

ACCESS & INCLUSION FORUM

E Bikes and E Scooters – Free rein or reign of terror for many?

Euphoria about the cleaner, greener, quieter future offered by the introduction of e-bikes and e-scooters means that some of the real-life experiences (including injuries and fatalities) are being ignored.

No-one – least of all disabled and older people – want to stand in the way of innovation but we should all be entitled to evidence based assurances that they have been properly assessed and that legislation will be in place both to monitor and enforce against improper or dangerous use. Without such assurances, we risk turning many town centres into no go areas for people with low vision or mobility difficulties. Already – while private use of e-scooters remains illegal on pavements and the highway they are widely used not only by individuals but also increasingly by delivery companies.

In Germany, a recent successful prosecution was brought by the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired of North Rhine-Westphalia against Münster City Council for failing to ensure that e scooters were not left cluttering the pavements where they cause a major tripping hazard for older and

vision impaired pedestrians. The Court ruled that adopting a ‘free floating’ model of e scooter use in which scooters can be left at any location was illegal.

Similar enforcement issues arise with e-bikes. Many are now being used by delivery companies in place of pedal bikes or motor bikes and are regularly seen on pavements as well as roads at speeds of up to 40 mph. It is important to note too that neither e bikes nor e scooters have any audible warning device to alert pedestrians of their approach.

Without number plates there is little scope to monitor or enforce against dangerous behaviour .

The result is that many older and disabled people are simply losing the confidence that they can go out safely in their local area. And before anyone says, yes but there haven't been that many reported accidents, let's consider , first, how many fatalities does it take before this is taken seriously and, second, fear of falling or injury is a very powerful deterrent for many older people. And we know that once independent outdoor mobility is lost it is very difficult to

regain. If that happens, the cost to mental and physical health and wellbeing is immense and so too is the increased cost to the state of bringing support and services to those who are housebound.

This is not about blocking innovation. It is rather about making sure that we do not allow the fervour for green solutions to overtake the need for proper laws and effective enforcement so that the pavements remain safe for those who need them most.

As a blind colleague commented: “When I was first being taught to use a white cane, we learnt that the pavement was a safe place as opposed to the road. Gradually over the years with the advent of overhanging foliage, street clutter, pavement parking, cyclists, and stranded bikes and now all the vehicles connected with the e-revolution, the pavements are no longer a safe haven for pedestrians, but rather something much more akin to the slow lane of a low carbon, low noise, but very high-risk e-motorway.”

Ann Frye FCILT
Chair, Access & Inclusion Forum

CILT GOLF FORUM

In September 2001 Golf Society Member, John Winter, was inspired to organise a 3-day tour to North-West France. Thanks to an unfailing mix of camaraderie, quality accommodation, excellent cuisine and quality golf courses (including Open Championship venues), annual overseas and UK tours have been well supported by the membership ever since.

From 4th to 6th September this year's tour heads up to Norfolk, staying at Sprowston Hall on the outskirts of Norwich. We will play the cliff top course at Sheringham, the home course of our past treasurer Chris Sturman who has assured us that the course and the welcome will be second to none. On Day two, we travel south to play Thetford; a James Braid designed heathland classic. It comes with a big reputation and is a relatively short drive away from the hotel. On the final day we steel ourselves to tackle Hunstanton that is ranked #66 in Golf Monthly's GB&I Top 100. It is an absolute joy to play and links golf at its very best. On Days 1 and 2, we will be playing an 18 hole individual and a



team stableford competition. On the final day we will be playing an 18 hole individual stableford competition.

Anyone interested in joining the tour should contact the organiser, John Winter, on 07484 706098 or john.winter@redacre.co.uk, or via the Golf Society website: www.ciltgolf.co.uk

Match versus the Oil Industry Golf Society

This is the oldest regular event played at our founding venue, Denham Golf Club. The Golf Society founding captain, John Smith, was a member at Denham Golf Club and of the Oil Industry Golf Society. He arranged this annual match which has been played since 1995 and was originally sponsored by BP.

Teams are made up of 8 players (4 pairs) and matches are played over 18 holes as a 4BBB Stableford, followed by the famous Denham GC carvery lunch (jacket & tie required).

This event is great fun and provides another excellent opportunity for networking with members of both societies. After 2 successive wins for the Oil Industry, last year's match was halved. Let's go one better this year with a win.

All CILT Golf Society members are eligible to bid for a place in what we hope will be a team that is up to the challenge.