

**Somerset West  
and Taunton**

# **E-SCOOTERS IN TAUNTON**

Frequently Asked Questions



## EScooter trial

- To support a 'green' restart of local travel and help mitigate reduced public transport capacity, the Department for Transport (DfT) has fast tracked and expanded the trials of rental EScooters.
- EScooters offer an additional form of public transport, which allows users to socially distance.
- Somerset West and Taunton Council have been approved to take part in the trial and have appointed EScooter operator Zipp Mobility to manage the scheme of their behalf.

## What is an EScooter?

For the purpose of the trials, the definition of an e-scooter has been set by the DfT. An EScooter falls within the statutory definition of a motor vehicle that;

- is fitted with no motor other than an electric motor with a maximum continuous power rating of 500w and is not fitted with pedals that are capable of propelling the vehicle.
- is designed to carry no more than one person.
- has a maximum speed not exceeding 15.5 mph.
- has 2 wheels, 1 front and 1 rear, aligned along the direction of travel.
- has a mass including the battery, but excluding the rider, not exceeding 55kg.
- has means of directional control via the use of handlebars that are mechanically linked to the steered wheel.
- has means of controlling the speed via hand controls and a power control that defaults to the 'off' position.

## How long will the trial last?

- The trial in the SWT are began in October 2020 and initially had a duration of 12 months.
- The Department of Transport has decided to extend the trial until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 in order obtain more detailed data due to the impact of the pandemic.

## Where is the trial taking place?

- We now have live trials in Taunton and Minehead.
- Taunton went live on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- Minehead went live 5<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### **What happens after the trial?**

- The Council will consider what happens next in line with the Government's plans for the future legalisation of EScooters.

### **Can anyone rent an EScooter?**

- No, riders must be at least 16 with a provisional or full driving licence.
- The App will validate user eligibility via licence checks.
- Avon and Somerset Police have the power to enforce on the correct usage of EScooters.

### **How much does it cost to rent an EScooter?**

- There is a fixed unlock fee of £1.00 after which you will be charged £0.10p per minute of usage.
- When the EScooter is paused the fee is £0.50p per minute.

### **How to do I pay?**

- Paying is simple. After registering on the Zipp App, you can add a payment method to your account. To do that, open your profile in the app, click on the payment method and chose the option that fits the best.
- You can choose from Mastercard, Visa or American Express.

### **Where can I hire an EScooter from?**

- Across the designated service areas in Taunton and Minehead there are multiple parking bays where you can collect an EScooter from.

### **How will the docking of vehicles be structured?**

- EScooter parking is virtual, managed via geofencing.
- There are parking bays across the service areas of the trial where users must start/end their journeys.
- This is to prevent the littering of these vehicles.
- These can be seen on the Zipp Mobility App.

### **Where can I ride one of the Zipp Mobility EScooters?**

- The Zipp Mobility rental EScooters are legal for use on roads, cycle lanes and cycle tracks.
- Certain areas within Taunton and Minehead will be restricted (e.g. busy roads and pedestrian areas).
- Riding an EScooter on a pavement is illegal.
- Riding is permitted anywhere cycles are allowed.



- For your own safety, don't ride on roads with a speed limit above 30mph, unless there is a segregated cycle route.
- Watch out for pedestrians and other road users who may not be used to seeing EScooter.

### **How will the journeys and whereabouts of vehicles be managed?**

- Routes and parking zones are controlled via geofencing.
- EScooters will not be allowed to enter certain areas or their speed will be reduced.

### **Who will manage and oversee the trial?**

- Zipp Mobility will manage the scheme.
- Zipp have appointed a local area manager and team to charge, redistribute and repair scooters.
- SWT Council will oversee the contract with Zipp Mobility (**there is no cost to the Council**).

### **Who will be responsible for maintaining the fleet?**

- The area manager will charge, clean, service and maintain the scooters.
- Zipp Mobility have a local warehouse in Taunton.
- Operational staff are employed by Zipp and are local to the area.

### **Will the scooter user be insured?**

- Zipp Mobility insure the user for third party accidents and additional personal accident cover.

### **Are EScooters limited in speed?**

- Yes, the legal maximum speed of the EScooter is 15.5mph, although we have different speed zones for different areas of the town from 8mph to a maximum of 12mph.

### **How are new riders trained?**

- Zipp Mobility held training and education sessions for members of the public prior to go live, these sessions were open to all and attendance was very positive. Training is also provided within the App and online (and safety notices will be ongoing via the App and social media throughout the trial).

### **Are helmets provided?**

- Helmets were handed out to anyone who attended a training session (helmets are recommended but it's not a legal requirement).



## What safety features does the Zipp EScooter have?

- The EScooter has a bell and automatic lights.
- They have a wide base and thick, 10-inch airless tires that sit on a dual suspension system.
- All EScooters within the trial have to be compliant with the safety indicators provided by the DfT.
- Zipp EScooters are easily distinguished from privately owned scooters due to their yellow colour.
- Zipp branding is displayed on the front, side and back of the scooter.

## What about COVID-19 transmission?

- The Zipp team follow a COVID-19 disinfection process, which includes a morning and evening cleaning regime and warehouse procedure.

## How are EScooters identified?

- The EScooter are branded (bright yellow and purple)
- Each scooter has a unique registration number.

## How many scooters will be deployed?

- The Taunton scheme currently operates with circa 90 EScooters (growing from an initial fleet of 25 at go live)
- The Minehead trial started with 25 EScooters, this is under constant review and will grow according to public demand.

## Is the EScooter approved for use?

- Yes, all EScooters being used on the trial have been approved by the DfT.

## Are Zipp Mobility an approved operator?

- Yes, the operator Zipp Mobility has been approved by the DfT.

## When can I use an EScooter?

- The Taunton trial went live on 30th October 2020
- The Minehead trial went live on 5th June 2021
- You can hire and ride a Zipp EScooter between the hours of 06:30am and 10:30pm. These times may be changed at any time based on demand.

## Are private EScooters now legal too?

- No, private EScooters remain illegal to use in the UK, apart from on private land.



- Avon and Somerset Police have the powers to confiscate any private EScooters that are being used illegally, and they will be destroyed.
- Avon and Somerset Police also have the powers to fine users and issue points onto driving licences.
- Current law indicates that EScooter are under the same category as mopeds therefore the same road laws apply.