

The scourge of electric scooters

Police chiefs are facing fresh calls to clamp down on the illegal use of electric scooters after 16 recorded accidents in the last year.

Police Scotland said there were 16 accidents in the 12 months up to 31 March involving e-scooters, which are illegal to ride in a public place in Scotland, including any park or town centre, cycle lanes, footpaths or public roads. It is however permissible to ride them on land which is owned by the rider or on private land with permission from the landowner.

Despite the legal position, e-scooters can be bought legally and have become common in towns and cities across the Lothians and Scotland as a whole, sparking concerns about pedestrian safety.

Police Scotland has been criticised repeatedly for failing to enforce the law, with riders of all ages openly flouting the ban, and have insisted that they are not a major issue nationally.

Scottish Conservative deputy justice spokesperson, Sharon Dowey MSP, said: "We know that these scooters could cause accidents and put the public at risk, so it is concerning that their use is becoming more widespread.

"The use of these scooters is illegal and the SNP must provide our police force with the resources they need to stop these

crimes and prevent more accidents.”

Unlike in parts of England there are no trial schemes in Scotland, yet youngsters well below driving age are routinely seen riding them in public.

Police Scotland said local divisions across Scotland do carry out operations in relation to e-scooters and related anti-social behaviour within communities.

In a Freedom of Information (FOI) response, they said: “Initiatives to tackle misuse are generally local ones in response to specific challenges and they are generally undertaken by divisional officers, supported by roads policing colleagues where appropriate.”

E-scooters are classified as Personal Light Electric Vehicles (PLEVs) so they are treated as motor vehicles and are subject to the same legal requirements as any other motor vehicle, requiring insurance, a valid driving licence, and compliance with various construction and use requirements.

Use of the machines, which can hit up to 30mph – faster if modified – have resulted in a number of injuries.

In September, a dad criticised reckless e-scooter riders who left his young son in hospital with cuts and bruises after a high speed hit and run in Dundee, while in April last year a man was taken to hospital after a two vehicle crash involving an electric scooter in Edinburgh.

In August an electric scooter crash in Oban, Argyll, led to two men being taken to hospital, with one believed seriously injured, while in July two 15-year-olds were reported to the Youth Justice Assessor in connection with a single vehicle crash in Monifieth, Angus. The 15-year-old rider was taken to Ninewells Hospital in Dundee.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: “E-scooters can only be

legally used on private land with permission from the landowner.

“Their illegal use can impact local communities and anyone with concerns should contact us so an appropriate policing response can be provided. We also urge anyone purchasing an e-scooter to be aware of the law and the implications of using one in a public place.”

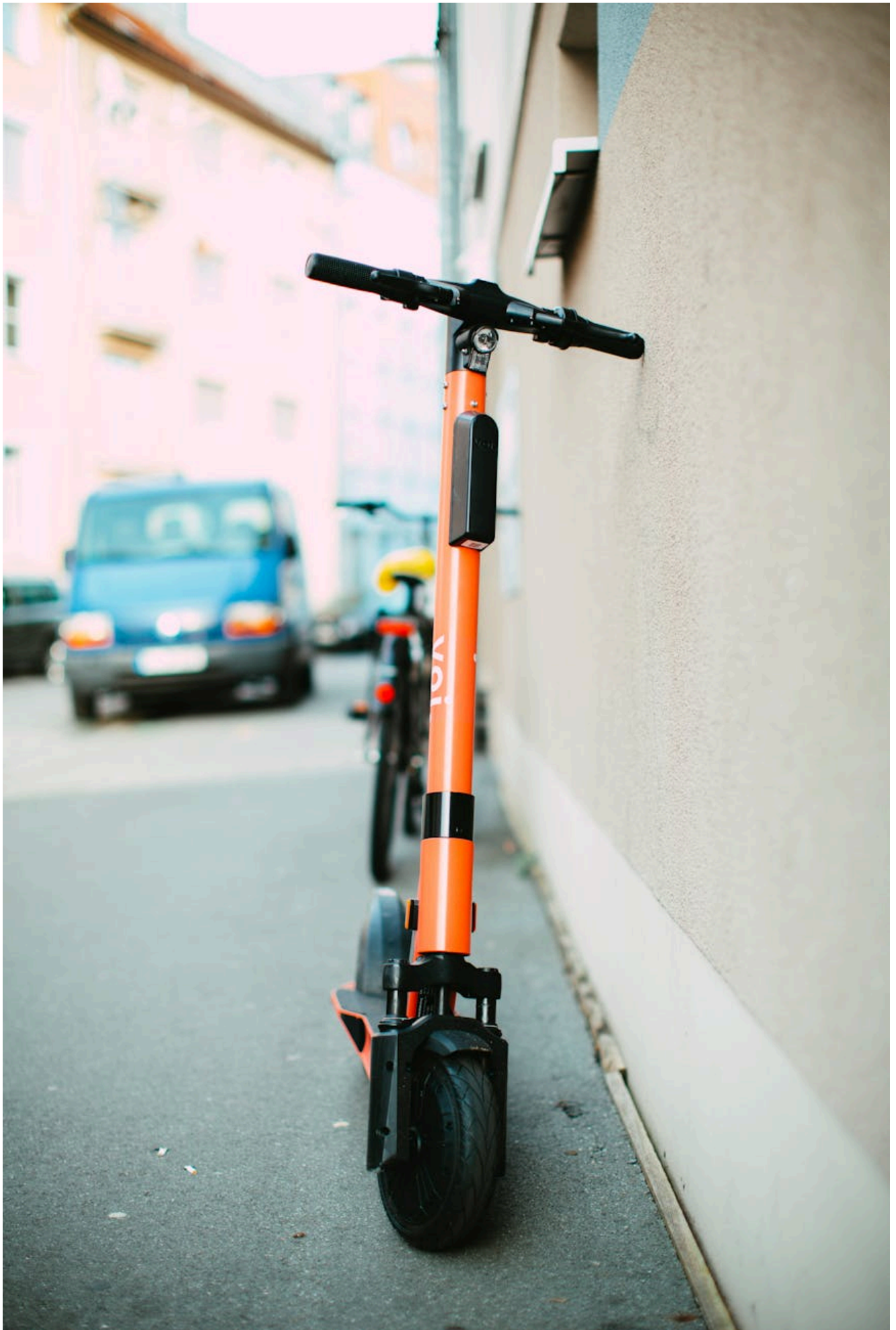


Photo by Markus Spiske on [Pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)