

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES



# TWIZY GETS CLOSE TO NATURE

Compact, agile and all-electric, the Twizy may be the ideal city car, but it's proving equally useful in getting visitors closer to nature in the New Forest.

In the summer of 2012, Dave Streater and Stephen Vine of New Forest Environmental, a company specialising in green solutions, set out to offer an environmentally-friendly and fun alternative to cycle hire in this vast, beautiful National Park.

While the city-focused Twizy may have sounded an unlikely solution, within six months of first testing it, the company was running a fleet of nearly 50 electric two-seaters for rent in England's favourite forest.

The scheme was born out of the duo's desire to cut down on the number of conventionally-powered cars moving around the New Forest, but also to put some fun into the firm's

sustainability activities. Having tried numerous electric cars, the pair decided the Twizy was ideal because of the relatively short 43-mile average distance per day covered by visitors in the forest, and because it met all of the environmental and cost criteria too.

However, what has really given the project momentum is its close ties to the Brand New Forest campaign. A fundamental part is the Brand New Forest Card scheme which provides users with special offers and discounts at pubs, restaurants, attractions and services throughout the New Forest. The Brand New Forest Cards are included in every Twizy rental, allowing users to save money and carbon all day long.

The £49 daily rental package includes Brand New Forest Card, free parking in New Forest District Car Parks, and if the card is used at a Brand New Forest business, recharging the Twizy is also free.

Dave explains: 'The Twizy is designed for urban areas, but we've found a role for it as a fun recreational vehicle in the countryside. We've created a major alternative use which is enjoyable, adventurous and introduces the benefits of electric vehicles.'

The New Forest Twizys are owned by New Forest Environmental, supplied through Motorline in Kent with comprehensive service and support help from Renault UK. The fleet is split, with 15 day-hire Twizys at Brockenhurst Railway Station,

the busiest non-city centre station in the UK, thanks to its easy links to central London. The remainder of the fleet are leased to local hotels, B&Bs and Holiday Parks which run their own rental schemes and Twizy holiday packages.

New Forest Environmental's existing network of free-to-use charging points for customers will soon feature interactive screens containing local information, and there are plans for off-grid charge points in remote locations to complement the growing network.

Further growth is planned, with more rental locations and an eventual fleet of 100 vehicles due in the near future, possibly including the ZOE. New Forest Environmental is also beginning

the groundwork of an electric distribution network for local producers, which will use Twizy and Kangoo Z.E. models to move produce around the New Forest with zero tailpipe emissions and low noise.

Anthony Climpson, Employment & Tourism Manager at New Forest District Council and a key supporter of the project says: 'The Twizy suits the forest perfectly. There's an intimacy to the forest that you don't get in city locations. Visitors are already in a rural mindset as they've chosen to be here and want to interact with nature.'

'The Twizy allows people to get closer to the forest creating a quality of relationship between product and place that is simply irresistible.'



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Stephen Vine, New Forest Environmental

