

Driverless shuttle will be on the move in UK

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(Phys.org) —"Autonomous public transport" is on the minds of planners who envision self-driving vehicles that would cross over short distances, suited for airport transport, industrial sites, theme parks and resort centers, hospital sites, aid for the elderly, and consumers wanting to shuttle around shopping areas, all where low speeds are required.

Recently in London the Meridian shuttle was shown for tests, part of some [driverless vehicle](#) trials in the UK. GATEway (Greenwich Automated Transport Environment project) is one of the three projects and it includes the testing of the Meridian. This is an electric self-driving vehicle for public transportation, created by a French company as the

[Navya](#). The spirit behind its creation is nothing less than a desire to rethink how we move within our space, to protect the planet and ease pollution, with good robotic engineering and better approaches to [public transport](#). "The Meridian-Navya is an example of the world's first commercially available driverless shuttle vehicle, and will be used in trials to investigate how this innovative vehicle can support urban [mobility](#), integrate with other [transport](#) modes, and to give an insight into how the public respond to driverless travel," said *Engine Technology International*. Navya makes use of four Lidar (light detection and ranging) sensors performing 25 scans a second in a 360 degree angle surrounding the vehicle with a 200-meter range. Using an onboard touch screen, passengers can choose their destination. The BBC reported that the government wants the UK to become a world leader in driverless technology. "It will publish a code of practice in the spring which will allow the testing of autonomous cars to go ahead." The UK shows resolve in preparing the way for cars of the future. "The government promised a full review of current legislation by the summer of 2017." That review, said Jane Wakefield, technology reporter, will involve a rewrite of the highway code and [adjustments](#) to Ministry of Transport test guidelines, potentially taking into account if a higher standard of driving should be demanded of automated vehicles.

"This is a [driverless](#) vehicle!" announced Tom Scott, a presenter in a video showing the Meridian Shuttle. "In the wild, amongst the public with no backup driver!" He said it did not look like a sports car but that's not the point, he said; it doesn't have to.

Transport Evolved provided some details on what a passenger might expect: the driverless passenger shuttle resembles a carriage more than a car. There is a single [elongated](#) bench seat in the interior. Just a roof protects it from the elements, said Nikki Gordon-Bloomfield. Nick Summers, *Engadget* UK, said that "With its [exposed](#) sides, tiny wheels and raised roof, it almost resembles a golf cart." He said the driverless

Meridian shuttle will be tested over a two-year period.

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