
# Council 10 October 2024

Meeting recording: [Council - Thursday, 10th October, 2024 6.00 pm (youtube.com)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aa_3flF3p18&t=3001s)

## Agenda item 8c. Motion – Lithium-ion battery safety

Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly common in many household products, including e-bikes and e-scooters, but they can pose a significant fire risk. The recent increase in fires caused by lithium-ion batteries demands that proactive steps are taken to address these risks and ensure the safety of our community.

This Council notes:

1. Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly prevalent in a range of household products, including e-bikes, e-scooters, smartphones and laptops.
2. The number of fires in the UK caused by lithium-ion batteries in e-scooters and e-bikes has increased by four times since 2020.
3. In July 2023, three people tragically lost their lives in a fire at Sackville Close, which was likely caused by a faulty e-bike battery.
4. Battery fires in waste disposal are at record levels, with over 1,200 fires at UK waste sites and bin lorries in 2023, an increase of 71% from 2022.
5. As of the beginning of August 2024, there had been seven bin lorry fires in Greater Cambridge in 2024, likely caused by batteries or electrical products.
6. In September 2023, Cambridge City Council [wrote to the government](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2023/09/14/council-appeals-to-government-to-raise-awareness-around-risks-of-e-bike-battery-fires) requesting an increased focus on the dangers of lithium-ion batteries in e-bikes and e-scooters, advocating for improved legislation, safety guidelines, and a public awareness campaign.
7. Cambridge City Council continues to work with the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service to raise awareness of the risk of, and prevent, battery fires.

This Council issues the following advice to residents in relation to battery safety:

* Always use manufacturer approved chargers and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for charging, storage and maintenance
* Charge batteries while awake and at home
* Do not overcharge batteries
* Store e-bikes and e-scooters in a safe, cool place with a closed door and a smoke alarm if possible
* Buy e-bikes and e-scooters from reputable dealers, and check they meet British or European standards. Remember that private e-scooters are currently illegal to ride on public roads and footpaths.
* Check batteries for signs of damage and replace if damaged
* Do not dispose of batteries in household waste or normal recycling
* Do not attempt to extinguish a fire caused by a lithium-ion battery but get out, stay out, and phone 999.

This Council resolves:

1. To write to Electrical Safety First and Lord Don Foster to express its support for [The Safety of Electric-Powered Micromobility Vehicles and Lithium Batteries Bill](https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/300bnbc1/the-safety-bill-updated.pdf), introduced to the House of Lords by Lord Don Foster. This Bill is promoted by Electrical Safety First, and supported by, among others, the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, and the Royal Society for Public Health.
2. To work through the Community Safety Partnership to gain a deeper understanding of data relating to fire risks from lithium-ion batteries in Cambridge, and to use this understanding to work together to mitigate risks.
3. To develop comprehensive safety guidance for Cambridge City Council staff on battery safety, including guidance on the safe use, storage, and disposal of lithium-ion batteries.
4. To work with the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service to run an awareness campaign focused on the safe disposal of batteries, particularly lithium-ion batteries.
5. To continue to disseminate to residents information on safe practice relating to lithium-ion batteries through *Cambridge Matters, Open Door*, and the Council’s website and social media channels.
6. To work with Council tenants to, wherever possible, provide them with safe spaces for charging e-bikes and e-scooters.

Notes

Electrical Safety First's Battery Safety Campaign: <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/battery-breakdown/battery-safety-campaign>

Full list of supporters of Electrical Safety First’s campaign as of May 2024: <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/pjxh54wy/supporters-may-2024.pdf>

House of Lords Debate 5 September 2024 on Lithium-Ion Battery Safety: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2024-09-06/debates/738EAE4C-F67B-4AF5-AA7A-94759672C9D0/details>

Cambridge City Council's Work on Battery Safety: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2023/09/14/council-appeals-to-government-to-raise-awareness-around-risks-of-e-bike-battery-fires>

Research on Battery Fires in Waste Sites: <https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/press-releases/over-1200-battery-fires-in-bin-lorries-and-waste-sites-across-the-uk-in-last-year/>