

**The Potential Role of Car Sharing and Car Clubs
within Socially Disadvantaged Groups**

Supplementary Report 3 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

Ann Jopson and Peter Bonsall

The University of Leeds

February 2002

Executive Summary

It is clear that car clubs and car sharing may have a role to play in the provision of accessibility to some disadvantaged groups and that this may lead to cost savings. We conclude that particular potential exists for:

- Agencies who provide transport services to join forces to make more efficient use of their vehicles (adapted and otherwise) within a car club;
- Agencies to join forces to develop a car sharing database for use by clients and others in their locality (perhaps as part of wider brokerage service);
- Agencies to sponsor suitable clients to join existing car clubs;
- Residents of social housing within new city centre housing schemes could be included within new car clubs established on those sites;
- Innovative re-direction of existing funds (e.g. of Motability grants to support adaptation of car club vehicles);
- Small scale local initiatives.

It is also clear that significant barriers exist to prevent car clubs and car sharing playing a significant role in the provision of accessibility to some disadvantaged groups. We conclude that the most immediate barriers are:

- Lack of understanding of the car club concept;
- Lack of reliable data on the relative costs of provision by different means;
- Institutional inertia (fed by professional jealousy, lack of time to consider new modes of provision, lack of understanding of the concept of car clubs and a belief that, since the concept would not be appropriate for all clients, it is not worth considering);
- A concern not to further erode the market for conventional public transport:
- The fact that some clients would require delivery/pick-up arrangements;
- The fact that some clients would require specially adapted vehicles;
- The difficulties likely to be experienced when attempting to introduce a car club within a deprived community (difficulty posed by annual fee, lack of commitment within the community, vandalism, insurance problems...).
- Concern among some car club organisers as to the possible negative effect on their brand image.

We have made recommended eight actions and six research projects to help overcome these barriers and realise the potential. Briefly, they are:

1. Establishment of an interdepartmental team.
2. Production of publicity material to familiarise the provider communities with the concepts of car clubs and car sharing.
3. As a second stage, and pending completion of the necessary research, production and distribution of more detailed information and advice for the provider communities.
4. Provision of a training course, based on this material, for personnel in the provider communities.
5. Actions to raise the profile of the car club concept among the general public.

6. Encouragement of developers of high density low-car housing projects which incorporate social housing to establish car clubs within their developments.
7. Establishment of demonstration schemes to cover a range of issues.
8. Encouragement of existing car clubs to approach providers of services to disadvantaged groups with a view to their becoming corporate members of the club (with grant aid to assist extension of the vehicle fleet to include appropriate vehicles).
9. Further research on the costs of alternative models of provision. Access to detailed accounts of provider organisations will be required.
10. Research to characterise, identify and quantify clients' precise needs.
11. Attitudinal research to establish what value the clients put on different services and how they might react to different models of provision.
12. Exploration, with car club organisers, of whether and how the profile of membership fees might be made more attractive to people on low incomes.
13. Exploration and resolution of the potential conflict between the image of car clubs which some car club organisers wish to promote and the use of car clubs by disadvantaged groups.
14. Research to further develop and evaluate the models of provision (nine are identified as being particularly worthy of consideration).

CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Specification	1
1.2	Study Method.....	2
1.3	Findings from phases 1 and 2 of the project	3
2.	Existing Provision of Accessibility for Disadvantaged Groups	4
2.1	Target groups	4
2.2	Current provision and problems.....	4
2.2.1	<i>Transport for low income non-car owners in areas with poor public transport</i>	<i>5</i>
2.2.2	<i>Transport for non-car owners with special needs.....</i>	<i>5</i>
2.2.3	<i>Provision in action zones</i>	<i>7</i>
3.	Potential Role of Car Sharing or Car Clubs in the Provision of Accessibility for Disadvantaged Groups	9
3.1	For low income non-car owners in areas poorly-served by public transport.9	
3.1.1	<i>Car sharing.....</i>	<i>9</i>
3.1.2	<i>Car clubs</i>	<i>9</i>
3.2	For non-car owners with mobility problems.....	10
3.2.1	<i>Car Sharing</i>	<i>10</i>
3.2.2	<i>Car clubs</i>	<i>10</i>
3.3	For people with learning difficulties.....	10
3.3.1	<i>Car sharing.....</i>	<i>10</i>
3.3.2	<i>Car clubs</i>	<i>10</i>
3.4	Within action areas	11
3.4.1	<i>Car sharing.....</i>	<i>11</i>
3.4.2	<i>Car clubs</i>	<i>11</i>
4.	Evaluation of Model Solutions.....	12
4.1	Comments expressed by professionals during the interviews	12
4.2	Cost comparisons.....	15
4.2.1	<i>Costs of provision through a car club.....</i>	<i>15</i>
4.2.2	<i>Costs of provision through a car sharing scheme.....</i>	<i>16</i>
4.2.3	<i>Costs of provision by “traditional” means</i>	<i>16</i>
4.3	Costs to clients	17
4.4	Conclusions on relative costs.....	18
5.	Conclusions.....	19
5.1	Potential	19
5.2	Barriers.....	19
5.3	Action to overcome the barriers and capitalise on the potential.....	19
5.4	Research needs.....	21

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 address within the current topic report were:

- The profile of target groups (low income, ethnic minority, disabled, elderly)
- Decision as to which bodies should be involved (e.g. local authority, community organisations, mobility-related charities)
- Whether these bodies considered seeking to promote car sharing or car clubs (why / why not ?)
- Potential benefits from car clubs (e.g. to provide accessibility via a reliable car)
- Potential benefits from car sharing (e.g. for people unable/unwilling to drive, regular lift as social event for isolated elderly or disabled people)
- Cost-effectiveness of car sharing and car clubs compared to other mechanisms for delivery of accessibility.
- Risks (e.g. further isolation of those unable to participate – particularly if increased accessibility leads to further rationalisation of local facilities)
- Real and perceived barriers to car clubs among target groups (e.g. insurance, cost, low driving licence tenure, elderly reluctance to innovate, disabled need for door to door service, lack of critical mass, pre-existing arrangements within the community)
- Real and perceived barriers to car sharing among target groups (shortage of drivers, lack of matching service, complex trip patterns, pre-existing arrangements within the community)
- Potential links with other initiatives (action areas, demand responsive transport services, wider-access initiatives for health, education, training and life-long learning)
- Ways to overcome the barriers (e.g. dissemination of evidence on cost-effectiveness, flagship schemes based on model solutions, trials of model solutions)
- Recommendations for action and /or further research.

It was intended that the report would:

- evidence, with examples, the existing mechanisms for delivering increased accessibility for socially disadvantaged groups in action zones and assess the scope for car sharing and car clubs to meet the needs of specific group(s);

- examine the cost/benefits of car sharing and car club schemes in action zones supplementing or replacing existing mechanisms;
- advise on what measures might be taken (and by whom) to encourage the greater take-up of car sharing and car club schemes amongst socially disadvantaged groups; 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 an extensive series of discussions with interested parties.

The work was progressed through:

- Consideration of the target groups;
- Identification of current methods of delivering accessibility to these groups;
- Development of models for the role of car clubs and car sharing as alternatives, or supplements, to existing means;
- Discussion with relevant professionals and organisations (health, community health, community liaison officers, housing action area managers, local transport coordinators), in order to identify whether the organisations identified have considered car sharing or car clubs and whether they see potential benefits in so doing;
- Discussions with community representatives/representative bodies, (e.g. disability-mobility charities, voluntary community transport organisations) in order to ascertain their opinions on the potential role of car sharing and car clubs in providing accessibility for their clients.
- A desk study using secondary sources to establish the cost-effectiveness of car sharing and car clubs compared to that of other means of supplying accessible transport; and
- Synthesis of conclusions.

The following groups were contacted during this work:

- Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office
- Disability Modernisation Team, Leeds
- The William Merit Centre (disabled living centre), Leeds
- Disability Information and Advice Line, Leeds
- Access Bus, West Yorkshire
- Social Services, Leeds City Council
- Access to Work Team, Placing, Assessment and Counselling Team of the Department of Employment, Leeds City Council
- Action Teams for Jobs at DfEE
- Action Teams for Jobs Operations Manager for the North West
- Health Actions Zones at NHS Executive + <http://www.haznet.org.uk>
- Education Actions Zones at DfEE + <http://www.standards.dfee.uk/eaz/>
- Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, DTLR
- SUSTRANS

- Red Cross, West Yorkshire
- Hackney Transport Co-ordination Centre
- London Borough of Stepney
- Camden Accessible Transport Unit
- Carplus (formerly CCSN)

The following websites were also consulted:

- Age Concern (<http://www.ageconcern.org.uk>)
- Sandwell Health Partnership (<http://www.sandwellhealthpartnership.org.uk>)
- Cornwall County Council centre of excellence for integrated rural transport website (<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/Transport/centofe/Cochome.htm>)
- Community Transport Association (<http://www.communitytransport.com/>)
- Colchester Community Voluntary Services – Transport (<http://www.ccvs.org/transport.html>)
- DTLR (<http://www.dtlr.gov.uk>)
- London Borough of Camden accessible transport (http://www.camden.gov.uk/living/access_fr.htm)
- London Borough of Hackney (<http://www.hackney.gov.uk>)

1.3 Findings from phases 1 and 2 of the project

Our previous research suggested that:

- Car sharing and car clubs can provide enhanced accessibility for non-car owners
- When car sharing and car clubs are used to provide enhanced accessibility for non-car owners, the net effect is likely to be an increase in car use and a reduction in use of public transport
- Car clubs have not so far been established specifically for disadvantaged groups.
- Depending on definitions adopted, car sharing using voluntary or paid drivers is already a feature of some schemes to promote access – particularly in rural areas (e.g. hospital car schemes)
- There is little evidence that disadvantaged groups have been able to benefit from existing car clubs.
- There is little evidence to suggest that groups such as the elderly or disabled would welcome specifically targeted schemes.

2. Existing Provision of Accessibility for Disadvantaged Groups

2.1 Target groups

We identify the following as disadvantaged groups in need of improved accessibility:

- Low-income non-car owners in areas poorly served by public transport, particularly within the following groups:
 - the rural poor
 - young or long-term job seekers
 - social services clients
- Physically disabled (or mobility impaired) non-car owners, and
- People with learning difficulties.

Whilst some of these groups are often identified within action zones, many/most of the problems fall outside these zones, indeed, for some of these groups, particularly those with mobility problems or learning difficulties, the action zone concept has little relevance.

In all the above cases, although a case can be made for providing assistance for all journeys, there is a particular need for assistance for those which might be regarded as “essential” journeys. By which we mean journeys to or from:

- work
- school
- hospital or other health facilities, or
- essential personal maintenance (primarily food shopping).

2.2 Current provision and problems

Accessible transport is currently provided by a variety of different agencies dealing with specific needs or groups. The degree to which these agencies work together varies but is generally minimal. The main actors (and their clients) are:

- Local authority Social Services departments (for elderly and/or disabled clients),
- Local authority Education departments (for school children),
- Health Authorities (for patients),
- Employment Action Teams (for long term unemployed people requiring access to work),
- Education Action Forums (for school children),
- Health Action Area Partnerships (for all residents with existing or potential health problems), and
- Voluntary bodies (for community transport in rural areas and for the elderly and for people with physical or mental disabilities).

Clearly there can be some overlap, for example help in attending hospital appointments might come through the Health Authority, local authority social services department or volunteer transport. However there is often very little co-operation between different providers, and examples of duplication are well known to those

involved – it is apparently not uncommon for social services and education department transport to be running along similar routes, each with excess capacity. Where co-ordination has been achieved (e.g. in Hackney and Camden), significant financial savings have been made.

We will now consider the provision for particular groups.

2.2.1 Transport for low income non-car owners in areas with poor public transport

The problems are obvious; without a car or access to public transport these people are effectively isolated from mainstream society. Although their parents' generation might have been able to access most key facilities by walking, cycling or public transport, this option is now very rare because of the progressive centralisation of facilities and the withdrawal of public transport services. It is generally accepted that conventional public transport is an expensive way of providing accessibility in sparsely populated areas and that, even where it still exists, its continued provision cannot be guaranteed.

In the absence of conventional public transport, help for these people may come through special provision for essential journeys (school bus or taxi for journey to school, hospital or social services transport for visits to health facilities) but generally does not extend to journeys to work or shops. Also, even for essential journeys, the client may not be able to make use of the service if it is not also available to their dependent children or to carer-companions, (we understand that a frequent reason for the exclusion of dependent children and carer companions is that they are not covered by the insurance. As an example of the implications of this restriction we note anecdotal evidence suggesting that inability to make arrangements for dependent children can be a common cause of missed medical appointments in some communities).

Community-based initiatives can play an important role but rely on local initiative and volunteer help. Church groups feature particularly strongly in this role in some communities. The most important source of access to transport, however, is often through friends and neighbours who own a car. Although not formally declared (for fear of attracting the attention of the taxation authorities or insurers), there are many instances of informal sharing arrangements involving the exchange of money or gifts in kind.

2.2.2 Transport for non-car owners with special needs

People with mobility problems

This group of people are served by a wide variety of agencies. Many **local authorities** provide door-to-door services, which require that passengers register for the service and then book individual journeys in advance. These services usually utilise specially adapted minibuses which may also offer hailing at bus stops. However, the services are frequently restricted by tight budgets, and may only be able to guarantee one trip per passenger per week. **Health Authorities** provide transport for mobility-impaired in-patients and some out-patients. The journeys, which have to be booked in advance

and can involve the client in a long wait for the transport to arrive, are made in ambulances, adapted minibuses and cars as necessary. (We note that some Health Authorities use the same ambulances or adapted vehicles to carry able-bodied clients – this can be very efficient where the journey requirements for both groups are similar but there are cases where an able-bodied client who could use a general purpose vehicle effectively displaces another client who could not). **The Red Cross** provide trained drivers and escorts with adapted vehicles for individual and group travel. Again these services are restricted by budget, so they can only cater for one-offs and group travel to clubs. Volunteer car schemes run by community organisations such as **The British Legion** also operate, sometimes from Disabled Living Centres, but supply is limited, especially by the number of volunteers.

The limited availability of transport for people with mobility problems results in journeys being suppressed. The suppressed journeys are often for social or leisure purposes and, although regarded by many providers as “non essential”, the individual’s mental health can suffer. Access to work or training can also be problematic, although there are now schemes to fill this gap. For example, The Access to Work Team in the Placing, Assessment and Counselling Team of the Department of Employment at Leeds City Council are able to subsidise taxi fares, pay for drivers, or pay a mileage allowance for lift givers.

Taxis can provide a very useful service for people with mobility difficulties if:

- the individual can afford to use taxis (or is reimbursed for doing so), and
- the taxi is suitably adapted for their disability (we note that the current stock of taxis contains rather few adapted vehicles but that this situation should improve in the lead up to implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act).

Public transport, if available, is often preferred to “charity” transport but may not be suitable unless the person’s mobility impairment is slight and/or the bus (or train) fleet has been adapted to provide access for disabled people. A number of initiatives designed to provide greater accessibility for people with mobility difficulties have been designed to promote the use of public transport. The Leeds Disability Modernisation Team have worked with a local bus operator (First Leeds) to increase the number of accessible buses and concentrate these vehicles on routes where there is greatest demand. More innovatively, in conjunction with the passenger transport executive (METRO) and Leeds Social Services, £250k has been obtained from DTLR under the Urban Bus Initiative to fund a team of four personal assistants to familiarise disabled users with public transport.

Hospital patients

There is clearly some overlap between this group and that described above but it is worth identifying separately because the nature of the journeys (involving fixed appointments) brings particular constraints and problems. Patients who require transport to hospital appointments will normally be offered a seat on a minibus or in a taxi provided by the ambulance service or contract. Several health authorities have a serious problem in providing a reliable service for clients; very long waits and no-shows are not uncommon. This contributes to missed appointments and this in turn results in knock-on problems for the providers of the health care service.

People with learning difficulties

People with learning difficulties face particular problems when travelling. For some, the decision to travel may itself be difficult and the decision on how to travel may be extremely daunting. In the majority of cases these people are relieved of the responsibility of making such decisions because someone else does it for them – and they are ferried from place to place in cars or minibuses. Unfortunately this can reduce their confidence still further and hence increase the pressure on service providers. An innovative attempt to overcome this problem was implemented in Southend-on-Sea, where teenagers with a mental age of 5 or 6 were being taught how to use the public transport services running between their home and frequent destinations, all they need to do after deciding to travel is go out and catch the bus or train. They know where to catch the bus or train, what number it will be, where to get off and that, even if it is late, it will turn up eventually.

2.2.3 Provision in action zones

Employment Action Zones

Provision is very specific to the needs in each individual area. For example, in the North West, a bus service has been established in collaboration with Mersey Travel to take formerly unemployed clients from Wirral, where there were few vacancies, to Deeside where there were recruitment problems. The service, which was designed to serve the shift patterns worked by clients, allows them an initial period of free travel followed by a further three months (or longer depending on personal circumstances) of subsidised travel. The Service was originally for the exclusive use of formerly unemployed clients but has since been made available to the general public – thus helping to reduce the net cost of the service. In Knowsley, people-carriers were used to take clients to work trials in engineering and construction jobs. When not in use for this purpose the carriers were parked in convenient locations (e.g. Asda car park) and used as bases in which to interview potential clients, or used to transport lone parents' children to crèche.

Other schemes pay for taxis, purchase bicycles or fund driving licences. The Sunderland team bought a cheap second-hand vehicle for one client. Some teams will, if a client owns a car but cannot afford to run it, pay to tax and MOT client's vehicle. (This practice is, however, generally discouraged as the payment results in a legal Duty Of Care).

Education Action Zones

Rather surprisingly perhaps, there has been little emphasis on the role of transport in education action zones. The initiatives outlined on the Education Action Zones website (EAZNET) do not mention transport as a facilitator of success, yet it is clear that transport is a key element in schemes which seek to foster wider participation in education, to foster links between local education centres and the community, and to build links with families, employers, community sports facilities, local colleges and other community centres, or to bring truants to school. EAZNET reports that schools bringing parents into school (sometimes out of school hours) to work with their child

to improve literacy have achieved significant successes. Yet in deprived areas with social problems, parents may lack the motivation to get to the school without easy transport. Similarly, taking pupils to local workplaces or sports facilities may be difficult if neither the school nor the parents can transport the children. Schools in more affluent areas are likely to have a minibus, but this may not be the case in areas where it is difficult to involve parents, local businesses and the wider community in fund raising.

Transporting children with behavioural problems and those needing adapted vehicles can be particularly problematic. Some children are unable to share a journey with others children or members of the public and need an escort at all times. Special insurance may also be required. In these cases, shared community transport is difficult, but where provision is co-ordinated with social services provision, such as in Hackney, the vehicle can be used for other purposes during the day. The Hackney Transport Co-ordination Centre devise routes where by one service provider may take a child with behavioural problems (and their escort where necessary) to school, then pick up an elderly patient living near the school to take them to a hospital appointment. By devising routes with a number of pick-ups and drop-offs instead of duplicating journeys, further financial savings are made.

Health Action Zones

As with Education Action zones, there has been little emphasis on transport in Health Action Zones (HAZ). Transport is rarely mentioned as a facilitator of success, yet it has obvious roles. HAZ's not only seek to improve patient care, they also seek to tackle staff shortages, form educational links with schools and improve health through access to diet and sports and leisure facilities. All of these initiatives involve travel to and from medical facilities, work, supermarkets and sports centres.

Despite the lack of clear reference in the HAZNET dissemination, the co-ordination between health, education and employment related transport in Sandwell is an excellent example of joined-up working. Another example of good practice is the Netherton community Transport on Merseyside where £150,000 has been provided through the SRB, European Union, grants from Merseyside Health Action Zone and Merseytravel to fund a community transport minibus scheme. Netherton community Transport is a founder member of Merseyside Community Transport, an umbrella group supporting and developing community transport provision across Merseyside.

3. Potential Role of Car Sharing or Car Clubs in the Provision of Accessibility for Disadvantaged Groups

3.1 For low income non-car owners in areas poorly-served by public transport

3.1.1 Car sharing

Car sharing can only occur among low income non-car owners if they can find a friend who already owns a car or if they can manage to obtain one themselves. In fact, as indicated in Section 2.2.1 above, receipt of lifts is already a widespread phenomenon in these communities. The question is whether, with some external assistance, the volume and effectiveness of lift-giving might be increased. The following suggestions could be made:

- *Provision of a matching service to better inform people about the possibilities for shared journeys.*
- *Action to remove the limits on the amount of “compensation” which drivers are allowed to receive without invalidating their insurance or VED license. Allowing the driver legally to make a modest profit for providing lifts might encourage many more drivers to offer lifts.*
- *Action to provide incentives to multiple-occupancy cars (HOV lanes, preferential parking etc)*

3.1.2 Car clubs

To date, most car clubs have been within quite affluent communities. This reflects the following facts:

- The annual membership fee may be beyond the means of some low-income groups
- Car club membership is of little use to the non-drivers who make up a significant proportion of the low income non-car owning groups (particularly among people under 23 and over 65).
- Insurance of vehicles (and some drivers) within low income communities can be difficult/expensive.
- Car club organisers are reluctant to propose a car club in a community which has not itself expressed a commitment to the concept (and, thus far, the car club concept has remained a fairly middle class preserve).

Nevertheless, assuming that funding would be forthcoming to overcome these problems, and that the implications for increased car use were deemed acceptable, the following suggestions can be made:

- *Establish car clubs within low income communities*
- *Establish car clubs within mixed communities but encourage/subsidise membership for low income residents.*

3.2 For non-car owners with mobility problems

3.2.1 Car Sharing

An important feature of the needs of people with mobility problems is that they may require specially adapted vehicles – with different people requiring different adaptations. Bearing this in mind we made the following suggestions:

- *Provide grants to enable people to adapt their vehicles so that they can carry disabled passengers.*
- *Subsidise membership of car sharing schemes for people with mobility problems.*

3.2.2 Car clubs

The same considerations led us to make the following suggestion:

- *Encourage/sponsor car clubs to include vehicles within their vehicle fleet which are adapted for use by disabled drivers or disabled passengers.*
- *Encourage agencies responsible for providing transport for disabled people to consider becoming corporate members of car clubs.*

Given that, depending on the nature of their disability, people with mobility problems will generally require a door-to-door service, they might not be able to access cars stored at parking stations. We therefore suggest:

- *Encourage/sponsor car clubs to provide a car delivery/pick-up service for disabled members.*

3.3 For people with learning difficulties

3.3.1 Car sharing

We gave some consideration to the possibilities of special measures to promote the involvement of people with learning difficulties in car sharing or car clubs but concluded that their involvement could only be as passengers of people whom they already knew. Bearing in mind the vulnerability of this group we do not think it appropriate to expose them to the risks of general car sharing. However we suggest that the following arrangement might have some merit:

- *Carers use matching services to identify potential drivers for their clients, explain the situation to the driver and, if they are happy with the idea, the carer travels with the client in the driver's car until such time as client feels confident to travel alone.*

3.3.2 Car clubs

We concluded that the routine and predictability which the clients need is not a feature of car clubs but that there was no reason why social services / education authorities should not become corporate members of a car club and use it to ferry their clients much as they would if using a pool vehicle.

3.4 Within action areas

3.4.1 Car sharing

We made the following suggestions:

- *Encourage co-operation between different agencies to establish a common database of clients' travel requirements - with a view to arranging shared journeys.*
- *Encourage agencies to make use of existing car-sharing databases to find potential lifts for their clients*
- *Encourage agencies to make use of car-sharing databases as part of a more general brokerage/coordination of travel options for their clients.*

3.4.2 Car clubs

Car club organisers have expressed some concern about the difficulties which occur when car club members do not act with a sense of responsibility to other club members. This may make them nervous of any suggestion to open up club membership to some clients of social services departments. Bearing this in mind, we made the following suggestions:

- *Agencies should become corporate members of a car club and utilise the club vehicles to take their clients as passengers*
- *Agencies should sponsor selected clients (drivers, good attitude) to become car club members in their own right.*

4. Evaluation of Model Solutions

4.1 Comments expressed by professionals during the interviews

- Those involved in the routine provision of accessibility were more sceptical about the role of car sharing and car clubs than were those who are already involved in trying out new initiatives. The absence of working examples of car sharing and car clubs was clearly a drawback.
- The potential role of car clubs, and to a lesser extent of car sharing, in the provision of accessibility for disadvantaged groups is not immediately apparent to many people working in the field. There will clearly be a need for considerable effort in raising the profile of the car club concept if it is to be adopted by practitioners. Similarly, it will be important to involve the relevant professional bodies in any further development of the concept.
- Demonstration projects are required to familiarise members of the public, and professionals, with the car club concept. Demonstration projects are most likely to succeed in areas where there is already a high degree of joint working.
- There was a general enthusiasm for greater coordination of services between different providers and a recognition that considerable savings might be possible and that the service provided to clients could be better able to meet their diverse needs. However those professionals who already have their own, dedicated and appropriately adapted, fleet of vehicles, were sceptical about the practicality of any arrangement under which they would have to share their vehicles with others. Potential problems were foreseen in respect of maintenance, cleansing, insurance and guaranteed availability when required.
- The idea of having access to a pool of vehicles, perhaps obtained from a car club, available for a range of purposes, was generally welcomed. One benefit would be that a larger range of vehicles including minibuses and specially adapted vehicles could be justified if a critical mass could be achieved and could be used more efficiently by a wider range of agencies. Several agencies noted that they could benefit from access to a wider range of vehicles. Others noted that their current stock of specialist vehicles is not used to its full potential.
- It was clear that, although some mixing of client groups within the same vehicle for shared journeys may be wholly beneficial, there were some clients for whom this would not be appropriate – particularly those with behavioural problems or those needing constant medical attention (problems of insurance, the need for escorts and the likely negative response of co-passengers were mentioned). More generally it was suggested that some clients' schedules were not sufficiently flexible, or predictable, to make car sharing a viable option.
- The idea of a car delivery/pick-up service for mobility-impaired car club members was welcomed but it was noted that the logistics of this could be difficult to arrange in such a way as to keep the hire period to a minimum.

- It was suggested that drivers in car sharing arrangements might be paid to make diversions on behalf of mobility-impaired passengers. Similarly it was suggested that car club drivers could be paid to make diversions required to deliver vehicles to mobility-impaired club members.
- It was not thought that a car club could ever offer vehicles with the range of adaptations needed for the full range of disabilities, but that much could be achieved simply by providing vehicles with automatic transmission, powered steering, electronically adjustable extended-view mirrors and fully adjustable seats (including swivel). Seating adaptations for disabled passengers, including provision for wheelchairs, would be cheaper than attempting to provide for drivers with the same level of disability.
- Whilst car club and/or car share schemes could be designed specifically to cater for disabled users, access to normal public transport as part of greater integration in the wider community is a desirable goal. However, since accessible public transport will not become a legal requirement until the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act come in over the next decade, other arrangements are necessary in the short term.
- The social interaction required to participate in a car share journey would probably deter some people with learning difficulties from travelling.
- In deprived rural areas there is a need to include all the local actors to achieve the necessary critical mass. It was thought that this might be easier to achieve in market towns than in 'deep' rural areas. Given the role of Chambers of Trade in such towns it was suggested that they might be well-placed to sponsor and champion car clubs and/or car sharing schemes. It was noted that efficient use of car club vehicles would be difficult in rural areas because, given the scarcity of development, the pick-up and return of vehicles to a location where they could be accessed by other users would be problematic. It was suggested that one solution could be the use of volunteer (or paid) drivers to deliver/collect vehicles. It was also suggested that car club vehicles might be kept at members' homes overnight, used by them to travel to work (preferable giving lifts to neighbours en route), left at work during the day (during which time they would be available for corporate use by businesses and social transport services) and then driven home again in the evening.
- Any attempt to establish a car club within a low income community is likely to fail unless it has the full support of that community. This is most likely to be achieved in a tightly-knit community with identifiable community leaders. Not only must the community leaders be supportive but an active "champion" for the concept must be found from within the community. Efforts must be made to raise the profile of the proposed car club and to create a sense of local ownership via community publications and demonstrations. Even then, it is essential to ensure that the community has continuing on-the-ground support from the car club organisers.

- Although car clubs could provide access to cars for older drivers who can no longer justify the expense and responsibility of owning their own car, it is generally recognised that, not only are they reluctant to give up the door-to-door convenience which comes from owning their own car, but they are not keen on the prospect of having to familiarise themselves with new/different cars each time they want to make a journey. It is also suggested that they would be reluctant to commit to a concept as novel as a car club.
- The establishment of a car club in a new city centre development incorporating social housing might be an effective way to extend the benefits of car club membership to a disadvantaged group. The membership fees of the disadvantaged group could be subsidised. Care would need to be taken to ensure that the image of the car club was not compromised because it is important that the more affluent residents, on whose contribution the financial future of the car club would ultimately depend, are not dissuaded from joining.
- The idea of combining the concepts of car clubs and car sharing was thought to be worth considering. In areas of low car ownership a car club might provide vehicles for use in car sharing arrangements.
- It was suggested that concerns about personal security dissuaded many people from using car sharing matching services and that any “official” use of car sharing would require a demonstrably high level of security to be in place (e.g. involving ID cards).
- It was thought that any increase in the level of “compensation” that drivers could claim from their passengers before invalidating their tax or insurance, would have a limited effect on the amount of informal car sharing but would be fiercely resisted by taxi operators.
- Although it is accepted that some journey purposes are more important than others, several of our interviewees suggested that, if due to accessibility problems, clients are unable to participate fully in Society, their health and well-being is likely to suffer – resulting in an increased demand on support services in the longer term. Thus, it is argued, clients should receive access-support for all journey purposes.
- Some concern was expressed that, if the support for car clubs and car sharing were at the expense of that for conventional public transport, some people would be worse off. It was noted that some people preferred the anonymity and independence of public transport to the intimacy and obligation involved in accepting a lift from someone else - be it friend or volunteer. A recent study in Cumbria highlighted the fact that young people and people suffering from depression prefer the anonymity of public transport when visiting health clinics and several studies have commented on the beneficial effect that use of public transport can have on the self-confidence of people with learning difficulties.
- A message which came across strongly from our interviewees, particularly those representing disabled groups, was that people who are disadvantaged for some

reason would ideally prefer to access services available to the general public rather than to be treated as a separate, marginalized, constituency.

- There is clearly a danger that overall levels of car use could increase as a result of the establishment of car clubs among non-car owners. This effect could be particularly marked if, in order to facilitate maximum use of the car club, young people received help with driving lessons. The accessibility achieved from car use, initially experienced courtesy of the car club, might well lead them to adopt a more car-dependent lifestyle. If increased availability of cars were to lead to reduced use of local facilities and public transport services, the viability of those facilities and services could be reduced and if they were withdrawn this could result in reduced accessibility for those who previously depended on them – an ironic result given that it would have arisen from an attempt to increase accessibilities.
- A number of Community Transport organisations are currently investigating the possibility of establishing car clubs within deprived communities. We are aware of intended initiatives in Chorlton and in Stepney (under the New Deal Initiative).

4.2 Cost comparisons

Published figures have been sought to illustrate the costs of alternative modes of provision of services to disadvantaged groups. The published figures are very difficult to compare with one another because they do not contain sufficient detail on the precise service provided to enable a meaningful comparison. Considerable effort was expended in the search for more detailed data but, even so, we do not regard our conclusions as more than indicative.

It is perhaps worth noting that few of our interviewees had much idea of the costs of the services for which they were responsible. A typical response was “We are given a budget and we just spend it.... we do not know the cost of individual journeys”. This attitude was particularly associated with services which had been offered in more or less the same form for several years.

4.2.1 Costs of provision through a car club

The club for which most data is available is the BEST club in Bristol (much of the data being available in the Bristol Transport Plan 2001/2-2005/6). Bristol City Council provided £5000 and staff time for the feasibility study, £5,500 for start-up costs and £2,500 for promotion and marketing. A further £5000 was obtained from the Sustainable Neighbourhood Fund. We understand that the total cost so far to Bristol City Council is around £40,000. The transport plan indicates an intention to expand the car club concept throughout Bristol, and “it is anticipated that an amount in the region of £15-20k per annum will be required to support further development.”

If a new car club had to be formed in order to serve the needs of disadvantaged groups, it would seem unwise to assume a cost much less than £60,000 over two years.

If a car club already exists (sponsored by someone else!) the costs to the provider of accessibility services would approximate to those of corporate membership. Assuming that no special deals are done, this might equate to normal usage charges (£120 annual membership for each driver plus £2 per hour and 15p per mile). If specially adapted vehicles were required the cost might be higher. If special facilities are required such as an on-site parking station, an additional fee might be charged (for Edinburgh Royal Infirmary this was £8,000).

Edinburgh City Council and Edinburgh Royal Infirmary have chosen to become corporate members of Edinburgh Car Club and suggest that this saves them money when compared to their previous method of vehicle procurement. Our calculations suggest that the choice of method of vehicle procurement is very sensitive to the utilisation rates achieved. We understand that utilisation rates for vehicles used by social services and health authorities to transport their clients are generally very high and this leads us to doubt that savings could be made by using a car club as a vehicle pool.

If a client is capable of acting as an individual member then the cost to the agency would depend on the level of usage and degree of subsidy to be provided. For a client requiring two journeys per week this might amount to around £500 per year.

4.2.2 Costs of provision through a car sharing scheme

If the agencies decided to make use of an existing car sharing service, the costs could be minimal but there would be little point in joining a scheme unless it had good local coverage and usage. Some car sharing services offer a corporate package which includes targeted efforts to increase usage within the organisation. We understand that the cost would be in the range £100 to £1000 depending on the size of the organisation and the level of service required and that special terms may be available for local authorities and NHS Trusts (*Shareajourney.com*).

If an agency wished to organise its own, in-house or inter-agency, matching service then the costs, including software (available at £350 from *Travel2+Carshare*) and staffing might be £30,000 per year.

If a client is capable of acting as an individual member and accept lifts from another member, the cost to the agency would depend on the level of usage and degree of subsidy to be provided. For a client requiring two journeys per week the compensation to the driver might amount to around £100 per year.

4.2.3 Costs of provision by “traditional” means

We were not able, within the time and resources available, to find detailed data on the cost of these services. We had expected that analyses would have been available within the providing organisation’s accounts to differentiate the costs of transport from other aspects of service provision, but we were not able to locate any such analyses. We have therefore had to infer costs from such data as is in the public domain. We made particular use of the summaries of recently announced Bus Challenges and Rural Bus Subsidy Grants.

Our discussions with providers of services to disadvantaged groups emphasised that costs are extremely situation-dependent. Examples of the factors which can influence the cost include:

- Whether the client needs an escort
- Whether the client needs a specially adapted vehicle
- Whether several clients can be taken in one vehicle
- The utilisation of vehicles achieved
- Whether volunteer assistance is available/appropriate
- Union agreements.

As an example of what little can be done with the available data, we attempted to estimate of charges for travel to special schools in Camden. Camden offers a free travel pass for children who are able to use public transport. A child travel card for Zone 2 costs £40.10 per month. There are 13 special schools in Camden, with approximately 479 day places. Assuming there are 40 weeks in the school year, that all places are taken by children who are able to use public transport and that all children travel within Zone 2, then the total cost will be £199,297. This will be an underestimate as it does not include travel for those unable to use public transport or special needs pupils attending ordinary schools.

Examination of the grants made under the Bus Challenge Initiatives and the Rural Bus Grant confirms the variability of costs:

- The provision of a fairly conventional bus service “for social purposes” appears to range from around £5k per year to almost £75k per year;
- The cost of school minibus services may be around £200k (Dudley);
- A demand-responsive minibus service might cost from £600k (West Yorkshire, East Leeds Employment Link) to £1.2m (Worcester’s Demand responsive orbital minibus to assist 4 deprived wards with x-city service);
- Hertfordshire’s Rural Community Transport and Accessible Vehicles £386k grant covers 12 accessible vehicles and a Project Officer for three years.

4.3 Costs to clients

Assuming that clients are encouraged to make their own arrangements the costs might be as follows (assuming an outward journey of three miles and a return some hours later – six miles in total and excluding parking costs).

Car clubs: The user costs for BEST comprise a £25 joining fee, a £100, refundable, deposit against accidents, a £10/month membership fee and usage fees of £2 per hour and 15p per mile. The cost of six mile trip, assuming a two and a half hour booking, would be £5.90 (rising to about £8.50 if membership fees are allocated on the assumption of one trip per week).

Car sharing: Using data from *NationalCarShare* and *Shareajourney*, we conclude that typical charges for membership and use of car share databases comprise a registration fee of up to £30, an annual membership fee of around £10 and journey costs of around £1.50 for a short journey. Assuming intermittent use of the service a typical cost per two-way journey might thus be £2-£4 (although we note that costs

may be less than this because some schemes do not levy any charges and leave it up to the driver and passenger to agree a fair level of compensation).

Taxi: A typical taxi fare for two three mile journeys might be £10-£12 (two journeys).

Public Transport: A typical cost of public transport for two three mile journeys is £2- £3 depending on ticket type and usage profile.

Transport provided by social services or community organisations:

Many services are provided free to approved users but the following examples indicate the level of charges that may be incurred:

- The Red Cross (West Yorkshire Branch) charges comprise a £5 administration fee per journey, plus 37p-65p per mile depending on the type of vehicle used, (plus, if an escort is required, a further £5 administration fee plus escort's travel costs). Further charges may be made to cover any out-of-pocket expenses for the volunteer. However The Red Cross say that, whilst a contribution is requested, no client will be denied a journey because they cannot afford the charge.
- In the London Borough of Camden, people with severe, permanent, mobility problems can use a Taxicard, which gives subsidised rides in licensed black taxis. A flat fare of £1.50 is charged for the portion of a journey costing up to £10.80 on the meter (plus the usual extras). Hence, for any journey costing less than £10.80, the charge is only £1.50. For journeys costing more than £10.80, the charge is £1.50 plus anything in excess of £10.80.
- Elderly people in Leeds pay a flat rate of 20p per bus journey.

4.4 Conclusions on relative costs

The user cost figures show that, where charges are imposed, clients can be faced with a wide range of charges depending on local circumstances. For a typical usage profile and assuming that the client does not require an escort or specially adapted vehicle, use of a car sharing scheme would be the cheapest option, followed by public transport, car club, taxi and, finally, dedicated vehicle.

If the client has their own car then this would, depending on usage profiles, come in as cheaper than all options except car sharing and public transport. (Although Baum & Pesch (1994) report that, relative to car ownership, use of a car club car is cheaper for annual mileages up to around 4,000 miles, our Phase 2 work suggested that purchasing and running a second hand vehicle is likely to be cheaper than using a car club vehicle irrespective of annual mileage).

It appears that, relative to more conventional provision with dedicated vehicles, the cost of provision via a car sharing service could represent a significant saving to the provider. The cost of provision via a car club could also represent a significant saving depending on the level of vehicle utilisation achieved.

It must, however be stressed that the cost of the vehicle is often only a small part of the total cost. The cost of escorts, particularly for disabled clients can be a large part of the whole.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Potential

It is clear that car clubs and car sharing may have a role to play in the provision of accessibility to some disadvantaged groups and that this may lead to cost savings. We conclude that particular potential exists for:

- Agencies who provide transport services to join forces to make more efficient use of their vehicles (adapted and otherwise) within a car club;
- Agencies to join forces to develop a car sharing database for use by clients and others in their locality (perhaps as part of wider brokerage service);
- Agencies to sponsor suitable clients to join existing car clubs;
- Residents of social housing within new city centre housing schemes could be included within new car clubs established on those sites;
- Innovative re-direction of existing funds (e.g. of Motability grants to support adaptation of car club vehicles);
- Small scale local initiatives.

5.2 Barriers

It is clear that significant barriers exist to prevent car clubs and car sharing playing a significant role in the provision of accessibility to some disadvantaged groups. We conclude that the most immediate barriers are:

- Lack of understanding of the car club concept;
- Lack of reliable data on the relative costs of provision by different means;
- Institutional inertia (fed by professional jealousy, lack of time to consider new modes of provision, lack of understanding of the concept of car clubs and a belief that, since the concept would not be appropriate for all clients, it is not worth considering);
- A concern not to further erode the market for conventional public transport:
- The fact that some clients would require delivery/pick-up arrangements;
- The fact that some clients would require specially adapted vehicles;
- The difficulties likely to be experienced when attempting to introduce a car club within a deprived community (difficulty posed by annual fee, lack of commitment within the community, vandalism, insurance problems...).
- Concern among some car club organisers as to the possible negative effect on their brand image.

5.3 Action to overcome the barriers and capitalise on the potential

Our recommendations for the promotion of car clubs and car sharing among disadvantaged groups would be as follows:

1. An interdepartmental team should be established to develop a joint strategy on car sharing and car clubs. It should involve DTLR, DoH, DfEE, and SEU and should in due course be extended to include representatives of the relevant professional bodies.

2. In order to familiarise the provider communities with the concepts of car clubs and car sharing, publicity material should be produced for each of the provider communities. The material should be distributed via professional channels and should include:
 - a clear description of how car sharing and car clubs, separately and in combination, might be used to serve that community;
 - examples, where available, of how the concept has been used (regrettably this would not yet be able to contain many UK examples!);
 - clarification of which groups for whom the concepts would, and would not, be appropriate.

3. As a second stage, and pending completion of the necessary research, more detailed information and advice should be sent to the provider communities. This material would again be distributed via professional channels but on this occasion should ideally be endorsed by the relevant government Minister. The material would include, for each provider community:
 - an indication of likely costs to the provider (in comparison with existing modes of delivery);
 - examples of best practice (as soon as they are available);
 - different modes of involvement, for example:
 - clients are encouraged to join a car sharing scheme
 - clients are encouraged/sponsored to join an exiting car club
 - provider organisation joins an existing car club as a corporate member
 - provider organisation joins with others to seeks to establish a car club
 - practical advice on aspects such as:
 - how to contact organisers of local car clubs and car sharing matching services (and who to contact to promote establishment of such a scheme if it does not yet exist),
 - sources of additional funding and advice on how to apply (e.g. The relevance of Motability funds, European funds, special government grants and funding initiatives),
 - establishing locations for car club car parks which are convenient for clients and providers,
 - integration with related services (e.g. Shopmobility),
 - insurance and liability issues, and
 - the benefits of co-operation with other service providers.

4. A training course, based on this material, should be provided for, and recommended to, personnel in the provider communities.

5. 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 of the concept. The coverage should explain the concept and provide examples of current car club activity (with examples from Switzerland, Bristol and perhaps, a city centre car club). This might be achieved by:
 - distribution of professional-quality publicity material (explaining the concept, describing the benefits and mentioning demonstration projects) to selected journals, newspapers, lifestyle magazines, TV and radio programmes;

- seeking to have the concept included in the storyline for a TV or radio soap opera.
6. Developers of high density low-car housing projects which incorporate social housing should be encouraged (via Section 106 Agreements if necessary) to establish car clubs within their developments and to offer the residents of the social housing free membership for at least a year.
 7. Demonstration schemes should be established to cover a range of issues. Our initial investigation suggests that the concepts are likely to take root in areas where some innovation is already apparent. The following should be considered as candidates:
 - Employment Action Zones and access to work areas where there is already some innovation in the provision of accessibility;
 - The Centre of Excellence for Rural Transport (Cornwall);
 - Sandwell, Camden or Hackney where provision by different departments is already integrated to some extent;
 - Leeds, where there is innovation in the provision of accessibility for disabled people;
 - Stepney, where a proposal is being made to establish a car club under the New Deal Initiative;
 - The Caspar city centre housing initiative (currently being promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in York).
 - Bristol or Edinburgh, where the established car clubs might look to expand by providing access to low income residents (via subsidised charges) and to disabled residents (via a pick-up/delivery service and adapted vehicles).
 8. Existing car clubs should be encouraged to approach providers of services to disadvantaged groups with a view to their becoming corporate members of the club (grant aid might be provided to assist the clubs to extend their vehicle fleet to include a minibus and at least one disability-adapted vehicles in order to make the prospect attractive to the service providers).

5.4 Research needs

We identify the following issues as being in need of further investigation:

9. There is clearly a need for further research on the costs of alternative models of provision. Access to detailed accounts of provider organisations will be required.
10. There is a need for research to characterise, identify and quantify clients' precise needs. For example,
 - what proportion of clients would be able to drive a standard specification car if it were available?
 - What proportion would be able to drive a car with automatic transmission etc, if it were available?
 - What proportion of potential drivers would require assistance in getting to a parking station (at specified distances from their door)?

- What journeys are not catered for by current provision? How important are they? And can car sharing or car clubs fill the gap?
 - Will subsidised driving lessons be required to raise licence to a level necessary to make car clubs a viable prospect within disadvantaged communities?
11. There is a need for attitudinal research to establish what value the clients put on different services and how they might react to different models of provision – including conventional public transport, client-group transport vehicles, car clubs and car sharing.
12. The current structure of car club membership fees and usage charges includes a significant lump sum payment. This may discourage people on low incomes. It would be useful to explore, with car club organisers, whether and how the cost profile might be made more attractive to people on low incomes.
13. There is a potential conflict between the image of car clubs which some car club organisers wish to promote (exclusive, high-tech, exciting, young, modern, fashionable, clean) and the use of car clubs by disadvantaged groups. This issue should be explored with car club organisers and promoters (e.g. developers seeking to establish car clubs in their city centre projects) in order that potential problems can be identified and solutions sought, at an early stage.
14. Research is required to further develop and evaluate the models of provision. We suggest that particular attention be paid to the following:
- Co-operation between different agencies to establish a common database of clients' travel requirements - with a view to arranging shared journeys.
 - Agencies making use of car-sharing databases as part of a more general brokerage/coordination of travel options for their clients.
 - Provision of grants to enable people to adapt their vehicles so that they can carry disabled passengers (within a car sharing scheme).
 - Subsidise membership of car sharing schemes for people with mobility problems.
 - Inclusion of low-income residents within a car club on a new city- centre residential development
 - Establishment of car clubs within tight-knit low income communities
 - Sponsorship of car clubs to:
 - include vehicles within their vehicle fleet which are adapted for use by disabled drivers or disabled passengers
 - provide a car delivery/pick-up service for disabled members
 - provide reduced cost membership and use by people on low incomes
 - Agencies responsible for providing transport for disadvantaged groups become corporate members of car clubs and utilise the club vehicles to take their clients as passengers
 - Agency sponsorship of selected clients to become car club members in their own right.