

the smart get one

BARGAIN WHEELS



★★★★★

Ezee Liv — £595
www.50cycles.com
01509 266 656

Excellent value, simple and practical

A surprisingly gutsy bike from Ezee, with a 200W front hub motor, the Liv comes equipped with lights, a luggage rack, mudguards and a kick-stand. The mudguards are a bit flimsy, but otherwise the bike's overall quality is good, if heavy at more than 28kg. The Liv also has suspension forks, which work surprisingly well. As with all Ezee bikes, the Liv is fitted with a huge, squishy saddle, which many riders will probably replace. Three-speed hub gears keep maintenance to a minimum, but the lack of a very low gear means steep hills can be hard work. A 370Wh lithium battery gives good range:



ride the bike gently and 30 miles should be within reach from a full charge, which takes about five hours. The motor is more primitive than the type found on some bikes, but it works well, making the Liv an excellent, inexpensive all-rounder.

DUTCH DELIGHT

Gazelle Easy Glider — £1,460
www.gazelle.nl/uk.html
00 31 313 429 911

Stately, beautifully made, very Dutch

This heavy (28kg) bike comes with every conceivable accessory, from high-quality lights and an adjustable handlebar stem to a full chain guard and a built-in lock. Brakes are of the roller variety — not the most powerful, but at least they're weatherproof. delivered at the Easy Glider's ped arrangement as the motor spins a comfortable lick even when climbing in a low gear. There is no throttle instead the Gazelle's pedelec system

HIGH-TECH SPORT

★★★★☆



Airminal Joey Move — £1,500
www.airninalfoldingbikes.com 01954 782 020

Huge fun with clever drive system

Based on the lively Airminal Joey folding bike, a machine that always puts a smile on its rider's face, the Move has a clever drive system. Power is supplied by a 250W BionX motor, and regenerative braking tops up the battery when you brake. If you feel in need of a workout, you can even set the system to charge while you pedal along, which adds work, of course, although the 16kg Move is one of the lightest electric bikes around. You have to provide your own pedals (from £15), and fit mudguards and a rack for everyday commuting, and be warned that the Move is not ideal for steep hills, although it is exceptionally quick if the rider is happy to contribute some effort. The range of the lithium battery depends on how the bike is ridden and the terrain, but 20-plus miles should be comfortably achieved, particularly if you use the regenerative braking on downhill stretches.

CLASSY COMMUTER

★★★★☆



Kalkhoff Agattu — £1,250
www.50cycles.co.uk 01509 266 656

Happy marriage of German and Japanese engineering

The Kalkhoff is an obvious rival to the Gazelle. It too has all the extras you could possibly want — mudguards, rack, excellent lights, lock and pump — and the ladies' version even has a skirt guard. It has good-quality suspension forks and is fitted with a low-maintenance seven-speed Shimano Nexus hub. Importantly, it's available in five frame sizes. As with the Gazelle, power comes from a motor that works directly on the pedal crank, rather than on a wheel hub, and there are few hills that could defeat it — while you pedal in bottom gear, the Kalkhoff will chug up just about anything. There are three power settings, and even on the maximum, travelling range should easily top 25 miles on a freshly charged lithium battery. Incidentally, a full charge takes about six hours. This bike is no lightweight, though, weighing 23kg with all its extras.