

# Easy rider

## Paddle-assist fold-up bike

Having a fold-up bike on board is a real boon when it comes to exploring ashore but the bike we've been testing comes with a bit of a bonus – an electric motor. The aluminium **Xero ePedal Traveller** can be pedalled like a normal bike or, at the flick of a switch, it can use an electric motor to assist. The key word here is assist, as the motor alone does not turn the wheels; instead it provides extra power to the rider's pedalling.

In assist-mode, start pedalling as normal and as soon as the pedals have made a couple of revolutions the motor will kick in. When this happens it feels like someone is giving the bike a gentle push, not enough to make a great deal of difference to the speed but suddenly the pedalling gets a lot easier. This is an absolute godsend when going up hills and has the effect of seemingly levelling out the road. If you stop pedalling the motor drops out and you start to slow down, so to keep the electrical assist going you have to keep pedalling.

Moving up through the six gears with motor assistance you soon pick up a decent turn of speed. The top speed is said to be 15mph but it felt faster to me. The downside of this swift pace is that you have to keep pedalling to keep the motor running, and sometimes the pedals are going around so quickly it is difficult to keep

up! So don't do as I did and try to keep going – it's far better to settle for a slower but more comfortable speed, where you can keep turning the pedals, and waft along with very minimal effort. Regardless of how fast you go, the chunky wheels make the bike feel stable and the suspension on the front forks provides a nice soft ride.

The lithium-ion battery, which is 24V, 8Ah, is said to provide 25 miles on a full charge, which takes around four hours and should last 500 charge cycles. The surprisingly light battery (just 2kg) can be removed and charged somewhere convenient, which means there is no excuse for getting the bike out and finding a flat battery.

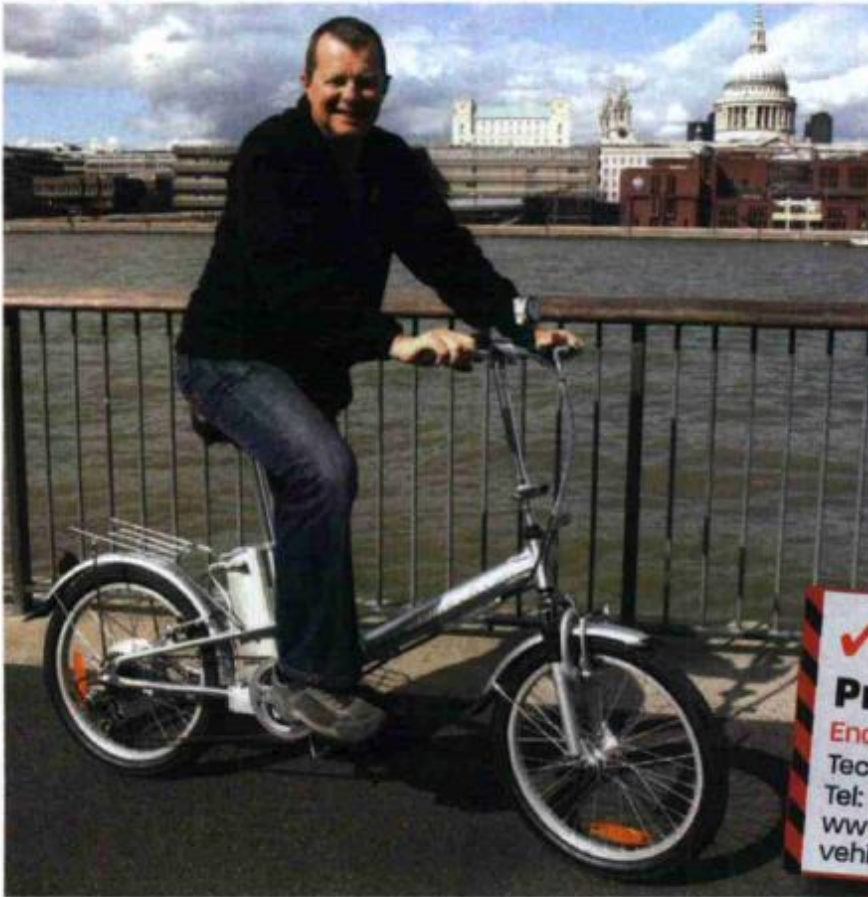
The downside to this bike is its weight. At 20kg it is a good deal heavier than a normal fold-up bike and would certainly be difficult to carry across a raft of boats. It is also quite bulky when folded and does not lock in the folded position, making it even harder to carry or pull out of a lazarette.

Perhaps the most surprising thing with this bike is the price. It's not as cheap as chips, but considering the extra technology involved it isn't much more than a standard mid-range fold-up bike and cheaper than some premium brands without a motor.

If I had space in the lazarette and a spare £700, this would definitely be on my shopping list. **Neale**



**The bike is bulky and unwieldy when folded**



The lightweight battery is removable for easy charging

✓✓✓✓✓

**Price: £699**

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