



E-Scooter Safety Report - High Wycombe Town Committee

Author: Rupert Zierler – Principal Transport Strategy Officer

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Recommendations: To note safety statistics relating to e-scooters in High Wycombe, as well as other trial schemes operating in Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury and Princes Risborough).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper outlines recent safety statistics for our current e-scooter trial schemes, particularly the High Wycombe scheme. Material from this report was also substantially presented to the Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet meeting of 11 October 2022.
- 1.2 The e-scooter trial in High Wycombe is facilitated by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Buckinghamshire Council. Further information on the wider e-scooter trial programme led by DfT can be found on their website¹. This scheme (and all other trials in Buckinghamshire) are operated by Zipp Mobility.
- 1.3 The purpose of the trials is to build robust evidence about the safety, benefits, public perceptions, and wider impacts of e-scooters to inform the possible future, permanent legalisation of e-scooters in England. At present only e-scooters participating in the trials are officially classed as legal to use on the highway. Privately-owned e-scooters are still considered illegal.
- 1.4 The statistics in this report are based in part upon the DfT's 'Reported Road Casualties Great Britain' reports, which are available online via the DfT website². Further information on incidents involving e-scooters at a national level can also be found on the DfT website³.

¹ E-scooter trials: guidance for local authorities and rental operators - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/e-scooter-trials-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-rental-operators/e-scooter-trials-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-rental-operators>

² Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2021/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2021>

³ Reported road casualties Great Britain: e-Scooter factsheet year ending June 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-e-scooter-factsheet-year-ending-june-2021/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-e-scooter-factsheet-year-ending-june-2021>

1.5 Some additional statistics regarding e-scooter usage in High Wycombe have been provided as an Appendix. As with the safety statistics, these have previously been presented at the Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet meeting of 11 October 2022.

2. Main content of report

2.1 To try and reduce safety risks for riders, other road users and pedestrians on shared use pavements, the trials include a number of critical elements:

- a) Maximum speed limit of 15.5mph. In Buckinghamshire we have reduced this in key areas in response to local conditions.
- b) Rider education/training via the booking app
- c) Offering free helmets and £5 voucher as an incentive to wear them
- d) Geo-fencing to force reduced speeds and exclude e-scooters from specific areas which are considered less suitable for e-scooters or may pose safety risks
- e) Specifying journey start and end locations in marked bays to promote good parking practice and reduce obstructing other members of the community such as visually impaired or blind residents
- f) E-scooters are all painted in the Zipp Mobility branding (yellow) and are fitted with identification plate numbers to aid in reporting riders who break the rules.
- g) All e-scooters are powered down at night to prevent use for criminal activities.

2.2 There have been over 191,000 rides in Buckinghamshire since the trials began in 2020. In contrast, there have been only four reported health and safety incidents across the three Buckinghamshire e-scooter schemes, equating to 0.002% of all rides.

2.3 However, a handful of these incidents have received media attention, which has resulted in mixed public opinion on the safety performance of e-scooters.

2.4 The extension of the trial enables the DfT to gather additional usage- and safety data. The extension also allows the DfT time to finalise legislation making all e-scooters road-legal, whether privately owned or part of a hire scheme. This legislation is expected in the near future as part of a new Transport Bill, although the date for this has not been set.

2.5 New powers, to be set out in the forthcoming Transport Bill, will establish how these vehicles are regulated to ensure the safety of e-scooter users, pedestrians, and other road users, whilst still facilitating growth and innovation.

- 2.6 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening was completed prior to the start of the trial. The EQIA highlighted concerns regarding the impact on residents who may be blind, visually impaired or hard of hearing. The main concern, as with cyclists, is the potential for collisions. A key aim of the trial is to provide evidence to assess safety for the users, other road users and the wider community. The EQIA is available online with the e-scooter Cabinet report for 11 October 2022⁴.
- 2.7 So far, we have had four reported health and safety incidents across our three e-scooter schemes, either on the roads or on shared cycle/pedestrian pavements. Zipp Mobility automatically bans users where dangerous riding is reported. These incidents are also reported monthly to the DfT.
- 2.8 In May 2022 there was an incident in High Wycombe where a dog was killed by an e-scooter. Zipp Mobility worked with the police to identify the rider, who was arrested and has been charged with dangerous driving of a motorised vehicle.
- 2.9 As a whole, we have had very few reports of negative impacts on the community. However, we have received concerns from the public and Members about underage users, use for criminal purposes and multiple occupancy riding. These are reported to the police, who we meet with monthly, and Zipp Mobility blocks repeat offenders of antisocial riding. 3 riders have been banned in Buckinghamshire for reckless riding.
- 2.10 E-scooters are not Council property which means that any health and safety incidents are the responsibility of Zipp Mobility and do not need to be reported via the Council's Health and Safety reporting system. Zipp Mobility have sufficient public liability insurance to cover any safety incidents.
- 2.11 Out of the 3,656 collisions in the Thames Valley police region in 2021 (which covers other local authority areas and e-scooter rental schemes), there were only 28 collisions involving e-scooters, representing less than 1% of all collisions in the Thames Valley region. This also represented only 2% of all collisions involving e-scooters reported nationally.

3. Appendix: Key elements of the e-scooter trials

- 3.1 During the trials, e-scooters are being classed as motor vehicles, requiring all users to have a provisional driving licence as a minimum.

⁴ E-scooter cabinet report (including EQIA), 11 October 2022:
<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s51130/EscootersCabinetreport270922FINALREVISED.pdf>

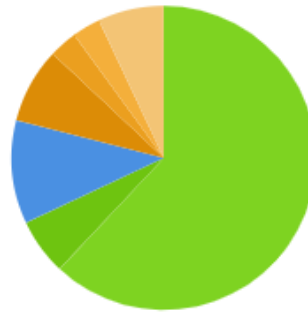
- 3.2 E-scooters in the trials must be covered by a motor vehicle insurance policy. DfT expect all operators to have a policy in place that covers users of the vehicles.
- 3.3 Users are not required to complete a mandatory training course. We offer training and other safety tutorials on the Zipp Mobility App.
- 3.4 Wearing a helmet is recommended but not a mandatory requirement – however to incentivise use of helmets, Zipp Mobility offer a £5 credit to anyone who wears a helmet whilst riding.
- 3.5 E-scooters are permitted to use the same road space as cycles and Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles. This means e-scooters are allowed on the road (except motorways) and in cycle lanes and cycle tracks.
- 3.6 E-scooters can be used on shared cycle/pedestrian pavements through an amendment to the TRO. E-scooters are not permitted on pavements which are not shared with cycles.
- 3.7 The numbers of scooters, potential routes and parking locations were agreed with stakeholders and the operator at the outset. These are reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure issues such as safety concerns can be resolved quickly and to meet new demand where required.
- 3.8 Geo-fenced zones are also agreed with stakeholders and the operator to enable enforcement of a strict e-scooter use zone.
- 3.9 Journeys begin and end in pre-defined parking bay locations. The operating model of painted parking bays was agreed with stakeholders and the operator to ensure it was appropriate for the locality. A parking bay is typically indicated by a painted white box marking so that these are easily visible. An process has been introduced to ensure engagement with local members and parishes before any new bays are implemented.
- 3.10 Usage statistics (up to 1 September 2022) for the High Wycombe scheme are provided on the next page of this report.

High Wycombe - E-scooter Trial Statistics

72,760 rides covering 111,528 miles



21% of journeys have replaced motor vehicle transport



■ Walking (62%)
 ■ Cycling (6%)
 ■ Bus (11%)
 ■ Cars/vans as driver (8%)
 ■ Cars/vans as passenger (3%)
 ■ Motorbikes or mopeds (3%)
 ■ Other motor vehicles (7%)

36% of trips were to or from work or work related reasons



■ To or from work or for work related reasons (36%)
 ■ Personal Errands (10%)
 ■ Leisure Activities (11%)
 ■ Enjoyment or no particular reason (10%)
 ■ Other (33%)

