

Expectations for WECA Micro-Mobility Contractors



Bristol Walking Alliance would like to see a number of issues addressed by those bidding for the new Micro-Mobility contract in the West of England Combined Authority area.

Bristol Walking Alliance has been a member of the WECA Equalities Group for over two years, during the e-scooter trial. We have frequently commented on the issues raised by the trial. We hope that, in the next stage of the trial due to begin in June 2023, those bidding for the micro-mobility contract will offer solutions to the following issues.

Education about and enforcement of good user behaviour

There are a number of poor e-scooter user behaviours that have become apparent during the last two years. Those that particularly affect pedestrians include:

- Riding on pavements.
- Riding too fast in areas where use is shared between pedestrians and cyclists/scooters.
- Leaving scooters where they cause an obstruction.

We hope a future contractor will:

- Provide mandatory initial education and regular reminders to users about good behaviour.
- Make it easy for third parties to report poor riding behaviour, including easily identifying the vehicle involved.
- Make it easy for third parties to report badly parked vehicles, or those causing an obstruction.
- Give feedback when a problem is reported so that the person reporting knows action has been taken.
- Enforce sanctions against those who exhibit poor behaviour, including banning those who are repeat offenders.

Location of parking spaces

We fully support the objective that micro-mobility parking spaces should be on the road, not on the pavement. We would like to see a similar approach to that used by car clubs, where on-road spaces are rented from the council by the contractor and reserved for their users.

There may be some locations where parking is possible on pavements without causing an obstruction or trip hazard, for example on pavement build-outs. Councils should agree such locations in consultation with equalities groups representing those who may be adversely affected. Parking areas to the rear of pavements should be deprecated since they encourage users to ride over the pavement when leaving or entering the parking space.

Demarcation of parking spaces

It is essential that parking spaces are demarcated in a way that is both visible to users and can be understood by the visually impaired. It is not sufficient to rely on geo-fencing and virtual spaces.

Such demarcation should be the basis on which good user parking behaviour is adjudicated. Users who park outside demarcated parking spaces should be sanctioned.

Removal of vehicles causing obstructions

It must be easy for third parties to report vehicles that are not parked within demarcated areas, and contractors should follow-up swiftly to remove badly parked vehicles.

Support for council provision of infrastructure

Unitary authority council transport budgets are inadequate to provide micro-mobility infrastructure, including officer time both to implement modification of Traffic Regulation Orders for on-road parking spaces and to consult on and implement other demarcated parking spaces.

We hope that contractors will build into their financial models the provision of financial support to councils to provide the necessary infrastructure.

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