

Marketing and Communications Strategy

The industry

Membership of UK car clubs has more than doubled since before the Covid-19 pandemic, with 339,017 members of car clubs across the UK. More than three-quarters of members are in London. Since 2021, the number of members of car clubs has been relatively stable.

As data for 2024 is not yet available from CoMoUK, it is currently unclear what the impact of rising insurance costs has been on the industry. In March 2024, it was reported that up to 40 community car clubs could cease to exist, with the Chief Executive of CoMoUK describing the sector as “facing an existential crisis”¹.

Aside from issues with insurance, the industry has seen a significant growth in electric vehicles. As of 2023, some 35% of publicly accessible car club cars were electric compared to just 1.2% of private cars. Almost half of all UK car club members had used an electric car club vehicle in 2023, with 12% stating that wanting access to an electric vehicle was a reason to join a car club.

In terms of the car share models, the most common form of car club in the UK are ‘back to bay’ - where cars must be returned to designated parking places after use. There is, however, notable growth in One-way/flex car clubs, where the car is taken on a one way trip and then can be parked on-street in a legal parking spot wherever the user finishes their journey.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2024/mar/17/just-when-we-need-them-most-britains-car-share-clubs-face-closure-as-last-insurer-pulls-out>

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The area

The Upper Calder Valley, despite being composed of small towns and villages, is a highly suitable location for a car share scheme. The steep topography has restricted, particularly in Hebden Bridge, the extent of any suburban expansion. Instead, many homes are on tightly-packed streets of terraced housing (with 'back-to-back' or 'over-' and 'under-dwellings' common). This means that Hebden Bridge and Todmorden are fairly densely populated and compact areas, where walking to a rental car is, for many people, a short journey. 27.5% of households in Todmorden West and Cornholme do not have access to a car compared to 21.6% in Hebden Bridge. In many central areas of Todmorden, more than 4 in 10 households do not have a car; in central Hebden Bridge this is between 3 and 4 in 10 households. The short distance to the car parking bays and the low car ownership mean that targeting residents who live in central areas of both Todmorden and Hebden Bridge should be a key focus of our communications and engagement.

Strategic objectives

Communicating and engaging with the local community in the Upper Calder Valley (and beyond) is crucial to us delivering our vision for POD as a long-term alternative to car ownership in this area. It is essential that members, users, the wider public, local businesses and other key stakeholders (e.g. councillors) are aware of and involved in the scheme.

Below we outline some of the key strategic objectives of our Marketing and Communications Strategy - what do we intend to achieve and why? We have separated this into two sections: 'POD in the community' and 'POD and its members'.

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POD in the community:

1. Becoming established

- **Increase awareness of and interest in POD** amongst the population in the Upper Calder Valley. This includes potential users, members and the wider public but also more specifically key stakeholders, including businesses, charities and councils/councillors. We want them to know we exist, who we are and where we operate, as well as being interested in our offer.
- From becoming established in the local area, we want to **build trust in POD in the community** not just through operating successfully and reliably, but by building positive relationships with key stakeholders in the community and promoting ourselves as an environmentally-conscious and accessible organisation.
- By working closely with other environmental organisations in the local area, we want to establish ourselves as part of a wider network that seeks to **promote sustainable transport** more widely in the local area.

2. Growing sustainably and inclusively

- To ensure that POD grows and achieves financial sustainability, we must ensure that we identify our target audience, understand who they are and what would motivate them to join POD. We must ensure we then **message them effectively** to generate interest in POD and the ensure that we can convert that interest and attention into action, with sufficient numbers of people joining us.
- From building awareness of POD in the community, we want to **encourage and increase member and user sign-ups** by providing the public with clear information about how POD works, including information about registration and some of the key benefits. By

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maintaining this as a continuous process that will ensure we continue to grow and expand and will ensure our long-term sustainability.

- **Engage with marginalised and under-represented groups.** Broadly, we want to ensure that people from a diverse range of backgrounds know about and understand the benefits of POD. We want to ensure that sign-ups do not just come from economically comfortable residents who might choose not to own a car. Rather, we want to engage with low-income residents, some of whom may benefit most from the cost savings and increased mobility offered by POD. In addition, we aim to build networks with disabled resident/groups as well as ethnic minorities.
- Part of this engagement process with under-represented groups will allow us to **understand the barriers to participation** in the car share scheme for some residents, so that these can be mitigated.

POD: users and members

1. Creating a democratic organisation with engaged members

- We want to communicate effectively with our members so that we can encourage them to be **involved in the decisions that we make**. Our aim is to have a membership that is, on the whole, engaged and feels like they are heard, listened to and supported in any decisions we make.
- A key objective is also to fully understand members' experiences of POD: what are they getting and what do they want from the scheme? It is important that we establish effective mechanisms to get feedback and hear experiences from members so that we can improve the service we provide.

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Customer analysis

We consider our **Total Addressable Market (TAM)** - anyone who could hypothetically use our vehicles - as anyone who lives in Calderdale with a driving licence. Of course, it is unrealistic that a high proportion of these people actually join POD.

Therefore, our **Serviceable Addressable Market (SAM)** is defined as the subset of TAM that is, realistically, most likely to benefit more from our service than from that of competitors (which in POD's case includes car ownership, other car hire companies, and other modes of transport). These are people that we can realistically target to build our audience in the local area.

What is our SAM?

Because of the quite specific user profile of people who are likely to use a car club, it is quite challenging to estimate a specific population that could, in theory, benefit from our service. However, we can at least identify likely characteristics:

- Hold a driving licence
- Do not own a car or own one car but use it infrequently
- Live in Hebden Bridge or Todmorden within 15 minutes' walk of a car parking bay
- Do not need to use a car for regular journeys
- Have sufficient income to join a car club

Why have we chosen these characteristics as our SAM? Partly common sense - of course, to use POD you will need a driving licence and POD will not offer value of money for people that need to use their car every day to commute. But also based on our recent survey of newsletter sign-ups, where we found that almost three-quarters of respondents planned to walk or wheel to reach POD's cars, with 85% of respondents would be willing to walk a minimum of 10-15 minutes to access POD's cars. We also found that only 10% of survey respondents had two cars - 42% did not own a car and 48% currently had access to one car.

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A useful starting point is to identify the size of the population that live within 5, 10 and 15 minutes' walk from different possible car parking bays in Todmorden and Hebden Bridge. To do this, we have used the mapbox API in RStudio to estimate the size of the geographical areas, based on estimated walking times using the street/path network, that could reach the parking bays on foot in that time. We have then intersected this

Figure 1 and Figure 2 are examples for the railway station in both towns.

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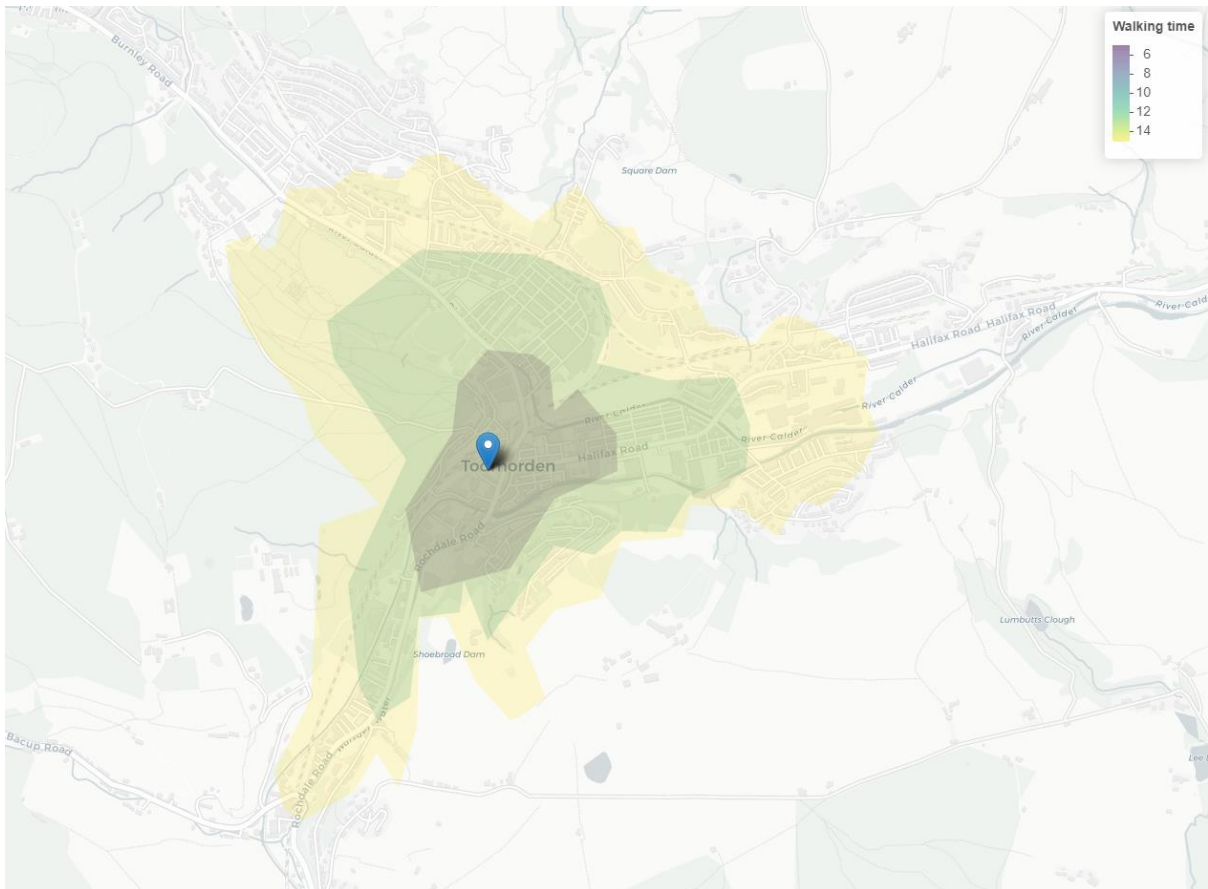


Figure 1. Population living with 15 minutes' walk from a hypothetical car parking bay at Todmorden railway station

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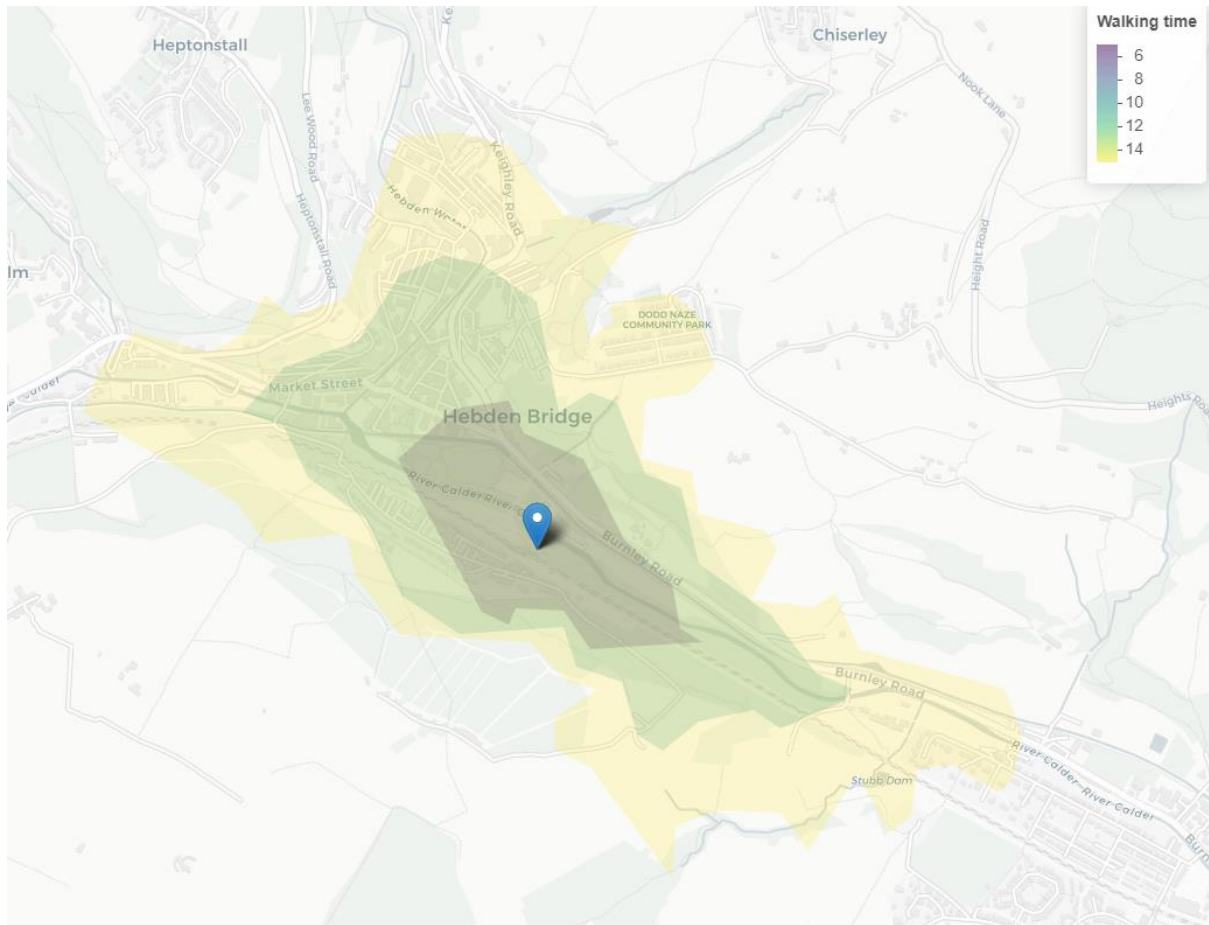


Figure 2. Population living with 15 minutes' walk from a hypothetical car parking bay at Hebden Bridge railway station

After creating the isochrones (i.e. the 5, 10 and 15 minute areas), we have then calculated the population size and characteristics living in each area. To do this, we have performed spatial intersections of buildings and output areas onto the isochrones, to calculate, for each output area, the proportion of building area that is in each isochrone. We have then assigned population characteristics from the 2021 census, at output area, to the isochrones, based on the distribution of buildings. This gives us key information including the population aged 16+., the number of households with 1 car or zero cars and the number of people employed who, at the

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time of the census, did not drive a car to work. We have also added the number of member sign ups living in each 5, 10 and 15 minute walking isochrones.

In Tables 1-3, we consider the population in Hebden Bridge, Todmorden and rural areas living in proximity to each possible parking bay location. Realistically, we can only assume that people would become members and also use the cars frequently if the cars were conveniently located i.e. within 15 minutes' walk. Even within 15 minutes, we would assume that we would get a higher proportion of sign-ups and use from people that live closer, and with increasing distance, both measures would fall. It is therefore important that we have sufficient population within 5 and 10 minutes.

From Table 1, it is clear that, in Hebden Bridge, the SAM is larger at the non-railway station locations. The number of households without a car, with one car and the number of people not driving to work is higher in closer proximity to Market Street, Bridge Lanes and Salem – this is particularly pronounced for those within 5 and 10 minutes. Generally, if we focus on households with no cars, we can see that in Hebden, depending on the location of the cars, we have between 517 and 609 households that would be our SAM. If we consider anyone aged over 16 who doesn't regularly use a car for work, this population is somewhere between 1230 and 1428. In Todmorden (see Table 2), the numbers are a little higher – between 867 and 925 households and 1572 and 1650 people not driving to work. However, we can see from Tables 1-2 that the number of signups is actually lower in Todmorden than Hebden Bridge. There may be other population and values-based characteristics leading to these discrepancies. At present, this is one reason why we plan to have 3 cars in Hebden Bridge and 2 cars in Todmorden.

In the UK, around 75% of the 17+ population has access to a driving licence. It is difficult to estimate in our case, what proportion of households without a car actually have a resident living there with a valid UK driving licence. If we assume that number is, say, 50%, then, taking Salem as an example, then the number of households without a car but with a licence and also within 15 minutes' walk would be approximately 300. In Todmorden, using the WMC as an example, this number

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would be more like 450. This is a rough estimate but at least gives us some sense of what a realistic targetable population might be in each location.

Based on this then, we would estimate that the non-car-owning part of our SAM in Hebden Bridge is approximately 300 and in Todmorden is approximately 450. Once we factor in households that own one car, but use it infrequently, and may consider giving up that car, this number is likely to be significantly higher. However, we do not have an estimate for this population locally.

Location	Post code	Walking distance (mins)	Sign ups	Populati on 16+	House holds	Households: no car	Households: one car	16 plus in work: Not driving to work
Bridge Lanes car park	HX7 6AA	<5 mins	23	811	525	195	256	374
		<10 mins	53	2,571	1,601	507	807	1,132
		<15 mins	60	3,232	2,001	614	1,007	1,411
Salem	HX7 6HB	<5 mins	22	836	540	197	266	386
		<10 mins	52	2,533	1,583	502	799	1,116
		<15 mins	59	3,200	1,982	609	999	1,399
Hebden train station	HX7 6JE	<5 mins	4	333	198	56	105	149
		<10 mins	33	1,449	893	277	467	672
		<15 mins	54	2,834	1,734	514	873	1,223
Market place car park	HX7 7BX	<5 mins	25	1,317	840	276	431	612
		<10 mins	51	2,459	1,540	475	788	1,101
		<15 mins	58	3,264	2,008	603	1,009	1,428

Table 1. Hebden Bridge population characteristics

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Location	Post code	Walking distance (mins)	Sign ups	Populati on 16+	House holds	Households : no car	Households: one car	16 plus in work: Not driving to work
Ferne Lee Road	OL14 5JW	<5 mins	16	1,623	872	274	404	526
		<10 mins	23	3,424	1,889	613	858	1,099
		<15 mins	27	4,916	2,745	907	1,245	1,563
School Lane car park	OL14 5AG	<5 mins	2	1,274	757	307	341	438
		<10 mins	21	3,503	2,006	685	940	1,163
		<15 mins	30	5,182	2,922	917	1,366	1,657
Todmorden college	OL14 7BX	<5 mins	6	974	564	213	256	340
		<10 mins	18	3,101	1,755	631	806	1,042
		<15 mins	32	5,144	2,905	925	1,351	1,650
Todmorden sports centre	OL14 7DF	<5 mins	1	620	311	75	143	200
		<10 mins	9	1,634	878	254	393	498
		<15 mins	20	3,609	1,998	627	912	1,128
Todmorden train station	OL14 7AA	<5 mins	1	941	549	212	254	302
		<10 mins	19	2,953	1,700	618	779	997
		<15 mins	29	4,866	2,745	867	1,287	1,572
Working Men's Club	OL14 5QG	<5 mins	2	1,075	648	265	293	371
		<10 mins	22	3,363	1,932	659	908	1,117
		<15 mins	29	5,006	2,822	888	1,319	1,605

Table 2. Todmorden population characteristics

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Location	Post code	Walking distance (mins)	Signposts	Population 16+	Households	Households: no car	Households: one car	16 plus in work: Not driving to work
Mytholmroyd community centre	HX7 5AF	<5 mins	1	1,166	705	191	350	341
		<10 mins	5	2,503	1,484	369	724	784
		<15 mins	6	3,104	1,824	440	877	943
Mytholmroyd train station	HX7 5DU	<5 mins	0	705	452	143	231	228
		<10 mins	4	2,226	1,337	340	669	703
		<15 mins	6	3,089	1,814	436	873	932
St Michael's Square	HX7 5DS	<5 mins	0	1,078	680	202	354	350
		<10 mins	5	2,490	1,483	374	731	775
		<15 mins	7	3,223	1,886	445	903	962

Table 3. Mytholmroyd population characteristics

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Location	Post code	Walking distance (mins)	Sign ups	Populati on 16+	House holds	Households: no car	Households: one car	16 plus in work: Not driving to work
Blackshaw Head Methodist Church	HX7 7JY	<5 mins	1	86	41	2	15	35
		<10 mins	3	193	93	4	35	78
		<15 mins	4	317	154	9	58	127
Cragg Vale: Hincliffe Arms	HX7 5TF	<5 mins	0	96	48	5	18	33
		<10 mins	1	184	92	9	34	62
		<15 mins	1	231	115	12	42	76
Heptonstall: towngate car park	HX7 7LW	<5 mins	5	556	328	75	160	185
		<10 mins	8	1,114	675	172	327	396
		<15 mins	52	3,169	1,950	569	954	1,293
Luddenden Foot: Pharmacy	HX2 6NZ	<5 mins	0	615	342	96	152	165
		<10 mins	0	1,074	599	156	263	294
		<15 mins	0	1,602	880	182	407	456
Old Town: Wadsworth community centre	HX7 8RY	<5 mins	4	296	169	29	74	99
		<10 mins	6	524	296	53	129	175
		<15 mins	28	2,191	1,298	326	619	882
Walsden: Hollins Mill	OL14 6SA	<5 mins	1	470	275	58	133	153
		<10 mins	3	894	486	90	241	297
		<15 mins	5	1,203	650	116	326	397

Table 4. Rural areas population characteristics

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While we may spend significant time marketing POD to our SAM, we must also consider our Serviceable obtainable market - the subset of SAM that we are actually providing our service to. Strictly speaking, at present because we aren't yet trading, this is zero. However, in the future, we will use it to set a target for our market share, for example by looking at the number of contacts (i.e. newsletter signups) we have that we expect to be users and that have a planned car club bay within easy reach. Our aim, of course, is to target the SAM population (while also having a long-term plan to diversify our offering and also assure inclusive growth) and steadily build SOM until it is a large proportion of SAM.

What needs would POD fulfil for our SAM?

To market POD effectively, we need to understand how and why potential users would use POD's service. In the survey of newsletter sign-ups, who we consider potential future members, we asked the reasons why people considered themselves likely to join POD as a user. The most popular answers were:

1. Reduce environmental impact (79%)
2. Not needing a car often (72%)
3. Avoiding hassle of car ownership (60%)
4. Saving money (39%)
5. Not being able to reach destinations by public transport (37%)
6. Can't afford to buy or run a car (28%)

Of course, we do not know if survey respondents are completely representative of the people that may become users of POD. However, we know that these respondents are at least very important in that they are already engaged with POD and are likely to help us reach a viable membership quickly. Therefore, it is especially important that we meet the needs of these respondents at this stage, even if they might not be completely representative of our entire SAM.

From the survey responses, we know that POD must enable people to feel that it is a means to reduce their environmental impact, be relatively hassle-free and easy to

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use, enable people to save money and be more affordable than car ownership for people that do not need regular use of a car. These are key factors that we think would ensure that people join POD as a user and would continue to use POD after doing so. In addition, if 28% of our SAM cannot afford to buy or run a car, then we know how crucial it is that POD can offer a service to residents who are on a low income. This is a key reason behind the decision to charge a £1 monthly fee for low-income residents.

We are nonetheless aware of a possible tension in our aims to be inclusive and evidence from CoMoUK that suggests that car club members across the UK are generally better off economically than the wider population. We understand that, as well as offering a key service to low income households who may not be able to afford a car, we also need to appeal to households that may choose not to own a car, say, for environmental reasons. This is outlined in our Audience Segmentation below.

Our survey has also given us key information on trip purpose i.e. how respondents think they would use POD's cars. Of course, this is, at the moment, hypothetical, but for some sign-ups who were Hour Car members, it may also be based on how they used those cars. The most popular reasons were as follows:

1. Transporting bulky/heavy items (69%)
2. Day trips (68%)
3. Visiting friends or family (63%)
4. Holidays (52%)
5. Hospital/medical/doctor appointments (52%)
6. Shopping (41%)
7. Work trips (25%)

There were a fairly limited number of respondents (15%) who indicated that they would use POD's cars for children's activities. This reflects the fact that less than a quarter of our respondents lived with children at home. However, we are careful in how we interpret this; rather than families being especially unlikely to use POD's

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cars, it could be that parents are less likely to have signed up to the newsletter or are less likely to have completed the survey, due to time pressures.

Finally, we consider the age characteristics of survey respondents to understand the likely age profile of POD's car users. It was notable in the survey that we had very few young and older residents complete a survey: only 8% of respondents under 35 of which none were under 25, and only 7% were 75 or over. In contrast, the vast majority of respondents fell between 35 and 74 – a likely reflection of the local population with driving licences who are still able to drive. Over half of all respondents were aged between 55 and 74, highlighting this as a key age group for POD.

Knowing how users think they are likely to use the cars and their reasons for joining, who do we think that POD is in competition with? For users that do not own a car, we are in direct competition with taxi services and other car rentals. It is important, therefore, that our target audience does not consistently view these options as more attractive, based on price, convenience, the environment or any other motivating factor. To a lesser extent, POD may be in competition with public transport operators, though for the most part our focus is on allowing people to make journeys that they cannot easily make by public transport. As an organisation, we are also keen to support public transport use and emphasise the multi-modal possibilities with POD e.g. travelling by bus to reach our cars.

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Target Audience and Segmentation

Within our identified SAM, and based on the survey responses, we can identify different segments of the population for targeting purposes. While these groups may not be mutually exclusive, it is likely that they have different reasons for considering joining POD. They may therefore be responsive to different messaging techniques, as well as different communication channels.

Primary target audiences

1. Eco-conscious local people who choose not to own a car

- motivating factors: local environment, active travel, air pollution, reduced car ownership, reduced blight of traffic/congestion
- demographics/geography: middle-class, a little more likely to live in Hebden Bridge

2. People who can't afford to own a car but have a licence

- motivating factors: cost, convenience, value for money, accessibility/mobility
- demographics/geography: younger, working class, more likely to live in Todmorden

3. People who would like to give up owning a car (i.e. don't regularly need a car - working from home, retired, two-car households)

- motivating factors: avoiding the hassle of car ownership, cost vs ownership, convenience - can still make the trips they need to make, availability of cars
- demographics: retired, but many different groups including people working from home and those that would like to save money.

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User personas

Based on these primary target audiences, we have created a few 'user personas' to further demonstrate the kinds of people that we think POD might appeal to, and the type of messaging that might be most persuasive. These are of course not real people nor do they aim to capture the complexities of actual people. While the messaging for one user may also work for another, these personas are used to demonstrate that some users may respond better based on their specific needs or motivations.

1. **'Eco-conscious Emily'** - recently moved to the area, tries to make ecologically-minded decisions, wants to avoid owning a car - recognises it's bad for the planet, still needs to use a car occasionally.

Messaging: POD is the 'smart choice' - evidence of environmental impacts of car sharing vs car ownership

2. **'Struggling Sarah'** - Sarah has a driver's licence but can't afford to run a car at the moment. She'd love to use a car every now and again to go visit her family, go to the garden centre or go for a day trip with her partner and children.

Messaging: POD is affordable, even if she only uses a car once every so often, and that she can bring the kids.

3. **'Retired Rob'** - Rob has noticed since he retired that he barely uses his car. Insuring, taxing and petrol cost quite a bit - a waste of money when he only uses it for the occasional trip. He finds it all a bit of a hassle.

Messaging: POD is easy-to-use and better value for him than keeping his current car.

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4. **'Work From Home Will'** - Will and their partner work from home. They walk everywhere around Hebden and occasionally drive to Todmorden or Halifax. They'd be happy to get the train or bus most of the time.

Messaging: it's economical, it can fit around a modern lifestyle and the cars are there when they need one.

Inclusive growth

It is important that we acknowledge that some groups in our community may find joining POD easier because they have more time, more money, have more community connections or because they can more easily envisage ways in which POD will benefit them. We are aware that reaching 'Struggling Sarah' may be more difficult than 'Eco-conscious Emily'. While POD will not be able to provide a service to everyone (e.g. for people that do not have a driver's licence or for people without sufficient income to pay the hourly cost of the cars), we want to make a concerted effort to evaluate and understand the needs of the more economically disadvantaged groups (i.e. low income residents with a driving licence) that could benefit from our service.

To better enable us to reach these residents, we will focus some of our in person events on specific areas of Todmorden where there are higher levels of deprivation - in particular the area to the North East of Burnley Road. In these areas, we will conduct period door-to-door leafletting and place leaflets in key nearby locations, including cafes, pubs, supermarkets, health centres and the market.

Providing a service that many low income residents will be able to access is part of POD's commitment more broadly to **inclusive growth**. As well as reaching the audiences outlined above, we also want to ensure that POD is accessible to other members of the community, particularly those who our marketing might not otherwise reach. We plan to **increase awareness and membership amongst the South Asian population** in Todmorden. To do this we will establish a relationship with key stakeholders in Todmorden such as Masjid Hamza mosque, Integrate

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Todmorden and Todmorden Faith. We will ensure we have a presence at public events that are likely to attract many members of the South Asian community in the area.

Finally, we will make contact and establish an ongoing relationship with stakeholders from **Hebden Bridge Disability Access Forum**. This will ensure we understand the diverse transport needs of Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent local residents and focus on ways in which we can make POD as accessible as possible moving forwards.

Unique Selling Points (USPs)

POD also has some USPs that our messaging should highlight. These may appeal differently to different people, but ultimately, are generally more likely to be considered positive features of POD than negatives.

1. **Tailored to local needs:** POD is not a big, faceless corporation and nor is it being run from afar. Rather, it has been set up by a group of volunteers who have given up a significant amount of time because they want a scheme to operate where they live.
2. **Your money benefits the local community:** POD is a Community Benefit Society rather than a private business. Community Benefit Society's exist to benefit the local community and all decisions should be made with this primary aim. This sets us apart from companies such as Enterprise, but also allows us to fit into a long and dynamic tradition of co-operatives in the Upper Calder Valley. POD fits well with other local co-ops such as the Calder Valley Land Trust or Valley Organics.
3. **Easy to use:** Compared to the previous car share scheme – Hour Car – POD will be much easier to use. Cars users will join, book, and unlock cars with an app, making the whole process seamless. Cars will be located in central locations within walking distance of the vast majority of residents of Hebden Bridge and Todmorden.

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Attention, Interest, Desire, Action

Having segmented the market and matched service offers to each segment, it is important that we think about AIDA: attention, interest, desire and action. This outlines how we essentially move from generating and maintaining attention all the way through to the action of people joining POD as users. We consider these in turn below.

1. **Attention:** this is the point at which the brand 'POD' needs to do the most work for us. Repetition is essential – alongside the name, the colour scheme and graphic elements must become identifiable, signifying our identity with a casual glance. This is why POD has employed a graphic designer to ensure we can grab people's attention with memorable and distinctive branding.

We will also consider the use of surprise, humour, personality, and evidence of other people engaging to get people's attention.

Attention will be key in all channels of communication. In particular, we know from CoMoUK research with car club members that the most common reason for joining was seeing a car on the street. Therefore, our cars will all be branded with POD's distinctive logo and a shortened URL to access our website. The bays will also be visible with a pole sign advertising POD. Other methods to get attention, aside from social media posts, will include leaflet drops, stalls and search engine optimisation.

2. **Interest:** this cannot be general interest or affection, but must relate directly to the service offer – interest in anything other than convenient car hire is unlikely to translate into action. With our 'eco-conscious' segment, interest might be generating through highlighting the environmental benefits. With most of our audience, we will try to remind people of the key benefits of the car club and the disbenefits of owning an underused car.

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3. **Desire:** The cars themselves – their quality, convenience, accessibility – could be a strong source of interest. However, desire for things is often not as powerful as desire for the experience of using the thing; or indeed the perception of what kind of person uses that thing. Other car clubs have had some success by identifying their users as smart, ahead-of-the-curve, or insightful people, who have picked up on an opportunity that someone less alert and in touch might miss out on.
4. **Action:** the action is easily defined – joining POD through our website. However, even when we have generated interest and desire, we might need some intermediate steps: some people will want to use an online calculator to check savings, some will be greatly encouraged if they can meet someone who will demonstrate how to make and start a booking, some will be encouraged when they find out where the nearest car club bay is to them. The scheme manager’s role will include demonstrating how everything works from reserving to accessing a car, and providing that personalised service where it is necessary. We are also maintaining and encouraging people to sign up to a newsletter; through taking people’s contact details, we will contact them directly with a sign up link to join POD.

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Channels of communication

Below we highlight the main channels of communication that we will use to market POD to new users and members and to retain the attention and interest of existing users and members.

Social media

POD has two social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram respectively. Facebook is a particularly important means of communication for POD, both due to our older demographic profile but also because it is widely used in the Upper Calder Valley by businesses to generate interest in events. Instagram may be particularly useful for generating attention and interest amongst younger SAMs.

Both platforms will be used to share the story behind POD, how it came to happen, how it benefits the community and environment and what the user experience is like.

Through graphics, photos and video, we will aim to give followers a sense of using POD, demonstrating possible scenarios and different types of users (similar to the 'user personas' above) who may use the cars.

We will share bitesize information on cost comparisons with car ownership and statistics on carbon emissions.

This will be the channel for giving a strong visual sense of POD's story, the branding, the cars available to use, whilst also inviting followers to ask questions, answer online polls and communicate with POD on a less formal basis.

We can implement initiatives to share and interact, such as online raffles to receive free/discounted membership for a limited time, to encourage shares and follows, which all contribute to elevating the POD social media platforms.

By following and interacting with other community-minded organisations, local businesses and charities, we are already feeding the algorithm with information on

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who the POD social media accounts will be shown to, thus reaching a demographic who are interested in community minded schemes. Key local businesses and stakeholders are also likely to share content from POD on their own pages. We will encourage this by doing the same.

We are continuously sharing the POD Facebook and Instagram accounts on local online forums, such as Todmorden, Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge Facebook groups, and community WhatsApp groups. We will also collaborate with other like-minded social media accounts and groups to share POD's accounts.

Emails

Email will be used for two main purposes: 1) to communicate with existing users and members; 2) to communicate with other organisations and local stakeholders.

Existing users and members will receive regular updates from POD to include more general news items and important updates regarding the service and any changes. In the early days of the service, emails will also be an important way for us to remind people how to use the app, access the cars and what to do in an emergency.

Email will also be a key means through which we encourage involvement from users and members, in everything from feedback and surveys to volunteering and buying shares with POD. By ensuring a constant feeling of 'being informed' about POD, we hope that we will generate a feeling of 'being involved' that may ultimately manifest in volunteering to support POD.

With local stakeholders, we will regularly stay in contact via email to maintain their interest in and support for POD. We will also invite them to events via email and encourage them to sign up to our newsletter by email.

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In person

It is critical that POD also generates attention 'offline', since many potential users may be more receptive to outreach efforts encountered in everyday offline contexts. Physical advertising will play an important role in generating attention and maintaining interest in POD's offer.

[CoMoUK research](#) has shown that when car club members were asked about where they first heard about their car clubs, more than a third said that they saw the car club vehicles on the street and 15% said that they saw the car club vehicles in their parking bay. It is critical then that the POD cars serve as important forms of marketing. Decals with the POD logo and our website will help draw attention to POD and get us noticed on the street. We also plan to have signs with our logo at the parking bays, which have been selected because they are not only in central locations but are generally visible (with the exception of Salem in Hebden Bridge).

To effectively engage with these users in person, POD will also use strategies such as community events, local workshops, and partnerships with businesses and organisations that align with our mission. Additionally, distributing flyers, engaging in targeted door-to-door outreach, and participating in local markets or fairs will help raise brand awareness and build trust through personal interaction. Incorporating traditional media outlets, such as local newspapers, radio, and community boards, can further ensure POD's message reaches a diverse audience who may not otherwise engage digitally.

More specifically, we recently hosted a drop-in event in Todmorden at the Kindness Café. Aside from our launch event in Hebden Bridge, we plan to do a smaller launch in Todmorden, and will have an on-street trestle table in central Hebden Bridge on a few days throughout December and January. Representatives of POD will be able to answer any questions that people have about the scheme.

We also plan to contact Radio 4 You and Yours again to update on the progress of the new scheme. Hour Car Scheme Managers were previously on this radio

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programme. We will use this space to highlight the story aspect of local residents grouping together for the sake of establishing a new car share scheme in the community.

As there is an active University of the Third Age (U3A) community in Todmorden, with whom we already have some contacts, we also plan to do a presentation where we outline how POD could benefit retired local residents.

We will continue to be proactive in seeking out similar in person events and opportunities beyond the coming few months.

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Branding and messaging

Brand Voice and Tone

POD's brand voice and tone should align with our mission of fostering sustainable, shared transport solutions in the Calder Valley while building strong community connections. It should also aim to build different types of trust in the community, including care-trust, competence-trust and character-trust. A focus should therefore be on achieving the following voice and tone:

1. Friendly and Approachable

- **Tone:** Conversational and inclusive, but simultaneously professional, making users feel welcome and valued.
- **Example:** "At POD, every trip brings us closer as a community. We're here to make shared transport easy, enjoyable, and empowering."

2. Community-Centric and Empowering

- **Tone:** Collaborative and supportive, emphasising the strength of collective action.
- **Example:** "Together, we're transforming how we move through the Upper Calder Valley - reducing congestion, improving air quality, and building connections along the way."

3. Reliable and Competent

- **Tone:** Assured and professional, consistent messaging that demonstrates POD's ability to deliver high-quality, dependable service.
- **Example:** "POD offers reliable, hassle-free journeys with no hidden fees, so you can trust us for all your transport needs."

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4. Environmentally Conscious and Responsible

- **Tone:** Passionate and genuine, without being preachy.
- **Example:** "By choosing shared transport, you're choosing cleaner air, quieter streets, and a healthier future for everyone."

5. Trustworthy and Transparent

- **Tone:** Honest and straightforward, building trust by communicating clearly and being competent.
- **Example:** "We're committed to keeping costs fair and your journeys hassle-free. No hidden fees, just reliable shared transport."

6. Innovative and Solution-Oriented

- **Tone:** Optimistic and forward-thinking, showcasing the innovative nature of POD's service.
- **Example:** "Ready to reimagine how you get around? POD is leading the way in efficient, flexible, and eco-friendly travel."

7. Empathetic and Understanding

- **Tone:** Sensitive to the challenges and needs of users, with a focus on accessibility and inclusivity.
- **Example:** "We understand mobility needs vary – POD offers flexible options for everyone, from family days out to trips to the doctors."

By maintaining this brand voice and tone, POD can create meaningful connections with its audience, clearly convey its mission, and motivate behaviour change toward shared, sustainable transport solutions.

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Taglines, Key messages

We will test out a few different taglines to use that will appeal to the different segments of our SAM. These are:

- "Connecting the Calder Valley, One Journey at a Time."
- "On the Road to a Greener Calder Valley."
- "Sharing cars means fewer cars."

Visual identity: logos, colours etc

POD's branding has been designed by graphic designer, Jonny McCawley. A contemporary colourway is provided featuring a green and complimentary blue/purple as the main brand colours. An off white and charcoal grey serve as supporting colours. By not using brilliant white and pure black as secondary colours reduces the harshness of the palette and echoes the approachability of POD. The green used is synonymous with "go", giving positive connotations.

Examples of POD's logo and branding are below.



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Monitoring and Evaluation

We will track several key performance indicators (KPIs) that will indicate how successful our marketing strategy is being implemented, but more generally, how well POD is achieving its key aims.

User acquisition metrics

- New sign-ups: we will track the number of new users signing up to POD.
- Lead conversion rate: we will measure how many website visitors convert into actual users.

Engagement metrics

- App engagement: we will track how often users open the POD app and interact with different features
- Facebook/Instagram engagement: we will track engagement with social media posts to understand which posts have been most successful.
- Website traffic and social media followers: we will monitor the growth of website traffic and social media followers - both indicators of interest in our brand and product.

Usage metrics

- Trips per user: we will measure how often users are using PODs cars.
- Trip frequency and duration: we will track how frequently cars are being used and the durations of each trip.

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Future surveying

We have already administered a short survey to those that have signed up to our newsletter. The aim of this was to understand not only the potential membership size and their needs but also the extent to which we are reaching specific sub-groups in the population. We plan to compare our sign-ups with the population of the Upper Calder Valley to check that potential users and members are representative of the wider population. We will adapt our communications strategy to specifically target under-represented groups if there is a risk of not achieving inclusive growth.

Once the scheme is operational, we will ensure that as part of the signing up process, users are asked to complete a full survey that details their demographic, socioeconomic, household and geographical characteristics. This will enable us to conduct ongoing, top-line analysis of who is signing up to our scheme and where they live. We will also acquire information on reasons for joining and intended usage. In short, we will quickly understand who is signing up, where they live and how they intend to use the scheme. From this, we will understand the extent to which we are reaching our four user personas as well as more broadly potential under-represented groups (e.g. low-income households, families with children) and ensure that we respond dynamically.

After one year of operating, we will conduct a full, detailed survey of our users and members. In addition to questions to establish the extent of under-representation amongst certain groups, we will also ask about any difficulties or challenges users have using our service (e.g. accessing vehicles, using online platforms, language barriers). Based on this analysis, we will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that will be operational for several years. The Communications and Engagement Strategy will also be updated at this time point. The aim is that we will achieve a continuous **feedback loop** between monitoring and evaluation and communications and engagement to ensure we are successfully marketing ourselves to our SAM and

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achieving inclusive and sustainable growth to deliver the service that the Upper Calder Valley needs.

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