



Scaling on Street Charging Infrastructure

D2.6 Car Clubs & EVs Engagement Event & Report

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Executive Summary

Event to Promote Car Club and EVs Across the Target Areas

The SOSCI project has successfully engaged with individuals, communities, and organisations from all sectors across the Country. Engagement has primarily been done through local community development, networking, and engagements in communities in the North East, Cumbria and nationally.

The multifaceted approach of partners and networks has been a key strength in promoting and communicating the programme and its various services on a national scale. From engagement of individuals and local communities interested in car clubs or private EV's to working with a network of community energy organisations, both centrally through their umbrella organisation - Community Energy England - and also individually with follow up presentations and discussions.

A range of innovative online events hosted by partners including the Derwent Valley Car Club, CAfS and Charge My Street have enabled the engagement of a wide and varied audience. The car club events consisting of two online webinars which were focussed on EV's and car clubs, have increased awareness of electric vehicles, myth busted concerns and encouraged individuals and organisations to see EVs as a credible alternative to ICE vehicles. These events have also increased membership in the car club and raised awareness and demand for more rural community car clubs across the North of England. The second local lockdown in the North-East made it impossible to continue with a physical event in quarter 4 as planned. This will be reorganised as soon it is safe to do so, however the EV Quiz was a fun engaging alternative to retain interest of current and future members, as well as stimulating more interest in car clubs and EV's. Engagement is more than just events. The continued communication through social media, advertising campaigns, leafleting and networking is successfully engaging individuals and organisations on a daily basis. Continual clear messaging is essential to the adoption of new technology and mobility systems. The behavioural changes following Covid-19 is the perfect time to push forward new concepts and alternative options to audiences looking for a cleaner, greener, and smarter way forward.

A number of community energy organisations are now developing their approach to EV chargepoint roll out using Charge My Street as the preferred solution, citing shared ethics as one of the principal reasons for choosing another community benefit society to deliver their EV solutions.

The geographical range of community energy organisations now stretches across the entire country; from Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network in Cornwall, to Brighton Community Energy, to Pennine Community Energy and Ambleside to Zero in the Lake District, alongside ongoing discussions with an Edinburgh based community solar organisation.

Whilst no organisation has yet signed leases or deployed CMS EV chargepoints, early indications suggest they are keen to secure sites in their communities.

A grant scheme administered through Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) as part of the Innovate UK funding for up to £5,000 per organisation (for EV site surveys, promotion, legal advice, training etc.) has yet to be requested by any groups, with the most common challenge from the community energy groups being one of time and existing focus on managing the energy projects. CAfS has

requested that some of this facilitation fund be reallocated to enable CAFs to extend its own support beyond the original project end of March 2021.

In quarter 4, further support and guidance will be made to the organisations already demonstrating interest. It is expected that by quarter 5 some of these will have progressed to instalment, demonstrating that the community led model has traction within the right audience.

Car Clubs

Blackhall Mill Community Association (BMCA) is the lead partner in relation to generating interest in car clubs within the SOSCI Partnership. BMCA operates the Derwent Valley Car Club. A small rural based community car club which developed following a Lottery Fund application in 2013. It has been running since and as part of the SOSCI project is expanding the car club into two new areas within Gateshead and Durham. BMCA were tasked with developing an event to promote car clubs and EV's within the SOSCI project.

Community Engagement

Throughout the project BMCA and partners have worked to engage with communities, stakeholders, businesses and organisations locally and nationally. Traditional engagement has become very different over the past nine months due to the impact of the global health emergency, Covid-19. The pandemic has limited face to face contact and required engagement to transition to online and digital communication channels, even during the post lockdown phase. Despite being physically distanced, engagement did not stop, instead the internet and social media platforms enabled new engagements to be made. People had more time available to connect or reconnect with areas of interest and renewed focus on the environment, climate change, working differently, smarter, and reducing unnecessary travel which resulted in the development of a new 'norm' for most. As a direct result, interest in developing car clubs particularly in rural underserved transport areas, has increased significantly across the Country. The DVCC has supported many of these communities, answering questions, providing advice and creating new partner arrangements. Weardale Community Transport and DVCC have worked together supporting each other with their development plans and work is underway to create a new car club in the Weardale and Stanhope area.

During quarter three the car club held two online 'webinars' to create interest in EV's and the car club. The online sessions provided presentations by 'EV enthusiasts' who presented their thoughts on the benefits of adopting EV's. The second part of the sessions were dedicated to car clubs and a presentation on the DVCC and the benefits of car clubs. Many of the participants engaged in the webinars have now become members of the car club, supporters or potential partner areas for new car clubs. We have supported organisations in Haltwhistle, LongByre (Cumbria), Acomb, Chopwell and have appointments planned for quarter 5 in Stanley, County Durham and initial discussions with other communities.

One of the largest hurdles in developing a car club is the initial capital financing for the vehicle, charge post, staffing support, and the promotional and community engagement costs. It can take a significant amount of work before a car club can be initiated. At DVCC we are looking to create a co-operative model where we can work with other communities and organisations to develop an application to a major funder to develop car clubs in these rural communities rather than each organisation developing application after application to numerous funding bodies and charitable

organisations. This is in the early stages of development but we hope to be able to put in a formal application in early 2021.

In quarter four with lockdown restrictions easing a large community engagement event was planned for 17th October 2020. It was to be held in Rowlands Gill where the next car club hub is progressing, however during the planning process the North East entered into local lockdown restrictions, which forbade meeting anyone from outside of their household indoors or outdoors. Resulting in the postponement of the event. It was felt that an online version of the event would not have the same level of engagement as a key element of the event included demonstrations of the electric vehicles and trials for interested members and drivers.

We considered alternatives and as quizzes became a fond engagement technique for many friends and families during lockdown the team at DVCC decided to trial a fun quiz event. The experimental approach had the intention of engaging local car club members, potential members, people interested in EV's and other interested communities. The DVCC Big Night in Quiz was promoted through Facebook, as the main social media platform, through the car club newsletter and partner networks. It was 'boost' posted to targeted individuals and communities. It took place on Monday 26th October at 7.30pm through Zoom. The online advertising reached over 2,600 people and engaged with 23, although only 8 people attended. All in attendance were supporters of the car club. Although the advertising had a wide reach and did engage with new audiences through social media it was disappointing not to have had more individuals in attendance. There are several reasons as to why this may have been the case, it was held on a Monday and was during the half term holidays, which may not have appealed to, or been practical for everyone. We asked those in attendance for feedback which included "Thanks for the quiz, great fun" and "Brilliant! Quiz was great, really enjoyed it." The attendees very much enjoyed the evening and would consider attending a future quiz should another be held. It built rapport, increased communication, and engaged participants. We asked those who did not attend for feedback but have not yet received any.

Alongside the online events DVCC have utilised a series of multimedia approaches to engage and communicate with individuals, communities, businesses and organisations. In quarter four a series of promotional adverts were developed in the 'In and Around Magazine' delivered to over 20,000 homes in the North Durham area. A small advertisement ran in the August and September issues followed by double page editorial and promotional advert in the October issue. A picture of the editorial and adverts are pictured below:

Derwent Valley Car Club expands innovative electric car sharing scheme - tripling its fleet of electric vehicles!

The Derwent Valley Car Club has tripled its electric vehicle fleet over the past four months, with expansion plans in full swing! The fully electric car share scheme is environmentally friendly and an integral part of modern mobility for businesses and individuals.



Following changes in travel patterns due to Covid-19 and people looking for a cleaner, greener, cheaper alternative to car ownership, the car club may have the perfect solution. Members have all the benefits of their own car without the expense. Based at Blackhall Mill (coming soon to Rowlands Gill, and Shotley Bridge), the pay-as-you-go car share scheme is a simple, easy to use car club, which offers members low hourly rates, no mileage fees or limitations, excellent insurance cover and maintenance costs taken care of. With an easy to use online booking system you can book and go whenever and wherever you wish to.

The Car Club was set up by the Blackhall Mill Community Association, a charitable organisation, 8 years ago to provide a more sustainable transport solution for the community of Blackhall Mill in the North East of England.

The expansion of the car club into Rowlands Gill and Shotley Bridge is part of a larger project funded by Innovate UK, involving 11 partners including Durham County Council, which will install 200 new electric charge points across the North of England. The Car Club development will allow access to electric vehicles for the local community.



The Derwent Valley Car Club is committed to supporting our community to use sustainable and environmentally friendly modes of transport. For more information please check out our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/derwentvalleycarclub

For further details contact:
 Email: jjcommunitycic@gmail.com
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/derwentvalleycarclub

**Clean,
easy way to travel.**

Flexible use of an electric vehicle **WITHOUT THE COSTS** of owning your own.

Benefits

- Save money.
- Convenient and flexible.
- Simple online booking.
- Environmentally friendly.
- Run by the community, for our community.
- Easy and stress free!

Derwent Valley
Car Club

find out more visit www.facebook.com/derwentvalleyclub

derwentvalleyclub



WOULD YOU
LIKE ACCESS TO A CAR WHEN YOU NEED IT?

WITHOUT OWNING IT?
NOW YOU CAN AT YOUR COMMUNITY BASED RURAL CAR CLUB
IN BLACKHALL MILL, ROWLANDS GILL & SHOTLEY BRIDGE

Derwent Valley
Car Club

find out more at facebook.com/derwentvalleyclub

derwentvalleyclub

Advertisement, Promotion and Campaigns

A bus stop advertising campaign was completed in August. The advertising campaign was placed at a strategically important location, close to Blackhall Mill and on the main A694 between Rowlands Gill and Shotley Bridge, where the two new car club hubs are being created. This allowed for an eye-catching campaign for bus users, drivers and passers-by. It linked to the fact that early adopters of car clubs are most likely to be bus passengers as they select the most appropriate transport solution for their journey.

Online social media platforms have been essential communication mechanisms through both organic and paid advertising. We have been able to track the reach of our advertising both in terms of views and engagements, on a monthly basis. In quarter four there have been over 11,870 individuals reached and 590 engagements.

We have engaged with businesses and organisations through a number of different fora including the North East Super Innovation Network and their Electric Vehicle and Last Mile Logistic Forum. We have networked with several EV businesses and promoted SOSCI and the car club programmes. One business in particular has strong links which we are pursuing as part of the next car club expansion programme.

In terms of EV take up the car club provides a valuable insight and opportunity for people to try an EV with no risk and little cost. Often a car club replaces a second vehicle within a household. By engaging people into the car club, enjoying the experience of using an EV and realising that they are a realistic alternative to ICE vehicles it will lead to more adoption of EV's as primary vehicles within households.

Nadder Valley Car Club

Charge my Street has worked with Nadder Valley Car Club in Hampshire to install 2 EV charging points. They contacted CMS following a Community Energy England Webinar and have also been working with BHM on an open source car club management platform.

CMS supported the installation through SOSCI to gather data on these issues:

- a) Understand the usage stats around a car club as an “anchor tenant” of a chargepoint, the key considerations and processes.
- b) Deliver a chargepoint at the other end of the country using alternative installers – how much additional management is required. This impacts on national scalability.

Already it is apparent that DNO connection costs in Hampshire are less than a third of those in North West and North East. This may explain the greater numbers of chargepoints and therefore adoption in the South East of England and reluctance of Chargepoint operators to invest in the North.

Community Energy Groups

SOSCI identified community energy groups as a fertile ground for the Charge my Street model of deployment of EV charge points. This was based on discussions with existing community energy groups and with CAFS, which has a significant length and depth of experience of supporting community energy groups.

The proposal within SOSCI was to contact the various groups across the UK (over 220 are registered in England alone, with 100+ further organisations based in Wales and Scotland). Presentations and meetings were then planned, though these were transferred online due to COVID-19.

The basis for contact was as follows: these communities already had successful histories of raising share finance, had members (over 30,000) who had literally and metaphorically bought into the low carbon agenda, were driven by a social and environmental agenda rather than a profit motive and also many had established networks and experience of community engagement.

To complement the initial engagement activities, a facilitation fund would be established within SOSCI to enable these communities to exploit the opportunities presented by Charge my Street (on a first come first served basis) with up to £5,000 per partner organisation and totalling up to £25,000. This would help communities survey their members regarding appetite / barriers to EV; seek out the most appropriate sites in their communities; undertake research into integrating their renewable energy systems with battery storage and EV charging; develop share funding projects; promote and advertise the charge points; and engage in their own activities to encourage the uptake of EVs and use of Charge My Street charge points (see <https://chargemystreet.co.uk/allthingsev> for documentation). SOSCI wanted to test this model of audience and engagement to see if the deployment could be accelerated by choosing a particular segment of the population.

Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network

CAFS have been working closely with Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network based in Cornwall who then received a follow up visit from Charge my Street (CMS) to look at particular host sites across the town. WREN are nationally renowned for their innovative approach to community energy. They had contacted the SOSCI programme following presentations by CMS to Community Energy England’s national online conference in the summer 2020. It was considered that engagement with WREN was

worthwhile as WREN is something of a beacon for other community energy groups and therefore working with WREN on the SOSCI project might inspire other groups to get involved.

Successful discussions led to a webinar with the Board and thereafter a visit to evaluate proposed sites. WREN then presented their ambitions and the proposed sites to the Town Council. Intriguingly, the response of the Town Council was very unexpected. Rather than supporting WREN in its endeavours, the Town Council has decided that they themselves would like to run the project itself as it sees itself as holding the responsibility for the townscape and for progress! In a way, WREN has unintentionally shamed the Council into action! The Town Council is now considering which sites to develop as EV charge points and further engagement in the next quarter is expected. The only 'downside' for SOSCI is that a fast turnaround with WREN is now likely to be a 'slow burn' with the Town Council who will inevitably follow a tendering process.

Solar Co-operatives

CAfS has also been working with CMS to engage with Edinburgh Solar Coop through the delivery of an introductory webinar. CAfS using its expertise in community owned solar PV to advise SOSCI on the marketplace / 'strike price' for purchasing solar pv generated electricity.

The main focus of dissemination with Community Energy groups has been around understanding the business models so each party can understand if there is sufficient value in working together on projects. Big Solar Co-op provided information on how metering could be fixed to show when EVs are using solar power and when they are using power from the grid. This impacts on the commercial model – is it the operator of the building selling power to CMS or Big Solar Co-op.

Data has been provided to Edinburgh solar Co-op and Big Solar Co-op on chargepoint usage statistics so they can incorporate into their business models for new sites.

There is a tension in the aspiration to use local solar renewables – CMS advocates overnight charging to building operators when spaces are generally empty, but there is no solar available at this time. It is likely that parking and solar will need more thought with site owners when this is part of the equation.

Other issues are:

- 1) Availability of parking at solar PV sites – many landlords like schools can offer roof space but are reluctant to offer parking due to safety concerns about access to school sites.
- 2) Coinciding EV installations with renewable installations.
- 3) Community sites with existing PV are difficult to meter PV being delivered to the charging point.

Dissemination Activity and Impact in the Last Quarter

A full summary is available in appendix 1 (table). These are the points of note for each of the relevant partners.

Blackhall Mill Community Association

Blackhall Mill Community Association has engaged with local communities surrounding the car club development areas of Blackhall Mill, Rowlands Gill and Shotley Bridge and beyond by hosting EV webinars and an online EV quiz. A large community engagement event had been planned for October but with the North East entering into local lockdown restrictions this has been postponed until the

restrictions are lifted and more than one household can meet together. As a result an online quiz was created to engage local car club members and the wider community. The event held on Monday 26th October attracted interest from a wide range of individuals through the car club's social media page and the boost post reached over 2,600 people and engaged with 23 only 8 people attended. As detailed above the advertising did have a wide reach and engaged with new audiences it was disappointing not to have had more in attendance. The feedback received from attendees was extremely positive including: "Thanks for the quiz, great fun" and "Brilliant! Quiz was great, really enjoyed it." The attendees very much enjoyed the evening and would consider attending a future quiz, should another be held. It built rapport, increased communication, and engaged participants. As an experimental event we do feel that although small in numbers it was a useful, fun and interesting way to engage and to increase knowledge of a range of subjects including EV's and the car club with dedicated rounds to these topics.

Over the course of the last quarter we have worked to engage communities through a wide range of communication activities including social media engagements in the form of posts, updates, newsletters, EV information and news stories. We have used paid promotional adverts and editorials in magazines, have sent out two newsletters to members, supporters and partners. Networked with the North East Super Innovation partners and have created some potential future delivery partners.

DVCC have worked with communities across the North East to support the development of new car clubs in rural communities and are working together to lead a bid for funding to expand the car club into these new areas.

Durham County Council

Durham County Council has been working with Councillors, parish councils - where a presentation on the SOSCI project was given and the area action partnership group, where a pack was sent out about the SOSCI project. A presentation has been made as well. Durham County Council has a website <https://www.durhaminsight.info/SOSCI/> about the three EV projects there are working towards with an email for suggestions included.

Online engagement events with and through Community Energy England to multiple stakeholders at various events have been held:

Community Energy England in the North East (Durham County Council participation event Jan 27th 2020); presentation to Community Energy England and 100s of delegates at the annual Community Energy Fortnight on June 12th 2020. Follow up presentations with Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network 17th July 2020; Ambleside to Zero June 2020; Pennine Community Energy June 2020; the Board of Burnside Community Energy June 2020. Discussions with Brighton Community Energy, Illford Community Energy and Edinburgh Solar Cooperative have also taken place.

A presentation to the 'wider community' (including community energy representatives) was held by Charge My Street on June 30th 2020 and attracted over 150 attendees.

The project manager at CAfS has attended a number of other EV webinars (hosted by e.g. Regen, EV Cafe, E-Delta, Electricity North West) at which he has used the chat room to promote the opportunities with Charge My Street.

On 30th July 2020, further connections were made with the Energy Savings Trust Sustainable Transport Team who have now signposted SOSCI to Local Energy Scotland to introduce the SOSCI programme to community energy groups in Scotland.

The presentation to the Community Energy England fortnight can be found at:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1R-Yqpp2FVqbYoDip6b6G2SM_ljEw7cWM

Impact of Activity in Previous Quarters

Community Energy

To date, the following organisations have engaged positively with the offer and are investigating sites and integration:

Pennine Community Energy: also working with Miralis on a rural community energy project in which PCE wants to develop battery storage from their renewable energy installations and link these with Charge My Street EV chargepoints.

Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network, Cornwall: Currently identifying potential sites. Site visits took place in August 2020.

Ambleside to Zero, Cumbria: Currently negotiating with local housing organisations for potential sites. Collaborating with South Lakes District Council.

Other discussions with Brighton Community Energy, Burneside Community Energy and Illford Community Energy have not developed into further site assessments. This has been due to alternative charge point providers being deployed in the vicinity; members taking the ideas back to their boards but not developing them further; and, a lack of volunteers to lead the project in their communities.

No group has yet requested financial assistance from the facilitation fund set up to help them through SOSCI.

COVID-19 has prevented face to face meetings, and this has inevitably taken away the opportunity of building greater trust with representatives.

EVs and Car Club Promotion

Following engagement activities in previous quarters we have been able to continue to support community groups review options for car clubs in their communities including in Haltwhistle, Longbyre, Acomb, Weardale and Stanley. We have submitted an application for funding to conduct a feasibility study into the potential need for a car club in Chopwell. As with all well-developed community initiatives, we are working with communities to develop a ground up approach to EV car clubs across the area. We are working with other partners and their networks to ascertain other potential communities which would like to develop a car club. In the next quarter we plan to develop this further by supporting needs analysis and developing an evidence base for a detailed funding bid to cover all interested communities. We hope that this joined up approach will be successful; simplify and co-ordinate the funding process; enable the sharing of knowledge and build a co-operative of sustainable rural EV car clubs across the North and further afield.

We have inducted new individual members into the car club and have others who have expressed an interest in joining. We have a waiting list of members for when the new hubs in Rowlands Gill and Shotley Bridge are operational.

Lessons Learned

Adaptation and learning to master online networking, forums and new ways of working has become a major lesson learned during the health pandemic. It has also shown how resilience and change can lead to positive outcomes. We understand that planning in such changeable times is difficult, but flexibility is key to success.

It has become apparent that many individuals are keen to return to normal life as quickly as possible however, with the virus still prominent in society many people are not comfortable to return to social settings and this will continue to be the case for a long time to come. Future engagements will therefore require a mixture of virtual and when possible, physical activities and meetings.

Behavioural change takes time, to make a large shift from the known to the unknown requires reinforcing key messages, myth busting and clear, concise, and continual promotion. The transition to EVs continues to be surrounded by scepticism and concern. Engagement, promotion, marketing, and messaging needs to be strong, consistent and regular in order to encourage individuals to switch from their own ICE vehicles towards EVs and car clubs.

Experimental engagement activities are key to trial new ways of communicating with people in these changing and uncertain times. More frequent and varied engagement techniques should be trialled to see what works and what does not, when more traditional forms are unavailable.

Community energy groups report that they feel comfortable engaging preferentially with Charge My Street as the organisations all share the same social and environmental values. The 'community benefit society' / 'community interest company' status of Charge my Street certainly has resonance with these energy groups who often share the same legal set up.

Several groups reported that whilst they would like to get engaged and drive forward the project in their community, as Board Members of their community energy group, they are already over extended as volunteers and do not have sufficient time to progress the idea.

Some energy groups reported that a local network of chargepoints was already being developed.

Several community energy groups have expressed an interest in integrating their existing renewable energy generations but do not have the technical expertise to progress this. One organisation: Pennine Community Energy, have managed to access the Rural Community Energy Fund support to help understand the opportunities better. They still wish to pursue chargepoint infrastructure - but not until they have the findings back.

Emails from community energy group representatives and Board members demonstrate clearly that such groups embrace the principle of community owned EV chargepoints, but due to their voluntary status and often considerable existing responsibilities, they are likely to be 'slow burn' rather than 'quick fix' in terms of the speed of installation. Nevertheless, they remain potentially great advocates and are highly likely to encourage their own members and the wider public to use the chargepoints, once installed.

Several groups have expressed an interest in using a facilitation fund to undertake surveys and promotion of installed networks, we believe it remains a valid resource to offer these groups. However, the pace of uptake from the community groups has been very slow and it has been these funds originally allocated to this facilitation fund will be switched to support further community engagement activity beyond March 2021 by CAFS rather than directed to the groups themselves.

Conclusions and Next Steps

EV Engagement and Car Clubs

The SOSCI project has made some interesting, diverse, and innovative engagement progress to date at both the national and local scale. This is key to the development and implementation of the project moving forward. It is essential that it continues to develop key messaging and specific marketing and promotional campaigns for the car club. This will drip feed the concept and lead to more adopters in terms of car club members and EV users.

The next steps moving forward include:

1. Developing online and when possible, physical engagement events to attract those who are willing to attend but also, those who are not yet comfortable to be back in society.
2. Reviewing the installation and usage at Nadder Valley Car Club.

Community Energy Groups

Community energy groups are clearly keen on working with Charge my Street due to shared values and an existing commitment to decarbonise their communities. However, due to the voluntary nature of their boards and members, the pathway to installation is likely to be slower than when engaging with the private sector, for example.

The next steps moving forward include:

1. A number of leads are currently 'hot' and SOSCI is confident that these will progress to deployment of Charge my Street EV chargepoints during the period of the Innovate UK funding.
2. A facilitation fund remains a valid support mechanism to help these groups to promote the use of the chargepoints, albeit reduced in size.
3. A number of 1-2-1 online meetings are scheduled, discussing potential sites within the communities. Engagement with community energy groups in Scotland will be investigated through the Energy Saving Trust's Local Energy Scotland officer.