

# Car Club Strategy

London Borough of Richmond upon  
Thames

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Over the last 30 years, car ownership rates in the UK have grown significantly, together with the number of larger and heavier goods vehicles. As car ownership rates have increased the population has adopted more mobile lifestyles and travel patterns and therefore have become increasingly car dependent.

1.2 One of the top priorities for London Boroughs is tackling the transport issues, particularly with London's population projected to continue to rise over the next decade and because economic growth is a key goal of the GLA. The Government wishes to achieve a more integrated transport system through reducing the dependency on cars and lorries, through providing genuine alternatives and promoting greater use of more attractive public transport, and safer walking and cycling.

1.3 Residents and the workforce of Richmond have expressed growing concerns about the problems resulting from traffic congestion and pollution. The extension westward of the Congestion Charging Zone will increase the traffic on the roads in and around Richmond.

1.4 The Council is a keen supporter of sustainable travel and through its policies and strategies aims to provide its residents, visitors and employees with the infrastructure and knowledge to allow them to make informed travel choices.

1.5 As part of this the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames proposes to adopt a Car Club Strategy that will enable the Council to form a partnership with a Car Club provider and give borough residents, visitors and employees even more sustainable travel choices.

## 2. Policy context

### National and Regional:

2.1 The Government's Ten Year Plan for Transport identifies a strategic approach to transport planning. It contains a long-term Government commitment to sustained increases in transport spending. This has led to the 'Future of Transport' White Paper, which outlined expenditure plans to 2015, as well as setting out the longer term aspirations for the next 30 years.

2.2 PPG3: Housing provides advice to local planning authorities on how to meet the Government's objectives for housing. As part of this there is a need to reduce dependence on the car and promote walking and cycling as well as facilitating improvements to public transport linkages between housing, jobs, local shopping and services.

2.3 It also states that developers should not be required to provide more car parking than they or potential occupiers might want and that car parking standards should be expressed as maxima not minima. It also states that on average car parking provision within developments should not exceed 1.5 spaces per dwelling.

2.4 PPG13: Transport objectives are to integrate planning and transport at a national, regional, strategic and local level, with a view to:

- promoting more sustainable transport choices for both people and moving freight;
- promoting accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling; and
- reducing the need to travel, especially by car;

2.5 Local planning Authorities are required to make more efficient use of land through their policies and standards, such as increasing housing densities in town centres and close to public transport nodes, as well as applying their parking standards flexibly.

### Subregional and Local:

2.6 The GLA recognises that the availability of off street parking influences the number of car trips and requires London Boroughs to submit Parking Enforcement Plans as part of their Local Implementation Plan (LIP) submissions. Such Plans should set the Council's approach to both on street and off street parking management, together with estimates for future parking demand and provision.

2.7 The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets the policy framework for transport in London over a ten-year period, covering all modes of transport and management of London's road system. The transport priorities are as follows:

- i) Improving road safety
- ii) Improving bus journey times & reliability
- iii) Reducing traffic congestion
- iv) Improving the working of parking & loading arrangements and the service and delivery of business
- v) Improving accessibility
- vi) Encouraging walking
- vii) Encouraging cycling
- viii) Bringing transport infrastructure into a state of good repair

2.8 The Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is currently under review and will be superseded by the Local Development Framework (LDF). The existing document sets out the Council's planning policies, and provides the basis for all the Council's planning decisions. It is based on the Council's priorities and policies of creating an environment where it's residents and visitors would:

- Have pride in the borough
- Feel safe
- Live in a clean and pleasant environment
- Enjoy good quality services that are value for money

2.9 The manifesto of the new Council administration will form the basis of a revised Council transport strategy. The policies are divided into 6 main categories:

- Community Safety
- Environment
- Sustainability
- Sustainable Road and Transport Policies
  - Safety not speed – use all available methods with local support
  - Self-enforcing 20 mph zones, in residential areas and near schools
  - A road safety assessment and Green Travel Plan for every school
  - Pragmatic criteria for Controlled Parking Zones to meet local wishes
  - Prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport
  - Encourage safer cycling using funds from Transport for London
  - Keep bus lanes red
  - Fight night flights and Heathrow expansion
  - Work with others to maintain runway alternation
  - Encourage low car and no car developments
  - Progress Council's Green Travel Plan and reduce environmental impact of Council's own vehicle fleet.

-Undertake pavement improvements including looking at main pedestrian routes to ensure there is no discontinuity in dropped kerbs and other matters pertaining to walking routes.

- Accessibility
- Education and Youth Services
- Health and Social Services
- Housing, Libraries, and Arts

2.10 It is the Council's intention through its LDF and LIP to support and improve public transport, cycling and pedestrian routes in the borough while reducing transport related air pollution and improving air quality. It is considered that one way forward is through the introduction of a borough-wide car club.

2.11 Car clubs will be supported by the Council both as a way to reduce car ownership among existing residents and as an alternative to car ownership in new developments. Reduced and car free developments in the borough will be welcomed particularly where these provide residents with alternatives to car ownership, as well as innovative solutions to travelling.

### **3.0 Sustainable Travel in Richmond**

3.1 The residents of Richmond are already ahead of many other Londoners as they are keenly aware of and are helping to tackle the problems of traffic congestion and pollution by undertaking many of their journeys by sustainable methods such as public transport, cycling and walking.

3.2 The Borough's public transport provision is good with buses, national rail and London underground routes serving Richmond however, these services are not evenly spread across the borough. Richmond and Twickenham town centres have better provision and therefore more choice available than other parts of the borough.

3.3 The Borough's schools are involved in tackling congestion and pollution on local roads and around the school gates by adopting Travel Plans and educating both the children and their parents on the health benefits of cycling and walking to school. Through their travel plans schools have received Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) funding for improvements to cycle storage, pedestrian and cycle routes, lighting, shelters and signage within the school grounds as well as funding through Transport for London (TfL) for engineering measures to improve safety outside and on the approaches to school sites.

3.4 The Borough offers Year 5 and 6 children in state schools cycle proficiency training, including on road instruction. Independent schools can also access this service by paying a small fee per child for administration and materials. Children and adult summer courses are also provided and are very popular both with new cyclists and older members of the community that wish to take up cycling again after many years of using their car to undertake their journeys.

3.5 Local businesses also play a part by providing employees with information and incentives to use alternative modes to the car for their travel to and from the Borough. Workplace Travel Plans are being adopted by large and medium sized employers in the borough, aimed at encouraging their workforce to make sustainable travel choices by providing them with the tools to pursue these options such as on site showers, secure cycle storage and pool bikes, car sharing web sites and season ticket loans.

## 4.0 Operation of Car Clubs

4.1 Car clubs are privately operated 'pool cars' and members of the club can book a car as little as an hour before use. Bookings can be for an hour, for 2-3 days or longer and is cheaper than conventional car hire. Bookings are made over the internet or phone and payment is by the hour and/or miles travelled.

4.2 Car Clubs are consistent with the aims of both PPG13 and The Mayor's Transport Strategy, which seek to reduce reliance on the car and the number of car trips made, yet both recognise that the car still has a role to play for certain types of trips.

4.2 The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997, requires local authorities to assess traffic levels and to forecast growth of traffic levels in their areas. In addition, the Council will need to specify targets for reducing traffic or reducing the rate of growth of traffic levels. In addition, The Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to provide Air Quality Action Plans; this is to ensure that local authorities take suitable action to improve air quality in their area.

4.3 Reducing parking provision in new developments and encouraging existing residents to use the car less when travelling will be key to helping the Council achieve their targets. Car Clubs have a central part to play in this.

4.4 Research has shown that a car club car can replace 5-6 privately owned vehicles. They should not however, be confused with 'car sharing', which encourages people to share car journeys and is an initiative that can be promoted through travel plans and web based sites.

4.5 The benefit of car clubs is that they encourage people to forego private car ownership and they are also attractive to people that make very limited use of a car. While not having the expense of buying, insuring and maintaining their own vehicle, members have access to a car that is parked conveniently in dedicated parking spaces within a few minutes walk of their home.

4.6 Research by the AA and Streetcar has shown that the annual average cost of running a private car when using it for 2 trips a week is £2,749 as opposed to £707 when using a car club car.

4.7 There are 3 main Car Club providers in London are:

- City Car Clubs
- Streetcar
- Whizz-Go



## **5.0 Car Clubs in Richmond**

5.1 The Council in its Transport Policies in the adopted UDP has placed great emphasis on sustainable developments and their locations close to public transport and shopping facilities/town centres. The location of development plays a key role in reducing the number and length of car trips, as well as encouraging non-car travel.

5.2 Developments close to town centres and within Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) provide opportunities for reduced or no car parking provision and innovative approaches to travel and transport. Car clubs can bridge the divide between lack of car parking on site and on street, use of public transport, cycling and walking and the need for occasional access to a car.

5.3 Richmond currently has the benefit of two Streetcar vehicles, which are well used. The car in Richmond is booked for an average of 5.5 hrs a day while the Twickenham car is used for an average 5.2hrs a day. There are 121 members of Streetcar who are Richmond residents and another 135 who have registered with streetcar as being interested in having a car parked closer to where they live. The provision of these two cars is on an ad hoc, temporary basis.

### **Car clubs in CPZ's:**

5.4 Allowing a car club operator to use on-street parking bays would enable a club to achieve a greater geographical spread and add new cars as and when required. The added advantage of having on-street car club cars as opposed to cars within developments is that it raises awareness of the concept with local businesses, residents and visitors thus helping to widen the catchment of potential users. It also helps with social inclusion as residents who cannot afford to own a car have an alternative, as well as helping with reduction in overall car ownership.

5.5 The disadvantage of using on street bays, particularly in CPZ'S, is the loss of on street parking availability to residents for their private cars. However, it is necessary to dedicate bays for the exclusive use of the car club so that members are aware of where to take the car from and where to return it to for ease of access and enforcement and to ensure that parking for the car club car is always available. The Council will use its discretion with regard to locating bays on residential streets, so as to minimise the impact on residents personal parking availability. The provision of car club spaces should reduce the demand for personal parking as a percentage of residents join the car club.

5.6 The Council will normally include car club bays within the initial design of new or in the review of existing CPZ's and obtain feedback on this provision through its consultation process.

5.7 The car club provider will be asked to pay an annual fee towards a CPZ permit for each vehicle. The fee will provide an all zones permit for the car so that resident's who have switched to using the car club, are able to park in any CPZ in the borough. The terms of the car club provision will be set out in the tender document.

### **Car clubs in non CPZ areas:**

5.7 Where there is no CPZ provision, the Council will use its discretion with regard to locating bays on residential streets. Priority will be given to locating car club bays within Council run car parks to minimise impact on parking availability for residents however, where this is not possible the bays will be provided in areas where they will have least impact on residents parking. It should be borne in mind however, that the bays must be provided at locations that are easily accessible, well lit and overlooked.

### **General:**

5.8 Where there is no existing or proposed car club bay either through new or reviewed CPZ provision or through proposed development either in or outside of a CPZ, the preferred car club provider can put forward to the Council suggestions for locating car club bays. Where the locations are agreed to by the Cabinet Member for Traffic, Transport & Parking, the provider will either incur all the Council's costs associated with the provision of the bay or if available at the time, match funding provided by TfL.

### **New developments:**

5.9 There a number of benefits to developers arising from the provision of car clubs as part of new developments:

- increase in the amount of built development on site
- improvement to the environment by increase in the landscaped and open space areas
- savings on infrastructure and roads within the development
- there may be lower costs in relation to contributing to access/off site highway work improvements
- land locked and previously unsuitable sites may become suitable for development
- where local authorities would accept low levels or no on site car parking provision, car clubs can help with the marketing of a development

5.10 Where a new development is proposed within existing CPZ's and in a good public transport accessibility location (PTAL 4-6), the Council will seek from the developer reduced or no on site car parking and through a Section 106 agreement remove the right of prospective occupiers to apply for residents parking permits and instead encourage new car club provision in the locality through the Council's preferred provider or where appropriate and where capacity exists, affiliation to the preferred providers car club.

5.11 Payment of new car club provision will be sought through the Council's Planning Obligations Strategy where the qualifying thresholds are met. The payment will meet the cost of a new vehicle(s) and the cost of the amendment to any existing or provision of new traffic order to provide the car club bay(s) on street. Remaining funds will be put towards improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure and public transport.

5.12 The size of the development will determine the number of car club cars required (see section 6.0) and these can be provided on a phased basis to concur with any phasing of building works and occupation of the development however, provision will be required prior to the occupation of each phase.

5.13 The developer will also be required to make a one off payment for each residential unit of the development to be affiliated to the providers club. This will ensure that the membership of the car club will be passed on from occupier to occupier and as the membership fee will be non-refundable it will ensure that the residential units are affiliated for the life of the development. Occupiers would be able to register with the car club on occupation however, they would have to meet the terms and conditions of the car club membership.

5.14 In instances where the car club provision through the preferred provider will be on the development site, the vehicle(s) should be provided in a location that:

- will not cause amenity issues for the residents of the development,
- be well lit and covered by CCTV and
- will be accessible to non-residents, where appropriate.

Planning Obligation funds and payment for affiliation of the residential units to the car club will still apply.

5.13 Where a development is proposed whose size does not trigger the Planning Obligation Strategy the developer will be asked to pay for the residential unit(s) to become affiliated to the car club.

5.14 The Council do not wish to limit the provision or membership of car clubs to residential development only and therefore would support their provision within business or mixed-use developments. In mixed-use developments the provision as per residential development will apply, with the addition that each commercial unit will also become affiliated to the car club in the same way. In very large mixed use developments car club cars for the sole use of the commercial element of the proposal can be provided and advice on this will be sought from the preferred provider.

5.15 The Council is one of the largest employers in the Borough. Many of its employees use a vehicle as part of their job either on a daily or ad hoc basis. As part of this strategy the Council will become a corporate member of the preferred providers club and where appropriate promote to employees the use of the car club cars, as pool cars, to carry out their jobs. This will reduce

- the number of employees that are required to bring their vehicles to work
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Borough
- the number of car parking spaces that are required to be provided or paid for by the Council

## 6.0 Size of development, car clubs and membership

6.1 Research carried out for the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly by CarPlus indicates that a development in excess of 33 units is required to support one car and 65 are needed to make two cars viable. The size of the units is also important and Table 1 provides information on size of development and numbers of car club vehicles needed.

Size of development		Membership take up as % of number of residents**			
No of dwellings	No of residents in development*	15%	20%	25%	40%
		Number of cars in car club***			
33	50	0	0	1	1
50	75	1	1	1	2
65	100	1	1	2	2
165	250	2	3	4	6
265	400	4	5	6	10
400	600	6	7	9	15
500	750	7	9	12	19
650	1000	9	12	16	25

Table 1

Source: Achieving low car housing: the role of car share clubs – Yorkshire & Humber Assembly

\* No. of residents assumes 1.5 adults per dwelling

\*\* Potential membership may be increased by extending access to nearby residents

\*\*\* These figures have been calculated on 16 members/car

6.2 However, more recent car club membership figures provided by CarPlus show that, on average a car club vehicle is used by 24 members on a regular basis. City Car Club provides figures of 12-20 members per car. Data from Streetcar also indicates a need to have 20 members to make the provision of a vehicle viable, although they have also provided information that up to 40 members are able to make use of a car where there are several within close proximity of each other. An average of these figures, taking into account the calculations in Table 1, is 20 members per car.

6.3 Using the figure assumed for table 1 of 1.5 adults per dwelling, it would appear that at least 13 dwellings would be required to make a new car club car viable, although by allowing residents of an area in general access to the vehicle, usage will be increased and this will make the provision of the car more viable.

### Examples of development related car clubs in London

Location	Developer/ Local Authority	PT Access	Size of Dev/ type of Dev.	Number of Club Cars	Car Parking Rates	Required by S106	Operator/ Operative	Other
Bed Zed Hackbridge Sutton	Bio-Regional/ Peabody Trust/ LB Sutton	Low/ Medium	82 + some live work units, 'B1' units health centre, sports pitch	2 +	car spaces provided for 42% of residential development	No part of Green Travel Plan	Smart Moves/ No	Sustainable/Zero Emission Development
Clark and Smith Melbourne Rd Wallington	Bryant Homes LB Sutton	High	65 units (1,2,3, bed flats) 2 B1 Units	2	80% of development has car parking	Yes	Smart Moves/ No	14 Affordable shared/ownership
Deptford	St James Homes LB Lewisham	Medium /High (SRQ area)	550units	Eventually 19	50% provision	No	Avis	-Developer considers would assist marketing of development -Parking controls -Discount for first 300 members
Grand Union Village	Bryant Homes LB Ealing/ Hillingdon	Medium	700 units + offices retail, leisure uses	2-3 to start 12 cars after 5 years	100% provision for housing	Yes	Smart Moves	-Parking difficult in surrounding streets -First Phase of Car Club when 133 Units occupied
Elephant and Castle	LB Southwark	High	70 flats New Shops, offices	5	Nil	Yes	?	
Blackfriars Bridge	LB Southwark	High	Office Block	3	Nil	Yes	?	

Table 2

6.4 Table 2 shows existing developments that have car clubs. Looking at the BedZed, Wallington, Deptford and Elephant & Castle developments, which are in areas of high/medium accessibility, the ratio of car club provision to number of units is 1 car club to 14/15 units. This compares favourably with paragraph 6.3 where it was found that 13 units would be needed to make a car club car viable.

6.5 Based on the above information Richmond Council will seek one new car club car for every 15 new dwellings provided in a development. The council will seek annual updates from the preferred provider on the use of the car club cars and use these figures to ensure that

- sufficient car club provision exists
- the ratio of car club cars to dwellings as required in paragraph 6.5 is still pertinent.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### Sustainability Appraisal

Table 1: Appraisal of SPD against Draft SA objectives  
(Objectives taken from the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report)

		impact of SPD
<b>E N V I R O N M E N T A L</b>	1) To promote sustainable waste management, including reducing waste and waste disposal, promoting recovery, reuse and recycling.	=
	2) To make the most efficient use of land and to reduce contamination and safeguard soil quantity and quality.	=
	3) Reduce air and noise pollution, including greenhouse gases, and ensure air quality improves.	+
	4) Minimise congestion and pollution by reducing the need to travel, encourage alternatives to the car and making best use of existing transport infrastructure.	+
	5) To maintain or where possible improve water quality, conserve water and reduce the risk of and from flooding.	=
	6) To promote sustainable energy use through reduced energy use, improved energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy.	=
	7) Conserve and enhance biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses, through responsible management of key wildlife sites connecting and other areas.	=
	8) Promote high quality places, spaces and buildings & conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character of the borough including historical features for the benefit of both residents and visitors.	+
	9) to make best use of previously developed land and existing buildings, encouraging sustainable construction practices	=
<b>S O C I A L</b>	10) to provide new housing opportunities and sufficient affordable housing that meets local needs.	=
	11) to create and maintain safer, more secure and more cohesive communities.	=
	12) To facilitate the improved health and well-being of the population, including enabling people to stay independent and ensuring access to those health, education, sport, leisure and recreation facilities and services that are required.	=
<b>E C O N O M I C</b>	13) To increase the vitality and viability of existing town centres, local centres and parades.	=
	14) To promote and encourage a buoyant and diverse economy that will provide sustainable economic growth.	=
	15) provide appropriate commercial development opportunities to meet the needs of the local and sub-regional economy.	=

**key to potential impacts:**

+ positive = neutral or no impact

+/- both positive & negative impacts