

Electric Powered Personal Vehicles (EPPV) Policy

Context

In the past year, the London Fire Brigade (LFB) has attended in the region of 200 fires involving e-bikes and e-scooters, with lithium-ion battery failures now one of the fastest-growing fire risks in London. These incidents often result in rapid fire spread, severe property damage and risk to life. Lambeth Council therefore places strong emphasis on the safe storage, charging and management of Electric Powered Personal Vehicles (EPPVs).

1.0 Aims of Policy

This policy outlines Lambeth Council's approach to managing the safe use, storage and charging of Electric Powered Personal Vehicles (EPPVs) such as mobility scooters, electric wheelchairs, e-bikes and e-scooters etc. within its housing stock.

It seeks to balance the Council's duty to promote independence and inclusion under the Equality Act 2010 with its fire safety responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Fire Safety Act 2021 and Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

2.0 Who is this policy for?

Lambeth Council staff, contractors, residents and visitors involved in managing, inspecting, or using EPPVs within Council housing.

3.0 Scope and Application

Applies to all residential properties owned or managed by Lambeth Council, including leasehold and temporary accommodation. Excludes Council fleet vehicles.

4.0 Policy Statements

General Approach

Lambeth Council recognises that EPPVs support independence but also present a fire risk.

- EPPVs must be stored and charged safely to prevent fire, explosion or obstruction of escape routes.
- Fire safety will take precedence where risks cannot be mitigated.
- Residents unsure about storage or charging should contact their Housing Officer or the Fire and Building Safety Team.
- Residents are encouraged to use the London Fire Brigade (LFB) Home Fire Safety Checker: www.london-fire.gov.uk/checker

Properties with Communal Areas

- EPPVs must not be stored or charged in communal areas, corridors, stairwells, or lobbies.
- Communal areas form part of escape routes and must remain clear.
- EPPVs incorrectly stored may be removed or disabled by Lambeth Council.
- Any proposed communal storage or charging areas must be fire risk assessed and approved by the Fire and Building Safety Team.

Properties without Communal Areas

For dwellings without shared entrances, EPPV use and charging are acceptable if safe and unobstructive.

- Devices must not be charged overnight or left unattended.
- Place EPPVs on hard, non-combustible surfaces away from combustibles.
- Faulty batteries or chargers must be disconnected and disposed of safely.
- Keep flat entrance fire doors in good condition.

Balconies

EPPVs, including e-bikes and e-scooters, must not be stored or charged on balconies. Balconies are not fire-protected spaces, and lithium-ion battery fires can rapidly spread to external façades, posing significant risk to residents and the building.

Maintenance and Safety Checks

Residents must keep EPPVs in safe working order. Each EPPV and charger should receive an **annual service and Portable Appliance Test (PAT)** by a qualified person. The Council may request evidence where concerns arise.

Battery Charging

- Charge strictly per manufacturer's guidance.
- Only manufacturer-approved chargers and batteries must be used.
- Never use counterfeit or damaged batteries or chargers.
- Council charging points will only be provided if purpose-built, fire-separated and approved.
- Report smoke or overheating immediately by calling 999.

Best Practice:

- Plug chargers directly into wall sockets; avoid extension leads or adaptors.
- Allow batteries to cool for 15–30 minutes before charging.
- Charge on hard, non-combustible surfaces in ventilated areas.
- Fit smoke or heat detectors where charging occurs.
- Never charge overnight or unattended.

Insurance and Liability

Residents are advised to obtain **personal insurance** for fire, theft and liability. If an EPPV causes fire or damage, the owner may be liable for costs which can be **recharged** if uninsured, per the Council's Recharge Policy.

Fire Risk Assessment

Fire Risk Assessments will consider the presence, storage and charging of EPPVs and record any required actions within the building's fire safety plan. This includes specific arrangements for mobility scooter storage in sheltered and supported housing schemes.

Communication and Awareness

The policy will be available at www.lambeth.gov.uk and summarised in resident newsletters and notices. Housing Officers and Building Safety Managers will periodically remind residents of rules and updates.

Enforcement

Non-compliance may result in EPPV removal and enforcement under tenancy or lease conditions.

5.0 Equalities

Lambeth Council supports residents with mobility needs and will consider reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act.

6.0 Legislation /other information

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Equality Act 2010
- Lambeth Council Recharge Policy
- London Fire Brigade – Home Fire Safety Checker
- Zurich Municipal – eScooters and eBikes Fire Safety
- NFCC – Guidance on Mobility Scooters and Lithium-Ion Batteries
- Lambeth Council Fire Safety Policy