

**BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
20 NOVEMBER 2023**

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Member Question

Question (1) – from Ellie Ann May

As we are not members of the Rivers and Canals Trust, will the Basingstoke Canal be introducing the ban of electric scooters on canal towpaths?

Response:

There are approximately 25 inland navigation authorities within the UK, each have different powers and rules governing the navigations they cover. Canal & River Trust are the largest of these authorities but have their own unique circumstances just like the others; they also cover some city centre locations such as London, Birmingham and Manchester where high levels of towpath use can lead to inter-user conflict.

The Basingstoke Canal is primarily governed by the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and an identical (except for geographic location) set of bylaws made by Surrey and Hampshire County Councils in 1995 under that Act.

E-scooters are currently classed as a “motor vehicle” within the meaning of the Road Traffic Act 1988 – it is an offence to ride them on any public road or pathway, or on private land without the landowner’s express permission. A number of limited trials of public hire e-scooters have been given special licence to operate in certain cities on a 2-year trial basis, but these do not cover the geographic extent of the Basingstoke Canal. The Basingstoke Canal’s bylaws further make it a specific offence to ride motorcycles or motor vehicles on Canal property with “reasonable excuse”.

It is therefore already an offence, under the Road Traffic Act and the Canal Bylaws, to ride an e-scooter on Basingstoke Canal property.

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