



# Employer's guide to car sharing



# The benefits of car sharing to an organisation

## **Reduce the demand for parking spaces**

Encouraging and incentivising staff to share cars can impact the numbers of single occupancy vehicles travelling to site, resulting in a reduction in the parking spaces required – whether this be to the existing parking spaces or impacting the need for expansion.

## **Recruitment and retention**

Using Liftshare to offer potential employees an alternative method of transport to work is another string to add to your recruitment bow, and is particularly attractive for those living/working in rural areas. In terms of retention, it has been found that sharing driving is less stressful than driving alone and encourages staff to leave on time. In addition, staff from different departments can car share together, helping with inter-office relations, networking and knowledge sharing.

## **Corporate Social Responsibility**

By incentivising staff to formalise their sharing and form Liftshare teams, Liftshare can offer you a 12-month forecasted savings report. Car sharing can reduce negative impacts on the environment, including CO2 emissions and car miles, so using Liftshare can help you achieve your sustainability objectives. By improving your output, this, in turn, can create positive PR.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Car sharing has benefits on the mental wellness of your staff, including the reduction of stress sitting in traffic alone and having someone to speak with about the day on the journey home. It can also help staff feel safer when commuting in the dark.

## **Financial cost savings**

Your scheme can be used by staff to arrange travelling to meetings together - decreasing the related costs and environmental impact of the journey.

**Workplace travel plan** Car sharing complements other measures within an organisation's travel plan. Staff who don't have access to public transport and live too far away to use active travel can benefit from car sharing - it is more sustainable to share than to drive alone.

# The benefits of car sharing for members

Your staff will be engaged in car sharing by different motivators, so do consider the below for ideas to promote your scheme.

## **Financial**

The financial savings made by halving (or more!) the cost of a commute is one of the biggest incentives for staff to car share. In 2016, 50% of members who answered said saving money was very important when joining Liftshare. The typical commuter who car shares every day saves on average £1,100 per annum!

## **Safety**

Drivers tend to be more cautious when they have a passenger on board. Independent research by Privilege Insurance found that drivers carrying a passenger were involved in half as many accidents as drivers on their own. Added to that, just 9% of drivers had been pulled over due to driving quality when driving with someone else in the car, in comparison to 20% of single occupancy drivers. Members have also expressed that they feel safer travelling to work in the dark when joined by a companion.

## **Environment**

'Becoming greener' is climbing higher on the public's agenda, along with the realisation that driving alone is unsustainable. By sharing a car journey which would have been travelled solo, the CO2 emissions can be cut in half – the more you share, the more you save.

## **Accessibility**

If public transport connections are convenient and reliable, it's not so bad being without a car. A lot of members, however, don't have good connections where they live - or the local bus and train timetables don't fit with their working hours, so car sharing can really help make the inaccessible, accessible.

## **Friendships**

What better way to make new friends than by sharing your commute? As well as having a chat on an otherwise lonely journey to work, car sharers have also expressed that they have been able to vent their issues to someone less emotionally-involved, arriving at home a happier individual. 44% of members who answered our 2016 survey said car sharing made their journey less stressful, and 52% said it made their journey more fun.

Happy days!

# Perceived Barriers to Car Sharing

As Liftshare Scheme Manager, you'll know that there are always reasons/barriers that people put forward as to why car sharing isn't for them. Many of these barriers are easily overcome when the correct message is shared.

The Liftshare system is as flexible and convenient as the member wants it to be. People do not have to share daily to make a difference! One person could car share once a week, and would still be 'doing their bit' for the environment while saving some money. It's important that this message is clear when the scheme is promoted.

Below are some of the common perceived barriers we hear to car sharing, and our answers to them:

*"I can't car share because I have small children"*

If children need dropping off at school or nursery, there may be opportunity to ride with someone needing the same drop-off, or someone who lives by the school for the onward journey.

*"Car sharing doesn't suit me because I work shifts"*

Shift working is common in many organisations, and most have set shift patterns. Even for varied shift patterns, it may be that workers can share weekly or fortnightly. 20% of all journeys on the Liftshare network are between the hours of 6pm and midnight – not everyone is 9-5!

*"Nobody lives near me"*

No one knows this until they search the Liftshare system for matches. Tying into a network with hundreds of thousands of live members, the chances are that a match will be found if the search is widened. A journey match may drive past them and pick them up en route, or vice versa.

*"I work flexi-time so can't share my commute"*

Most flexible office arrangements still have core hours. Suggest that people on such working patterns try sharing once a week, where they can match their working day with a colleague's.

*"I don't have a car!"*

Car sharing isn't just for car owners: for those who don't or can't drive, this could be the perfect solution! Liftshare offers the ability to search for lifts as well as offer them.

*"I don't want to agree to share in case I don't like my car share partner"*

No one is obliged to share with anyone they contact, or anyone who contacts them. Suggest trialling sharing for a few days and if it doesn't work out, don't do it again with that person. Share the Trust and Safety advice on the Liftshare site.

*“I need access to my car during the day”*

That’s fine. Offer a lift to someone travelling to your travel start point, or just share a one-way trip. Others may too be needing to make business trips during the day, and it may be that these can be shared.

*“I share with my partner/spouse already”*

Great! It’s always good to hear that people aren’t driving single-occupancy vehicles. But having two people in a car doesn’t stop them sharing with others too. Even if the existing pair register on the site as sharers, you as an organisation can then ensure they contribute to your overall statistics.

*“I don’t like the idea of sharing with a stranger”*

If you run a restricted Liftshare group, you pay for the privilege of only enabling staff to share with other members of staff. If not, direct people to the Trust and Safety advice available.

*“I don’t need to car share”*

You may not need to, but others do. Registering on the system could help out others who otherwise may not be able to make the journey.

**It is worth remembering that there are some people who will never be convinced to car share, so bear this in mind – try not to focus efforts on those who won’t ever be convinced to use the site.**

# Liftshare Etiquette Guide

## Top tips to stay a popular sharer

### **Be approachable online**

Having a clear photo of yourself and a biography makes it much more likely that someone will message you to arrange a share – and ensures they know who they'll be getting in a car with!

### **Clear, concise, timely messaging**

Arranging to car share need not be stressful. Make sure you're clear and concise in your messages so there's no room for misunderstanding and everyone involved is on the same page. It's also advisable to message others back as soon as you are able – they may be relying on your response to make plans.

It's polite to message someone before you try and make a booking with them. Let them know who you are, where you're going, and why you'd like to ride with them.

### **Be on time**

It seems a really basic courtesy to mention, but we're often approached by members who worry that others will make them late. If you've agreed to meet at a certain time, make sure you're there and ready to go! If you are delayed for whatever reason, you can phone/text your sharer/s, or message them on the Liftshare Companion App.

### **Drivers – Drive a little more carefully than usual**

Another really easy way to stay top of the liftsharing game if you're a driver – stay steady! If you know you can be a bit speedy, or a little quick to temper when on the road, rein it in a little and let chatting to your passenger/s take the stress out of the ride. Having more eyes in the car helps flag up any issues quicker, and being able to talk along the way can relax you.

### **Passengers – Pay promptly**

We've all been there – handling cash can be awkward around strangers. Be sure to have the right amount of cash on you for the agreed price, and don't assume drivers will have change; after all, they're not professionals. It's up to you if you pay at the beginning or end of the journey, but don't forget! If it's a one-off, it could be difficult to get money to the driver afterwards.

If drivers accept it, you can pay online through the Liftshare system. In this case, you pay in advance and payment is transferred to the driver either:

- when they input a payment code, given to them by the passenger when the lift has happened;
- automatically, 72 hours after the lift was scheduled to have taken place.

If you've remembered it, messaging or texting the code to the driver as soon as you can after the lift is a great way to help them receive payment faster.

**Leave feedback**

Show how much you've appreciated your trip by leaving a prompt, honest review and star rating. These are the same as feedback ratings on sites such as eBay, and help other members choose who to share with in future. You can leave feedback easily on the Liftshare site for anyone you've communicated with through the system.

So, there you have it. Small, easy ways to make sure you're a 5-star model liftsharer. Keep up the good behaviour!

# Guaranteed Ride Home Guide

## What is 'Guaranteed Ride Home'?

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) schemes provide an occasional subsidised ride to commuters who use alternative modes – ie. if a bus rider must return home in an emergency, or a car sharer must stay at work later than expected. This addresses a common objection to the use of alternative transport modes. GRH programmes may use taxis, company vehicles, or rental cars.

GRH trips may be free or may require a modest co-payment. The cost of offering such a service tends to be low because it is seldom used. Although sometimes called 'Emergency Ride Home', it is most effective when its requirements are not just restricted to emergency situations.

"Of 16,000 respondents who didn't car share when asked, 25% of respondents said they would share if they had a guarantee of being able to get home" - AA Populus Survey, 2010

## How does it work?

GRH is typically service managed by a relevant person within the company. A GRH policy should be compiled, and specify the following:

- Who is eligible? The programme could cover all employees, or only those who use alternative modes for a specified portion of commuting (ie. car sharers);
- What trips are eligible? The programme could cover any trip, or limited to (but not inclusive of) unexpected business appointments, employee sickness, family member sickness;
- The maximum number of uses allowed during a certain period, maximum miles within a period, or maximum cost per trip;
- Procedures for using the GRH service;
- Appropriate forms (ie. reimbursement procedures if an upfront payment is required).

## What are the benefits of having a GRH scheme?

GRH initiatives offer increased commuter security, can encourage staff to sign up to or try alternative transport modes, offer flexibility, and enables people to stay at work when otherwise they may have to leave. By supporting alternative transport modes, GRH helps achieve sustainability objectives.

## How much does maintaining a GRH scheme cost?

Costs of running such a scheme include the ongoing programme administration and the costs of subsidising trips where required. A recent ACT survey showed that costs were generally very low, primarily due to the lack of use – typically less than £300 per annum.



Costs can be limited by specifying rules around the scheme's usage, as mentioned above in policy planning. A GRH scheme offers piece of mind rather than an everyday service for members.

### **Are there any tax implications?**

The IR176 from the Inland Revenue states the following:

“Employees will not have to pay tax or NICs if their employer provides alternative travel arrangement when employees cannot car share as usual due to exceptional circumstances, eg. if an employee has to go home because of a domestic emergency. It does not apply if the circumstances could have been anticipated and planned for. This concession applies to a maximum of 60 journeys per employee in a tax year.”

### **What's the best practice approach to start a GRH programme?**

Experience shows that a strong written policy is key to the easy facilitation of such a scheme. Requirements should not be overly restrictive (even as a 'nice to have' scheme, usage is likely to remain low – and restrictions for usage can be in place anyway), and involving staff in the planning can help shape the programme to work best for all parties involved.

# Dedicated Parking Bay Guide

## Why implement dedicated bays?

At an organisation where parking is in high demand and a point of contention, dedicated and guaranteed parking spaces for staff who share their journey to work will be a huge incentive, and a perk!

## Gaining approval

The provision for dedicated car sharing parking bays is likely to need a certain level of approval before it can be put into action. You may need to speak with:

- Policy makers
- Facilities Manager
- Senior Management Team
- Staff representatives
- Union representatives.

Talk to everyone that you think you ought to – the more support you have, the better! Preparation is key. The most common argument will probably be that parking provision is already over-stretched and taking away spaces will be difficult. By encouraging more people to share you are reducing the total number of cars coming on-site, and in turn reducing the number of spaces required. By turning some of your car parking spaces into ‘high-occupancy’ spaces, you’re actually making it less crowded for everyone – including those who choose not to share their journeys.



Example:

- Our car park has 100 spaces, and 110 currently bring a car to work – leaving 10 people who can't park daily
- We encourage car sharing, and set aside 20 parking spaces for Liftshare Teams made up of people who previously drove to work on their own
- 20 (two-person) Liftshare Teams form as a result of the promotion and are now using the 20 dedicated sharing parking bays
- 110 'people journeys' are now accommodated by 20 cars with two people in them, and 70 cars with only the driver. We now have 90 cars utilising the 100 spaces!

## **Preparation**

Once the implementation of car share bays has been agreed, it's good practice to give advance notice to staff of your intention, which at the same time gives you an opportunity to approximate how many parking spaces may be needed. Giving advance notice gives your staff time to get signed up to your Liftshare scheme and to start forming Liftshare Teams.

Raise awareness through staff emails, posters/banners at building entrances from the car parks, and face-to-face engagement. Face to face conversation is the best way to break down the barriers to car sharing and alleviate any concerns staff may have.

## **Establishing bays**

In order to make your car sharing bays as big an incentive for sharing as possible, they must be located within the prime parking areas – usually closest to the main entrances to your building or the car park exit. This also ensures that they are highly visible to staff and to visitors (car share spaces demonstrate to people outside of your organisation that you are actively encouraging sustainability!). There are many different ways to 'sign and line' your bays. It's best to do both and as clearly and visibly as possible. Remember, you want everyone to see them – the users themselves, potential new users, and visitors. The signs should be positioned in such a way that they are still visible when the bays are occupied.

Issuing permits

The most effective way to manage use of dedicated sharing parking bays is to issue permits. This could be a 'personal' permit, like an ID card. To reduce the risk of misuse, it can contain details such as employee number, Liftshare Team number, and even the registration number(s) of the car(s) used by the Team. Whenever a car is parked within one of the dedicated bays, at least two personal permits must be displayed on the dashboard. Alternatively, a permit can be allocated to the designated car share car, if driving isn't to be shared.

Criteria for permits can be set by you to suit your organisation best.



### **Enforcing your rules**

By asking sharers to display a permit(s), it's easy to see at a glance who is eligible to park in designated areas.

If staff are aware that spot checks are carried out and action is taken against misuse, then checks shouldn't have to be done too often. In some cases, spot checks on the bays can be incorporated within the general car park management by facilities staff, although often the carshare manager may prefer to take a role in this part of the process.

Genuine users of the bays can be keen to help prevent misuse and you are likely to find that they come forward with reports of 'suspicious' behaviour if there is any, or remind their colleagues themselves that they need a permit to park there.

When intentional misuse had been identified, firm action, as identified in your policy, must be taken, eg. a 'three strikes and you're out!' rule. However, your chosen course of action must be on that suits your organisation best.