

RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION FROM CARPLUS BIKEPLUS

THE DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN (RPP3)

1. We are commenting on the transport elements of this Climate Change Plan and recommend that the core principles should be:
 - Emissions reduction
 - Safety and liveable neighbourhoods
 - Fairness
2. The benefits of reducing road traffic are significantly greater than the benefits of switching to electric vehicles, and the transport focus should be on demand management. The Climate Change Plan should aim to reduce the distance that people drive, which will unlock the following benefits:
 - **Emissions reduction.** The use of electric vehicles has associated emissions, in the production of the vehicles and the electricity generation. Reductions in car miles will achieve greater emissions savings.
 - **Safety and liveable neighbourhoods.** Road safety is largely determined by the volume of traffic on the roads. Significant gains in terms of road safety can be achieved by reducing the number of cars/vans/lorries on the roads. This will, in turn, make neighbourhoods more pleasant to spend time in and people will be more likely to walk and cycle more, with associated health benefits.
 - **Fairness.** There will always be a segment of society that is unable to drive (e.g. because of age, disability, or cost). The historic focus on cars when planning towns and transport has led to increasing isolation of these groups, as it has become more difficult to access services and amenities without driving. This disproportionately affects lower income households and neighbourhoods. This can be addressed by prioritising more sustainable and equitable forms of travel (public transport, walking and cycling), and designing future development around these.

About Carplus Bikeplus

3. Carplus Bikeplus is a not-for-profit, environmental transport organisation that promotes accessible, affordable and low-carbon options in shared transport, as alternatives to traditional car use in the UK. While recognising the benefits that cars can bring to society, we believe that a new approach to car use and ownership is needed in order to mitigate the financial, environmental, social and health costs of motoring today.
4. We are the national accreditation body for car clubs, car sharing and shared bike schemes in the UK and co-ordinate annual data collection and research for the sector. In Scotland we provide technical and financial assistance to support the development of car clubs in urban and rural communities across Scotland

through the Transport Scotland funded *Developing Car Clubs in Scotland (DCCS)* programme.

5. More information can be found on our website: www.carplus.org.uk.

The role of car clubs in tackling climate change

6. Carplus data shows that car clubs play a useful role in reducing emissions. Our comprehensive annual survey of members and car club operators¹ in 2015-16 reported that
- **Car club members drive less** – after joining a car club, households reduce the amount they drive by an average of 967 miles per year.
 - **Car club members reduce their car ownership** – after joining, 3.6 members sold or disposed of a car for every car club vehicle, and 31% would have bought a car if they hadn't joined a car club.
 - **Car club vehicles are greener** – on average, each car club vehicle in Scotland produced 49% lower tailpipe CO₂ emissions than the average UK car.
 - **Car clubs save carbon** – car clubs across Scotland saved a total of 2,895 tonnes of CO₂ in 2015-16.
7. There is significant potential for car clubs to save greater levels of carbon in the future, and we suggest that they are built into the Climate Change Plan, with a focus on establishing car clubs in urban areas with a population of over 20,000.

The role of public bike share and shared electric bikes in tackling climate change

8. Public bike share schemes and shared electric bikes can play a useful role in reducing emissions. Bikeplus conducts an annual survey of its users and has just completed the monitoring of the Department for Transport funded *Shared Electric Bike Programme*. The findings show:
- **Public Bike Share Schemes attract new cyclists:** The percentage of people saying they have begun cycling as a result of the bike share scheme is 13% - once added to the 37% increasing their use of bikes, this makes 50% cycling more.
 - **Public Bike Share Schemes encourage more women and older people to cycle.** The percentage of female users is 43%, considerably more than the national average of 25%. The age range of users also shows that those aged 30 -60 are regular users.
 - **Public Bike Share Schemes act as public transport extender.** Bike share is often used as the first and last mile to add flexibility and convenience to journeys. 20% of respondents used bike share in conjunction with the bus and 40% with train.
 - **Public Bike Share Schemes users reduce their car use:** 22% said they previously travelled by car or taxi, suggesting potential for bike share to

¹ http://www.carplus.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Carplus-Annual-Survey-of-Car-Clubs-2015-16-Scotland_Final3.pdf

reduce congestion and pollution. This is backed up by the question which asked what percentage of short local car trips were replaced by bike share – 40% of respondents said they were replacing at least some.

- **Shared Electric Bikes amplify the benefits:** The addition of electric assist to bikes has been found to overcome many barriers to cycling for those who are unfit, unconfident or have health difficulties. The soon-to-be-published Shared Electric Bike Programme report will illustrate how electric bikes can attract new users to cycling as well as supporting new longer, hillier and faster trips for existing cyclists. For these reasons electric bikes have been found to allow riders to reduce their car trips.

Complementary factors

9. The impacts of car clubs and bike share are affected by a number of external factors. Shared transport measures are most successful in areas where:

- There is parking pressure.
- People are able to make their most regular journeys (e.g. commuting, going to school) by public transport, walking or cycling).

10. Therefore we would encourage the Climate Change Plan to support these measures by:

- Tightening planning regulations so that developers in urban areas are required to limit the parking provided.
- Requiring new developments to fund locally (as appropriate): a car club, public bike share schemes, public transport, and/or walking and cycling routes.
- Requiring that public transport, walking and cycling are prioritised over driving within urban areas.
- Enabling local authorities in Scotland to implement (a version of) the Workplace Parking Levy licencing scheme (UK Transport Act 2000). This has been successful in promoting a shift from car to sustainable forms of transport in Nottingham.

11. In a wider context, carbon emissions can be further reduced by:

- Measures to support the local economy, to enable people to have shorter commutes.
- Providing longer-term funding for sustainable transport projects. Many of these projects are delivered by the third sector, who typically receive government funding on an annual basis. This limits their ability to deliver meaningful long-term projects. We would recommend increasing this to a minimum of three-year funding pots.

Summary

12. Whilst privately owned electric and other low emission vehicles have a role to play in addressing the carbon emissions from transport, these should be towards

the bottom of the travel hierarchy, after: reduced demand for travel; walking and cycling (including bike share); buses and trains; and car clubs.

13. Car clubs and public bike share schemes have a valuable role to play in supporting sustainable transport choices; providing people with occasional convenient access to vehicles when they need them, whilst reducing their reliance on road transport and reducing carbon emissions. Shared transport measures should be included in the Climate Change Plan with a particular emphasis on:

- Establishing car clubs in towns with a population of over 20,000,
- Requiring new developments in areas with existing car clubs to have reduced parking and for developers to provide funding for car club vehicles in the area.
- Establishing the right bike share model to fit the town or city, e.g. on-street docks, rail (bus /ferry) station flexible easy-access share schemes, and community hubs.
- Integrating shared transport with public transport ticketing to increase take-up.

Carplus Bikeplus
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