

Electric & hybrid vehicles

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Transport is one of the largest contributors to carbon dioxide emissions in the UK, with 90% of transport emissions coming from road traffic. The Government has committed to achieving a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2027 and an 80% reduction by 2050. Ultra-low emission vehicles and plug in vehicles will have a major role to play in achieving these targets, together with improvements to the efficiency of internal combustion engines.



Cleaner vehicles

The availability and use of electric vehicles (EVs) and plug in hybrids has increased significantly over the past three years. The Government forecasts that by 2020, plug-in vehicles will make up around 12% of the vehicles sold in the UK. This expansion will be due in part to advances in vehicle and battery technology and also as a response to the expansion of charging infrastructure across London and the rest of the UK.

In London, car club fleets are at least 20% cleaner than the average private car. Even if car club members do not reduce their overall car usage, they can reduce their carbon emissions by switching to a cleaner vehicle than their own. Carplus research has documented the contribution car clubs make to reducing harmful emissions; visit our [resources section](#) for further information.

Electric vehicles and car clubs

Carplus believes that the most effective way of establishing widespread use of battery electric vehicles is through shared use (car-sharing/car clubs) and in employers' car pools. This will encourage the allocation of the appropriate vehicle for the trip rather than assuming individual ownership of a multi-purpose vehicle.

Whilst electric vehicles can help to reduce vehicle emissions (at point of use), Carplus believes that there are still significant technological and operational issues that limit the use of these vehicles in car clubs. As they become more widespread, their cost effective use (e.g. for repetitive short trips and selected sub-regional journeys) will become clearer. There is now some operational experience of electrical vehicles with noted improvements in battery technology, reductions in both purchasing price and the cost of service and maintenance.

The issues of purchase or leasing cost, ease of use and convenience need to be tackled before pure (rather than hybrid) electric vehicles will become a financially viable proposition for car club operators. Available to our members [our guidance](#) on electric vehicles and their shared and pooled usage, summarises our recommendations on this topic.

Carplus believes that encouraging the use of electric vehicles by car clubs can help to increase their popularity and more widespread use. Wider access to electric vehicles may also influence the next generation of owners who might purchase them in the future.

Contact

We are currently involved in promoting electric vehicle trials in Car Clubs across the UK. If you are interested in discussing electric vehicle opportunities with us, please contact Kate Gifford at kate@carplus.org.uk.

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