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Traffic

Pilot project: The electric car for the neighbourhood

Can a shared e-car function as a second or third car in rural areas? To answer this question in an everyday trial, the neighbours of Pfarrer-Wissing-Straße in Barlo and Elsenpass in Lowick have now successfully applied for a pilot project.



Car sharing Bocholt

Residents of Pfarrer-Wissing-Straße in Barlo and Elsenpass Straße in Lowick together with representatives of the city of Bocholt, Bocholter Energie- und Wasserversorgung GmbH and the LEADER region Bocholter Aa.

In future, participating households in Lowick and Barlo will each have a Mercedes EQA and an e-charging point at their disposal, which they can use jointly. In Lowick, a Renault ZOE is also available. An associated app enables appointment booking for the participating households.

The vehicles and the associated charging infrastructure are part of the "Neighbourhood Car Sharing" project of the LEADER region Bocholter Aa. The aim is to make an attractive offer in the outer districts and thus effectively save on the second or third car.

Neighbourhoods could apply

Last year, neighbourhoods could apply to participate in the project. A total of ten neighbourhoods in the region were selected for the pilot project, two of them in Bocholt. "Especially in rural areas, you have to rely on a second car every now and then," says Benedikt Braems, who applied for the project on behalf of his neighbourhood on Pfarrer-Wissingstraße in Barlo.

"Especially in the cold and wet season, not all errands and appointments with two children can be realised exclusively by bicycle," says Braems. He wants to do without the existing second car in the long term, he says. "We are happy that there is now also car sharing in Barlo and are curious to see if there will be a continuation in a larger circle after the year," he says.

New charging points erected

The funding project is initially scheduled for one year. The necessary charging points were installed in Bocholt by Bocholter Energie- und Wasserversorgung GmbH (BEW) and financed by subsidies. They can continue to be used by the public after the project.

Stefan Lammers from Lowick is also looking forward to being able to use the electric car in his neighbourhood in the future: "Since Corona, I no longer have to commute to the office every day, but can work in my home office most of the time," he reports. Due to this circumstance, the second car is rarely used in his family. "Replacing it with a car-sharing solution is a real alternative for us," says Lammers.

At the end of the project period, a résumé will be drawn up, says Daniel Zöhler, Bocholt's municipal planning officer. Then the project participants will be surveyed. "We will see how often the offer was ultimately used," says Zöhler.



As a city, we hope that this will be very well received - and that this model will ultimately be self-sustaining.

Daniel Zöhler, City Planning Officer

Funding through LEADER

The project is largely funded by the [LEADER region Bocholter Aa](#), an initiative to strengthen rural areas. It is initially planned for a period of one year. An e-car sharing service provider takes over the technical instruction and is available to residents for technical questions.

