



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Housing Services

A guide to e-scooters and e-bike safety



We recognise that e-scooters and e-bikes are becoming increasingly popular.

If you use an e-scooter or e-bike, it's important to think about how best to store it. This will keep your vehicle safe – and more importantly, it will keep you and your neighbours safe. There are only certain mobility vehicles that can be safely stored in your home, the majority should be stored and charged away from your home to reduce fire risks.

Inappropriate storage and charging of e-scooters and e-bikes can increase the chances of trips and falls, increase fire risks, and could hamper escape routes.

Please remember that they can be dangerous to other members of the public if they are not operated properly and carefully so you should always use them and store them safely.

Why are e-scooters and e-bikes potentially dangerous?

Most e-bikes and e-scooters are powered by lithium-ion batteries, which can be charged in the home. The use of these batteries in a wide range of household products is becoming increasingly common. You can find them not only on e-scooters and e-bikes but in lots of other home devices such as a laptop, a tablet or a mobile phone.

On occasions, these batteries can fail catastrophically, they can 'explode' and can also lead to a rapidly developing fire and poisonous fumes.



What advice can you give me about charging my e-scooter or e-bike?

We recommend you follow the advice below:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when charging, and always unplug your charger when it's finished charging.
- Never charge an e-scooter or e-bike if the battery or battery charger is showing any signs of damage.
- Never charge or store e-scooters and e-bikes in communal areas of residential buildings or on fire exit routes.
- Allow your e-scooter and e-bike battery time to cool down before starting the recharge process – 15 to 30 minutes is the minimum recommended time.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms in your home; you should test these regularly to ensure they are working.
- Charge batteries whilst you are awake and alert so if a fire should occur you can respond quickly. Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.
- Always use the manufacturer approved charger for the product, and if you spot any signs of wear and tear or damage, buy an official replacement charger for your product from a reputable seller.
- Do not cover chargers or battery packs when charging, as this could lead to overheating or even a fire.
- Do not charge batteries or store your e-bike or e-scooter near combustible or flammable materials.
- Do not overcharge your battery – check the manufacturer's instructions for charge times.
- Do not overload socket outlets or use inappropriate extension leads (use uncoiled extensions and ensure the lead is suitably rated for what you are plugging in to it).
- Register your product with the manufacturer to validate any warranties – batteries are usually included in warranties. Registering makes it easier for manufacturers to contact you in the event of safety or recall information.

Where should I store my e-bike/scooter?

You should not store your e-bike or e-scooter inside your home, this is the best way to stay safe and avoid a fire in your home.

You must not store or charge e-bikes and e-scooters on escape routes or in communal areas. If there's a fire, it can affect your ability to escape.

We carry out checks of communal areas and any items stored or being charged in communal areas will be removed.

You should always store e-bikes and e-scooters and their batteries in a cool place. Avoid storing them in excessively hot or cold areas.

Follow manufacturer's instructions for the storage and maintenance of lithium-ion batteries if they are not going to be used for extended periods of time.

I'm thinking of buying a e-scooter or e-bike, what should I consider?

You should buy e-bikes, e-scooters and chargers and batteries from reputable retailers.

Many fires involve counterfeit electrical goods. Items which don't meet British or European standards pose a huge fire risk and while genuine chargers (or battery packs) may cost more, it's not worth putting your life at risk and potentially destroying your home by buying a fake charger.

If buying an e-bike conversion kit, purchase from a reputable seller and check that it complies with British or European standards. Take particular care if buying from online auction or fulfilment platforms. Also be aware that if buying separate components, you should check that they are compatible.

Register your product with the manufacturer to validate any warranties – batteries are usually included in warranties. Registering makes it easier for manufacturers to contact you in the event of safety or recall information.

Check any products you have bought are not subject to a product recall. You can do this by checking Electrical Safety First's website (www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk) or the government website www.gov.uk/guidance/product-recalls-and-alerts.

We recommend your e-scooter or e-bike is suitably maintained and tested on a yearly basis. Any spare parts such as charging cables should be purchased from your vehicle provider to ensure that approved parts are used which will help to reduce the fire risk.



Do I need insurance?

If you've got an e-scooter or e-bike, you'll need to insure it.

Your insurance should cover theft, as well as injury to yourself and other people. If you damage our property, we'll claim for the cost through your insurance company. If you don't have insurance, you'll be charged by us for the costs involved in fixing the damage.

If you would like to know more about the RSA Tenants Insurance scheme please go to www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/manage-your-home/your-home/home-contents-insurance

How can my battery become damaged?

Batteries can be damaged by dropping them or crashing e-bikes or e-scooters. Where the battery is damaged, it can overheat and catch fire without warning. Check your battery regularly for any signs of damage and if you suspect it is damaged it should be replaced and should not be used or charged.

Where can I safely dispose of batteries?

If you need to dispose of a damaged or end of life battery, don't dispose of it in your household waste or normal recycling. These batteries, when punctured or crushed, can cause fires in bin lorries, recycling and waste centres. Your e- bike or e- scooter manufacturer may offer a recycling service or you can find more information around local battery recycling centres at Darlington BC - Recycling - recycle right (www.darlington.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/recycling-recycle-right).

What about visitors with e-scooters or e-bikes?

As a tenant you are responsible for ensuring any guests to your home use their e-scooter or e-bike safely and responsibly. They should not cause damage, obstructions or put anyone's safety at risk when visiting you.

Visiting guests are not permitted to use any communal area for storing or charging their e-scooter or e-bike.

You will be recharged if your visitor damages any Council owned property.

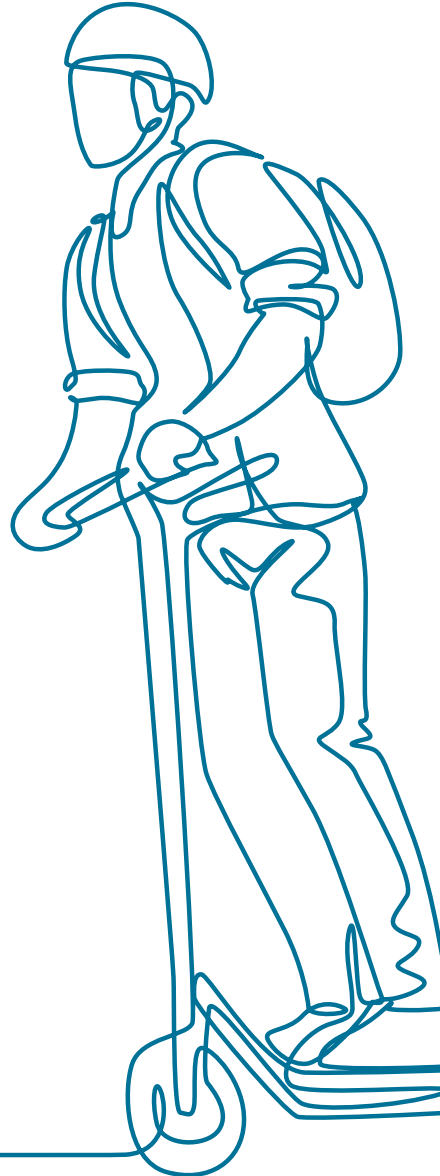
What should I do if I have a fire from my e-bike or e-scooter?

In the event of an e-bike, e-scooter or lithium-ion battery fire, do not attempt to extinguish the fire. Get out, stay out, call 999.

Where can find more advice and guidance?

Further information can be found here www.gov.uk/electric-bike-rules and Powered transporters - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and www.gov.uk/guidance/buy-safe-be-safe-avoid-e-bike-and-e-scooter-fires

Further information can also be found around lithium-ion batteries is available from Welcome I County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (ddfire.gov.uk)





UK Government

BUY SAFE
BE SAFE



HOME
SWEET
HOME

DON'T GET BURNT BY E-BIKE FIRE RISKS

- ✓ Get a professional to carry out e-bike conversions
- ✓ Use manufacturer recommended batteries and chargers
- ✓ Only buy from trusted sellers

For guidance visit gov.uk/buy-safe



Housing Services contact details



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