



Car Club Accreditation Criteria

Full, Provisional and Basic Standard Accreditation

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Car Club Accreditation Criteria

Introduction

The car club accreditation scheme has been set up for the benefit of public bodies, and it was designed with their input. The aim is to provide a tool for organisations that helps to assess operators when deciding who should be invited to submit proposals, be supported or be chosen for a contract. It also maintains standards for the end users.

The scheme is valuable for local authorities who are increasingly supporting car clubs with funding and provision of on-street parking. Planning authorities requesting car club provision in a development as well as public transport operators working on joint promotions and discounts will also benefit from the system.

Section 1. Developing Accreditation for a Changing Market

CoMoUK reserves the right to update the accreditation criteria and application forms to reflect changes in the car club market and new models of car clubs that are emerging. Any changes will be done in consultation with all stakeholders and will be done at the point of renewal each year unless there is a consensus for an urgent change between these dates. Updated versions will be published on the CoMoUK website and circulated to all accredited operators.

There are two standards of accreditation available, full and basic, both of which are available on a provisional and location specific basis.

1.1 Full Accreditation

Full accreditation will apply to operators who are already established and have a scheme that has already been launched. Full accreditation requires operators to meet all of the requirements set out in the Full Accreditation application form (see below)

Some car club operators who are new to the market may wish to work towards full accreditation as their operations move past the launch phase. In these circumstances provisional full accreditation may be appropriate (see above).

1.2 Provisional Full Accreditation

Local authorities entering into agreements with operators need to have assurances that they can deliver what they claim, but at the same time, new entrants to the industry may wish to apply for tenders prior to having all operational elements in place. Provisional full accreditation provides a means for CoMoUK to assess core aspects of an operators before they are operational.

Provisional full accreditation will only be awarded on the basis that the operator provides CoMoUK with written details of a set of milestones leading up to a launch date and evidence

at each stage they are achieved. If significant and repeated delays occur, provisional status will be removed until the launch programme is back on track.

1.4 Basic Accreditation

Smaller community-based car clubs have not previously required accreditation status or been able to meet the criteria, e.g. the standard of vehicles. A number of stakeholders have raised the issue to CoMoUK that it would nonetheless be useful for these clubs to demonstrate that they have met selected minimum standards such as safety and service standards. Local authorities issuing tenders would still require full accreditation status but those providing small scale grants to community clubs and its members could have basic reassurances.

Specific criteria have been developed in order to enable appropriate clubs to be awarded “basic accreditation” from CoMoUK. Basic accreditation applies to schemes with less than 10 vehicles. The criteria have been chosen carefully to ensure they are realistic for this sector of car club operators to comply with and simple to administer whilst still being meaningful. They are designed to ensure a uniformity of basic standards whilst nurturing the growth of car clubs in the UK.

Section 2. Accreditation Scheme

The criteria for the basic and full accreditation are split into four sections; each section contains the requirements needed and a brief explanation of what is included and necessary. The four sections are:

- **2.1 Business requirements**
- **2.2 Service provision requirements**
- **2.3 Safety requirements**
- **2.4 Data collection requirements**

The differences between the basic standard and full accreditation are highlighted in each section. All other standards apply to both levels.

To be awarded accreditation each operator will need to complete the appropriate application form and provide the appropriate supporting documentation outlined in the application form.

To be awarded accreditation it will be necessary for an operator to achieve all of the requirements in full. The accreditation process will require operators to renew their accreditation on an annual basis.

The charge for accreditation is comprised of a CoMoUK membership fee and a per vehicle levy. The levy charge contributes towards wider support work. Car club operators with less than 10 vehicles will be charged a lower membership fee rate and no vehicle levy. The table below illustrates the fees to be paid from 1st April 2023.

A penalty charge of £100 may be made if substantial information is missing on an application and a second appraisal is required. Price rises may be applied each year at the AGM. Each renewal year runs April to March regardless of when a club is approved. Pro-rata charges will be applied when an operator applies for accreditation part way through a year.

All materials supporting the application will be provided in English.

Payment structure from 1st April 2024 (prices exclude VAT)

- £2700 core fee and £800 membership fee for all companies with over 10 vehicles.
- £300 core fee and £20 membership fee for community schemes with less than 10 vehicles.
- £3.06 per vehicle levy for 1st 500 cars or vans plus £3.34 per vehicle levy above 500, (based on the number of cars at 1st April each year and no levy charged for under 10 vehicles).

Accredited operators will be entitled to two passes to the CoMoUK annual conference.

2.1. Business Requirements

2.11 The operator must have a formal constitution and/or be a limited or public liability company

Car club operators will be required to show that they have a formal organisational structure in place. Limited companies must produce foundation documents and demonstrate that they have a formal management structure in place, such as a board of directors.

Other operators, such as community groups should have, as a minimum, a formally adopted, written constitution. These groups should also have an elected body that forms an operational committee; these should include a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer as a minimum.

2.12 The operator must submit an annual report on application, unless they are not yet operational in which case they must submit a similar publicly available statement of how the club will be operated

In all cases the report should include details of current number of vehicles and members, pricing structures, location(s) of operation, and operational methods. It should also include a statement on company procedures should the operator cease to operate in a particular area, close operations or be taken over. Published audited accounts or management accounts for the previous year must also be submitted.

On renewal, it is the duty of the operator to make CoMoUK aware of any new documentation or changes to operating conditions that have an impact on their

accreditation status (for example new operational locations that are to be included in the accreditation). CoMoUK reserves the right to request updated documents on renewal of accreditation (such as published accounts for the most recent year).

2.13 The operator must meet the following ethical, social and environmental standards

To ensure high environmental standards are maintained the operator will have either:

- ISO14001 accreditation, or
- An Environmental Policy and Environmental Impact statement to be approved by CoMoUK.

To ensure operators demonstrate fair work practices, operators will demonstrate that they:

- Support the living wage by guaranteeing a minimum standard of income for all employees and sub contractors.
- Have an Equality and Diversity Policy.

2.14. All operators to publish an assessment of their full lifecycle carbon emissions in their annual report.

2.15 All operators must make reference to their accreditation status on their website

2.2 Service Provision Requirements

2.21 The operator must offer a pay-as-you-drive car club service

To be accredited the car club operator must provide a service that conforms to ALL of the criteria listed below. Where operators run a range of services as well as a car club which do not meet these the definition and requirements of accreditation (e.g. car hire, closed pool car schemes and peer to peer services) then prominent differentiation of services must be made online (website and app).

The car club must have:

- Prices based upon mile AND/OR per time booked.
- A clear price structure.
- A pricing structure which is available to customers at the time of booking and include all aspects of vehicle usage (e.g. insurance, tax, fuel etc).
- A recognised booking system and customer helpline (e.g. telephone, mobile app and/or internet) accessible to all their customers.
- Vehicles available to be booked in time segments, for example by the hour or by the minute.
- Vehicles available to customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This rule allows for block bookings by corporate members.

- The ability to hire without the customer signing a new hire or rental agreement contract with each booking.
- Vehicles which are accessible at the time of the booking commencing without the need of assistance from a member of the car club staff.
- Vehicles which are located within residential or commercial areas close to a cluster of members.

2.22 Vehicle age and emissions.

Data from October 2022 shows that 14% of the car club fleet is zero tailpipe and the transition to EV is moving faster than the UK in general. Full accreditation requires that current vehicles will be Euro 6d rated. All vehicles must be less than 5 years old throughout their time on the fleet.

Exceptions:

- For basic accreditation the emissions standard is reduced to Euro 5 and vehicles should be no older than 8 years.
- Diesel cars are not acceptable in a fleet which holds full accreditation. Exceptions can be applied for by basic accreditation schemes for a limited number of vehicles only. These will be judged on a case by case basis.
- Diesel vans to be phased out when feasible.

2.23 Vehicles should be kept clean and tidy at all times

To protect the image of car clubs as a professional service, as seen by potential and actual customers, all vehicles available for use by customers should be kept clean and in good order. As part of the application for accreditation, operators must outline their checking procedures which should include cleaning and checking each vehicle:

- at least every two weeks for full accreditation,
- or four weeks for basic accreditation,
- or when a complaint is received, whichever is sooner.

2.24 Operators must be contactable by telephone or in app communications

In order to deal with member's problems operators must be contactable between reasonable hours.

Full accreditation:

Ideally, 24 hours cover but a minimum of 7am to 10pm plus system to deal with out of hours queries as soon as possible via a 24 hour message retrieval system.

Basic accreditation:

From 8.30am to 6pm plus system to deal with out of hours queries as soon as possible via a 24 hour message retrieval system.

In order to reduce the number of out of hours' queries, systems should be put in place to deal with non-serious matters. Members should be informed of the procedure in the case of:

- A parking space being taken on return with the vehicle (where relevant)
- Not being able to access the vehicle
- A vehicle being returned late (where relevant)
- Damage being discovered on the vehicle before driving
- A vehicle breaking down or being involved in an accident.

2.25 In the event of a withdrawal of operations, operators must have an appropriate procedure in place to support the transition of scheme users to new providers.

Operators are required to share plans for an appropriate closing down procedure with CoMoUK which would include the timeframes for the changes and communication plans with partners and their car club members.

Withdrawal of service includes the following scenarios:

- Where the operator decides to withdraw service in one, multiple or all local authority areas of the UK,
- Where the contract for a specific local authority area is awarded to a new operator, even if the existing operator moves to off-street bays,
- In any of the scenarios listed above operators must give CoMoUK and their members two months' notice or as much as is practicable.

CoMoUK also require the operator in these scenarios to facilitate a process to let their members know about the changes. We require the outgoing operator to link their members to a 3rd party website such as the local council or CoMoUK with details of car club services in the area and any introductory offers relating. These details can be advertised through the council or CoMoUK website.

CoMoUK will if possible work with the relevant authority to support the transition to new operator or operators.

3.0 Safety Requirements

3.1 All vehicles available for hire must be covered by comprehensive insurance. This could include operators self-insuring their vehicles.

To protect the safety of users and their property, vehicles and the operator, ALL vehicles must be covered by comprehensive insurance that protects against passenger injury, third party injury and damage to the vehicle being driven, regardless of who was at fault. (It is standard for policies not to compensate the driver for their injuries if they are at fault).

3.2 Deposits (which should be fully refundable) and excess payments taken by the operators must not be unreasonable

To protect the operators from insurance excesses and unpaid penalty charges it may be necessary to request a deposit from the customer. In all cases the deposit must not be greater than the excess required from the insurance broker. Members should be made aware of what excess will be payable in the event of an accident which is their fault.

All deposits must be returned to the customer within 60 days of termination of the service contract, any deductions must be itemised and supporting documentation and/or receipts provided.

3.3 All vehicles available for hire must be roadworthy and regularly serviced and maintained

To protect the customer's health and safety all vehicles offered for hire must comply with all national legislation regarding roadworthiness.

Manufacturer's service requirements must be adhered to in full. All servicing should only be undertaken by a qualified mechanic and service history records kept up to date.

Regular maintenance checks should be undertaken by the operator to ensure compliance with legislation and the Highway Code. All maintenance checks should be recorded and any repairs or adjustments also recorded.

3.4 All vehicles available for hire must be covered by a national breakdown and recovery programme.

To protect the customer's health and safety whilst driving the vehicle, all vehicles that an operator has available for hire must be covered by a national breakdown and recovery company (e.g. AA, RAC, ETA, Green Flag). This must offer roadside assistance, vehicle recovery and return to home for the customer.

3.5 All operators must provide a handbook to members on joining and in each vehicle

To ensure that members are aware of how to operate the vehicle and how to deal with emergencies and breakdowns, a handbook or pack of information must be available within the vehicle. This can be provided electronically through an in-car system. This should include a telephone number or in-car system by which the operator can be contacted.

3.6 All operators must have a complaints policy

Operators should have a procedure by which members can raise complaints which should be made available to members.

3.7 All operators have to comply with data security legislation.

Operators must demonstrate compliance to the 2018 General Data Protection Regulations. Privacy policies need to include a clear statement of what intentions there are for any data

gathered. Operators must notify CoMoUK with any changes to privacy policies during the year with highlighted changes.

Accreditation also requires an outline of how user registration provides prominent, specific, data use consent opt-ins separated for different purposes.

3.8 All operators to consider equality impacts of schemes

In a first step towards addressing inclusion in car club, the accreditation will now include a voluntary agreement for:

- Operators to provide us with whatever equality impact assessments they may have carried out;
- Operators to engage with inclusion forums with authorities where appropriate.

3.9 All operators to abide by the DfT Car Club Rental Vehicle Security Code of Practice

Section 4. Data Collection

The criteria outlined below are those agreed with all operators and local authority representatives, for those with full accreditation status. CoMoUK welcomes all basic accreditation operators to join in the data collection process for the benefit of themselves and their supporters. CoMoUK will provide any required web system for the online surveys which will be suitable for any operator to use.

It should be noted that the data criteria will have to be reviewed annually and there will be an opportunity for revisions and additions at this point.

The data will be collated into the following reports:

1. **The Members Survey** – a survey of private and corporate car club members and corporate car club administrators, that collates information on car club membership, usage and customer satisfaction. It also measures the impact of car clubs on travel habits, corporate policy and the environment. There is a slightly modified version of the survey issued to car club members who have joined a car club within the three months prior to the survey referred to as the joiners survey. This captures information about their joining experiences and the early impacts that car club membership has had on their travel habits which can be different to those of more established members. The corporate surveys are tailored to gather relevant information on car clubs in a business context.

Operators are asked to distribute web links to the various surveys to the appropriate target members on our behalf. The data is analysed by an independent, managing consultant.

The survey is usually run annually with some exceptions. Timings for the surveys will be agreed with operators each time. Three versions are published – London, England & Wales (excluding London) and Scotland.

2. **Operators Survey** – this runs concurrently with the annual survey of car club members and the results are included within the CoMoUK Annual Survey report. It asks operators to provide data on the profile of their car club membership and the general usage of their car club vehicles by members.
3. **Emissions Analysis and Profiling** – this is carried out from time to time when funding allows, and provides an insight into the impact of car clubs on air quality. It requires car club operators to provide a list of the vehicle registration marks (VRMs) of all of the vehicles on-fleet for analysis against DVLA and manufacturer datasets. The results of the emissions profiling forms part of the CoMoUK Annual Survey.
4. **Metrics:** parking bays (where relevant) and vehicle details broken down by location and vehicle type, to be supplied via API or manually on a quarterly basis. All are to provide metrics using the template spreadsheet agreed annually with operators.

To view a sample copy of the CoMoUK Annual Survey, including the Operators Survey and Emissions Analysis report, please go to our web site:

<https://como.org.uk/shared-mobility/shared-cars/why/>

All information held by CoMoUK as a result of applying for accreditation or participating in the CoMoUK Annual Survey and other data collection exercises is subject to the General Data Protection Regulation and no company sensitive information will be disclosed to any other operator or third party. Where data is reported publicly as part of the CoMoUK Annual Survey or in reports to our funding partners, the data will be presented anonymously.

Please note that CoMoUK reserves the right to withdraw an operator's accreditation if they consistently fail to provide data outlined in this document within given timescales.

Section 5. Maintaining Standards

The standard of operators will be checked through a renewal of the accreditation status each year. CoMoUK reserves the right to randomly check the quality of service being provided by each operator, we welcome feedback from all stakeholders. If operators do not maintain standards throughout the year then a process has been put in place to review their continued eligibility for accreditation as outlined below:

1. CoMoUK will write to the operator detailing the areas which are thought to need improvement.

2. The operator has 1 month to challenge the claims and up to 2 months to make necessary improvements.
3. If the standards are still not met after this time CoMoUK, in conjunction with the relevant local authority or other key partners, will look to remove the accreditation status.
4. If an operator has not paid the renewal fee due for the whole of the fleet by the 60th day after the renewal invoice is dated, the accreditation will be removed.

Consultation process for annual review of criteria

Each year there may be shift in the car club market or new models of car clubs emerging which make desirable or necessary to make changes to the accreditation criteria. All operators apply for accreditation renewal at the same time on 1st April each year. Having a collective renewal date allows for any amendments to be made fairly across all operators at once. Changes are only made in consultation with all stakeholders and will generally only be made at this point in the year although there may be a need to review criteria between these dates.

Details of the consultation process are outlined below.

Action	Timing
CoMoUK invites comments on current criteria and proposals for amendments	January
CoMoUK assesses the submissions and shares the suggested changes firstly with operators to gain feedback and test their practical application.	February
Any proposed changes not taken forward for discussion will also be published anonymously with reasons for rejection.	February
Agreement on changes is sought with operators through group or 1:1 discussion.	Early March
Where a consensus cannot be reached on proposed changes the first stage would be to referral of the issue to the relevant stakeholders (mainly public sector authorities also including members) for discussion through email, telephone conferencing or online survey. If consensus still cannot be reached, then the matter would be referral of the issue to the CoMoUK board to review all opinions and decide upon a course of action. Notes on the decision process including a summary of comments anonymised will be available on request and CoMoUK reserves the right to publish.	Early March
Final criteria are shared with local authorities.	Mid March
Final criteria and renewal forms are sent to operators	Mid March
Renewals are processed, invoices issued, and certificates sent out once all steps are completed.	April