

PRESS COMMENT



7 November 2023

Motor Accident Solicitors Society (MASS) comment: The King's Speech and the absence of e-scooter legislation

The absence of any legislation in the King's Speech on e-scooters is another missed opportunity to address this issue. There were 1,437 casualties and 12 deaths to June 2022 in collisions involving e-scooters. A new regulatory regime for e-scooters and other low-speed zero-emission vehicles has been promised for some time now, but has yet to appear. In our evidence to the Transport Select Committee, MASS called for the introduction of a range of technical standards around speed, wheel size and the compulsory wearing of safety helmets for e-scooters. Research from the UK Trauma Audit and Research Network suggests that 28% of e-scooter riders involved in accidents in 2021 had the most severe head injuries (twice the rate of cyclists) and only 7% of e-scooter riders wore a helmet (compared to 47% of cyclists).

Sue Brown, Chair of the Motor Accident Solicitors Society, said:

“Having ducked this opportunity to bring forward legislation on e-scooters, we must hope that whatever government is in power following next year's general election will finally grasp the issue. Getting to grips with the regulation of e-scooters is long overdue and in the meantime, both e-scooters riders and pedestrians are being injured in their hundreds.

The Motor Insurers Bureau told the Transport Committee that accidents involving uninsured e-scooters are adding 3% or 4% to motor insurance premiums. At a time of record insurance premiums, everything must be done to limit increases.

It is high time that the Department for Transport brought forward legislation and then a full debate can be had about the details of precisely what the regulatory framework should look like.

There are thorny issues to resolve around road tax, registration plates and insurance, but despite the difficult enforcement issues, there are strong arguments in favour of all of these. With the number of deaths and serious injuries rising, we should not allow convenience and affordability to be considered above wellbeing and life.”