

## FRIENDS OF THE SCOTSMAN / TRANSPORT

# Leave your gas guzzler at home and enjoy all the fun of the car share

Life's more fun when you share. The phrase used by Liftshare is more relevant now than ever as the "sharing economy" grows in popularity. Since its launch in 2006, Tripshare-SEStran.com has joined a plethora of apps and websites which encourages users to share different parts of their lives; sharing resources rather than outright ownership. Brands such as AirBnB, Uberpool and Borrow my Doggy allow people to share everything from their home to their pet. Car sharing has also seen a rise in popularity thanks to recent celebrity endorsements by James Corden and Peter Kay. Corden, joined by a host of different celebrities, has made car sharing cool with his Carpool Karaoke whilst Kay injects humour into car sharing in his BBC sitcom. Even in Edinburgh and South East Scotland, membership of Tripshare has risen to more than 8,800 people.

Funded by the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran), Tripshare is the region's fastest-growing car share scheme, linking car drivers or passengers who are making similar journeys and wish to share the costs.

Many people are car sharing to cut the cost of motoring and travel. Car sharing also allows people who cannot afford their own vehicle access to a car. A typical commuter can save almost £1,000 a year (based on two people sharing a regular Monday-

A scheme pairing drivers and passengers to cut down on single occupancy vehicles has an added social benefit, writes **Lisa Freeman**

Friday commuting trip). Many members say membership of Tripshare has enabled them to get lifts to jobs that they would not have otherwise been able to access due to the financial burden associated with travel.

An Edinburgh Park-based member noted the value of Tripshare during the Forth Road Bridge closure at the end of 2015: "Living in a rural area, public transport just wasn't an option to me. My employer was very supportive and allowed me to work from home two days out of the working week. But, for the days I had to be at work, Tripshare helped me to save money on the additional miles on my journey due to the bridge closure."

Car sharing provides new opportunities – whether it is to services that were not previously accessible, or allowing organisations to save on business miles and costly car park spaces. There is even anecdotal evidence that car sharing staff are more punctual and alert when they arrive at work than non-sharing staff.

Not only does Tripshare reduce members' travel costs, it can reduce the need for car ownership – you don't even need to own your own car to car share. Many Tripshare

SEStran members are happy to car share in return for a small contribution towards costs and some friendly company for their journey.

Reducing the number of cars, especially single occupancy vehicles, from our roads is a high priority for the Region's Transport Partnership, SEStran. Fewer people behind the wheel of a car means lower carbon emissions and it helps create more liveable communities due to reduced traffic and demand on parking.

Tomorrow is World Car Free Day. It aims to make people less dependent on their cars for one day by encouraging them to leave their car at home.

Councillor Lesley Hinds, SEStran Chair and Edinburgh Transport Convener, said: "Car-sharing plays an integral part in developing a cleaner, greener and more sustainable transport system. It is a convenient alternative to private car ownership, all the while helping to reduce congestion and the harmful effects of vehicle emissions on our environment.

Car Free Day is an opportunity to question and raise awareness of the way we travel on a day-to-day basis and consider alternative and more sustainable methods. If people who



↑ You don't have to own a vehicle to join SEStran's Tripshare scheme, just be

routinely drove to work shared their journey just once a week it would take up to 20 per cent of cars off the region's roads."

Tripshare could provide those driving on their own a more sustainable, economic and social way of getting from A to B. Driving alone can be an isolating experience and

the social element of car sharing is important. As well as gaining access to opportunities that might otherwise have proved difficult or impossible to reach, individual car-sharers report that the interaction with their car-sharing partners has led to new friendships, opportunities and knowledge.

willing to contribute to costs – and you may make a friend along the way

Individual members can stipulate specific needs for their journeys including preferred routes, passenger gender, smoking or non-smoking, accessibility requirements and so on. All information is held in strict confidence and only shared when the member allows it within the system. Thousands of people across South

East Scotland are already enjoying the benefits of regular car sharing, through TripshareSEStran.com, so why not give it a try?

Lisa Freeman is Strategy Liaison Officer, SEStran. National Climate Week runs from 16-23 September, sign-up for car-sharing at [Tripshare-sestran.com](http://Tripshare-sestran.com)



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## Road to the future is paved with driverless cars

All of the major vehicle manufacturers have been setting out their planned timescales for launching sales of driverless vehicles. Many people are surprised at the pace of change under which increasing numbers of cars are operating on our roads with less control by the driver. The UK Department for Transport (DfT) roadmap to encourage autonomous vehicles (AVs) on our roads envisages that the UK can be a world leader in AVs.

In May a Tesla car in Florida was the first high-profile example of a fatal accident involving a car in autopilot mode. In reality, most of the current generation of cars still require a driver to override the car in case the automated controls don't get things right. Many people already drive long dis-

tances without touching the pedals using adaptive cruise control, and it may not be long before more of us are willing to let our cars do some of the steering too – not just when parking.

The potential advantages of vehicles driving themselves are huge. Most road accidents are due to driver error. Although one fatal crash with over 100 million miles of Autopilot experience is a better record than with human error, much better safety than this is needed before we can rely fully on these technologies.

For the manufacturers making huge investment in AVs there are strong pressures not to fall behind their competitors. Although, there does not seem to be much demand yet from the public, the potential benefits are so great that few doubt that

self-driving cars are here to stay. The manufacturers don't know yet know what types of AV will become popular first, but they are all expecting mass markets to emerge quickly.

Automation allows much better use of road capacity since vehicles can travel in road trains. This is particularly attractive for lorries where huge improvements in fuel economy are possible. Some freight operators are already participating in trials on the country's motorways. Google's AVs have been designed with an autonomous taxi-style transport service in mind and nuTonomy are already piloting autonomous taxis in Singapore. These fully automated vehicles provide a completely new type of transport system, automating the fast-growing ride hailing serv-

ices such as Uber and Lyft. AVs are coming fast, so CILT as a professional institute needs to ensure standards and training help professionals adapt. This means going back to the core values and basic principles of mobility and access which were used when designing the current standards. Who should get priority? How do we accommodate human error within increasingly automated systems? How do we manage liability?

CILT has published its vision of the future of transport to 2030 and seeks to facilitate debate within the industry and with the travelling public about our transport future. Many of the myths that create the greatest concern have already been thought through, and the future is not nearly as scary as it might seem. AVs will not

replace public transport. Particularly with high capacity systems such as rail and tram it would be very difficult to put all these people into individual vehicles, even with the better allocation of vehicle space that would come with AVs. The issue is not replacing high capacity vehicles but using AVs to connect people with the public transport services. AVs could expand the coverage of public transport to rural areas and places with dispersed populations, which could be a particular advantage for older people and low mobility groups.

Some early plans for AVs allow for more signs and road markings, but as the technologies develop, the roadmaps envisage no lanes, no signs, and no need for traffic control at all, helping to make places more attractive.

One of the greatest challenges relates to security. The most serious issue relates to people's privacy as they can be tracked wherever they go. However, this is already a challenge with existing technologies. People are being tracked through mobile devices such as phones, watches, and navigation systems. Urgency is needed to resolve these security problems, and the approaches taken to data ownership and management will then work for AVs as well.

Changes in liability laws will be driven by the insurance industry, which will be keen to see clearer presumed liability for AVs as a means of lowering accident risk, reducing their greatest costs.

Vehicles with AV capabilities are already on Scotland's roads with

drivers checking and overriding as needed. Over the next 20 to 30 years the need for driving skills will increasingly be replaced with a need for better customer service and social skills. CILT is helping to set the standards for training the next generation of transport employees to encourage more social behaviour when travelling.

Derek Halden is chair of the Scottish branch of CILT, [www.dhcl.co.uk](http://www.dhcl.co.uk)



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Autonomous vehicles present challenges, writes **Derek Halden**