

Identifying illegal

Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (EAPC), Electric Motorcycles and Scooters

Merseyside is currently seeing an upward trend in the use of illegally modified electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs) and electric motorcycles.

Merseyside Police are committed to tackling the increased threat and risk posed by EAPCs and electric motorcycles but in doing so, education is needed for those using them.

A large portion of riders are young people, sometimes illegal, dependent on their age and therefore without a substantial driver's licence.

DID YOU KNOW?

Identifying an illegal

ELECTRICALLY ASSISTED PEDAL CYCLES (EAPCs)

Electric motor mounted to the front or rear wheel (or under the pedals) to provide electric drive without pedalling



Twist and go throttle and accelerator

Battery mounted to the frame with zip ties or other methods



MERSEYSIDE
POLICE
Putting our Community First



OPERATION
GEARS

You can ride an electric bike if you're 14 or over, as long as it meets certain requirements. These electric bikes are known as 'electrically assisted pedal cycles' (EAPCs).

Any modifications to a legal EAPC render the whole bicycle outside of the criteria and will be treated as a motorcycle or moped.

For example:

- if a person removes the pedals
- If a person makes modifications to the motor to increase power output
- If a person removes manufacturer labels showing the power output / manufacturer, battery voltage / maximum speed.

Any electric bike that does not meet the EAPC rules is classed as a motorcycle or moped and needs to be registered and taxed.

Identifying an illegal

OFF-ROAD ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLE



MERSEYSIDE
POLICE
Putting our Community First



OPERATION
GEARS

You'll need a driving licence to ride one and you must wear a crash helmet. The bike must also be type-approved if either:

- it can be propelled without pedalling (a 'twist and go' EAPC)
- it does not meet the EAPC rules

Merseyside Police are concerned that young people are leaving themselves vulnerable to being targeted for the EAPC and electric motorcycles which are seen as a high-value item. There have been many reports of various crimes involving EAPC's and electric motorcycles and the level of violence is increasing, we do not want any young people on Merseyside to become a victim of any crime.

WHAT MERSEYSIDE POLICE ARE DOING?

On Wednesday 9 July 2025 Merseyside Police launched Operation Gears, a targeted campaign to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour linked to the illegal use of two-wheeled vehicles, including electric motorcycles, e-scooters and non-compliant electric bikes.

The operation comes in response to a sharp rise in incidents involving these vehicles, which are increasingly being used in serious organised crime, including drug supply, robberies, and violent offences across Merseyside.

Operation Gears aims to disrupt this growing threat by seizing illegal vehicles, arresting offenders, and increasing patrols in hotspot areas to protect communities and prevent further harm. Visit the Merseyside Police website for more information.



OPERATION GEARS

You'll need a driving licence to ride one and you must wear a crash helmet. The bike must also be type-approved if either:

- it can be propelled without pedalling (a 'twist and go' EAPC)
- it does not meet the EAPC rules

Merseyside Police are concerned that young people are leaving themselves vulnerable to being targeted for the EAPC and electric motorcycles which are seen as a high-value item. There have been many reports of various crimes involving EAPC's and electric motorcycles and the level of violence is increasing, we do not want any young people on Merseyside to become a victim of any crime.

Operation Gears will take place across Merseyside, with Local Officers supporting from Wirral, Sefton, Liverpool, St Helens and Knowsley. Local Policing teams will be running regular operations to deal with those who cause danger and disorder on the region's roads and open spaces.

Targeted operations will focus in hotspot areas for e-bike criminality, with officers already stepping up patrols and seizing record numbers of illegal electric bikes, e-scooters and scramblers after they were used without insurance or a valid licence. Many have also been involved in other serious offences and road traffic collisions.

- In Wirral, 86 unregistered vehicles (e-bikes, e-scooters, and scramblers) have been seized since 1 January 2025.
- In Sefton, 64 unregistered vehicles (e-bikes, e-scooters, and scramblers) have been seized since 1 January 2025.
- In Liverpool, 208 unregistered vehicles (e-bikes, e-scooters, and scramblers) have been seized since 1 January 2025.
- In St Helens, 47 unregistered vehicles (e-bikes, e-scooters, and scramblers) have been seized since 1 January 2025.
- In Knowsley, 96 unregistered vehicles (e-bikes, e-scooters, and scramblers) have been seized since 1 January 2025.



MERSEYSIDE
POLICE
Putting our Community First



OPERATION
GEARS

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

How to keep you and your e-bike safe:

- Find and keep a record of the frame number. This usually stamped into the frame. This is an important number should your e-bike be stolen.
- Use a high-quality lock and secure your bike when not in use.
- Lock your bike at recognised secure cycle parking. It should be well lit and covered by CCTV.
- Take the same care to lock your bike securely at home as you would on the street.
- Register your bike with a security marking scheme such as Bike Register and consider fitting a GPS tracking device.
- Attend a free bike marking event where officers will mark your bike for free. Visit your local policing Facebook page for upcoming event details.
- At night display lights to the front and rear so that other road users can see you.
- Wear light clothes or a florescent vest and it's always advisable to wear a safety helmet.

Keep your child safe:

- Stick to well-lit routes
- Make sure mobile phones are charged
- Ensure you know what time your child is due home i.e. after school clubs, detention, social meet with friends
- If, your child is witness or victim, how to report any incident
- Open and honest conversations – road safety, personal safety
- Do not purchase an EAPC for a child under 14 years of age
- Utilise reporting mechanisms to inform the police of storage sites, ASB usage i.e. crime stoppers

Kind Regards

Sergeant Carly Slinger

Prevention Hub

Merseyside Police



**MERSEYSIDE
POLICE**
Putting our Community First



**OPERATION
GEARS**