

E-scooters Safety Statement

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Shared e-scooters have been shown to be an asset to the transport mix. They are a popular, efficient way to cover short distances and a complement to other modes. No transport mode is accident-free and e-scooter riders, like cyclists and pedestrians, are at the more vulnerable end of the spectrum.

A recent International Transport Forum study has found that accidents on e-scooter are no more likely than those on a bicycle¹. It reported that in the tragic circumstances where there was a fatality, as with cycling, in most cases this involved a motor vehicle in some way. E-scooters are a tool to help reduce car use in urban areas and therefore can play a wider role in making streets safer from car accidents. The UK has an opportunity to implement appropriate safety measures in its e-scooter trials and then to learn continually as those trials progress to pave the way for high standards of safety in the primary legislation that is needed if e-scooters are to become legal in the UK on a permanent basis.

Strategies for maximising e-scooter safety

- **Scooter design:** Design changes have improved e-scooter safety:
 - Larger wheel sizes
 - Dual independent braking
 - Speed limits which can be varied using geo-fencing for pedestrian heavy areas.
 - Capping acceleration rates
 - Weight being distributed as low as possible on the scooter
- **User education:** A study ² in **Austin, Texas** showed that most accidents occurred with those taking their first trip or those who were visitors to the area. Many companies are promoting safe riding with use education in the app or on the streets.
- **Space for scooting:** Creating segregated lanes for e-scooter and bikes is a key way in which cities can help to make the use of these modes safer for all types of user. It may be useful to restrict the speed or use of e-scooters in pedestrianised areas.
- **Helmets:** While wearing helmets can be beneficial in certain types of incident, they also have a clear deterrent effect to using the sustainable mode that is e-scooters. There are notable examples of mass cycling and significant e-scooter use where helmets are not mandatory and accident rates are low.

¹ https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/safe-micromobility_1.pdf

² <https://cste.confex.com/cste/2019/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/11994>

- **Parking and pedestrian safety:** The use of clearly marked parking abys alongside, geo fencing, and user education and incentives can mitigate against scooters ever being a trip hazard. Re-distribution teams back up these strategies to keep scooters in safe places however experience shows that e-scooters are used many times a day so are rarely left in once place for long.
- **Hygiene and Covid 19 safety:** Shared e-scooters offer travellers an alternative to public transport or taxis and by travelling in fresh air allows the user to reduce contact with others who may have Covid 19. As concerns have been raised about touching the handlebars of the scooter's, operators are making sure these are cleaned more regularly during the outbreak to reduce the chance of infections. However as with all aspects of day to day life the passenger must make sure they avoid touching their face or wash their hands first.

Safety is a key priority in our minds. CoMoUK is working with operators to garner best available evidence from the UK trials, and to learn from other countries' experiences to ensure any improvements which can be made to design are adopted across the sector.