

Rachel MacLean MP
Under secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
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21st Aug2020

Dear Minister

You will be aware of our concerns about e-scooters. We have not changed our view on their safety or benefits but we recognise that the trials are going ahead and our wish now is to see them operate as safely as possible and to provide useful learning.

I wrote to the LGA on this and I attach my letter which shows the five points that we are recommending to local authorities.

Our bigger concern is about the private use of e-scooters. Although this is illegal in almost all situations, they are being sold in large numbers and increasingly used on the roads and in public places.

There have already been fatalities among e-scooter riders and all manner of reports of dangerous use, misuse and even links with criminality. I know the media will seize on spectacular example which may not be typical but we are concerned that the situation is worsening and getting out of control. Whereas the trial schemes are localised, limited to adults with driving licences, and regulated and managed, this does not apply in any way to the private use which is taking place.

While some e-scooter riders simply choose to ignore the law, others may be genuinely confused. The 21 August Daily Mail headline "*It has been legal in the UK to use electric scooters on the road since July, 4*" is typical. This was very much part of our concern in relation to the trial schemes.

We would like to see the government stepping up information to emphasise that private e-scooters cannot be used legally on the roads or in public areas and that enforcement action will be taken. We would also like to see restrictions on sales as consumers are obviously being led to believe that they will be able to use the scooters and the retailers not disabusing them.

Whilst we believe that there are fundamental safety issues regarding e-scooters, some designs and some uses are clearly safer than others. If the government is minded to legalise private use in the near future it would be helpful to start discussing construction and use regulations as soon as possible. Given that the trials will only test hire scooters, with adult drivers and in limited conditions other information will need to be considered. We would be pleased to be involved.

Yours sincerely

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