

**The Role of Local Authorities and Public
Transport Operators in Successful Car Clubs**

Supplementary Report 2 to the Final Report

on

**Car Sharing and Car Clubs : Potential and
Impacts**

Prepared for

**DTLR and The Motorists' Forum
under contract PPAD/9/82/11**

by

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February 2002

Executive Summary

This report addresses the role of local authorities and public transport operators in the development of car clubs.

We conclude that local authority involvement is crucial to the success of car clubs (except perhaps those designed for special target groups such as employees of a particular organisation, where local authority involvement may be desirable but is not essential). We note that, although there are very many ways in which local authorities can assist car clubs, the provision of funding and an appropriate parking policy are perhaps the most important. We note that the promotion of car clubs can fit very well with local authorities' transport and planning policies.

We conclude that the involvement of public transport operators in a joint arrangement to provide discounted fares for club members can provide an important catalyst to the growth of car clubs, and that both sides can benefit from co-operation in areas such as marketing and smartcards.

We have made Eighteen recommendations for action or research designed to overcome barriers to the involvement of local authorities and public transport operators in the development of car clubs. They are:

To raise awareness

1. Actions should be taken to raise the profile of the car club concept among the general public. The prime means of achieving this would be to seek media coverage by:
 - distribution of professional-quality publicity material to selected journals, newspapers, lifestyle magazines, TV and radio programmes;
 - ministerial attendance at a high-profile (re)launch of a car club (this could be linked with adoption of a flagship scheme - see below);
 - seeking to have the concept included in the storyline for a TV or radio soap opera.
2. DTLR should give immediate consideration to adopting one or more car clubs with a view to its promotion as a high profile flagship scheme to demonstrate the concept in a UK context
3. The designation of an official symbol, logo or pictogram for car club parking points and inclusion of the same within the Highway Code should be considered and car clubs be encouraged to display any such logo prominently on their vehicles.
4. Actions should be taken to raise the profile of the car club concept among local authorities:
 - the visibility of car clubs within government documents should be raised. DTLR should consider adding suitable words to the next versions of PPG13, PPG3 and to the guidance notes for the preparation of funding bids, Regional and Local Transport Plans, Travel awareness strategies, Green Travel Plans,

Homezones, Controlled Parking Zones and Air Quality Management areas. Transport for London and the Regional Assemblies should be encouraged to mention car clubs in their relevant documents for use by their constituent authorities

- Local authorities should be encouraged to include reference to car clubs in local design guides and Supplementary Planning Guidance notes – perhaps including a requirement for serious consideration to be given to the establishment of car clubs in all new developments over a certain size.
 - A ministerial statement should be made indicating government support for the car club concept in the context of sustainable urban mobility
 - DTLR should consider inviting local authority opinion leaders to an event, hosted at ministerial level, at which the contribution of car clubs to the achievement of transport planning is emphasised
5. Particular action is needed to raise the profile of the car club concept among public transport operators. We suggest that a key means of achieving this could be to invite senior people from the industry to an event, hosted at ministerial level, at which the contribution of car clubs to increased use of public transport is emphasised.
 6. We recommend that the term “car sharing” should not be used in official documents or publicity material to refer to car clubs.

To achieve political support:

7. Independent should be undertaken to establish the robustness of the European evidence and to seek reliable evidence from the existing UK schemes. Given that existing UK data is likely to prove inconclusive we further recommend that a robust monitoring programme be devised and that its implementation should be a condition of government support for car clubs.
8. Government literature on car clubs should emphasise that car clubs are most likely to reduce traffic levels if they can attract former car owners.
9. Thought should be given to the possibility and consequences of targeting financial support towards financially disadvantaged members of car clubs via reduced subscriptions.

To secure funding to support car clubs during their early years:

10. DTLR should consider how best to facilitate LTP/LIP related bids for funds to support car clubs and, more generally, to consider how funds intended for such initiatives can be protected within a overall allocation.
11. A report should be commissioned to explore the funding mechanisms available and to produce guidance for local authorities on how and where to seek funding.
12. Further investigations should be conducted to explore what level of contributions might realistically be expected from developers of different types of scheme in different circumstances.

13. The scope and limitations of Section 106 agreements and the tariff approach should be further explored as a means of securing developer support for car clubs.
14. The benefits to the local authority of corporate membership should be quantified and, if the case is convincing, the results should be circulated to local authority departments responsible for procurement and finance.

To provide guidance on practical issues:

15. We recommend that the production of guidance for local authorities should be given priority and that, when available, it should be launched with appropriate publicity and an executive summary suitable for elected members. The guide should cover the following aspects:
 - Evidence of impacts (traffic, parking, accessibility)
 - Sources of funding (special government grants and funds, LTP grants, Section 106 agreements, European funds, charitable grants)
 - Incorporation into the Local Transport Plan and strategy documents (with advice and examples highlighting the relationship with other elements such as parking policy, CPZ implementation, Road user charging, Workplace parking levies, Planning policy, PPG13, PPG3, Green Travel Plans, Travel Awareness)
 - Co-operation with property developers
 - Co-operation with public transport operators
 - Technology options
 - Selection of a club operator
 - Use of criteria to identify schemes worthy of public support. Such criteria, which would define, and help to promulgate, good practice, might cover aspects such as inter-operability, financial soundness, insurance and maintenance of vehicles, quality of service, access by disadvantaged groups and arrangements for usage monitoring
 - Monitoring of impacts.
16. We recommend that training courses should be provided for local authority personnel interested in promoting car clubs and that these courses should be endorsed by DTLR in its advice on sustainable transport and land use planning.
17. We recommend that DTLR should include mention of the role of car clubs in its guidance on the preparation of LTPs, RPG, SPG, and in the next revision of relevant PPGs.
18. We recommend that contacts be made to establish whether the role of the Dutch organisation, *Stichting van Gedeeld Autogebruik*, goes beyond that played by CarPlus in the UK, and if so, to consider what might be learned from the Dutch model.

CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Specification	1
1.2	Study Method.....	2
2.	The Involvement of Local Authorities	3
2.1	The role of local authorities in the development of car clubs.....	3
2.2	Quantifying the effect of local authority involvement on car club development.....	5
2.3	Reasons for the involvement of local authorities in the development of car clubs	6
2.4	Barriers to greater involvement	6
3.	The Involvement of Public Transport Operators and Car Clubs	8
3.1	The Role of Public Transport Operators in the development of Car Clubs.....	8
3.2	Quantifying the effect on car club membership.....	9
3.3	Reasons for the involvement of public transport operators in the development of car clubs	9
3.4	Barriers to greater involvement of public transport operators	9
4.	Means of Increasing the Involvement of Local Authorities and Public Transport Operators	11
4.1	To raise awareness	11
4.2	To achieve political support.....	13
4.3	To secure funding to support car clubs during their early years.....	13
4.4.	To provide guidance on practical issues	14

1 Introduction

1.1 Specification

This topic was identified by the Steering Group on 4th December 2001 as one of four to be pursued within Phase Three of the Project. The full list of four topics is:

- 1 Car Clubs in New Developments
- 2 The Role of Local Authorities and Public Transport Operators in Successful Car Clubs
- 3 The Potential Role of Car Sharing and Car Clubs within Socially Disadvantaged Groups
- 4 The role of Internet Matching Services

As requested by the Steering Group, each of the four topics has been addressed in a freestanding document. These four documents act as supplements to our Final Report

The issues which we proposed to consider within the current topic report were:

- Advantages (and disadvantages) to car clubs from active involvement of local authorities
- Advantages (and disadvantages) to car clubs from active involvement of public transport operators
- Advantages (and disadvantages) to local authorities from car clubs
- Advantages (and disadvantages) to public transport operators from car clubs
- Examples of good practice (e.g. Bristol and Edinburgh)
- Real and perceived barriers to involvement of local authorities (quoting examples / reasons for non-involvement)
- Real and perceived barriers to involvement of public transport operators (quoting examples / reasons for non-involvement)
- Ways to overcome the barriers (e.g. promotion of flagship schemes -new or adopted, dissemination of guidance on good practice, inclusion in official or supplementary guidance notes, publicity for success stories)
- Recommendations or action and/or further research

It was intended that the report would:

- evidence, with examples, the success of car clubs where there is the active involvement of local authorities and public transport operators, including a quantification of the impact on car club patronage of that involvement;
- explain the role of local authority and public transport operators in car club development and the reasons for their involvement;
- advise on what measures might be taken (and by whom) to encourage more local authorities and public transport operators to support car club schemes; and
- identify further possible research/pilot studies that DTLR/Motorists' Forum might promote.

1.2 Study Method

This topic report presents a synthesis of evidence and opinion derived from existing documents and discussions with key people involved, or potentially involved, in collaborating to establish or promote car clubs. It was thought important to include people whose experience had been frustrating or disappointing as well as those for whom the collaboration had gone well.

The German and Swiss literature identified during the first phase of the project was re-examined to find examples of the difference made to car clubs when links were formed with local authorities or public transport operators. This was supplemented by a very useful review recently conducted by Enoch within the MOSES project (Moses WP6 , November, 2001)

The organisations contacted included CarPlus (formerly CCSN), SmartMoves, Bath Car, BEST, Co-Drive Leeds, Driveshare Car Club Coventry, Edinburgh City Car Club, Woodgate Car Club, First Bristol, First Bath, First Leeds, Lothian Transport and local authority officers in Bristol, Camden, Edinburgh, Leeds, Leicester and Oxford.

2. The Involvement of Local Authorities

2.1 The role of local authorities in the development of car clubs

Our interviews with the car clubs suggested that local authorities had helped in the development of car clubs in the following ways:

- financial support during the start-up phase and beyond
- assistance in provision of parking locations for car club cars
- marketing, advertising and general profile-raising
- complementary planning policies
- facilitating links with public transport operators
- facilitating access to external sponsors
- providing general administrative support – e.g. use of council premises for meetings (Edinburgh) or providing insurance for car club vehicles (Lincolnshire)
- becoming corporate members of the club.

It is unusual for a local authority to act as scheme organiser (although Lincolnshire's involvement in the Holbeach Scheme comes close to a precedent) or even to originate the idea. The more typical situation is that the local authority becomes involved after an approach from a community group seeking funds and other assistance to help them establish a car club. Some of these requests fall on stony ground – others lead on to greater things.

An idea of the scale of financial support received by car clubs from local authorities is provided by the following statistics:

- **Bath Car** received £10,000 from Bath city council in order to set up and then a further £30,000 over two years;
- **BEST** benefited from a feasibility study and a grant of £36,000 over two years from Bristol City Council;
- **Edinburgh Car Club** benefited from an initial grant of £48,000 from Edinburgh City Council in order to help start the scheme, a further £40,000 over a two year period (2001 – 2002). These grants were in addition to £150,000 from Central Government for technology and other starting up costs, and £30,000 from the Scottish Executive to cover the cost of monitoring the project (Hobley 2001 in Enoch, 2001).

Even though some of these grants are relatively modest they are invaluable at the setting up stage. For example, it is readily acknowledged by those involved in the Edinburgh club that it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to set up a club without this financial assistance. It was suggested that setting up a small scale community car club without funding might just be feasible, but anything larger needs money.

Our interviewees thought that a key benefit of local authority involvement was in the provision of designated or subsidised parking for the car club, especially where parking would otherwise be difficult or expensive. For example:

- Edinburgh has provided seven stations, each capable of holding two cars, around the city. These stations are tow-away zones which are strictly enforced by the

council – the Council’s preparedness to enforce the designation is particularly valuable in the city centre sites.

- Bristol City Council are in the process of providing approximately 4 preferential bays. Here the council is not only making the land available but are also undertaking the legal aspects by implementing a Traffic Regulation Order.
- Bath Car has benefited from subsidised parking at city centre locations; two such car parking spaces are located at Broad Street, a five minute walk from the city centre. The car club cars will be based in the car park permanently and have their own designated spaces with retractable bollards in front of them to prevent anyone else using the spaces. There is no charge for the car club and so car club members can park for free near town. For comparison charges for 3-4 hours car parking would be £4.00.
- The possibility of free parking at city centre locations has been suggested for BEST car users.
- In Toronto the car club is allowed a 30% discount on monthly parking permits.
- The Netherlands have national guidelines which allow car clubs access to on-street sites.

Another aspect is the importance of making it clear that the car park spaces belong to the car club, and this was noted to be a problem in Portland (Enoch, 2001). Clear signing and the tow-away system in Edinburgh, and the use of bollards in Bath, have been used to reduce this problem.

Local authority support in the provision of marketing and publicity can be very valuable. For example Edinburgh Council assists in the promotion and advertising of the car club in several ways:

- as part of the On Route campaign, which publicises the local transport strategy
- car club leaflets are produced by the Council’s in-house printing department
- signs on the car club parking bays explain what the car club is and who to contact for more information
- the Council’s public relations person writes the car club press releases.

Our interviewees suggested that, among the complementary planning policies which can assist a car club, the most important are:

- restriction of parking in the city centre - thus reducing the attractiveness of private car use;
- restriction of parking in residential areas (e.g. via a Controlled Parking Zone) – thus reducing the attractiveness of private car ownership;
- restricting the provision of parking in new developments, – again reducing the attractiveness of private car ownership;
- promoting a good level of public transport – thus facilitating a multimodal lifestyle.

The car club organisers we interviewed noted that, even if tangible support from the local authority was minimal, high profile support from the local authority reflects favourably on the car club, indicating that there is some substance behind it. Permission to use the Local Authority logo in promotional literature and on the sides of car club vehicles, was indicated as an example of a cheap but effective expression of support. Inclusion of car clubs within the local authority transport plan (as in

Bristol, Boston, USA, and Montreal, Canada) can be another demonstration of support.

The local authority can facilitate links with local organisations (as potential corporate members), with the public transport operator, with local taxi firms, and with potential sponsors. Bremen is regarded as a prime example of a local authority which has been very effective in promoting links between the car club and the local public transport operator. The most obvious example current in the UK is the co-operation between the BEST car club and First Bristol. It is clear that the financial support that Edinburgh car club received from central government and the Scottish Executive would not have been available but for lobbying by the City Council. Similarly the European support for BEST and the Southwark club would not have been forthcoming without the active involvement of the respective local authorities.

A local authority can, of course, become a corporate member of a car club. This can be a mutually beneficial arrangement because the council can use underutilised club vehicles during the day (most residential schemes have under-utilised vehicles during the working day). In Edinburgh, three of the ten vehicles are based at the City Chambers and are available for use on Council business. This replaces the previous council pool car leasing arrangements. It is planned to expand this to five cars in 2002.

2.2 Quantifying the effect of local authority involvement on car club development

It is almost impossible to quantify the effect of local authority involvement on the development of car clubs because, in most cases the local authority has been involved from the start and, without them, the scheme would probably not have existed. A recent example of failure of a scheme to get off the drawing board can be found in Huddersfield where, despite initial interest from the local authority, a political decision not to allocate funds to the scheme has led to its cancellation.

Very few car clubs have survived without the active involvement of a local authority, and those that have are typically very small. Campus Cars in Cranfield and the Manchester Airport Employee scheme are perhaps the biggest UK schemes without local authority involvement and both serve a specific community and so have little need for local authority support. Other examples include two fairly informal schemes in Leicester and the Oxford Carvenience scheme which, interestingly is not flourishing as well as it perhaps ought – a fact which some of our interviewees associate with the absence of on-the-ground support from a local authority and failure to secure appropriate parking locations. Another example of a scheme, which had minimal local authority support was that in Coventry where the local authority help was limited to assistance with marketing (a request for provision of on-street parking for club members was turned down); this level of support was clearly insufficient because the scheme has now folded. It remains to be seen whether developer-led schemes, such as the Grand Union Village site in Ealing/Hillingdon, OneE8 in Lewisham, or smaller schemes in Brighton and Reading, none of which has significant local authority involvement, manage to thrive.

Bremen and Berlin are good examples of schemes which started out as small scale community initiatives without local authority support but which grew rapidly once adopted by the local authority. The Leeds Co-drive scheme began with a modest (£5,000) start-up grant from the City Council together with council help in obtaining an EAF grant and other charitable donations. The scheme then stagnated for lack of significant additional support but this state of affairs may shortly change because the City council and Passenger Transport Executive have offered matching funding for a bid for “Target 2” European funding which, if successful, will allow the club to expand very significantly.

Subsidised and guaranteed city centre parking is clearly an important ‘perk’ for car club members. It is difficult to quantify the value of this perk but our Edinburgh contacts suggested that ease of parking is a definite motivation for joining the car club. Two out of the five Edinburgh car club members interviewed during Phase One, when asked about their motivation for joining the car club, cited parking as a reason. BEST car club members have expressed great interest in the prospect of free parking in the city centre.

2.3 Reasons for the involvement of local authorities in the development of car clubs

The key reason given by our local authority interviewees for their council’s involvement in the development of car clubs was that it fitted in with their policies for transport and planning (reduction in traffic, reduction in pollution, promotion of more sustainable land use patterns, encouragement of local initiative, allowing people to make informed choices about their car use). Interestingly, none of our interviewees attempted to quantify the contribution that car clubs might make to the achievement of these objectives (although we noted that Bristol City Council is undertaking surveys to monitor changes in travel behaviour associated with the BEST car club).

It was suggested that a particular attraction of car clubs to local authorities is that, in marked contrast to the general perception of parking policies and public transport priority measures, car clubs are not seen as being anti-car. The council’s promotion of car clubs signals an appreciation that people do sometimes need to use a car.

One of the reasons given by Edinburgh City Council for its support for the car club is that it benefits from the use of car club vehicles at more competitive rates than its previous arrangement, another is that, by being a member, it is demonstrating its support for the concept and doing its bit as a conscientious employer.

A more general but rather elusive reason for local authority involvement in car clubs is that there exists, somewhere in the authority, an individual who is committed to the concept and is prepared to champion it. The existence of a champion does not guarantee that support will be forthcoming – there are many potential champions who do not have the necessary influence – but absence of a champion makes it unlikely.

2.4 Barriers to greater involvement

Potential barriers identified by our interviewees or in the literature include:

- Lack of knowledge/understanding of what a car club is. Some local authorities are unaware of the car club concept or confuse it with car rental, employer car pools, ridesharing or liftgiving. The car club concept is not very visible within government documents. Although car clubs are mentioned in some official documents (notably in the context of the new Parish Funds within rural transport settlements) and although government support for pilot schemes is known to the cognoscenti, it would be quite possible for a local government official to be unaware of the fact that car clubs might have a role to play in the promotion of sustainable transport. It is widely held (Enoch, 2001) that a major barrier faced by North American car clubs is the local authorities' ignorance of the concept.
- Lack of political support. Some elected members, although aware of the concept, are loathe to offer their support. There may be several reasons for this, for example:
 - a lack of perceived need (for example, if they do not suffer from congestion or a shortage of parking, they may put low priority on the potential traffic reduction effect of car clubs);
 - a scepticism about the ability of a car club to contribute to their transport objectives. It is clear that many government officials and elected members, even if aware of the car club concept, do not believe that it can have a beneficial effect on traffic levels. Firstly they are not convinced that it can attract significant numbers of members and secondly they are not convinced that members would use their cars less. The evidence from continental Europe on levels of uptake is frequently dismissed as being of limited relevance to the UK and the evidence on reduced car usage is suspected as being partisan;
 - a concern that support for car clubs would be seen as anti public transport;
 - a concern that measures to promote car clubs - such as designation of scarce car parking space for exclusive use of car club vehicles – would be resented by car-owning voters.
- Lack of knowledge of what to do. Some local authorities express an interest in the concept but do not feel confident about how to go about promoting it.
- Lack of funds to support car clubs. Few local authorities are in a position to make a substantial contribution to the establishment of a car club or to guarantee the medium-term revenue funding necessary to attract an external service supplier to make the initial investment. Local authority funding for car clubs has to compete with other calls on a resource – and some of the other calls may have much greater political appeal (a general worry was expressed about the future with a single capital pot). Although several local authorities have provided funds, their contribution would have been insufficient if other sponsors had not been involved. Some authorities are adept at finding co-sponsors while others do not know where to begin.
- Some local authorities do not believe that they can spare the staff resources required to research the concept, or promote its adoption in their area. The transport skills shortage means that even if a local authority is interested, they may not have the staff to undertake the work
- Lack of an effective champion within the organisation (someone with the time, determination and influence to get things done).

3. The Involvement of Public Transport Operators and Car Clubs

3.1 The Role of Public Transport Operators in the development of Car Clubs

Collaborations between car club organisers and public transport operators are well-established in continental Europe but are only in their infancy in the UK. Examples of the nature of this collaboration include:

- joint and mutual marketing efforts;
- discounts of the price of public transport tickets made available to car club members;
- provision of space for car club cars on land owned by public transport operators (convenient for interchange);
- interchangeable smartcards to pay for public transport use and to book/pay for car use.

In Switzerland, *Mobility* car club has used information supplied by the public transport operator to direct mail to annual and monthly season ticket holders. Car club members are routinely supplied with information about timetables and special offers while the public transport operators advertise the car club on their buses and at bus stops.

The *Zuri-Mobil card* was launched by *Mobility* car sharing in 1997. Holders of annual or monthly season tickets in Zurich can use *Mobility* services and rental cars at favourable rates, and take a companion on Zurich's public transport free of charge. In 1998 *Mobility* also offered the *Mobility* rail card in collaboration with the national Rail network.

The *Bremer Karte plus Autocard* was set up in Bremen in 1998. It is a smartcard which combines public transport and car club services. It acts as a monthly or annual public transport ticket but also allows the automatic collection of a pre-booked car club vehicle, removing the need to manually log booking reports. The benefits this offers is a reduced price and the ease of transferring between modes of transport.

In Quebec, the car club operator has apparently negotiated a deal with the public transport operator whereby car club members are allowed a 15% discount off public transport passes by being registered as 'employees' of the operator (Roberts, 2001 in Enoch, 2001).

Bristol First Bus have, since early 2001, provided a range of incentives to encourage car club members to use public transport; *BEST* members receive a ten per cent discount off season tickets or multi-journey tickets purchased through the car club and, if any *BEST* member gives up their car completely they would receive a three month Rover card.

Bath First Bus offer a twenty five percent discount off *Bath Tens* (saver strips) for car club members. This is a new scheme, introduced in December 2001, as part of a wider scheme to encourage take up of public transport in green travel plans. The longer term aim is to widen the discount to encompass season tickets.

3.2 Quantifying the effect on car club membership

The literature suggests that approximately 500 new participants joined the *Bremer Karte plus Autocard* program in the first twelve months. Car sharing also took off in Switzerland with the launch of the *Zuri-mobil card* in 1997, within 6 months 3,500 people had joined the *Mobility Carsharing* scheme. In the following year *Mobility Carsharing* started a partnership with the Swiss railway company and over 5,000 people joined in six months.

In the UK the relationship between the public transport operator and the car club is still at the early stages, though there do appear to be benefits. In Bristol, though it was not the sole reason for joining, at least three people (out of the 40 members) have been very impressed and keen to join because of the discounted public transport ticket. They suggest that the discount effectively reduces the cost of joining the car club. The reduced cost of bus/local transport passes was specifically mentioned as an attractive feature during our earlier (Phase One) interviews with Edinburgh car club members.

3.3 Reasons for the involvement of public transport operators in the development of car clubs

The key benefit for the public transport operator is the increased use of public transport which follows from car club membership or, more particularly, from the reduced car ownership associated with car club membership.

The effect is well documented in Europe. Sixteen percent of the users of the *Bremer Karte plus Autocard* were new clients for public transport season tickets. A survey of 360 *Mobility* members suggested that people who gave up their car as a result of the car sharing scheme increased their travel by public transport by 2,000 km per person per annum. The survey also found that the existing *Mobility* customers spend 23.2m Swiss Francs a year on public transport season tickets which is about 2.6m SF (about £1m) more than they did before joining the scheme (www.mobility.ch). The role of the car club in the success of the *Zuri-mobil card* is put into context by the fact that an initial partnership between the public transport operator and the car rental company had generated only 200 extra customers in the first 18 months.

The UK statistics are more modest but nonetheless encouraging. Approximately one third of the 17 Bath members are using the *Bath Tens* and one member started using public transport for the first time, when they found out how cheap the tickets were!

3.4 Barriers to greater involvement of public transport operators

The key barrier is that few public transport operators know what a car club is and, even if they do, their gut reaction is often to see it as competition. This reaction, which used to prevail even in Switzerland, comes very naturally to UK public transport operators. The few operators who have taken a different view are exceptions to the rule. The devolved nature of many of the UK bus companies means that different views can prevail even within the same company (it is interesting to note that

the only two companies in the Firstbus Group who are actively supporting car clubs are from the same part of the country).

The withdrawal by Lothian Transport of its discounts for Edinburgh car club members reflected a change in priorities within the company; the scheme was not thought to be succeeding but was not without administrative cost. Given the more pressing problems of a bus war with the rival operator, the offer was withdrawn.

Another possible reason for limited involvement of public transport operators is that, given the negative image that bus travel can sometimes generate in the UK, they may not always be welcomed by the car club promoter. Some promoters are not keen to associate their product with bus use.

4. Means of Increasing the Involvement of Local Authorities and Public Transport Operators

In this final section of the report we indicate the action or further research required to overcome some of the barriers identified above. The recommendations are highlighted in bold italics and identified by a reference number to aid later identification. (Readers who have already seen our report on car clubs in new developments will recognise some duplication in the recommendations which follow, they should note that numbers 1 and 2 are slightly different and numbers 4, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 are entirely new).

4.1 To raise awareness

There is clearly a lack of knowledge among local authority and government officers, elected members and public transport operators of what car clubs are and why they might be beneficial. This lack of knowledge reflects the novelty of the concept in the UK and the lack of knowledge of car clubs within the general public.

We recommend that actions be taken to raise the profile of the car club concept among the general public. The prime means of achieving this would be to seek media coverage by:

- *distribution of professional-quality publicity material to selected journals, newspapers, lifestyle magazines, TV and radio programmes;*
- *ministerial attendance at a high-profile (re)launch of a car club (this could be linked with adoption of a flagship scheme - see below);*
- *seeking to have the concept included in the storyline for a TV or radio soap opera. (1)*

A key problem for anyone seeking to explain and promote the car club concept in the UK is the shortage of convincing models of how it can work in this country (examples from continental Europe or North America are popularly dismissed as ‘different’). *We recommend that DTLR give immediate consideration to adopting one or more car clubs with a view to its promotion as a high profile flagship scheme to demonstrate the concept in a UK context.(2)* Given the time lags involved, and the growing hostility of local authorities to the “challenge” approach, we would recommend adoption of one of the schemes already in place or in the pipeline, rather than inviting proposals for new ones. The choice of site(s) to be supported should be made on the basis of:

- the car club’s prospects for success,
- the wider applicability of the example,
- the standard of service (including vehicle specification and availability, communication/administration systems, back-up, insurance and security) offered by the scheme operator,
- the commitment of the local authority and public transport operator, and
- the timescale (wanting real evidence of “success” within, say, 18 months).

An obvious candidate scheme is Bristol *BEST* because it has strong involvement of the local authority and public transport operator but other schemes should also be considered. For example; Bath, Leeds (if the Target 2 bid is successful), Edinburgh

(if the relaunch is successful), or, in the slightly longer term, one of the car clubs associated with a major developments (e.g. at Deptford Bridge, Grand Union Village or BedZED). Adoption of BedZED has obvious attractions because it has good prospects and would require relatively modest support - approx £10,000 - to provide it with a state-of-the-art communications/administration system, but we would not recommend that it be the only adopted scheme because its green image would not be to everyone's' taste.

One means of raising the profile of car clubs is to make them more recognisable. ***We recommend that the designation of an official symbol, logo or pictogram for car club parking points and inclusion of the same within the Highway Code should be considered. (3a)*** Adoption of a European standard for the sign and associated road markings would obviously be desirable. ***We further recommend that car clubs be encouraged to display the logo prominently on their vehicles. (3b)***

Actions should be taken to raise the profile of the car club concept among local authorities (officers and elected members) This might be done in several ways:

- ***We recommend raising the visibility of car clubs within government documents. DTLR should consider adding suitable words to the next versions of PPG13, PPG3 and to the guidance notes for the preparation of funding bids, Regional and Local Transport Plans, Travel awareness strategies, Green Travel Plans, Homezones, Controlled parking Zones and Air Quality Management areas. Transport for London and the Regional Assemblies should be encouraged to mention car clubs in their relevant documents for use by their constituent authorities*** (we understand that Transport for London may already be considering this possibility)
- ***Local authorities should be encouraged to include reference to car clubs in local design guides and Supplementary Planning Guidance notes - perhaps requiring serious consideration to be given to the establishment of car clubs in all new developments above a certain size (4b) .***
- ***We recommend that a ministerial statement should be made which indicates government support for the car club concept in the context of sustainable urban mobility. (4c)***
- ***We recommend that DTLR should consider inviting local authority opinion leaders to an event, hosted at ministerial level, at which the contribution of car clubs to the achievement of transport planning is emphasised. (4d)*** (the event could feature a presentation by a prominent exponent of the concept from Germany or Switzerland)

Particular action is needed to raise the profile of the car club concept among public transport operators. ***We suggest that a key means of achieving this could be to invite senior people from the industry to an event, hosted at ministerial level, at which the contribution of car clubs to increased use of public transport is emphasised. (5)***

Public and professional confusion about the car club concept is mainly due to the novelty of the idea but has not been helped by a lack of clarity due to the insistence, by some members of car club community, that car clubs should be referred to as 'car sharing' (a term popularly associated with lift giving).

We recommend that the term “car sharing” should not be used in official documents or publicity material to refer to car clubs. (6)

4.2 To achieve political support

A key problem is how to overcoming doubts as to the contribution that car clubs might make. Our own concern about the possibly rose-tinted glow surrounding analyses of the impact of car clubs on car use was flagged in our interim report. We expressed the opinion that there would be circumstances in which the introduction of a car club could have minimal effect on car use and might even increase it.

We recommend that further, independent, research be done to establish the robustness of the European evidence and to seek reliable evidence from the existing UK schemes. Given that existing UK data is likely to prove inconclusive we further recommend that a robust monitoring programme be devised and that its implementation should be a condition of government support for car clubs. (7)

The reluctance of some elected members and officers to subsidise the city car club lifestyle is clearly a political issue where the democratic process should be allowed to operate. Nevertheless it would be perfectly proper to emphasise the benefits to the community that can be expected to flow from the establishment of car clubs. *We recommend that government literature on car clubs should emphasise that car clubs are most likely to reduce traffic levels if they can attract former car owners. (8)*

One way to overcome a reluctance to subsidise car clubs might be to target the ‘subsidy’ in such a way that it benefits disadvantaged groups. The additional revenue from subsidised members would be financially useful to car clubs but care would need to be taken to ensure that the addition of subsidised members did not introduce tensions within the club and make it less attractive to the more affluent members on whose subscriptions the financial sustainability of the concept would ultimately rest. Also it is likely that, were people to be provided with access to a car which they could not otherwise have afforded, the looked-for reduction in overall car use might be eroded and might even be reversed. *We recommend that thought be given to the possibility and consequences of targeting financial support towards financially disadvantaged members of car clubs via reduced subscriptions. (9)*

4.3 To secure funding to support car clubs during their early years

It is clear that car clubs cannot be expected to be self-financing within their first few years of operation and that some initial injection of funds is necessary. If and when the concept proves viable, service providers may see it as being in their own interest to make an initial investment against the prospect of future profits but this is certainly not yet the case. For the foreseeable future it will fall on local authorities, or in the case of car clubs associated with new property developments, developers, to provide some form of pump-priming support.

Local authorities will have to weigh support for car clubs against competing bids for use of the limited resources available. It is suggested that the problem might be reduced if car clubs were specifically designated as an acceptable expenditure

(alongside Travel Awareness, Green Travel Plans, CPZ expenditure etc) within bids for financial support from DTLR/TfL. However there are fears that, even if funds for car clubs are forthcoming via bids to DTLR/TfL, car clubs might not fare well in competition for use of a single capital (or revenue) pot unless it was clear that engagement of local authorities in car clubs would be looked on favourably by DTLR/TfL when assessing current or future bids for further funding for development of car clubs. ***We recommend that DTLR should consider how best to facilitate LTP/LIP related bids for funds to support car clubs and, more generally, to consider how funds intended for such initiatives can be protected within a overall allocation. (10)***

The local authorities who have already contributed to the establishment of car clubs, or are contemplating doing so, have used a variety of funding sources including the European Commission. Others are considering less obvious funding sources such as Home Office grants for CCTV cameras to overlook parking stations. All remark that the investment required of officers' time to seek out such funds can be considerable. ***We recommend that a report be commissioned to explore the funding mechanisms available and to produce guidance for local authorities on how and where to seek funding. (11)***

Where the car club is associated with a new development, the developers may see it as being in their own interests to promote a car club even without the stimulus of a Section 106 agreement. This is obviously a very desirable state of affairs. ***We recommend that further investigations be conducted to explore what level of contributions might realistically be expected from developers of different types of scheme in different circumstances. (12)***

There is clearly some debate about the usefulness of Section 106 agreements as a means of securing developer support for car clubs – some authorities regard them as a means of obtaining a guarantee of adequate support, others see them as a source of friction in an area where goodwill is essential. We understand that the consultation on the tariff approach in the Green Paper on Planning Obligations raises similar issues. ***We recommend that the scope and limitations of Section 106 agreements and the tariff approach be further explored as a means of securing developer support for car clubs be further explored. (13)***

Another source of funding which should not be overlooked is the fee income from local authority corporate membership (as in Edinburgh). It is possible that local authority decisions to obtain their pool of vehicles by this route could help to provide a basis for the development of car clubs. In addition to any financial savings to be made, local authorities may also want to become members in order to manifest their support for the concept. ***We recommend that the benefits to the local authority of corporate membership should be quantified and, if the case is convincing, that the results should be circulated to local authority departments responsible for procurement and finance. (14)***

4.4. To provide guidance on practical issues

Guidance is available to would-be car club organisers from several sources, notably through the publications of CarPlus (formerly CCSN). However there is no equivalent

guidance designed specifically for local authorities. *We recommend that the production of guidance for local authorities should be given priority and that, when available, it should be launched with appropriate publicity and an executive summary suitable for elected members. The guide should cover the following aspects:*

- *Evidence of impacts (traffic, parking, accessibility)*
- *Sources of funding (special government grants and funds, LTP grants, Section 106 agreements, European funds, charitable grants)*
- *Incorporation into the Local Transport Plan and strategy documents (with advice and examples highlighting the relationship with other elements such as parking policy, CPZ implementation, Road user charging, Workplace parking levies, Planning policy, PPG13, PPG3, Green Travel Plans, Travel Awareness)*
- *Co-operation with property developers*
- *Co-operation with public transport operators*
- *Technology options*
- *Selection of a club operator*
- *Use of criteria to identify schemes worthy of public support. Such criteria, which would define, and help to promulgate, good practice, might cover aspects such as inter-operability, financial soundness, insurance and maintenance of vehicles, quality of service, access by disadvantaged groups and arrangements for usage monitoring*
- *Monitoring of impacts. (15)*

We recommend that training courses should be provided for local authority personnel interested in promoting car clubs and that these courses should be endorsed by DTLR in its advice on sustainable transport and land use planning. (16)

We recommend that DTLR should include mention of the role of car clubs in its guidance on the preparation of LTPs, RPG, SPG, and in the next revision of relevant PPGs. (17) (note overlap with recommendation 4a relating to awareness-raising and that this information should be made available on the DTLR website).

We note that the Dutch Ministry of Transport formed a specific organisation to develop a national car strategy for car clubs. The organisation (*Stichting van Gedeeld Autogebruik*) linked local authorities, the market and consumers and so allowed a network of car clubs to be set up (Harms and Truffer 1998 in Enoch, 2001). A wide range of practical assistance was provided including:

- help in the provision of information
- help in the linking of private and business car clubs
- encouragement of car clubs by the provision of model contracts, insurance etc.
- helping to establish car sharing in new residential areas
- research and monitoring of car sharing schemes.

We recommend that contacts be made to establish whether the role of this organisation goes beyond that played by CarPlus in the UK, and if so, to consider what might be learned from the Dutch model. (18).