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Ford Brings Dynamic Car-Sharing Experiment to London; First Service to Offer One-Way Trips with Guaranteed Parking

- Ford will offer Londoners flexible, practical, and affordable GoDrive car-sharing service; invites 2,000 members to register free for service that offers 50 cars across 20 locations
- GoDrive is unique in offering one-way trips with guaranteed parking. Pay-as-you-go approach with pay-per-minute pricing covers all fees. Drivers book and access cars via smartphone app
- Zero-emission Focus Electric makes up half of the GoDrive fleet; fuel-efficient Fiesta 1.0-litre EcoBoost available. Service complements existing transport systems for integrated journeys
- GoDrive continually evaluates feedback; initial testing highlights strong interest in one-way journeys, easy parking, and simplified pricing. Customers respond positively to electric vehicles

LONDON, May 26, 2015 – Ford Motor Company will begin making its London-based [GoDrive](#) car-sharing service available to the public. The service offers flexible, practical and affordable access to a fleet of cars for one-way journeys with easy parking throughout the city.

The project started as one of more than 25 experiments that form Ford Smart Mobility, Ford's plan to use technology and innovation to take the company to the next level in connectivity, mobility, autonomous vehicles, the customer experience and big data. The pilot was called [City Driving On-Demand](#). The application being introduced to the public is called GoDrive.

With the global car-sharing industry expected to exceed \$6 billion USD (£3.8 billion) by 2020*, Ford is introducing GoDrive to target on-demand use and gain insight on emerging mobility trends and customers' car-sharing habits. Ford is exploring the opportunity for

car-sharing services, working with Londoners to better understand their mobility needs and travel and parking patterns.

“As cities become more and more congested, people are becoming increasingly open to new means of mobility, and car sharing is proving to be an appealing model,” said Ken Washington, vice president, Ford Research and Advanced Engineering. “A crucial part of delivering effective car-sharing services is to learn alongside these drivers what best meets their needs and expectations, and complements their location and existing transportation infrastructure.”

Intended to complement existing transport systems for integrated journeys, GoDrive is the only car-sharing service offering one-way trips with guaranteed parking. A pay-as-you-go approach, with pay-by-minute pricing covers congestion fees, insurance and fuel. Drivers use a smartphone app to easily reserve and access a car. Half of the fleet consists of Focus Electric vehicles.

The pilot experiment launched with 100 registered members accessing zero-emission Focus Electric or fuel-efficient, low-emission Fiesta 1.0-litre EcoBoost models from secure parking hubs near major public transport locations, such as Waterloo and Victoria railway stations. Ford now is inviting 2,000 people to register for a free expanded service offering 50 cars across 20 locations.

GoDrive also is notable for its continued evaluation and improvement through structured learning. Features regularly are added to the service based on learnings and customer feedback.

It is estimated that in the U.K. alone the car-sharing sector will grow by 23 per cent from 2013 to 2025.** A recent Ford-commissioned [survey of 5,500 commuters](#) in major European cities found that a majority of people consider their journey to work more stressful than their actual jobs, and 80 per cent of Londoners said they are late for work once a month or more due to hold-ups.***

“Our research tells us that car clubs currently are perceived as inflexible when it comes to booking, time slots and return locations. Features such as one-way journeys and pay-as-you-go extend the number of opportunities that drivers would want to car-share and could prove a game-changer,” said Alicia Agius, project lead, GoDrive, Ford of Europe. “More drivers are finding GoDrive to be a key service that can potentially empower people living in the city with its flexible approach.”

Since its launch earlier this year, feedback on the experiment has been largely positive, with the majority of initial users expressing optimism for the future of Ford in the growing car-sharing space. Users have cited access to technologies found in Ford’s current model line-up, such as Ford SYNC and parking assistance features, as a selling point of the project.

Members also highlighted the convenience of a one-charge, pay-as-you-go system that includes the London Congestion Charge (currently £11.50). Drivers can familiarise themselves with the car during a five-minute grace period free of charge. Running costs are displayed via their app.

With the experiment currently in its beta phase, Ford hopes to build on the initial success and gain further insight into user behaviour that will help refine the customer experience. Different weekend and day-hire pricing options, and further on- and off-street parking options will be investigated.

Ford also is exploring car-sharing experiments in Germany, India, and the U.S. that will help the company determine how to best serve global customers as they face new mobility options in the future. Other Ford car-sharing experiments include:

- [Ford Carsharing](#), Germany: The first manufacturer-backed, nationwide car-sharing programme incorporating dealerships, has run for two years and recently expanded to 40 dealers in 67 cities with 135 locations. In partnership with large, multi-partner car-sharing company Flinkster, the service allows Ford Carsharing customers to use about 3,600 Flinkster vehicles, and Flinkster's 270,000 customers to use the Ford fleet. Starting in 2015, customers can access a vehicle with a smartphone app, rather than a customer card
- [Share-Car](#), Bangalore, India: Ford is working with Zoomcar to test a sharing concept that would allow small groups, such as co-workers, apartment dwellers and families, to share a vehicle among multiple drivers. The approach helps consumers who can't afford a car but want the benefits of owning one. The pilot programme is expected to expand to two more communities later this year
- [Car Swap](#), Dearborn, U.S.: An experiment using Ford-owned fleet vehicles. Participating Ford employees use a mobile app that allows them to search for a vehicle that meets their needs and negotiate terms of the swap. The experiment will provide an in-depth understanding of how Ford can help make car swapping easier
- [Dynamic Shuttle](#), New York and London: Exploring a shareable service that will offer point-to-point pick-up and drop-off on-demand. The experiment aims to better understand the social dynamics and routing requirements of shared transportation for city dwellers

Ford is offering free membership and a £20 free driving credit to new members who sign up to the GoDrive beta programme here <https://www.go-drive.com/>.

* “The CarSharing Association Enlists TechAssure to Conduct 2013 Annual Insurance and Risk Survey”
<http://carsharing.org/2013/09/the-carsharing-association-enlists-techassure-to-conduct-2013-annual-insurance-and-risk-survey/>

** “The sharing economy – sizing the revenue opportunity”
<http://www.pwc.co.uk/issues/megatrends/collisions/sharingeconomy/the-sharing-economy-sizing-the-revenue-opportunity.jhtml>

*** Survey conducted for Ford Motor Company by Opinion Matters during April 2015 <https://media.ford.com/content/fordmedia/feu/en/news/2015/04/27/for-europeans--the-journey-to-work-causes-more-stress-than-their.html>

About Ford Motor Company

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