



## **E-scooters: the Bicycle Association position**

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The cycle industry contributes significantly to making the UK a cleaner, healthier place through the supply and maintenance of bikes and e-bikes for transport, leisure and sport. The Bicycle Association estimates this contribution to be worth at least £5.4 billion per year in taxes, jobs, benefits to health, and congestion and pollution reduction.

The cycle industry does this with products which are extremely safe and reliable, conforming to ever-evolving product safety standards, and which users of all ages can enjoy under a clear regulatory framework.

This provides a level playing field and the reassurance for companies that they are acting responsibly, with legal certainty, and in full agreement with the Bicycle Association's own Code of Practice, to which all of the Association's members sign up.

The clear regulatory framework does not stifle innovation – quite the opposite. Within the simple e-bike rules, for example, the cycle industry has developed a huge range of increasingly sophisticated vehicles, with exciting technical developments still underway (e.g. internet-connected smart bikes, anti-lock braking, e-cargo cycles...)

So when it comes to e-scooters, a new and fast-growing product category, the industry's first priority is to stress the need for a similarly clear regulatory framework for these vehicles, if their widespread use is to be permitted through changes to traffic regulations.

The question of whether e-scooters should be 'legalised', and if so about what restrictions might be appropriate, is the subject of a wider debate led by the DfT, bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders.

The Bicycle Association, representing the UK cycle industry, will contribute expertise to this debate. Our members' experience with e-bikes suggests that any regulatory framework should as a minimum feature:

- A clear definition, so that e.g. hoverboards or heavier, moped-like scooters are not inadvertently included if only e-scooters are intended to be in scope
- Maximum speed at which the motor can propel the vehicle
- Limits on either maximum motor power or acceleration
- Control system requirements e.g. to specify that any throttle actuation must be maintained by the rider
- Braking requirements
- Lighting requirements
- Marking requirements
- Clear details of exactly where they may be used: roads, cycle paths, bridleways, pavements, footpaths, etc.
- Any rider age restrictions

Through BA-led participation in CEN (European) and ISO/IEC (worldwide) standards development activities we are also monitoring international efforts to create an e-scooter safety standard (although this is currently still at an early stage).

When a suitable framework for the legal use of e-scooters is developed, we know that many companies within the cycle industry would relish the opportunity to compete within this new market, leveraging the cycle industry's proven expertise in product safety. And with a formidable network of local dealers already trained to handle e-bikes, the UK's cycle industry is well placed to sell and maintain these vehicles in the communities where they might be used.

Until there is such a regulation change, the Bicycle Association strongly supports the recent Ministerial comments that all retailers of e-scooters should make the current legal restrictions and risks very clear to purchasers who might consider using these vehicles on the public highway.

The Bicycle Association has been monitoring the development of e-scooters since they first appeared on the market, alongside other vehicles which broadly sit under a heading of 'micromobility'. The Association continues to provide advice and intelligence on all these developments to our members, most importantly that the industry must provide clear advice to consumers at point of sale.