

E-scooter brands roll out trials in the UK

Europe's e-scooter providers Voi and Lime will be running exclusive trials of e-scooters in UK cities to encourage workers to go back to the office in a safer and more environmentally friendly way.

As part of the government's initiative to encourage people to commute in a more environment-friendly manner, Swedish e-scooter designer Voi and micromobility leader Lime have been selected to run e-scooter trials on the streets of Northampton, Kettering and Milton Keynes.

In Northampton alone over 200 deaths per year can be attributed to air pollution with 45% of CO2 emissions coming from road transport. The partnership between Voi and Northamptonshire County Council will aim to reduce CO2 emissions by 400 tonnes across the region by August 2021.

This decision will also impact the local economy as 50 jobs will be created as part of the trial. Within weeks, Voi will be bringing a fourth-generation e-scooter, the Voyager 4, to the UK streets.

This trial is part of the Smart Move Northamptonshire initiative to promote smart technology and solutions brought by companies such as Voi and:

1. Help manage the transport network
2. Provide better information to users
3. Offer more choice as to how they travel

“We are delighted to announce that Northamptonshire will be one of the first regions in the UK where people can use a Voi e-scooter and enjoy the benefits of this liberating new form of transport. People are keen to get out of their cars and want greener transport choices. Cities that are serious about cutting pollution and congestion see that this is a huge opportunity to introduce a mode of transport that can radically improve how we get around urban areas.” – Fredrik Hjelm, co-founder and CEO of Voi Technology

The trial, now approved by ministers, will enable residents and visitors to the area to leave their cars behind and benefit from a new, convenient and low-carbon way to travel.

“As normal life resumes across the UK and people return to workplaces and shops, the need for quick, convenient and COVID-safe transport is increasing. Cars no longer suit the way we live now. 60% of car journeys in the UK are between 1 to 3 miles, significantly adding to congestion. We estimate that 1 in 5 of these journeys across Northamptonshire could be replaced by low-carbon e-scooters with a minimum 24 month lifespan. E-scooters provide a

*compelling alternative that will outrun the car.” –
Richard Corbett, UK GM of Voi Technology*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XwT9sMWZ8A>

With this exclusive contract, the Swedish e-scooter provider is now live in 45 regions and 11 countries.

Within the first three months of operation, Voi will share recommendations to the Northamptonshire County Council related to any additional infrastructure requirements – based on user feedback and user journey data.

To prevent the spread of coronavirus across the region, Voi is rolling out Shieldex Copper-Tape tape on handlebars, designed to kill 99.98% of coronavirus on contact, and all scooters will be disinfected every 24 hours. Voi is also providing COVID-19 information and advice in its app.

Overall, across the UK, more than 50 councils and regional authorities are planning e-scooter pilots, which can run for 12 months. Cities including Liverpool, West Midlands (including Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Dudley), Cambridge and Peterborough, Milton Keynes and Southampton were among the places to express interest in running a pilot.

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Lime will deploy 500 of its scooters across Milton Keynes. Lime e-scooters are now available alongside its e-bikes, making the City the UK's first and only to offer a multi-modal service.

Milton Keynes is the first of many UK cities expected to partner with Lime, the global leader in micromobility. The company has predicted its e-scooter service in the UK will save 3.65M car trips and 970.9 metric tons of CO2 annually – the annual energy consumption of 112 households and 10K car journeys avoided per day.

Over the next five years, this figure is expected to rise to nearly 11M car trips, reducing CO2 emissions by almost 3,000 tons annually.

As part of the launch, Lime, which operates in 120 cities across more than 30 countries, will also be helping workers across the UK ditch unnecessary car journeys and get back to the office in a green, socially distanced way, as it activates its 'first commute' programme.

Throughout September, any worker returning to the office for the first time will be offered a free e-scooter ride to work. Key workers will receive unlimited free e-scooter and e-bike rides.

“We’re incredibly excited to bring our service to Milton Keynes, making it the first and only e-scooter and e-bike service in the UK. Every day, millions of journeys are taken by cars that could be replaced by e-scooters. With traffic inching closer to pre-lockdown levels every week, we’re proud that Milton Keynes is leading by example, and excited to show the rest of the UK that there is a necessary place for

e-scooters on our roads.” – Florence Milner, General Manager UK and Ireland at Lime

To help new riders get to grips with the e-scooters, Lime is launching a series of ‘first ride academies’, which aim to teach users how to scoot and park safely and responsibly.

“At a time when residents are in need of safe, environmentally friendly and socially-distant means of transport, we’re thrilled to be the first UK city to provide this type of large-scale e-scooter trial. We’re pleased to continue working with Lime and are looking forward to seeing the people of Milton Keynes take advantage of the on-street e-scooter service. This will provide an important new travel option to residents and visitors to Milton Keynes and we look forward to working with Lime to study the results from the trial.” – Cllr Peter Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes Council

As per Government regulations, users will be able to ride Lime e-scooters on cycle lanes and roads, and they will be available to hire throughout Milton Keynes via the Lime app. Lime e-scooters will cost £1 to unlock, and 20p per minute thereafter.

Lime e-scooters and e-bikes are powered with 100% renewable energy through Lime’s partnership with Octopus Energy.

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