



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 31 January 2024

9.	(Pages 3 - 42)	Scrutiny review of the VOI Scooters Trial		
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**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review of the VOI E-Scooter Trial

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Chair's Foreword

The objective of this Review was to consider the effectiveness of the VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire.

Key lines of enquiry

The scrutiny review considered the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire, including:

- Ensuring the current trial meets the requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 and any subsequent changes to those requirements.
- An evaluation of the misuse of E-Scooters operating under the trial (including underage usage, issues of drink-driver usage, poor parking), the impact this has on the safety of all road users, the complaints procedure relating to the misuse of E-Scooters and enforcement where appropriate.
- An evaluation of the suitability of Northampton's infrastructure to accommodate E-scooters.
- An evaluation of the benefits that E-Scooters bring to West Northamptonshire as part of the options for sustainable transport.

The required outcomes were to enable the Committee to produce a report which makes recommendations to Cabinet regarding the evaluation of the VOI E-Scooter trial.

The Task and Finish Group was composed of members of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee – myself (Chair); Anthony Bagot-Webb, William Barter, Terrie Eales, André González De Savage, Paul Joyce, Kevin Parker; together with two further non-executive members – Councillors Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith. There were no co-optees to this Task and Finish Group but a wealth of information was gathered from a variety of expert advisors who attended the meetings.

The Task and Finish Group received both written and verbal evidence from these expert advisors. Representatives of the Task and Finish Group undertook a site visit to the VOI factory. A survey was made available on the WNC website to enable members of the public to express their views regarding the Voi E-Scooter trial. The survey attracted around 3,000 responses and a Focus Group organised by NCALC for representatives of Town and Parish Councils within West Northamptonshire was well attended. Through the combination of these sources, a wealth of information that informed the evidence base of this important Scrutiny review was obtained.

Following the collation of the evidence, the Task and Finish Group drew various conclusions and recommendations that are contained within the report.

The review took place over just six working weeks between December 2023 and mid-January 2024.

I would like to thank all the individuals acknowledged below who gave up their time and contributed to this review.



Councillor Alison Eastwood Chair, Task and Finish Group – Review of VOI E-Scooter Trial

Acknowledgements to all those who took part in the Review: -

- Councillors Anthony Bagot-Webb, William Barter , Terrie Eales, André González De Savage, Paul Joyce, Kevin Parker, Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith who sat with me on this Review
- Councillor Phil Larratt, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste, Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Leader of the Council, Ian Achurch, Head of Economic Growth & Sustainability (North Northants Council), Matt O’Connell, Safer Roads Team Manager, Northants Police, Matthew Pencharz, Head of Policy for UK, Ireland & France, VOI, Theo Gough, City Success Manager, VOI, Sara Homer, Chief Executive Officer, Brackmills BID, Hollie Darby, Northampton University and a member of the public, for attending meetings of the Task and Finish Group and providing evidence to inform the Review
- Clare Topping, Northampton General Hospital, for providing written evidence to this Review
- Danny Moody, Chief Executive of NCALC for facilitating a focus session with various Parish and Town Councils within West Northamptonshire
- Gillian Baldock, Political Assistant to the Conservative Group for her work on the public survey
- Duston Parish Council for submitting its written views
- Members of the public and various groups and organisations who took the time to complete the VOI E-Scooter Trial survey that the Task and Finish Group had put together

Executive Summary

1.1 The objective of this Review was to consider the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire

Key lines of enquiry

The scrutiny review considered the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire, including:

- Ensuring the current trial meets the requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 and any subsequent changes to those requirements.
- An evaluation of the misuse of E-Scooters operating under the trial (including underage usage, issues of drink-driver usage, poor parking), the impact this has on the safety of all road users, the complaints procedure relating to the misuse of E-Scooters and enforcement where appropriate.
- An evaluation of the suitability of Northampton's infrastructure to accommodate E-scooters.
- An evaluation of the benefits that E-Scooters bring to West Northamptonshire as part of the options for sustainable transport.

1.2 A copy of the Scope of the Review is attached at **Appendix A**.

2 Context

2.1 A motion was passed at the meeting of full Council held on 28 September 2023. A copy of the motion is attached at **Appendix B**. By a majority vote, Council agreed to refer this motion to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Committee considered the proposal at its meeting on 4 December 2023 and established a Task and Finish Group, composed of members of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee together with the proposer and seconder of the motion - Councillors Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith.

Corporate Priorities

2.2 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities - clean & green, improved life chances, connected communities, thriving villages and towns, economic development and robust resource management.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

A significant amount of evidence was taken into consideration. Further details are set out elsewhere in the report. After gathering evidence the Task and Finish Group established that: -

After receiving all the evidence, the Task and Finish Group heard that the Trial of the VOI E-Scooters meets, and in certain cases exceeds, requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 and any subsequent changes to those requirements.

Opportunities exist to address the concerns and challenges that were identified via the review in order to ensure the VOI E- Scooter Trial within Northampton and the wider communities is

continued. Overall, the economic and environmental benefits provide a compelling case for the retention of the scheme.

The Task and Finish Group acknowledged that should VOI E-Scooters become permanent following the Trial, there would be a need for improvements to be made to the infrastructure to support this.

Evidence received from VOI, businesses and the public survey highlighted the economic benefits of the trial and in particular the reliance of many people and some businesses on E-scooters as a way to access work. Whilst some people acknowledged that alternatives may be available it was also clear that for certain areas, such as Brackmills, cessation of the trial would reduce opportunities for some existing workers.

With regard to the environmental benefits of the scheme, whilst difficult to pinpoint a precise figure in terms of carbon reduction, the high use of scooters and reasons provided via surveys does point to a significant reduction in car use thereby reducing congestion and also impacting positively upon air quality in the town.

The Task and Finish Group identified a willingness from all partners; VOI, Northamptonshire Police and West Northants Council to work together in a positive and effective manner to ensure continuous improvement and resolution of existing concerns and problems. This positive approach is set within the context of improving governance, increasing communications and campaigns, works and new technologies within the infrastructure and improvement of processes.

The committee also acknowledges the consensus with respect to the problems identified by all parties and subsequently confirmed through the survey of residents and users. These problems are wide-ranging and predominantly relate to poor practice from a minority of users, whether that be riding on pavements, leaving scooters blocking pavements or twin-riding (two persons on a scooter). Other issues identified that complaints were not handled in a consistent way, leading to poor levels of responses, that the level of safety messages and advice required more emphasis and that enforcement of noncompliance needs to be improved in both prosecutions, penalties and the communication of actions.

Concern was expressed also that due to the reliance on E-scooters by some users, the ending of a regulated scheme could result in a significant increase in the use of illegal E-scooters, which are already considered to be a problem in Northampton. This could result in an increase in anti-social behaviour, the importing and use of 'dangerous' E-scooters and also reduced effectiveness of enforcement.

With respect to the governance of the project, it was acknowledged that the scheme was a joint project with North Northamptonshire Council and that the scheme would benefit from much closer management from West Northamptonshire Council, particularly relating to the detail and performance of the Northampton element of the trial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The above overall findings have formed the basis for the following recommendations: -

That the trial of the VOI E-Scooter is continued to May 2026 but there is a need for improvements and a Road Map for development of the improvements should be a condition of any contract extension offered.

The Road Map should address:

- 1 Review the current scheme to seek improvements and changes in respect of Geo-fence areas where:
 - Speed controls and restricted zones to be reviewed and extended.
 - E-Scooters cannot be parked on an individual basis in specific key locations (ie. disabled access and emergency access points).
- 2 That parking is reviewed to improve end location via use of improved technology (AI) and infrastructure (parking frames) are implemented where appropriate.
- 3 That new and emerging technology is assessed and timescale set for the implementation in regard:
 - Eliminating twin riding.
 - Preventing scooters from riding pavements
- 4 That E-Scooter safety is reviewed improving visibility at night, ensuring registration numbers are more visible and that campaigns and messaging to existing riders are increased and more regular in regard to best practice and also to include the wearing of helmets.
- 5 That a review of the complaints procedure is undertaken with the aim of improving the process of tracking complaints via a reference number with timely action and communication.

That a new governance and project management process is set up to include West Northants Council, VOI and Northamptonshire Police. That the terms of reference for this group include the management and monitoring of progress of items included in the Road Map.

That Officers produce a suite of KPI's for Cabinet to review which will provide transparency in relation to the numbers of complaints, actions taken and enforcement.

That Cabinet considers setting up a regular all Member Quarterly forum that will provide context and challenge for improvement and improved communications.

That Cabinet reviews enforcement to ensure all resources available to the Council, Police and VOI are aligned and efficient and that any enforcement actions can be aligned and the results fully communicated and released.

That Officers investigate best practice from other areas and where applicable implemented to include a review of future policies and infrastructure identified as part of the local plan process once subject to government approval.

That Cabinet has oversight and puts in place monitoring (period in review) of the Trial.

That Cabinet is requested to provide a report to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the conclusion of the E-Scooter Trial that identifies progress and issues for discussion.

West Northamptonshire Council

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of VOI E-Scooters Trial Task and Finish Group

1. Purposes and Rationale

- 1.1 The objective of this review was to consider the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire.

Key lines of enquiry

The scrutiny review considered the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire, including:

- Ensuring the current trial meets the requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 and any subsequent changes to those requirements.
- An evaluation of the misuse of E-Scooters operating under the trial (including underage usage, issues of drink-driver usage, poor parking), the impact this has on the safety of all road users, the complaints procedure relating to the misuse of E-Scooters and enforcement where appropriate.
- An evaluation of the suitability of Northampton's infrastructure to accommodate E-scooters.
- An evaluation of the benefits that E-Scooters bring to West Northamptonshire as part of the options for sustainable transport.

- 1.2 A copy of the Scope of the Review is attached at **Appendix A**.

2 Context and Background

- 2.1 A motion was proposed at the meeting of full Council held on 28 September 2023. A copy of the motion is attached at **Appendix B**. The Cabinet Member proposed to refer the matter to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. By a majority vote, Council agreed to refer this motion to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

- 2.2 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the proposal at its meeting on 4 December 2023 and a Task and Finish Group was established, composed of members of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Alison Eastwood (Chair) Councillors Anthony Bagott-Webb, Andre Gonzalez De Savage, William Barter, Terrie Eales, Paul Joyce, together with the proposer and seconder of the motion - Councillors Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith.

2 Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly clean & green, improved life chances, connected communities, thriving villages and towns, economic development and robust resource management.
- 2.2 The Task and Finish Group established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities in its evidence gathering:

Evidence collection

Background data, including:

- Site visit to the VOI factory, Northampton
- NCALC facilitated focus session with various Parish and Town Councils within West Northamptonshire
- VOI E-Scooter Trial survey
- Written representations from members of the public

Carried motion – full Council of 28 September 2023 (**Appendix B**)

Relevant governance guidelines regarding E-Scooter Trials

Data provided to the Department of Transport (DofT)

Views from internal expert advisors:

- Leader of the Council
- Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste
- Executive Director for Place and Economy
- Assistant Director for Highways & Transport

Views from external expert advisors:

- Head of Economic Growth & Sustainability– Highways and Transport (North Northants Council)
- Safer Roads Team Manager, Northants Police,
- Senior Officers, VOI
- Organisations whose employees use the VOI E-Scooters

Methodology and Evidence Collection

2.3 Evidence was collected from a variety of sources:

- Site visit
- Focus Group
- Public Survey
- Written evidence
- Expert advisor attendance at meetings of the Task and Finish Group

3 Background data

Site Visit

Key points from the site visit to the VOI factory on 11 December 2023:

- E-Scooters are re-charged, maintained, repaired and checked at the site
- Each E-Scooter is checked every 28-30 days unless attention is required sooner

- The site provides 43 jobs, which will soon to increase to 45
- VOI is proactive with genuine interest in the local area

Focus Group session

Salient points from the Focus Session with representatives of Parish and Town Councils across West Northamptonshire held on 17 January 2024:

- Eight Councillors, and 14 parish representatives from 9 parish councils and a number of Officers from WNC were in attendance. There were no objections to the Trial in principle, but concerns were raised regarding :
 - misuse
 - poor parking
 - Tandem riding
 - A need for more enforcement

Desktop Research

The Chair carried out desktop research. Key points:

- Out of 11 E-Scooters companies operating in the country, four covered one town only.
- VOI covered seven towns
- When contracts were up for renewal in both Bristol and Bath, VOI lost out to a competitor, with the new company receiving many negative complaints and reducing the company workforce

Report to the Department of Transport (DofT)

The Task and Finish Group had sight of the confidential, not publicly accessible E-Scooter situation report that the Authority provides to the Department of Transport on a regular basis. The report contains details of incidents that have taken place with the E-Scooters during the trial.

Public Survey

A public survey regarding the trial of the E-Scooters commenced on 20 December 2023 and closed on 11 January 2024. The main points are summarised as:

- 2663 respondents to the survey.
- The majority of respondents were aware of the E-Scooter Trial.
- 610 respondents used the E-Scooters and 2097 did not, 272 used them on a regular basis.
- 381 used the E-Scooters to make their journey easier and 379 used them to save time.
- 942 respondents felt that E-Scooters were good for people who cannot travel (far) by foot/bike and 923 respondents felt they were easy/convenient for short journeys to get from A to B.
- There were 3241 responses in respect of the question around issues with E-Scooters and these related to poor parking, underage usage of E-Scooters and tandem riding (defined as two or three riders).

- 1,569 respondents commented on improvements. The areas commented on for improvements suggestions and improvements were similar. The two most frequently mentioned areas were the removal of the scheme and further regulation enforcement by WNC and partners.

The headline results from the survey are detailed within **Appendix C**.

Written submissions

A number of written submissions regarding the E-Scooter trial were received. Respondents mainly commented around:

- Tandem riding, riding on pavements, inconsiderate and dangerous riding.

Further details are contained within **Appendix D**.

Duston Parish Council

The Parish Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council, submitted the Parish Council's comments regarding the E-Scooter Trial. Duston Parish Council had concerns regarding safety, pavement riding, underage riding and poor parking. More transparency was requested regarding complaints.

Expert Advisor Evidence

- 3.1 The Task and Finish Group received a wealth of evidence from expert advisors over a series of meetings – 4 December 2023, 18 December, 4 January 2024 and 12 January.
- 3.2 Salient points of evidence:

Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste, West Northants Council

- E- Scooters are a great sustainable form of transportation with environmental benefits
- There are problems with regards to the use and management of the E-Scooters
- Councillor Larratt put on record his thanks to the member of public for putting forward complaints which were likely similar to many other residents.
- Better management and enforcement are needed to prevent dual riders, underage riders, speeding and riding on the pavements.
- The majority of complaints received were in relation to poor parking, in particular how they are left on pavements restricting people with pushchairs, prams and people living with disabilities, for example visually impaired.
- The Cabinet Member's personal preference was for the use of docking stations for the E-Scooters.
- The majority of complaints received were in relation to poor parking
- The Cabinet Member suggested a review of restricted low speed areas for the E-Scooters.
- Number plates need to be clearer. Currently they are too small to be seen easily.
- There should be greater transparency with regards to reporting issues.

Leader of the Council, West Northants Council – personal views as a user of the E- Scooters

- E-Scooters were very useful for short journeys and meant that there was no longer a default to use the car. The change in habits has been positive.

- There were a number of issues when the scheme was first introduced, most of which have been resolved, through the use of photo ID and registration numbers on E-Scooters.
- Some issues remained more difficult to address including tandem usage, poor parking and pavement riding. It is hoped that the technology can be extended to reduce pavement riding, though it was appreciated that investment was required to enable this to take place.
- The E-Scooters prove useful for getting to work when public transport is not available.
- There are benefits in terms of air quality.
- The 'end of ride' photo is checked by AI (Artificial Intelligence) and is not as proficient as the human eye.
- Consideration should be given to allow the public to identify good, designated parking bays, though it was noted that they can reduce usage. Docking stations however are not considered to be beneficial. Parking areas need to be in convenient areas.
- Education has a key role to play in encouraging good and safe E-Scooter use. Educating on E-Scooter use should begin with children before they are old enough to ride. The age enforced in Northampton being 18.
- Improvements to the Scheme could be made a condition of any contract extension offered.

Executive Director Place and Economy

- Many of the issues raised relate to governance. Tighter contract management is required.
- The scheme had originally been led by NCC for the first year and a half, now WNC needs to take a lead on the management of the VOI E-scooter agreement.
- Better communication with elected Members is required.
- Additional resources, governance and communication of the scheme going forward will be very beneficial.
- The scheme is still a trial which stifles some innovation for Councils and operators. Once the E-Scooters are regulated there will be more provision to include them in the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan etc.
- It would be useful to plan ahead and not wait for legislation.

Assistant Director for Highways and Transport

- The intention is for West Northants Council to take a more proactive role in the scheme going forwards.
- A small minority are misusing the E-Scooters.
- There is discretion to not extend the trial for the additional 24 months.
- There are concerns that if the trial is discontinued, the use of private E-Scooters could increase with the associated problems of no insurance and possibly poor maintenance. VOI's E-Scooters are regulated, insured and maintained by mechanics and VOI could be notified if there were problems with an E-Scooter.
- The Council has a good working relationship with VOI. There are a number of issues to overcome and the intention is to work together to mitigate them. It is easier to influence issues when working together, than from 'the outside'.
- Officers consider that the benefits of the scheme outweighed the disadvantages.
- Improvements are needed with regard to complaints and the ease of making complaints.
- It would be beneficial to geo-fence areas where E-Scooters cannot be parked on an individual basis (e.g. disabled access).

Student Services, University of Northampton

- The waterside campus has reported 97,500 journeys in and out of the area.
- 9 E-Scooter incidents have been reported, with 5 identified as VOI E-Scooters. One incident involved a security officer being struck from behind by a E-Scooter.
- An extension to the restricted/slow zone was requested, for example through the campus.
- The scheme is promoted to students and staff and the University was supportive of their use.

Head of Economic Growth & Sustainability– Growth & Regeneration, North Northants Council

- The scheme was initially considered around four years ago. The trial began in September 2020 (initially for a 12-month period) following a competition asking for operators to run the scheme, which was won by VOI. The trial was extended to November 2022 and then to May 2024. A legal order was obtained to run the trial.
- The scheme initially launched in the town centre and was later extended to Moulton Park, Brackmills, and the remainder of the urban area.
- Government legislation regarding e scooters was still awaited but was not included in the most recent King’s Speech. The trial scheme can then be extended for a further 24 months to May 2026.
- The context for choosing Northampton as a suitable area for the trial was due to a number of factors – high car dependency, limited public transport and low cycle usage.
- The cycle hire scheme operated at the time by Northamptonshire County Council had not been effective. It was not popular with users and was costly to the Council.
- The E-Scooter trial operates at no cost to the Council. It ties into the Council’s objectives regarding the climate emergency. A trial provides an opportunity to see if the scheme can work in the area.
- There are currently 70,000 registered users in Northampton, with 3.4 million rides having taken place during the duration of the trial scheme, averaging out at 20,000 to 30,000 per month.
- The scheme had exceeded expectations in terms of usage and has been shortlisted as a finalist in national awards.
- During the early stages of the trial, many users were young people who couldn’t take their driving tests due to delays during the covid pandemic. Recent user data indicates that there is a broad spread of rider ages.
- Over a third of journeys are part of the commute to work.
- A wide range of data is available showing start and finish points, times, and distances. This is useful to the Council for transport and land-use planning.
- Discussions had taken place with three lead local authority bodies which use different operators for licensed E-Scooters - Newcastle (Neuron), West of England Combined Authority (TIER), and West Midlands (Beryl). Four main issues had been identified – underage riding, twin riding and anti-social behaviour, pavement riding and poor parking.
- The situation for operators is fluid with numerous factors influencing the long-term futures of the schemes, such as the economic situation and the delay in Government legislation.
- Parking options deployed by operators include physical racks (on pavement and/or on street), painted parking (on pavement and/or on street), geo fenced parking (without physical markings), and ‘free floating’. The Northampton trial used a hybrid approach. No operators rely on racks as the only solution.
- Areas shifting from the Northamptonshire approach to a mandatory parking scheme had experienced significant reductions in usage (down up to 50%).

- The research concluded that new guidance issued by the government last year incorporated many of the practices first trialed in the Northampton trial (e.g. mandatory ID plates and photo verification for new users). VOI remained a leader in the use of technology to mitigate any issues.
- Suggested improvements include:
 - Random driving licence reverification via selfie. Automatic reverification of driving licence if account is accessed on a new device.
 - Commitment to explore and trial technology to identify twin riding.
 - Acknowledgement and reference numbers provided for reporting.
 - Introduce the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to review all parking photos meaning rides cannot be ended without approval.
 - Higher level conversations with WNC to discuss governance issues.
- Some operators are dropping out of trials, mainly due to the finances involved. Transport often operates on marginal gains. The delayed provision of Government legislation also has an impact on long-term business planning.

Safer Roads Team Manager, Northants Police

- The rider age had been increased from 16 to 18 years old when the scheme was initially introduced. Although Government legislation is still awaited, it is anticipated that that a new legislation will be created, with perhaps a 16 and over age limit.
- The majority of 'misbehaviour' on E-Scooters will also constitute a traffic offence.
- Two riders on a scooter may be dealt with by the Police as a dangerous passenger load.
- Attempts are usually made to educate users on a first offence before imposing fines/bans depending on the offence.
- The police can report directly back to VOI where accounts can be quickly suspended or banned when misuse of the VOI scooters had occurred.
- The availability of resources/officers played a large part in enforcement.
- There is a concern that if the trial was discontinued, users could buy private scooters which would be unable to be legally used until the Government legislation is in place.
- Photo ID is required for all riders to be able to hire a scooter.
- VOI is trialing a system to reduce pavement riding through an artificial intelligence mapping system. This will take time to develop and extending the trial would be advantageous as stability was required to enable investment to take place.
- Data suggests most users are in their 20's and 30's. In the case of underage users, it appears that often parents are setting up the accounts for them. When found, such accounts are permanently banned.
- An operation is planned to enforce safe scooter use – targeting young riders and areas surrounding schools.
- Consideration is being given to prosecuting account holders (parents) for allowing use of the account by underage riders.
- The Neighbourhood Policing team is carrying out work regarding VOI and private E-scooters
- Consideration could be given to 'geo-fencing' a whole street in the town where it is particularly busy and identifying 3 or 4 areas along the street where parking would be permitted.
- There was a good working relationship between the Police and VOI.

- It was unlikely that traffic cameras could pick up the scooter registration plates. Although VOI stated that if a time stamp and location could be provided that scooters/riders could be identified.

Head of Policy for UK, Ireland & France, VOI and City Success Manager, VOI, City Success

- VOI introduced the scooters to Northampton during the Covid19 pandemic as a form of socially distanced transportation .
- The scooters are currently classified as motor vehicles, until the Government introduces new legislation.
- Legally the age limit for riders is 16+, but it was agreed to restrict users to 18+ in Northamptonshire.
- Responsible parking is encouraged with users required to submit a photo of the parked scooter after use.
- 38% of rides were used for commuting.
- 1.6 million car journeys have been replaced by E-scooter rides.
- Should the use of VOI scooters cease the use of private E-scooters is expected to increase.
- Riders are across most age groups and were mostly male.
- The lower number of female users may partly be attributed safety concerns around unsafe roads and unlit routes/parking areas.
- Parking E-scooters at the journeys end ('free-float parking') is preferred by users over designated parking bays as it was much more convenient.
- In the top five as start and end location in Northampton for rides are Brackmills, the General Hospital and the University of Northampton.
- Although the scheme is very positive, concerns are recognised, such as underage riding, anti-social riding and poor parking. Such issues are mitigated by raising safety concerns with the Police, incentivising the use of helmets when riding, and encouraging new users to a lower speed.
- Anti-social behaviour is very low, accounting for less than 0.15% of total rides.
- Since the scheme's launch, a number of new practices have been trialled in Northampton and then rolled out nationwide.
- VOI has recently processed the results of its bi-annual survey of riders. There were 25,000 rides per week in the town, with 37% commutes and 20% social. The age of use was spread fairly evenly from 18 to 44. Around a third of journeys would have been by car or taxi were scooters not available.
- Some of the concerns raised can be dealt with quickly – such as better communicating the benefits of incentivised parking zones and increasing communication with users regarding safer parking.
- VOI will promote submitting complaints to a support email address - support@voiapp.io
- The industry is looking at technology to identify weight changes to reduce twin riding. This is a difficult process due to riders with shopping/back packs. It will be expensive to retrofit the appropriate technology to the existing fleet but it can be fitted to the next generation of scooters.
- Cameras have been fitted to some E-scooters to monitor pavement riding. The tech is quite expensive and there has been some vandalism of the boxes being attached to the scooters.
- VOI strongly supports the Police in its planned campaign to target underage riding. VOI offers support in the prosecution of account holders allowing use by underage riders.
- Brackmills, along with the University and General Hospital are large users of the scooters.
- Employees often cannot afford cars and the bus services were not convenient. New facilities opening in Brackmills are offering reduced parking for staff in order to encourage

sustainability and sustainable travel. If the VOI E-scooters did not continue, people may use private E-scooters which are currently not legal or use cars.

- There is currently no legislation stipulating there must be only one rider per scooter, but it was specified in the trial conditions. The industry's view is that one rider only is safer. Two riders result in weight shifting and more erratic riding and is dangerous and irresponsible.

Chief Executive, Brackmills BID

- VOI E-Scooters were first introduced on to the Brackmills industrial Estate on 13 September 2020. The Brackmills BID had a launch of the trial of the VOI E-Scooters on the site of the VOI Business on Sketty Close. Since then they have moved to a much larger and suitable site on Weddel Way, Brackmills.
- E-Scooters were launched on the estate to make it easier than ever before to enable staff to get on and off of the estate, at a time that suited their individual working rotas.
- Brackmills also trialled the "Boris Bikes " but the take up was never very good.
- The Chief Executive of the BID worked with Officers of the Council, VOI, the local PCSO in putting together a safety plan which enabled the E-Scooters to not be able to work on some of the roads on Brackmills due to safety issues either permanently or at certain times. Over the past few years of this project, this has been updated where there were safety implications to the vehicles on the roads and also to the user.
- There are 183 businesses and approximately 212 hereditaments on the Brackmills site.
- These businesses are home to approximately 18000 + employees.
- The Business Improvement District is keen to work on its sustainability and any projects that can help it to improve the environment around it.
- A large number of employees travel to and from Town Centre and find the VOI E-Scooters a very affordable and viable option.
- E-Scooters help to reduce the carbon footprint. From a greener point of view, employees travel on the E-Scooters to Delapre Abbey, through the underpasses to travel safely and not having to use the roads at lunch times to relax in the grounds of the Abbey for lunch and to simply enjoy the lovely green environment around them. This is a good option to relax from the hustle and bustle of working in a warehouse and to aid with a stressful job and to assist with their health, safety and mental wellbeing
- Car sharing has never worked on Brackmills. Since employees have been using the VOI E-Scooters, it has created a better sustainable and green option for the businesses and employees to travel to and from the estate.
- A new initiative is being looking at taking on board is a scheme called "Smartgo" which is being rolled out around the UK especially when very large warehouses are being built where very large numbers of employees are going to be working long and varied shift patterns that will not be sustainable with the normal bus services that is on offer. VOI E-Scooters will be an integral part of this scheme and would help with the movement of people to and from Brackmills.
- There was initial scepticism when the E-Scooters were first introduced but now much of the workforce rely on them.
- VOI is a socially responsible organisation who is good to work with. VOI had worked with Brackmills initially to plan out the site and set up 'reduced speed zones'.
- There is a very positive working relationship with VOI.

Northampton General Hospital

- From a sustainability perspective the VOI E- Scooters are clearly a positive addition as anything that reduces traffic and pollution coming to site is a benefit to the town.
- The hospital has a couple of areas that are geofenced for the E-Scooters which appear to be well used.
- Although there were originally issues with the E-Scooters abandoned on site, Staff worked with VOI to prevent this from occurring and there has not been any recent issues reported.
- The main concern would be illegal E-Scooter user, any potential fire risks from them being stored or illegally charged on site.

Local Resident

- From the end of May to October 2023 , the resident had recorded 604 offences in relation to E-Scooter usages, offences often related to reckless riding and underage riding.
- The resident had sent numerous emails which had not been responded to.
- The resident felt there was minimal Police enforcement.
- In his opinion, the use of E-Scooters did not correlate with Government aims to increase walking and cycling and reduce obesity.
- The resident proposed that a reference number should be provided for any issue raised to increase accountability.

4 Conclusions and Key Findings

- 4.1 After all of the evidence was collated, the following conclusions were drawn:
- 4.2 After receiving all the evidence, the Task and Finish Group heard that the Trial of the VOI E-Scooters meets, and in certain cases exceeds, requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 and any subsequent changes to those requirements.
- 4.3 There are concerns and challenges that should be addressed and/or improvements made to ensure that the VOI E-Scooter trial within Northampton and the wider communities is continued but that overall the economic and environmental benefits provide a compelling case for the retention of the scheme.
- 4.4 The Task and Finish Group acknowledged that should VOI E-Scooters become permanent following the Trial, there would be a need for improvements to be made to the infrastructure to support this.
- 4.5 Evidence received from VOI, business and the public survey highlighted the economic benefits of the trial, in particular the reliance of many people and some businesses on scooters as a way to access work. Whilst some people acknowledged that alternatives may be available it was also clear that, for areas such as Brackmills, it would be difficult and would reduce the opportunities of some existing workers if the scheme were to be stopped.
- 4.6 In regard to the environmental benefits whilst difficult to be definitive on the actual figure of carbon reduction the high use of E-scooters and reasons provided in surveys does point to a significant reduction in car use thereby reducing congestion and also impacting positively upon air quality in the town.

- 4.7 The Task and Finish Group identified a willingness from all partners, VOI, Northamptonshire Police and West Northants Council to work together in a positive and effective manner to ensure continuous improvement and resolution of existing concerns and problems. This positive approach is set within the context of improving Governance, increasing communications and campaigns, works and new technologies within the infrastructure and improvement of processes.
- 4.8 The Task and Finish Group also acknowledges the wide consensus in relation to the problems identified by all parties and subsequently confirmed through the survey of residents and users. These problems are wide-ranging and predominantly relate to poor practice by a minority of users whether that be riding on pavements, leaving scooters blocking pavements or twin riding. However other issues identified that complaints were not handled in a consistent way leading to poor levels of responses, that the level of safety messages and advice required more emphasis; and that enforcement of non-compliance needs to be improved in both prosecutions, penalties and the communication of actions.
- 4.9 Concern was express also that due to the reliance on E-scooters, the ending of a regulated scheme could result in a significant increase of illegal E-scooters which are already part of the problem in Northampton. This could see an increase in anti-social behaviour, the importing and use of 'dangerous' E-scooters and also reduced effectiveness of enforcement.
- 4.10 In regard to the Governance of the project it was acknowledged that the scheme was a joint project with North Northamptonshire Council and that the scheme would benefit from a much closer management form West Northamptonshire Council in particular into the detail and performance of the Northampton element of the trial.

5 Recommendations and Reasons

- 5.1 Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that:

That the trial of the VOI E-Scooter is continued to May 2026 but there is a need for improvements and a Road Map for development of the improvements should be a condition of any contract extension offered.

The Road Map should address:

- 1 Review the current scheme to seek improvements and changes in respect of Geo-fence areas where:
 - Speed controls and restricted zones to be reviewed and extended.
 - E-Scooters cannot be parked on an individual basis in specific key locations (ie. disabled access and emergency access points).
- 2 That parking is reviewed to improve end location via use of improved technology (AI) and infrastructure (parking frames) are implemented where appropriate.
- 3 That new and emerging technology is assessed and timescale set for the implementation in regard:

Eliminating twin riding.

Preventing scooters from riding pavements

- 4 That E-Scooter safety is reviewed improving visibility at night, ensuring registration numbers are more visible and that campaigns and messaging to existing riders are increased and more regular in regard to best practice and also to include the wearing of helmets.
- 5 That a review of the complaints procedure is undertaken with the aim of improving the process of tracking complaints via a reference number with timely action and communication.

That a new governance and project management process is set up to include West Northants Council, VOI and Northamptonshire Police. That the terms of reference for this group include the management and monitoring of progress of items included in the Road Map. That Officers produce a suite of KPI's for Cabinet to review which will provide transparency in relation to the numbers of complaints, actions taken and enforcement.

That Cabinet considers setting up a regular all Member Quarterly forum that will provide context and challenge for improvement and improved communications.

That Cabinet reviews enforcement to ensure all resources available to the Council, Police and VOI are aligned and efficient and that any enforcement actions can be aligned and the results fully communicated and released.

That Officers investigate best practice from other areas and where applicable implemented to include a review of future policies and infrastructure identified as part of the local plan process once subject to government approval.

That Cabinet has oversight and puts in place monitoring (period in review) of the Trial.

That Cabinet is requested to provide a report to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the conclusion of the E-Scooter Trial that identifies progress and issues for discussion.

Reason

The E- Scooter Trial is continued for a further two years but there is a need for improvements to the Trial to be made as detailed in the recommendation.

6 Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, requests Cabinet to provide a report at the conclusion of the E-Scooter Trial that identifies progress and issues for discussion.

APPENDICES

Scope of the Review - Review of VOI – E-Scooter Trial in West Northants

Topic title	<i>Review of the VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire</i>
	<p>The scrutiny review will consider the effectiveness of VOI E-Scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the current trial meets the requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 • An evaluation of the misuse of E-scooters operating under the trial (including underage usage, issues of drink-driver usage, poor parking), the impact this has on the safety of all road users, the complaints procedure relating to the misuse of E-Scooters and enforcement where appropriate. • An evaluation of the suitability of Northampton’s infrastructure to accommodate E-scooters. • An evaluation of the benefits that E-Scooters bring to West Northamptonshire as part of the options for sustainable transport. <p>The scrutiny review will enable the Committee to produce a report which makes recommendations to Cabinet regarding the evaluation of the VOI scooter trial</p>
<p>Link to the Council’s Corporate Priorities (from Form A)</p>	<p>E-scooters offer increased accessibility in the town centre, major employment locations as well as access to local services including health care and leisure.</p> <p>The provision of E-scooters may encourage modal shift from car use for short trips, improving air quality and reducing emissions.</p> <p>The use of E-scooters and E-bikes links to the following corporate priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean & Green • Improved life chances • Connected Communities • Thriving Villages and Towns • Economic Development • Robust Resource Management
<p>Key objectives and measures of effectiveness (from Form A)</p>	<p>The scrutiny review will seek to understand where the VOI scooter trial has worked well and where there are areas for improvement. It will consider all of the evidence received to</p>

	make informed recommendations to Cabinet regarding the VOI scooter Trial in West Northamptonshire, and which will be also be provided to VOI.
Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)	<p><i>The Key Lines of Enquiry of this Review:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the current trial meets the requirements introduced by the Department for Transport in April 2022 • An evaluation of the misuse of E-scooters operating under the trial (including underage usage, issues of drink-driver usage, poor parking), the impact this has on the safety of all road users, the complaints procedure relating to the misuse of E-Scooters and enforcement where appropriate. • An evaluation of the suitability of Northampton’s infrastructure to accommodate E-scooters. • An evaluation of the benefits that E-Scooters bring to West Northamptonshire as part of the options for sustainable transport and the economy.
Outlining stakeholders	<p>The Committee will ask for evidence and information from the following expert advisors to inform its Review:</p> <p>Internal Expert Advisors</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste</p> <p>Assistant Director – Highways and Transport</p> <p>Head of Economic Growth & Sustainability – Highways and Transport (North Northants Council)</p> <p>External Expert advisors</p> <p>Senior Officers - VOI</p> <p>Officers – Northamptonshire Police</p> <p>Representative of Employers from Northampton where their employees use the E-scooters e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brackmills BID • Northampton General Hospital • University of Northampton <p>Parish and Town Councils</p> <p>Chief Executive of NCALC</p> <p>VOI scooter users</p>

<p>Outlining evidence</p>	<p>VOI scooter contract</p> <p>Government Guidance - Powered Transporters</p> <p>Statistical data from the Trial included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Safety measures ➤ Scooter usage data, including Km travelled ➤ Health and wellbeing data ➤ Parking of the VOI scooters ➤ Complaints data ➤ Governance data ➤ Action plan - VOI <p>Background information to the Trial – including what constitutes a legal E-Scooter, where they can be ridden and by whom; “no ride” zones</p> <p>Compliments and complaints procedure</p>
<p>Outlining Briefings and/or site visits</p>	<p>VOI has offered a visit to their establishment in Northampton for Councillors to understand their operation more fully and its impact.</p> <p>It is important that any recommendations are deliverable therefore it may be necessary to provide context or research from other schemes delivering similar services.</p>
<p>Risks</p>	<p>The subject matter of this Review is relatively wide and could involve evidence from a large number of groups, therefore a number of meetings may be required which may make a report to January 2024 cabinet (as per the proposal form) difficult to achieve.</p> <p>Risks will be mitigated by agreeing in advance of the commencement of the Review a series of dates for meetings with focussed agendas allowing for the correct experts/witnesses to be available to respond to the line of questioning at each meeting.</p>
<p>Membership</p>	<p>A Task and Finish Group to be convened. Membership to comprise all Members of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillors E Roberts and Z Smith invited to join the Task and Finish Group.</p>
<p>Timeframe</p>	<p><i>Set out the dates and times of the meetings here. It is good practice to check the availability of any witnesses or stakeholders required at meetings to avoid delays to the review. If any visits are required these should also be timetabled at the outset to</i></p>

	<p><i>enable the planning of those visits to take place as early as possible.</i></p> <p>The review will commence in December 2023, concluding in January 2024. The Chair of the Committee will present the report of Place OSC to Cabinet at its January 2024 meeting:</p> <p>Meeting dates:</p> <p>4 December 2023 - to formally approve the scope of the Review.</p> <p>Task and Finish Group meetings:</p> <p>4 December 2023</p> <p>Receive evidence from:</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste</p> <p>Assistant Director – Highways and Transport</p> <p>Head of Economic Growth & Sustainability– Highways and Transport (North Northants Council)</p> <p>Representative(s) from Northamptonshire Police</p> <p>18 December 2023 - Task and Finish Group meeting</p> <p>Evidence gathering:</p> <p>Senior officers - VOI</p> <p>Representative of Employers from Northampton where their employees use the E-scooters e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brackmills BID • Northampton General Hospital • University of Northampton <p>Parish and Town Councils</p> <p>Chief Executive of NCALC</p> <p>VOI scooter users</p> <p>4 January 2024 - To consider the evidence received and develop potential conclusions and recommendations for the final report</p> <p>15 January 2024 - To consider the evidence received and develop potential conclusions and recommendations for the final report</p> <p>31 January 2024 – The Chair to present the final report to the meeting of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>12 March 2024 - Report of Place Overview Scrutiny (Review of the VOI scooters) to be presented to Cabinet</p>
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28th September meeting of Council:

Motion 3

Proposed by: Cllr Emma Roberts

Seconded by: Cllr Zoe Smith

“E-scooters have become an integral part of Northampton’s transport and play a valuable role in this council’s active travel and carbon-reducing schemes by providing cheap, clean and efficient travel for commuters and students.

But the ongoing trial is being repeatedly plagued with riders breaking vital and statutory safety regulations in the town. Residents are repeatedly complaining of underage children using the scooters, of two people on a scooter at one time (so-called double-riding), of scooters parked in dangerous places like verges, and users thinking riding on the pavement is acceptable.

These illegal activities pose a serious risk to the safety of riders, drivers, and pedestrians, especially in the elderly and disabled communities. Since the trial began in 2020, two deaths in Northampton have been linked to e-scooters, whilst a representative of the National Federation of the Blind of the UK said in March that “rider behaviour is not safe for the rider or for any pedestrian” and proposed the trial’s immediate termination.

The extension of the current trial until May 2024, agreed with the provider and North Northamptonshire Council in December, was on the condition that additional safety measures were introduced by the provider. Yet residents have also complained of repeat offenders who, despite being reported to the provider, are still seen later riding on pavements or double riding. Last month, WNC and the provider announced the expansion of the scheme in Northampton to Moulton and Collingtree, despite ongoing concerns from residents over their safety.

This council acknowledges and welcomes the ‘We share the road’ campaign being run jointly with Northamptonshire Police to raise awareness of the rules of the road for e-scooters, but also recognises that better policing and evaluation of the trial is required. It therefore calls on the Cabinet to:

- Assure the Council it has enacted all of the additional e-scooter trial requirements the Department for Transport introduced in April 2022 to ensure the trials were as safe as possible
- Conduct a full evaluation into the safety measures of e-scooters, including consulting with Northamptonshire Police on better policing of underage and drink-driver users and the widespread problem of poor parking, and their complaints procedure
- Conduct an evaluation into the suitability of Northampton’s infrastructure to accommodate e-scooters and e-bikes and how this could be improved should they become legal
- Forward the results of these evaluations to the Members of Parliament for West Northamptonshire to take to Parliament as it continues to discuss and prepare legislation on e-scooters

- Agree to decline any further expansions or extensions of the trial in West Northamptonshire until the above evaluations have been taken place and the Cabinet, Police and communities are reassured that riders, drivers and pedestrians will be safe.”



West Northamptonshire Council
Public Rental of E-Scooters & E-Bikes
Call for evidence – headline survey results
January 2024

Executive Summary

The Public Rental of E-Scooters & Bikes survey, launched on the 20th of December 2023 and closed on the 11th of January 2024. A total of 2663 responses were received as part of the call for evidence. These were received via the West Northamptonshire Council's online platform – Have your say.

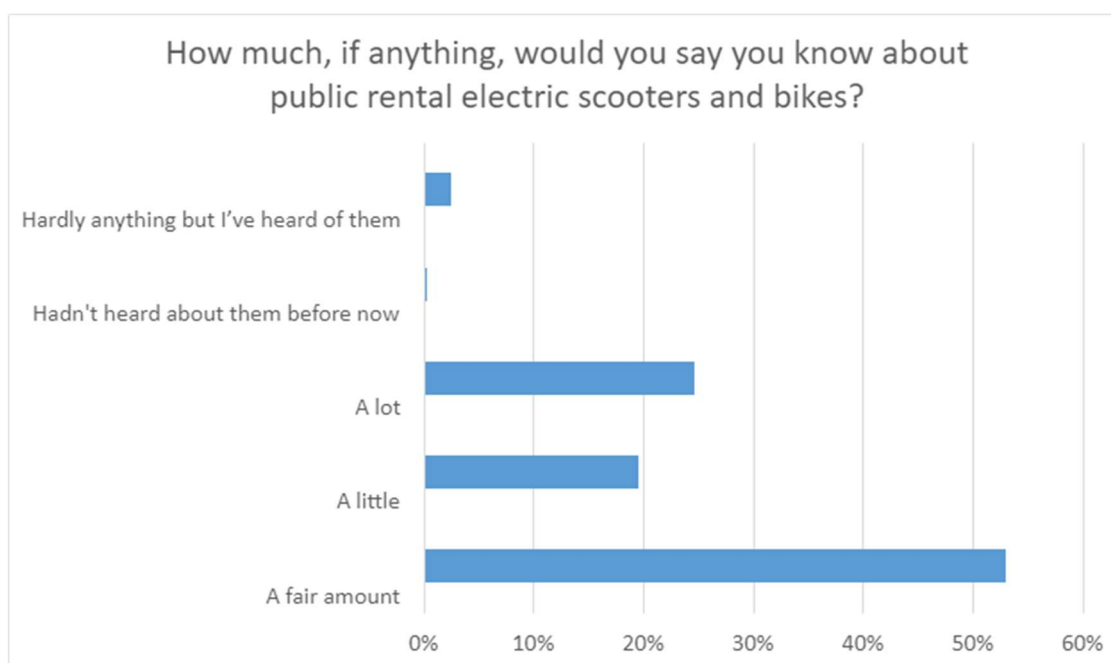
Knowledge of Public Rental E-Scooters

Respondents were asked how much, if anything, would you say you know about public rental e-scooters and bikes. There were 2729 responses to this question 1446 stated they knew a fair amount whereas 77 hadn't heard about them before now or knew hardly anything about but had heard of them.

Table 1: **How much, if anything, would you say you know about public rental electric scooters and bikes?**

Answer	Count	Per cent (%)
A fair amount	1446	53%
A little	533	20%
A lot	673	25%
Hadn't heard about them before now	8	0%
Hardly anything but I've heard of them	69	3%
Total	2729	100%

Chart 1: **How much, if anything, would you say you know about public rental electric scooters and bikes?**



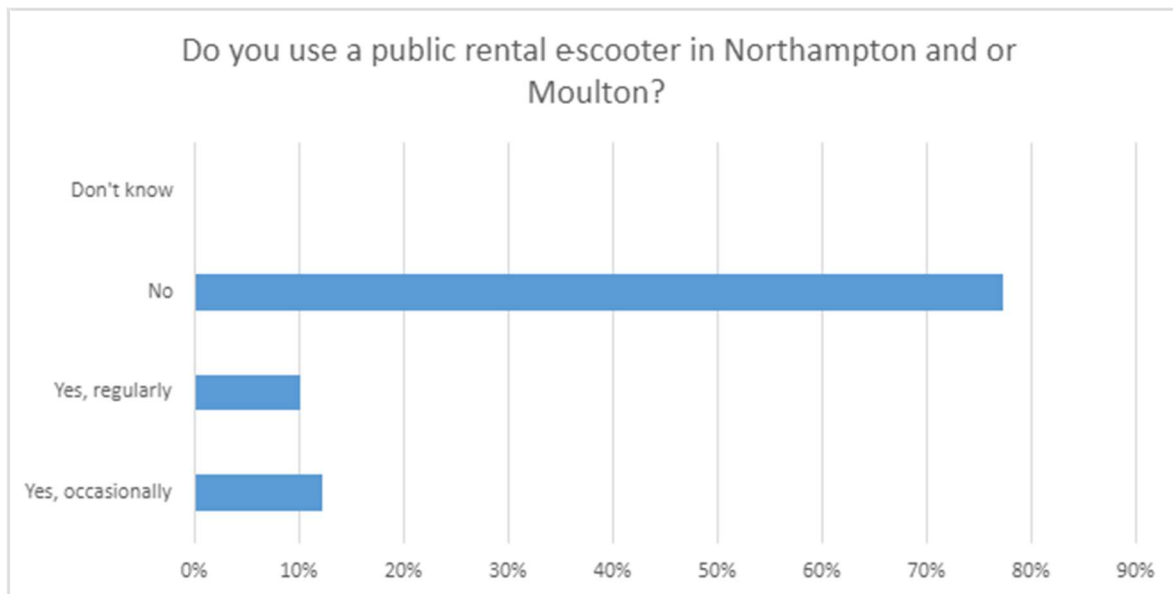
Usage of Public Rental E-Scooters

Respondents were asked do you use a public rental e-scooter in Northampton and or Moulton. There were 2712 responses to this question with 610 stating yes, occasionally or yes, regularly and 2097 answered no.

Table 2, **Do you use a public rental e-scooter in Northampton and or Moulton?**

Answer	Count	Per cent (%)
Yes, occasionally	333	12%
Yes, regularly	277	10%
No	2097	77%
Don't know	5	0%
Total	2712	100%

Chart 2: **Do you use a public rental e-scooter in Northampton and or Moulton?**

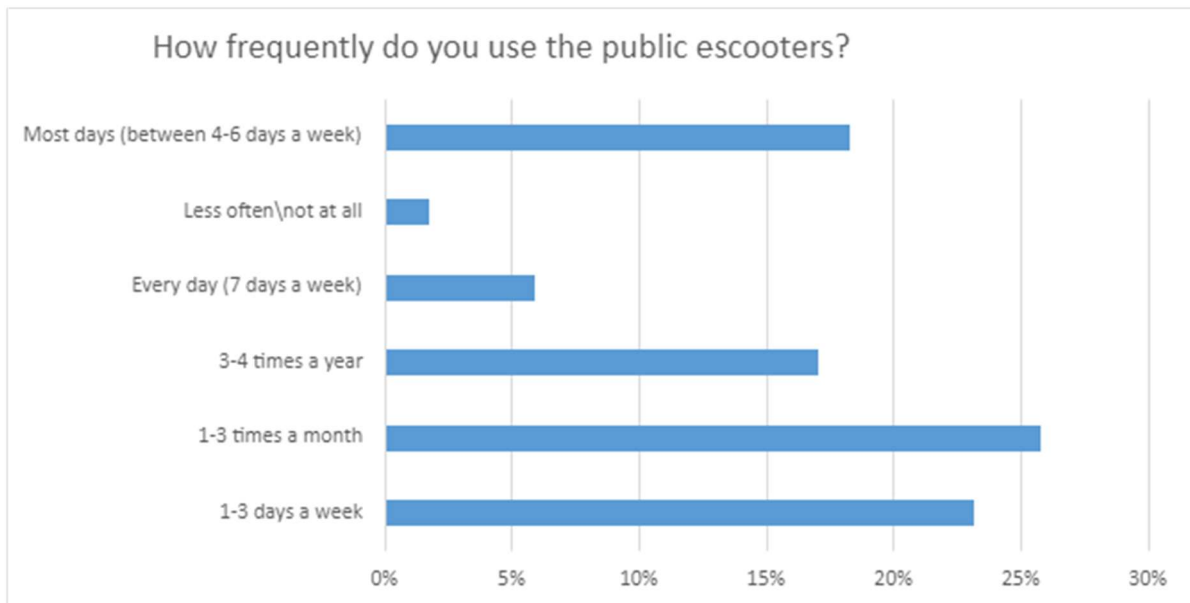


Respondents were asked how frequently do you use the public e-scooters. There were 574 responses to this question 272 respondents answers 1-3 days a week or every day or most days (between 4-6 days a week.)

Table 3: How frequently do you use public e-scooters?

Answer	Count	Per cent (%)
1-3 days a week	133	23%
1-3 times a month	148	26%
3-4 times a year	98	17%
Every day (7 days a week)	34	6%
Less often\not at all	10	2%
Most days (between 4-6 days a week)	105	18%
Once or twice a year	46	8%
Total	574	100%

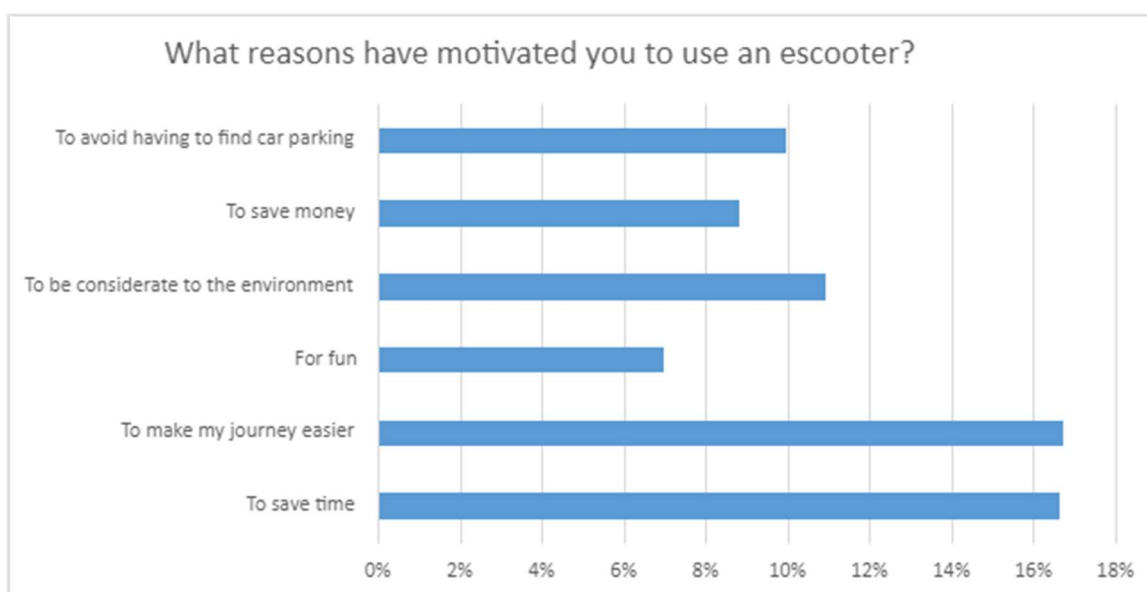
Chart 3: How frequently do you use public e-scooters?



Motivations for Using an E-Scooter

Respondents were asked what reasons have motivated you to use an e-scooter. The most selected responses were to make my journey easier with 381 selections and to save time with 379.

Chart 4: **What reasons have motivated you to use an e-scooter?**



Alternative Transport for E-Scooters

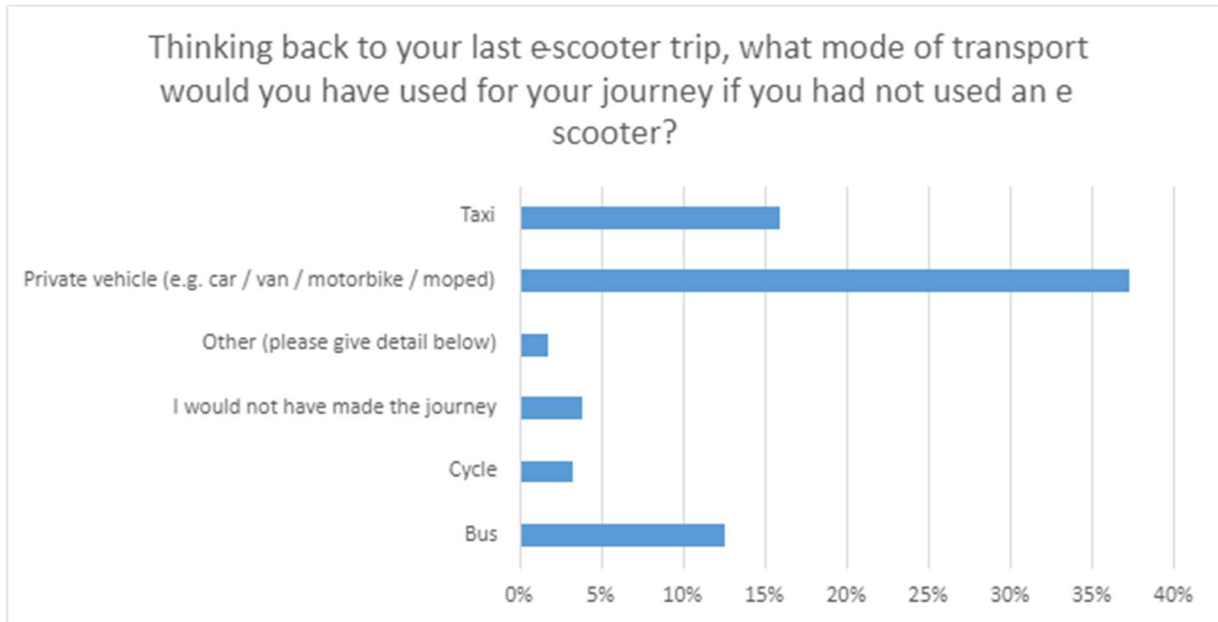
Respondents were asked thinking back to your last e-scooter trip, what mode of transport would you have used for your journey if you had not used an e-scooter. Of the 570 responses, 37% (273) chose private vehicle, while 13% (72) selected bus.

Table 4: **Thinking back to your last e-scooter trip, what mode of transport would you have used for your journey if you had not used an e-scooter?**

Answer	Count	Per cent (%)
Bus	72	13%
Cycle	19	3%
I would not have made the journey	22	4%
Other (please give detail below)	10	2%
Private vehicle (e.g. car / van / motorbike / moped)	213	37%
Taxi	91	16%

Walk	143	25%
Total	570	100%

Chart 5: **Thinking back to your last e-scooter trip, what mode of transport would you have used for your journey if you had not used an e-scooter?**



Advantages of E-Scooters/E-Bikes

Respondents were asked what you think are the advantages, if any of electric scooters/e-bikes. The two most selected answers were good for people who can't travel (far) by foot/bike chosen by 942 respondents and easy/convenient for short journeys to get from A to B chosen by 923 respondents.

Table 5: **What do you think are the advantages, if any, of electric scooters/e bikes?**

Answer	Count (#)
Good for people who can't travel (far) by foot/bike	942
Easy to use/learn/little effort required	590
Speed	271
Easier to use than a bicycle (can travel longer distances/easier going up hills)	545
Reduces pollution/better for environment	888
Fun to ride	357
Reduces congestion (relative to cars)/smaller than a car)	642
Safer roads (e.g., if more people are out of cars)	238
Able to travel in more places (than in a car)	337
Cost	328
Easy/convenient for short journeys/to get from A to B	923

Appearance/fashionable	69
Other (please give detail below)	451

451 respondents selected Other, of those answers 379 said there were no advantages while 88 expressed general dislike for e-scooters. 11 other advantages were listed those included: independence if they don't drive, available where public transportation is not and greater security or personal safety.

Table 6: **What do you think are the advantages, if any, of electric scooters/e bikes? (Other)**

Answer	Count
No advantages	379
General dislike	88
Good transport	2
Affordable	4
Employment Opportunities	1
Transport if don't drive	2
Commute	2
Greater security: personal bikes at risk of theft	2
Available where other public transport is not	3
Convenient	6
More income for the council	1
Independence: Unable to drive/not dependent on lifts	5
Personal safety: particularly at night-time	1
Total	496

Issues with E-Scooters/E-Bikes

Respondents were asked what they think the issues are, if any, with e-scooters/bikes. Of the 3241 responses provided the most frequently mentioned areas were poor parking, underage usage of e-scooters and tandem riding which was defined as two or three riders.

Table 7: **What do you think are the issues, if any, with e-scooters/ e-bikes?**

Safety protection: helmets + Hi-Vis	298
Too quiet/ Can't hear them	93
Visibility in dark	206
Regulation enforcement	259
Poorly parked/left	596
Underage usage	575
Ridden on pavements/footpaths	304
Sharing e-scooter (2-3)	516
Lack of suitable paths i.e few cycle lanes and/or problems with road surface	70
People have a negative perception	15
Not enough e-scooters	4
Too fast	214
Too expensive	21
Issues with the scooter	31
Late night curfew	6
No Issues	27
Not in the right locations	6
Total	3241

Diagram 1: **What do you think are the issues, if any, with e-scooters/ e-bikes? - What do you think are the issues, if any, with e scooters?**



Improvements for E-Scooters/E-Bikes

Respondents were asked if they had any improvements or suggestions that would be of use to the electric scooters/e-bikes trial. There were 1569 improvements provided. The areas commented on for improvements suggestions and improvements were similar.

The two most frequently mentioned areas were the removal of the scheme and further regulation enforcement by WNC and partners.

Table 8: **If you have any other improvements or suggestions that have not been mentioned in this survey please specify here - improvements.**

Answer:	Count (#)
Removal of Scheme	573
Regulation Enforcement	354
Greater regulations	238
Safety Education	82
Mandatory Helmets	87
Improved Maintenance	8
Face Verification	27
Improve Road Surfaces	21
Increase Visibility	14
Better Parking Facilities	47
Ban/Suspension for Breaking Regulations	26
E-Scooter Lanes	35
Weight Sensors	8
Fines for Breaking Regulations	37
Better Reporting Systems for Problems	12
Total	1569

Diagram 2: **If you have any other improvements or suggestions that have not been mentioned in this survey please specify here - improvements.**



Suggestions for E-Scooters/E-Bikes

Respondents were asked if they had any improvements or suggestions that would be of use to the electric scooters/e-bikes trial. There were 1727 suggestions provided which were largely similar to the improvements provided in the previous section.

The two most frequently mentioned suggestions were the removal of the scheme and further regulation enforcement by WNC and partners.

Table 8: **If you have any other improvements or suggestions that have not been mentioned in this survey please specify here – suggestions.**

Answer:	Count (#)
Removal of Scheme	721
Regulation Enforcement	402
Greater Regulations	201
Safety Education	54
Mandatory Helmets	107
Improved Maintenance	3
Face Verification	31
Improve Road Surfaces	45
Increase Visibility	40
Better Parking Facilities	63
Ban/Suspension for Breaking Regulations	22
Dedicated E-Scooter Lanes	34
Weight Sensors	4
Total	1727

Diagram 3: **If you have any other improvements or suggestions that have not been mentioned in this survey please specify here – suggestions.**



Table of Public Comments Received

Topic of Public Comments	Comments Received
Relating to the misuse of E-Scooters	Riding on pavements (15) Underage users (15) Riding under the influence of alcohol (1) Multiple people on a scooter (24) Inconsiderate parking (4) Irresponsible driving (8) Irresponsible disposal of scooter (17) Anti-social behaviour (2) Speeding (5) Using Mobile Phone (1) Danger of parents signing children up (1) Adults riding with young children (1) Using in pedestrianised areas such as town centre (1) Riding the wrong direction on roads and pavements (2) Joy riding (1)
Comments relating to the environment and infrastructure	Scooters parked on pavements (10) Scooters blocking/obstructing pathways or underpasses (8) Scooters knocked over (1) Scooters left near resident's home (4) Good for the environment (4) Need for designated parking (3) Poor road conditions (2) Scooters weaving in road to avoid potholes (1) Pavements not adequate for scooters (3) Lack of geofencing (1)
Comments relating to road safety	Risk to other road users (7) No road sense of users (5) Dangerous in cycle lanes (1) Riders ignoring traffic lights and other traffic regulations (10) Dangerous incidences with cars (3) Drivers having a near miss with scooter user (1) Scooters left in road (1) Reported deaths (3) Drivers weaving across road lanes (2) Breaking motoring laws (1)
Comments relating to public safety	Concern for safety of pedestrians (12) No warning bell to alert pedestrians (6) Users have no consideration for pedestrians (4) Near miss incidences with pedestrians and scooters (2) Pedestrians having to walk on road to avoid scooter blocking pavement (2) Hazard for disabled persons and/or wheelchair users (14) Hazard for pushchairs (9) Potential hazard/concern for older residents (11) Accidents with pedestrians hit by scooters (5) Trip hazard (1)
Other Health and Safety Comments	Riders not wearing helmets (6) No protective equipment (1) No high viz clothing (1) No insurance for riders (5) Put speed limitation on scooters (1) Riders wearing dark clothing at night (1)

	Scooters difficult/heavy to lift (2)
Other Comments	<p>Dangerous (10)</p> <p>Issues relating to management of the scheme by VOI (3)</p> <p>Policing and enforcement related (20)</p> <p>Public nuisance (4)</p> <p>Should be more restrictions for riders (1)</p> <p>Impact on number of residents using buses/cycling since the scheme (1)</p> <p>Increase in private unlicensed scooters (4)</p> <p>Ban the scooters (9)</p> <p>Take scooters off the road (2)</p> <p>Cheap to use (2)</p> <p>Instant and flexible transport (1)</p> <p>More reliable than waiting for the bus (1)</p> <p>Great reliable transport for work (2)</p> <p>Facilitating criminal activity such as supply of drugs (1)</p> <p>Making people lazy (2)</p> <p>Negative impact on public transport (1)</p>