



Dear all,

I am writing to provide an update on **Operation Gears**, a targeted campaign to tackle serious organised crime, robbery and ASB linked to the illegal use of two-wheeled vehicles, including electric motorcycles, scooters and non-compliant e-bikes, which launched in July 2025.

As with all major cities, Liverpool is experiencing a boom in electric bikes and electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs). Whilst this is seen by many as an alternative to public transport and the increased cost of vehicles, this has undoubtedly presented a problem whereby electric bikes / EAPCs are reported as a dominant form of transport, many do not understand the legalities in relation to these bikes and alongside the education, there will be those who inherently utilise these for criminality and target vulnerable users.

Merseyside Police are committed to tackling the increased threat and risk posed by EAPCs and electric bikes but in doing so, education is needed for those using them.

A large portion of riders are young people, sometimes illegally dependent on their age and the absence of a substantial driver's licence. More importantly, they are leaving themselves vulnerable to being targeted for the bikes which are seen as a high-value item.

We have seen a re-occurring trend of Merseyside cohort of males aged between 11-17 years being the vulnerable target group and we are committed to safeguarding where possible.

There have been many reports of various crime that are crosscut with electric bikes being involved and we do not want any of our Merseyside young people to become a victim of any crime.



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We have continued to enhance knowledge and education to provide a better understanding of laws and regulations that govern the use of these EAPCs and electric bikes despite numerous social media and news reports.

This letter intends to seek your continued support to educate yourselves and your children.

With this education; we have focused on, the roads become safer for both adults and especially children, but also pedestrians, as we recognise some who ride electric bikes, do so on pavements, endangering the safety of others and secondly; to reduce the number of victims associated with EAPCs / electric bikes including road traffic accidents, theft, and robbery, which have an added impact on both our NHS and Mersey Fire and rescue service.

The safety also extends not just when riding the bike but storage of bikes as some batteries can become unstable which has sadly caused house fires, some fatal.

Whilst the continual education has seen some real positive changes within the schools' settings, there is still recent evidence of parents not understanding the impact and actively purchasing these two-wheeled vehicles for children.

When investigations arise, there may be no alternative but to make parents accountable for children, and we will seek, to prosecute for offences relating to the use, cause and permit of these vehicles, where appropriate.

Identifying an illegal

ELECTRICALLY ASSISTED PEDAL CYCLES (EAPCs)

Electric motor mounted to the front or rear wheel (or under the pedals) to provide electric drive without pedalling



Twist and go throttle and accelerator

Battery mounted to the frame with zip ties or other methods

You can ride an electric bike if you're 14 or over, as long as it meets certain requirements. These electric bikes are known as 'electrically assisted pedal cycles' (EAPCs). It must show either:

- The power output
- The manufacturer of the motor
- The battery's voltage
- The maximum speed of the bike

It's electric motor:

- Must have a maximum power output of 250 watts

If a bike meets the EAPC requirements, it's classed as a normal pedal bike. This means you can ride it:

- On cycle paths and anywhere else pedal bikes are allowed.

Any electric bike that does not meet the EAPC rules is classed as a motorcycle or moped and needs to be registered and taxed.

You'll need a driving licence to ride one and you must wear a crash helmet.

Identifying an illegal

OFF-ROAD ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLE



**SOLD FOR OFF-ROAD USE ONLY
(PRIVATE LAND ONLY IF THE RIDER HAS PERMISSION)**

This is an electric motorcycle.

Some of the most well-known manufacturers of off-road electric motorcycles would include SUR-RON, Talaria, Bultaco, Stealth etc.

Identifying an illegal **POWERED SCOOTERS**



External company BOLT (you may spot them as the green scooters around Merseyside) are the only road-legal versions of the powered scooters.

- All powered scooters are classified as Personal Light Electric Vehicles (PLEVs)
- The only place privately owned scooters can be used is on private land (with the landowners' permission)
- If used on the road or in a public place, they are treated as motor vehicles

We continue to tackle the issue from a policing perspective but work closely alongside partner agencies as we recognise that we need assistance beyond the police to tackle this upward trend.

I am sure you agree, to ensure the safety of your children, is paramount and with that, I hope that with this bit of education, parents and guardians can make better choices and enable the safety of themselves and others.

If you have any information about the use, storage or selling of two-wheeled vehicles you believe to be illegal, please let us know.



Kind Regards
Sergeant Carly Slinger
Prevention Hub
Merseyside Police



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