

LPG vehicles or no vehicle at all

Even with the much-publicised government 'Scrappage Scheme', buying and owning a car in the UK currently is still a major headache as we continue to wade through the mire of the recession. With the average price of petrol climbing past the £1.1 per litre mark once more, as well as the reported increase in car and van insurance, many are simply finding that they have to cut back on insurance, or sell their vehicle and go back to public transport.

Of course, to many, an incentive for a good proportion of the general public to stop driving and to move onto greener buses and trains is a very good thing. And I would be inclined to agree. However, a new car by Malaysian manufacturer, Proton, may be set to become a viable alternative to the drastic action mentioned above. Proton is in a unique position in the UK, namely that they are the only car producer that offers an LPG model: the ecoLogic.

This month, the company have issued reports of a 375 percent increase in sales of its second generation ecoLogic in May alone. Of course, the correlation between this surge and concerns over the bleak future of UK petrol prices is pretty easy to spot - with the model costing around half as much to run in fuel terms. Yet, the ecoLogic has other benefits too, with 15 to 20 percent less carbon emissions.

However, it seems that LPG is not the answer for everyone. Those who are living in cities have an alternative that involves both not having to own a car, and not having to succumb to the bustle of public transport. Car clubs, such as Zipcar and Streetcar offer the drivers the use of a vehicle on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Typically, they are available for a membership fee, alongside an hourly or daily rate which tends to include an amount of free miles up to a certain distance. The service is also very easy to use. Bookings can be made online months beforehand, but also by phone if a car is needed within the hour (but users must acknowledge the distance from the designated car club parking bays if they are eager to make last minute bookings).

Additionally, fines are incurred if vehicles are returned late. Cars are typically smoking and pet free in order to cut down mess. And it is not always certain that motorists will be able to book a vehicle for when they need one.

About the Author

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