Mobility Hubs 02:
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How to Plan for Mobility Hubs: A Guide for Planners and Developers in Scotland

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How can this guide help planners and developers?

This resource builds on 'An introduction to Mobility Hubs for Planners and Developers in Scotland' by CoMoUK. It equips planners and developers with knowledge to consider mobility hubs at the policy-making, pre-app and planning application stages for new developments.

The first section explains how mobility hubs can meet **policy objectives**. It spells out how these policy objectives can enhance a development from the viewpoint of developers attracting buyers and planners seeking to enhance the sense of place, accessibility and social inclusion.

The second section looks at how developers and planners can **plan for mobility hubs** as an integral part of developments **to make a real difference to quality of life, health, public space and the quality of the environment**.

Mobility hubs and the Scottish context

Mobility hubs locate shared and public transport modes together, making alternative and attractive options for seamless journeys whilst also contributing to reductions in carbon emissions and offering an opportunity to improve the public realm.

The concept has grown in Germany over nearly two decades and is widely used in mainland Europe and the US. There is a growing interest for mobility hubs here in Scotland, both in urban and rural locations. It is looking likely that the first hubs in Scotland will complete development and open in 2021.

Shared transport offers ways to access mobility without needing to own a car or bike, and without needing to rely solely on public transport which often focuses on commuter routes and less on other routes. Shared mobility has continued to grow in popularity in Scotland in recent years, with all-time high levels of provision and participation before the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

The pandemic has forced a change in travel behaviour which is closer to the path Scotland needs to follow to achieve its legally binding net **zero greenhouse gas emissions level by 2045**. Mobility hubs can further encourage this trend by encouraging more sustainable travel choices through easy access to and awareness of the alternatives to a private car.

Public open spaces and private gardens were used by many during the Covid-19 lockdown and people are recognising the **value of green spaces** and a good local environment with daily needs being met in easy reach. Mobility hubs can **help enhance local environments by freeing up space previously used for parking of private cars and by incorporating facilities other than transport such as a community hub, an attractive green space or place to sit and relax.**

Mobility hubs offer an important contribution to the growth of sustainable mobility in Scotland, to the nation's health through active travel choices and to reducing carbon emissions by offering alternatives to the private car. In new developments, mobility hubs deliver convenient travel alternatives to the private car and **embed shared transport and active travel behaviour** to help achieve a high quality, people-centred **sense of place.** This approach is ideal for planning the 20-minute neighbourhood promoted by the Scottish Government, where people can reach the facilities and services they need within easy walking distance and hence do not need to own a car for every trip. Mobility hubs can also provide the alternative means of transport for travelling further afield, for occasions when walking is not practical and for connecting with public transport.

Mobility hubs and policy objectives

Clear policies on mobility hubs and shared transport can enhance the planning and development management process for planners and developers alike.

By offering sustainable and active modes in easily accessible locations, mobility hubs can contribute to the future growth of sustainable mobility in Scotland, to the nation's health through active travel choices and to reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2045. Moreover, they can offer an alternative to the private car when planning 20-minute neighbourhoods; helping to embed shared transport to achieve a high quality, people-centred sense of place. The local environment was more highly valued during Covid-19 lockdown and highlighted by RTPI's 'Plan the World we Need' Research Paper published in June 2020, which illustrates the need to plan for a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the current health and economic crisis, with green recovery and place-based solutions.

It is also important to design out what is not deemed desirable, as much as design in and provide what is. Reducing car parking spaces can be a significant step in this process. This might be offering only one space per dwelling or placing car parking spaces on the edge of the development, further away than a mobility hub offering shared transport which can encourage sustainable travel.

When a mobility hub is included in the development, the reduced need for the private car can free up space for other enhancements or to ensure adequate room is available for a new building on a constrained in-fill site that otherwise might not be as feasible to develop.

Some developments could be specifically designed with further reduced parking and marketed as a sustainable or active travel development.

As planners formulate policies to achieve these aspirations and as developers seek to embed these policy objectives into their developments and designs, it is helpful to reflect on how many policies mobility hubs can support:

- creating 20-minute neighbourhoods
- reducing car dependency
- responding to climate emergency and zero emission targets
- decarbonising the transport sector
- encouraging active travel
- improving health and well-being – physical and mental
- improving public transport (journey time, reliability, affordability, convenience, quality, availability, information and integration)
- improving connectivity and developing an integrated transport network
- decongesting and revitalising town centres and neighbourhoods
- improving public realm
- improving accessibility for health services, employment, education, leisure
- responding to increasing cyclist numbers
- responding to the desire for more local spaces for leisure/exercise

Examples of mobility hubs achieving policy objectives:

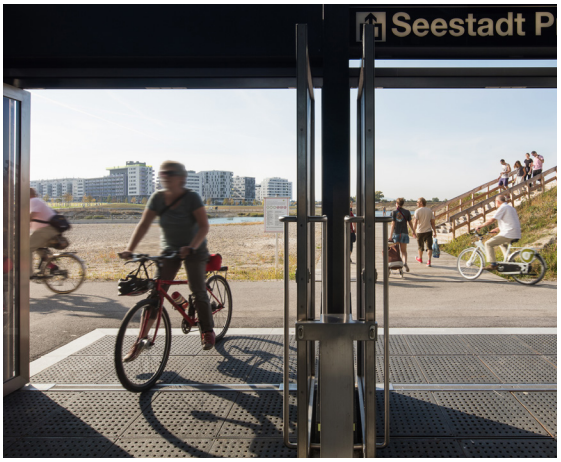
Reducing car ownership and hence reducing emissions, traffic, congestion and parking problems:

The city of Bremen in Germany has had a policy to reduce car congestion and parking since 2003 and mobility hubs have played a major role. Overall, the car-sharing opportunities studied account for approximately 5,000 fewer vehicles taking up space on Bremen's streets and parking spaces.

Car club cars reduce emissions. CoMoUK's 2019/20 Car Club Annual Survey for Scotland shows these schemes resulted in a reduction of 354 tonnes of carbon emissions from driving a more fuel-efficient car and a 3,620 reduction from reduced private car mileage.

Car club cars are driven less by users – The average car club member in Scotland drives 527 miles a year less than a private car owner. This suggests a potential reduction of 12.8 million miles over 12 months for all members.

Extrapolations from CoMoUK's 2019/20 Car Club Annual Survey for Scotland suggest that members have disposed of 6,700 cars since joining their car club and 8,543 cars have not been purchased. Each car club car takes around 14 private cars off the road, having other positive effects on parking, congestion and allowing new approaches to the use of street space, giving more space back to pedestrians and cyclists.



Aspern, Seestadt

Promoting sustainable transport:

Transport for New Homes found that 18 out of 20 recently built housing developments were designed around the car, forcing people into a car-dependent lifestyle. Offering mobility hubs with sustainable modes gives developers an opportunity to make a real difference to travel choices in new housing developments. Likewise, planners can use policy and pre-app discussions with developers to ensure these opportunities are realised wherever feasible.

A large high-density development at Seestadt, Vienna with a target modal split of 80% sustainable modes and 20% car was built with policies for high-quality shared transport, public transport links and an excellent network of pedestrian and cycle routes. It has created a feeling of streets for people and social interaction, rather than for cars. Building at higher density not only has obvious rewards in terms of lower land take for a greater number of people, but also helps more sustainable transport options achieve critical mass and suppresses the number of disaggregated origin/destination journeys (which tend to favour use of the private car). The higher density helps to achieve this by ensuring people have a shorter walk to shared transport options and other services.

Travel behaviour change:

Shared cars and bikes at a hub within easy walking distance and in situ when people move into a new development, encourage a switch from the habit of using the car for every trip. It makes a sustainable travel lifestyle easier with alternatives to the private car just a short walk from every home.

28% of bike share commuters in Scotland have reported in our 2019/20 survey that they previously commuted by car. E-bike share can encourage people to cover up to 5 miles that they might otherwise drive and hence support travel to work significantly, with around a quarter of respondents in our Scotland bike share user survey reporting that using an e-bike meant they use a car "much less often".

Timing is important. Mobility hubs work best when in situ before people move into a new housing development. This encourages people to consider alternatives to the private car and can lead to people not buying a car ahead of the move or cutting down on car usage. One car space per two households is allocated at an 85-apartment development called Blicken in Stockholm. Personal travel planning was introduced at the viewing and buying stages to illustrate that the area was very accessible with shared transport and that you did not need to own a car. Special 'try it' evenings were arranged at mobility hubs. Half of households joined the car club within a few weeks of moving in.

How to plan for successful hubs

Developers at the pre-app and planning application stages

If new developments are designed as places rather than simply collections of dwellings linked to a road network with commuting in mind, then opportunities arise to transform the expectations of residents and users to something which offers a better quality of life and better travel choices bringing more opportunities for everyone. Attention to detail can design in connections and routes for sustainable travel (walking, cycling, shared bikes, car club use where appropriate and public transport). Mobility hubs provide an opportunity to design and plan for shared transport and to connect with other modes and hence offer several sustainable alternatives to the private car.

By locating shared transport at hubs in easy reach of housing, developers can demonstrate that the built environment provides a means of influencing transport patterns as they are re-formed by the inherently disruptive act of moving to a new home. This can be further enhanced by developer led marketing of the development in terms of sustainability and by providing information at the viewing and buying stages, and even financial incentives to try out shared transport.

Mobility hubs can also be effective place-making in their own right and attention to the right details for the location can encourage people to enjoy the space for other uses such as social interaction or relaxation, as well as for transport.

CoMoUK has developed a quality standards tool to be used as a checklist for the concepts and design mock-ups at the pre-app stage, and potentially for monitoring the user experience after construction.

Changing travel behaviour through design and layout has the added benefits of more space for people, social interaction and green spaces rather than car parking bays and front garden drives for parked cars. Covid-19 lockdowns have led people to focus on their local home environment with aspirations for more green spaces or bigger gardens. The potential space released by reducing car parking in new developments can enable a greener, more open environment in response to this new demand from home buyers.

Developers are recommended to work with providers such as car clubs, car sharing platforms, lift sharing platforms, bike share operators, flexible bus service operators and micromobility providers (on the assumption that options such as e-scooters are legalised) to define potential service patterns.

Developers could benefit from designing in mobility hubs in Infill developments. A small hub with car club space and bikes could mean higher densities of housing could fit into a site, as less space is needed for parking.

Development management and supplementary planning guidance

Planners could develop a new and sometimes challenging approach to development management policy to encourage mobility hubs in new developments. Some possible approaches are:

- Strengthen development management policy so all new developments above a certain size 'must' rather than should support the provision of high-quality walking and cycling links, mobility hubs and shared transport
- Section 75 agreements or planning obligations can enable developer contributions to fund shared transport and there may be potential to also fund some other components of a mobility hub in this way
- Reduce car parking standards alongside minimum cycle parking standards, share bike and car club parking spaces
- Include specific mode share targets in local transport plans
- Have an expectation for locating shared transport near housing and within a 5-10 minute walk
- Require car club bays in hubs in all new developments over a specific size
- Develop a tariff schedule for developer contributions which includes support for car clubs and mobility hubs
- Use the 'Place Standard Tool' to assist in assessing the quality of transport and other provision in large new developments as well as conventional transport assessments
- Commission car club feasibility studies as part of a normal planning process
- CoMoUK has developed a quality standards tool which could be used as a check list for the concepts and design mock-ups at the pre-app stage
- Revise policy to include travel planning for new residents in large housing developments
- Raise awareness of the benefits of car clubs amongst statutory consultees e.g. community councils
- Support engagement in, and promote the outcomes from, post build surveys
- Require for post build surveys to be published on planning authority website alongside remedial action taken by developer

Planners may choose to further promote mobility hubs through supplementary planning guidance or through pre-app discussions and to emphasise that hubs:

- Should have good existing public transport provision or potential
- Should be highly visible and have natural surveillance
- Should be easily accessed with a critical mass that can reach the hub on foot within 5-10 minutes and/or reach their destination on foot within the same time or preferably less
- Should have space for the desired facilities and preferably space to expand
- Should consider locations where the hub project could be piggybacked onto other planned works e.g. EV charging installation or other services
- Should be inclusive: family-friendly, take account of gender mainstreaming and be accessible for all people

Further help and support from CoMoUK

CoMoUK is the national charity for the public benefit of shared mobility. Founded in 1999, CoMoUK enters its third decade with a depth of expertise and research into shared transport and the built environment.

CoMoUK has produced the UK's first introductory guidance to mobility hubs, as part of our work with partners in the EU Inter-reg project 'SHARE-North'.

CoMoUK can provide bespoke guidance on planning mobility hubs for specific contexts. This includes providing expertise and advice on the design, planning, consultation, implementation and monitoring phases, informed by the experiences of our SHARE-North partners and by our contacts with authorities and organisations in Scotland that are embarking on exciting projects.

To find out more about how we can help you, please contact **scotland@como.org.uk** for details.

Please also see our website **como.org.uk** for further information and to sign up to our newsletter and forums.

Further reading:

- **RTPI Paper Plan the World we Need**
  Click here to view
- **Analysis of Bremen's Car-Sharing Offers, Team Red Deutschland GmbH**
  Click here to view
- **CoMoUK's 2019/20 Car Club Annual Survey for Scotland**
  Click here to view
- **CoMoUK's 2019/20 Bike Share Users Annual Survey for Scotland**
  Click here to view
- **Transport for New Homes Summary Report**
  Click here to view
- **Seestadt, Vienna Development**
  Click here to view
- **Blicken, Stockholm**
  Click here to view
- **Mobility Hubs Guidance CoMoUK**
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- **Mobility Hubs Accreditation CoMoUK**
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Find out more about CoMoUK and collaborative mobility online at **como.org.uk**

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