

Edinburgh College Facilities & Services

'Taking the plunge with electric pool cars'

About the project

Summary

Edinburgh College's trailblazing electric pool car fleet offers staff a sustainable, low-carbon, low-cost transport option for intra-campus and other corporate travel. This has positively changed attitudes towards EV's and allows multiple learning opportunities for our students through engagement with our curriculum. The sector-leading project has delivered immediate positive impacts and continues to evolve.

Project partners

SEStran, Phoenix Mitsubishi, AF Nobles Nissan, Transport Scotland, ChargePlace Scotland, Energy Saving Trust, Automotive Leasing, Midlothian Council, East Lothian Council, Edinburgh Napier University.

The Results

The problem

Private car journeys for business purposes had been identified as the least sustainable transport option for our staff. To meet the needs of our Carbon Management & Green Travel Plans, a new approach was required to tackle this 'Grey Fleet' mileage. One which would also provide new and exciting educational opportunities for our students.

The approach

Following a successful trial an all-electric pool car fleet was created. Aimed at providing staff with a low-carbon, low-cost transport option, reducing 'Grey Fleet' use, link the 4 campuses across the city, and harvest data for an ongoing research project. The initial 4 car fleet is now **12 vehicles, plus a fully electric minibus**.

Our goals

Our Carbon Management Plan has a target of **18% minimum reduction by 2020**. Current footprint is some **7000 t/CO2 per annum**. In addition, objectives set by the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan include shaping an innovative Edinburgh College culture and providing a positive destination for every student. Our Project meets those goals through scholarships, student engagement, and its pioneering approach to staff travel.

Obstacles and solutions

Some of the obstacles we encountered, and solutions we employed, are shown in the next table.



Profile

- FEI
- +25,500 students (Full & Part time)
- 1,400 staff
- 4 campuses
- Urban & Rural reach
- One of the largest Scottish Colleges.

Category supported by



Obstacles	Solutions
Lack of Infrastructure (Charge Posts & Booking System).	Student-led post design & construction plus booking system creation. Charge post upgrades later.
Range Anxiety & pre-conceived distrust of EV's	Test drives, all-staff day presentations, vehicle inductions.
Lack of eCar availability due to popularity	Increased number of vehicles

Performance and results

The booking system started with **120** users in 2012 and has now grown into a database of over **520**. Individual bookings have increased from **513** in the first year, to **1,925** in 2014/2015 (by end August 2015). Total Fleet Mileage to end August 2015 is **96,584**. Total Carbon Savings to end August 2015 are **31.8 tCO₂e**. Total 'Grey Fleet' Fuel Expenses Savings to end August 2015 are **£43,463**. In addition, multiple Scholarships have been created for students to work with and learn from the project, as well as full-time job roles which allowed progression for ex-students.

The Future

Lessons learned

- Engaging students in the eCar fleet offers exceptional opportunities for further learning and positive destinations. Our electric car project has opened minds to ultra-low emission technology, infrastructure, and careers.
- We encouraged staff to 'Try out' electric vehicles during all-staff days and by providing inductions for all new users of the fleet. These dispelled myths that EVs are glorified 'milk-floats' and removed many barriers to their use by proving that they were fit for purpose.
- Provision of infrastructure to support an electric fleet is as important as selecting the right vehicle. We created our own posts initially, but upgraded through ChargePlace Scotland to offer a number of charging posts that our staff, and the general public can use.

Sharing your project

Edinburgh College has been an active participant in the E-cosse forums since 2012. We have presented findings from our project at Scottish EAUC Travel & Transport TSN events, and the prestigious annual 'All-Energy Conference' in Aberdeen. Social Media has also been a valuable tool to share success. Our project is featured in Transport Scotland's prominent '**Switched On Scotland: A Roadmap to Widespread Adoption of Plug-in Vehicles**' as a best-practice example. We are also a partner in the new Scottish Government '**Switched on @ Work**' scheme which is due for a high profile official ministerial launch in late 2015.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

We feel privileged to have been nominated as a Green Gown Finalist. These prestigious awards are a fantastic way to showcase innovation in sustainability and student engagement, plus share best practice amongst our sector colleagues and inspire others to think greener.

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