of-car-clubs/>

³ Figures for car clubs in London – from the Carplus Annual Survey of car clubs: London report 2013/14 – see <http://www.carplus.org.uk/resources/annual-survey-of-car-clubs/>

3. Types of parking bay

On-street parking bays

Car club cars require a designated location a short distance from where members live or work. The benefits of this are numerous. The fact that each car has its own dedicated space means that the member is able to quickly and easily find the vehicle they have booked and is able to rely on it always being in the predetermined space. The bay should be clearly marked with an official Department for Transport or Transport Scotland 'Car club permit holders only' sign (TSRGD diagram number 660.8⁴), bearing the clockface logo and the bay should have painted lines in order to prevent illegal parking by other drivers whilst it is empty. The signage for electric vehicle recharging points can be used where appropriate (TSRGD diagram number 660.9⁵). One of the issues currently facing car club operators is that there is not a DfT approved sign for electric vehicle car club bays. Please refer to Section 6 of this guide for more detail on signage and lines.

One car club operator is currently developing a flexible approach where the car club permit refers to a street or zone rather than being linked to a dedicated bay or vehicle. This approach can complement an existing network of dedicated on street bays and can have benefits in terms of ensuring that best usage of car parking bays, particularly in areas of high demand (but not saturation). This approach also enables an authority and operator to trial a car club in a new location as the setup costs are lower than with a dedicated bay.

There are also time benefits associated with this more flexible approach as it reduces the requirement of going through a full TMO/TRO process, which can take up to three months.

Experimental TMO/TROs can also be used to reduce the implementation time of a bay. This can be justified to residents by setting out a clear timescale for review and determination of local opinions (see Chapter 4).

The following are a list of the benefits of on-street parking when compared with other types of car club parking:

- **Credibility**
A highly-visible on-street parking bay on the public highway can serve to lend a car club legitimacy. Trappings such as the official DfT 'Car club permit holders only' sign with logo, and painted lines with lettering demonstrate that the bay has the endorsement of the local authority, which again can underline the credibility of the car club.
- **Community ownership**
By inhabiting a public space the car club gives a perception of local

⁴ TSRGD 2002 version

⁵ TSRGD 2002 version

neighbourhood ownership. By the same definition, a car club bay located in a private space may create an image of exclusivity or private ownership, even if this is not in reality the case.

- **Visibility of service**

Visible bay locations may help ensure a car club's success by being in themselves an advert for the club. Members of the local community will notice the cars/bays on their way past and may stop to investigate them. The location of new car club bays in an area may become a topic of conversation for local residents. In addition, signage sited next to the bay, facing the footway, to include information and contact details for the car club operator (in addition to the official DfT signage mentioned above) will assist in maximising awareness of the bay. Locating bays on or near a street corner helps visibility.

- **Transport option**

Car club bays sited next to a public highway help to place the club firmly within the realm of public transport, thereby establishing it as an alternative public transport option. In addition, situating bays on the street enables them to be integrated with other transport modes nearby, such as bus stops, train/tube stations, taxi ranks and cycle racks. This also enables car club users to effect a smooth and rapid transition between the car club and other transport modes.

- **Accessibility**

On-street parking promotes easy accessibility for car club users. A private parking bay might entail travelling away from the main drag to reach the car club bay e.g. onto a private driveway or across a car park. This could act as a disincentive for members, especially if such areas appear insecure. Locating cycle parking near to the bay can enable interchange between modes (but ensuring that enough clearance is left between the cycle parking and car club bay to access car doors).

- **Personal safety**

This is an important consideration, especially for female and/or elderly car club users, starting or returning from a booking after dark. Such individuals have expressed appreciation when a bay is located on a well-lit and well-utilised street. Elderly users often appreciate the proximity to their homes, the bay often being located nearer to where they live than the local bus or train station. On-street parking is preferable to the bay being located on private land somewhere darker or more secluded, such as a car park which may be quiet at night.

- **Car security**

Being located on a well-lit street and/or overlooked by houses can be important anti-vandalism measures for the car club. Schemes such as neighbourhood watch in the area can also act as a crime deterrent.

- **Attracting a mix of users**
A car club thrives on attracting a mix of users; businesses will utilise the cars during office hours, whereas residents tend towards evenings and weekends. Locating bays near a mixture of residential and business premises will help to encourage a range of users.
- **Cost savings**
On-street car club bays tend to be cost effective when compared with private parking options. The financial savings made by opting for on-street spaces will alleviate financial pressure on the car club operator and mean that the club can thrive as more investment is available for promotional and marketing campaigns.

[Further information on bay allocation and choosing locations for new bays can be found in the Carplus TMO/TRO Guidance Document.](#)

Off-street parking bays

Although in the main, on-street parking bays offer distinct advantages over off-street bays, the utilisation of off-street bays by operators (particularly in the London area) is becoming more mainstream, mainly as a result of market forces. In some instances, the following advantages exist:

- **Cost savings and access to new members**
The majority of off-street parking opportunities are with private companies and thus an expensive option, in some cases operators can find low cost options which compare favourably to on-street parking for several reasons especially in areas where the local authorities charge on a per-bay and/or timed basis for on-street spaces. It may be possible for operators to obtain free or reasonably-priced off street bays by offering up the car club car as a service available for the owner of the private bay. This could apply when making use of a supermarket, community/ faith centre or workplace car park, or indeed when placing a car club car on the driveway of a private property. A partnership with such organisations will bring a ready made membership pool often with a predisposition to sharing with their community.
- **Single operator areas**
In a number of towns, cities and London boroughs the local authority has chosen to put the car club operation out to tender and has selected a particular operator. This effectively excludes other operators from accessing on-street bays in those areas for the period of the tender. The only option for other car club operators who wish to operate in those areas is to provide a service using only off-street parking i.e. utilising bays that do not fall under the auspices of the local authority.
- **Implementation speed**
Obtaining permission to use an on-street bay from the relevant authority can be a lengthy process. Indeed, in some local authorities it is not uncommon for the process from original application through to lining and signing of the bay

to take up to six months. For car club operators this delay has negative impacts on their ability to expand their business at their desired pace. Bypassing the local authority by choosing off-street bays can help to speed up the process of expanding the car club. Off street bays can also offer a way to get car clubs established in an area in advance of a tender process. This can help to illustrate commitment to car clubs, suitability of vehicles, marketing effectiveness and pricing to local residents.

- **Utilising private driveways**

Making use of empty private driveways is one option for car club operators seeking off-street bays. A number of websites have recently been developed which pair up empty driveways with those looking for parking (be they car club operators or private individuals) e.g. <http://www.parkatmyhouse.com/>. There have been examples of the rating authority seeking to charge rates on the transaction where a commercial operator is using private land for dedicated car club parking.

Case study – Off street bays and EV charging points in Aberdeen

There are a significant number off-street parking bays in Aberdeen to accommodate car club EVs and their associated charging infrastructure. In some locations it can be easier to deploy car club EVs if off-street bays are used as it can help to minimise any potential trip hazard posed by EV charge cables, etc.

In areas where it may be difficult to gain public buy-in for an on-street bay there are advantages in looking at off-street options, particularly in the short term. This is a solution adopted in Aberdeen, in areas where public buy-in has been a problem, where there is a perceived risk of residents boycotting the car club over the provision of on-street spaces or where there may be a risk of vandalism. The picture below illustrates one of the off-street EV car club charging bays in Aberdeen.



4. Processes and procedures

There are a number of different elements that need to be addressed in the process of attaining on street parking. Various boroughs have approached the question in different ways, though there are common factors, such as the use of Traffic Management Orders (TMOs) and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), which are a necessary element of the process. The following steps are not all essential, but give an indication of what may be required.

Briefings

Briefing elected members is an important element in gaining political support for the process. This can take one of several forms:

- Producing a briefing document for elected members.
- Producing a 'key decision report' focussing on a discussion regarding, and soliciting borough support for funding of the car club generally. This report could be produced for the cabinet member with responsibility for planning policy and transportation.
- Holding an internal seminar for council officers and elected members.

Controlled Parking Zone review

Establishing a review of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) or undertaking a review of an established CPZ provides a good opportunity for incorporating car club parking within a given area. The implementation of car club bays should be considered at the same time as introducing a new CPZ because often parking space is freed up and it is the perfect time for new adopters to sign up. The costs of providing a parking bay will also be minimised, and the consultation over the introduction, extension or modification of a CPZ will be enhanced with the inclusion of a car club within the area. Residents will see the car club as an alternative option to owning and paying for a private car, or may realise the benefits of disposing of a second vehicle in the household.

As a result of incorporating car club bays as part of a CPZ review it may be possible to re-design street with less residential parking space and more community space like wider footpaths, trees, play areas or picnic benches.

Traffic Management Orders

TMOs and TROs are usually an essential element of securing on street parking. This can be a lengthy process, and is open to the vagaries of consultation. The process can be made more manageable if of the following factors are taken into consideration:

- Open communication between operator and local authority. Effective dialogue including outline of realistic plans within the local authority, such as

number and dates of requirements, precise preferred locations, along with options if these are unsuitable, are examples of the detail needed.

- Adoption of car clubs as agreed policy within the local authority. This requires education for elected members alongside officers in highways and planning departments. This process should not be limited to officers responsible for transport and travel.
- Support of the public as opposed to objectors can be gained through generating positive publicity and sharing information about the car club in leaflets and meetings before the process of formal consultation takes place.

Use of experimental TROs for car club bays

Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 enables traffic authorities to make experimental TROs. Such an Order may relate to anything which can be covered by a regular TRO and is used in situations where authorities want to 'test the water' before deciding whether to make the restriction permanent.

The main difference in procedures between experimental and permanent TROs is that objections are invited after an experimental order is made. For a permanent TRO, objections must be invited and considered before a decision is taken on whether to make the TRO.

Experimental TROs may be appropriate for some locations, particularly where a car club bay may not have been previously located as this allows the level of usage to be monitored before a decision is taken on whether to make the bay(s) permanent.

This should not however be seen as a way of quickly making a TRO without going through the normal procedures of consultation and consideration of objections. In order to avoid the possibility of a successful challenge in the High Court an authority must be able to demonstrate where the element of experiment or uncertainty lies.

[Further information on bay allocation and choosing locations for new bays can be found in the Carplus TMO/TRO Guidance Document⁶.](#)

Allocation of bays

The following section outlines the different elements involved in the process of on-street parking bay allocation.

Competitive tender

Local authorities have allocated parking bays in different ways to date. In part this was due to the lack of alternative operators in the field. However, with the emergence of a number of operators, most authorities are adopting a process that involves some element of tender. The tender will include requirements of provision

⁶ With thanks to Graham Lowe at Cheshire West and Chester Council for the information in the above box.

(e.g. number, type and locations of vehicle; anticipated expansion of service; etc.) rather than a simplistic focus on financial elements. In some areas, where there is competition, local authorities have offered bays on a rotational basis or have devised a written agreement whereby operators must utilise bays in less desirable locations in order to obtain bays in more lucrative areas. Remember that car club members are often committed to using their local operator and are not always open to changing to a new service provider.

There are benefits to requesting an expression of interest from car club operators before issuing a tender as this can help save costs in avoiding a full tender if there is only one interested operator.

Charge to operator, or provided free

Some authorities provide free parking and some recover just the cost of permit administration. In some London boroughs a differential is charged between high demand areas and low demand neighbourhoods.

At least one authority has taken a lead in the provision of parking bays. Having identified potential sites, they have carried out a TMO or TRO process and then made the bays available to operators, at a fixed cost, on a first come, first served basis or on rotation. Discussion with operators in terms of location is advisable in this instance, but it is proving an effective means of ensuring rapid development of car club provision.

Many operators or sole provider

A key debate in the development of car clubs in the UK at present concerns the co-existence of several operators in the same place. It has emerged mainly as several operators have set up in London in recent years, and as some towns and cities outside the capital have more than one operator (Bristol and Oxford).

The advantages and drawbacks are, to some extent, based on the different perspectives of operator, local authority or user. Furthermore, some of the arguments change when considering the present time, the mid-term and the longer-term future as well. As there is still huge capacity in the UK, the debate is more about working out the ground rules of co-existence rather than competition as such.

As an operator, there are clear advantages of having exclusivity in an area. This can help to ensure that there is clarity when communicating with the user and focussing on providing the best service rather than on “competing” with a rival. The quality of service will be reflected in the number of people and organisations who decide to join. This is a more constructive incentive than inter-operator rivalry.

From the local authority point of view, there is some argument that competition between operators provides better service and choice for users – especially if the different operators have different models and pricing structures. In some of the London Boroughs, a bidding process for on-street parking bays exists. Multiple operators in competition provide the local authority with a degree of power. At this level, “competition” should be about an authority having influence over which

operator would provide the most appropriate service for that place. If, however, the differences between operators are slight – at least in the eyes of the user, then it is difficult to see who benefits from such a situation.

What are the benefits for the user?

In denser, larger cities, the local co-existence of a number of operators provides a degree of choice. This choice is largely about car type and cost structure, though at present, the latter is about whether usage cost is weighted to membership or mileage/time use rather than total cost. As there is little margin for end-user cost competition, price wars are unlikely. The quality and reliability of service from the main operators is largely comparable, and this is underpinned to an extent by the national Carplus Accreditation Scheme. It could be argued that the authority should have the means to re-allocate bays if standards or growth targets are not met. Sometimes attracting an additional operator can be beneficial when authorities are looking to expand car club services into a new area and the existing operator is not keen to expand.

Practically there are a number of disadvantages to having a multiple operator system. Having a network of closely located bays run by one company means there are alternatives if a member's first choice of bay is booked. So this would not be possible with multiple operators. Secondly marketing messages may get confused and be less cost effective for the operators if business cannot be maximised in the area. Thirdly from the local authority's perspective, working in partnership with a number of operators will take more time in administration. Competition is an illusion if you live in a less densely populated area where there may only be one vehicle to choose from within walking distance.

In general, Carplus believes that in London and the larger cities in the UK, fast development of car clubs enables multiple operators to develop successfully in the same area, but in smaller locations or with slower start-up models, a single operator model may be more effective, at least in the short term. In due course multi-operator arrangements should be considered when the level of operation reaches a certain threshold (we suggest above 100 cars). We would also argue that ultimately, some element of inter-operability between providers would be of benefit for the end user, though there are few examples where this has currently been implemented. Collaboration with Public Transport operators is a far more pressing issue at this stage of car club sector development.

Resourcing of parking allocation

There is a significant cost involved in the conversion of a parking bay for exclusive car club use; signage, painting of lines, possible alteration of road surface etc. There are costs (e.g. press advertising) for the public consultation too. These costs can be met in one of a number of ways:

Local authority

Funding for car club bays can be met entirely by the local authority. This can be raised through the council's capital funding (for example, specifically allocated to car

clubs, identified in the LTP or LIP, or LTS in Scotland). In London there may be funding available via Transport for London for these purposes.

Controlled Parking Zone review

Where the cost of conversion is met as part of the introduction or review of a CPZ, the cost is significantly lower than for the provision of a single bay, due to the economies of scale in the whole process. Actual costs would still be incurred in the marking out of the bays.

Section 75 and Section 106 agreements

Car club bays can be funded through the use of Section 75 agreements (in Scotland) and Section 106 agreements (in England and Wales) with developers. As part of the planning consent a developer may be required to meet the cost of providing the bays, which would then be available to the local authority to allocate according to its existing policy. A developer may additionally be required to provide parking bays within its building parking provision, and contribute to the costs of operating those club cars for a period of time. Such payments may be routed wholly through the Local Planning Authority (LPA) or through the LPA for on-street parking cost and directly contracted with a preferred operator to meet the set up and initial operating costs.

Car club operator

The car club operator could be required to meet the full costs of on street parking provision. This would be a significant, if not prohibitive, expense to an operator and would reduce the growth of the car club. Given the benefits that accrue to the locality through the provision of a parking bay this approach would be counter productive. One way to reduce the costs associated with on-street parking bays would be for the operator to implement many bays at once thereby creating an economy of scale.

Leasing of bays

A further option is for the local authority to meet the full cost of providing the parking bay, and then make it available to an operator for an agreed amount, either a one-off payment, or on an annual fee basis. Some authorities have introduced an annual rent equivalent to local business or residents rates after an initial free period of a year or two.

Comment on options

It is not equitable for the initial operator to fund a network of bays and find that within a few years another operator is selected through competitive tender. It is more equitable for a modest permit charge to be levied annually.

5. Parking: issues and solutions

This section of the guide examines many of the issues connected with on-street parking and ways in which these can be overcome. Some of these are issues which principally affect car club operators, but for which local authorities can assist in finding solutions.

Issue: Processing of bays

Undertaking the appropriate procedures in order to implement the legal operation of a dedicated car club parking bay can be a lengthy process in many cases. In some instances it has taken up to two years from the bay being identified to it being marked and signed, ready for car club use although 6 months is more typical. This can cause problems for the operator in terms of timing for obtaining vehicles, installing smart card technology and knowing when to initiate a marketing campaign. From the point of view of the local authority, delays can be damaging as it will delay vehicle installation and member recruitment targets being met.

Solution

A good working relationship between the car club operator and officers responsible at the local authority has been identified as essential in ensuring efficient processing of bays. Equally, communication between officers and departments within the local authority are very important. Delays are often exacerbated when more than one department is involved in approving the bays and preparing them for car club use. The existence of a 'champion' – someone in the local authority who is enthusiastic about car clubs and will wax lyrical to their colleagues is an essential ingredient in the process. Finally the consultation process will be eased if the benefits of the car clubs are understood by the local community. [Further information on bay allocation and choosing locations for new bays can be found in the Carplus TMO/TRO Guidance Document.](#)

Issue: Charges

The relevance of charging business rates on on-street parking bays has been considered by the relevant authorities in both Edinburgh and Leeds. In both these cases the decision was made that the bays were not subject to rates. Contact Carplus for further information on this issue.

Issue: Community objections

Local residents may put up objections to the car club if they perceive the bays as a threat in an already parking-pressured environment.

Solution

It is helpful from the outset to ensure community involvement in, and awareness of a new car club in the area. By this token, local residents can appreciate how the bays might benefit both them as individuals and their community environment as a whole. It is important in keeping the community on board to disseminate facts and

figures demonstrating the benefits of car clubs, such as those to be found in Chapter 2 of this guide.

It may help increase local acceptability if the bays are implemented as part of a CPZ (controlled parking zone) review. Such a review also provides an opportunity to promote the concept of a car club together with mailings or other CPZ communications. The linking together of bay implementation with a CPZ can also be of financial benefit to the car club as this is a more cost-effective measure than carrying out the former independently.

Other factors which may help in gaining community support involve transforming existing unused or redundant infrastructure into car club bays:

- Converting single yellow lines into on-street parking bays; or
- Transforming old, unused disabled parking spaces.

Issue: bays are left empty for significant periods (e.g. over a month)

This may be as a result of an operator removing a vehicle due to insufficient demand in a particular location or due to a damaged vehicle or a vehicle awaiting replacement in the fleet. In some locations where double bays have been introduced, they may only be occupied by one vehicle due to lack of demand.

Solution

Bays may be temporarily decommissioned (for example by grey marking of the official sign, use of a suspension notice and informing local residents). Where double bays are under-utilised, boroughs and local authorities may need to take a more flexible approach to reducing/increasing demand from single to double bays as required.

Issue: Illegal parking

Parking problems in the local area – one of the very problems that car clubs seek to address, can cause trouble for the club as residents may be driven by a lack of spaces or laziness to park illegally in the car club bay.

Solution

The presence of an official Department for Transport or Transport Scotland ‘Car club permit holders only’ sign adjacent to the bay is an essential tool to discourage illegal parking. A small street sign explaining the purpose of the car club, the fact that it is used 24 hours a day and supplying contact details for the operator may help deter people from abusing the space.

Traditionally, the words “car club only” have been applied to the ground adjacent to the bay, however there are examples in Aberdeen where it has been extremely effective to apply the lettering inside the bay in areas of parking pressure as this acts as a deterrent to illegal parking in the car club bay. A secondary benefit of this approach is that the wording does not get rubbed off so quickly by passing traffic meaning less maintenance is required.

Locating the bay in areas where a parking enforcement regime is already established i.e. an area frequented by parking wardens, can be a major advantage. Within a CPZ (controlled parking zone) it is beneficial for car club cars to be issued with resident's parking permits so that the member may park elsewhere (without being subject to a fine) if the car club bay is illegally occupied. Out of hours contact details for those responsible for enforcing the bay should be made available to the club in order that illegally parked bays can be reported without delay.

This issue can also be tackled by issuing car club permits that are specific to a street or parking zone rather than a specific bay. It is also helpful if car club permits are not registration specific to allow operators to substitute vehicles where necessary.

Issue: Short term parking

Car club bays, when left empty during a booking, tend to attract opportunist short-term parkers who assume they will be able to leave their car undisturbed for a few minutes while they collect a takeaway or rent a video. This will become a problem if the car club member attempts to return a car while the space is occupied.

Solution

Clear labelling of car club bays and the situating of an approved (DfT or Transport Scotland) 'Car club permit holders only' sign, may be enough to deter some opportunist parkers. However, car club operators have found that where possible it is best to avoid locating bays outside fast-food outlets, convenience stores, video rental shops or schools or anywhere that short-term parking may occur.

Issue: Vandalism

Problems of crime may result if the car club car is located in an obscure on-street bay, especially if this is located in a high crime area. Car club cars tend to be relatively new and kept in good condition which may attract unwanted attention. New signage may attract graffiti.

Solution

Thieves will be deterred by smart card technology, which renders the car immobile unless the person who has made the booking is present. GPS (a global tracking device) is often incorporated by the car club operator and the fact that many clubs operate liveried cars allows them to be easily identified. CCTV in the area of the bay may also act as a deterrent. The London borough of Hackney has taken the approach of distributing a letter to all nearby residents stating that vandalism is a criminal offence and that they will take action against anyone caught. Also the letter asks residents to report any acts of vandalism directly if they see it taking place.

Issue: Accidental damage

The accidental clipping of wing mirrors/scraping of paintwork by other vehicles has been reported by operators.

Solution

Encouraging members to park carefully within the marked bay and to fold in wing

mirrors when their booking has finished results in far fewer damage incidents and consequently avoids repair bills which can be financially damaging to the car club.

Issue: Cleanliness

Bays being located under trees have resulted in cars being soiled by bird droppings, tree sap or falling leaves in autumn. Members do not appreciate dirty cars and the cost of cleaning will add up.

Solution

The siting of bays under trees or utility wires should be avoided wherever possible.

6. Parking bay design

Design of on-street furniture

The signage adjacent to the bay should include the official Department for Transport approved car club sign pictured below:



In Scotland, car club signage approved by Transport Scotland is available, pictured below.



Additional signage, exhibiting operators trading name and logo may be permitted with the approval of the local authority. Such a panel could include information regarding the car club as well as contact details of the operator. It might incorporate a map showing other car club stations and local public transport facilities. An example of this signage from Islington is included below.

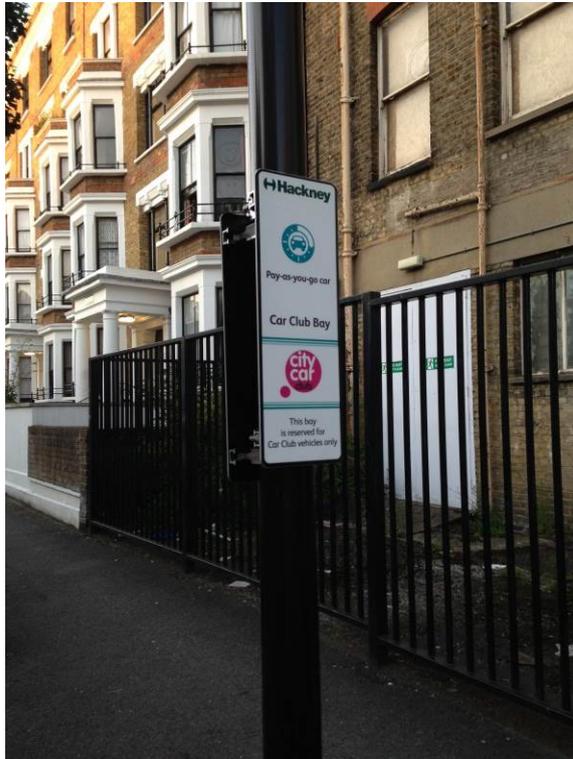


In London, boroughs may use car club signage as permitted by TfL and DfT pictured below. These signs are currently subject to ongoing consultation between TfL and DfT.



Proposed TfL/borough car club signage

Non-statutory signs may also be used to promote car clubs to pedestrians. An example of these signs in place in Hackney is included below.



Non-statutory signage promoting car clubs in Hackney

The mounting of additional information boards onto car club bay sign posts should not require planning permission⁷.

⁷ See page 19 Schedule 3, Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/783/pdfs/ukxi_20070783_en.pdf

On-street bay design

Parking bays need to be clearly marked out from the surrounding highway for two main reasons: to prevent misuse by other drivers parking their vehicle in the bay and as a means of information and marketing for the car club.



The bays should be marked with white or yellow lines, have wording such as 'Car club vehicles only' and should ideally be of a different surface colour. Where feasible car club stations should also include secure bike storage for those who wish to cycle to and from the vehicle.

Car Club only parking bay

Carplus has experience of helping car club operators design and implement the most suitable car club parking bay in each circumstance. In addition, there is an important role for local authorities in assisting the operators with the most effective bay design.

Appendix A – Carplus Accreditation scheme

Carplus operates an accreditation scheme for car clubs, in conjunction with a working group of local authority representatives. The aim is to provide a tool for organisations to use to assess which operators should be supported or chosen for a contract. A set of criteria is available on the Carplus website.

Local authorities are increasingly supporting car clubs with funding and provision of on-street parking. The Carplus accreditation scheme acts as a tool for organisations to use in assessing which clubs to support. This official scheme makes it quicker and easier to vet clubs and to be consistent.

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

Car clubs will benefit from using the accreditation logo in their marketing, but with a charge for administering each approval not all clubs want to apply for accreditation. This does not mean they are not bona fide clubs. Indeed many smaller community based clubs will not face the situations where it is needed.

Further details can be found on the Carplus website - <http://www.carplus.org.uk/membership/car-club-accreditation/>

This document may not be reproduced or resold without permission in writing from Carplus Trust. This material does not give a full statement of the law but is intended for guidance only, and is not a substitute for professional advice. No responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting can be taken by Carplus Trust

Charity number: 1093980