

## **A weekly guide to essential items**

**By SHEILA O'KELLY**

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A featherweight touch on the pedals is enough to generate a gentle, almost silent, whoosh of power on Raleigh's latest innovation. The electric power assisted Select bicycle will get you to your destination without any of the strain normally required – but maybe a little later.

Taking off at traffic lights instead of bracing my whole body a feather touch on the pedals was enough to generate a gentle, almost silent, whoosh of power. Going over the canal bridge on a test ride, I whizzed past the rest of the valiant rush-hour pedallers. However, they had the next laugh as they passed me on the other side. Top speed is 14 m.p.h.

The Select looks a bit like a 1950s moped and has a neat rechargeable unit attached to the frame. The motor powers the rear hub. The unit comes off at the touch of a button and is recharged by plugging into a normal socket. It takes three to four hours to recharge and this costs approximately 2p. It goes for 15–20 miles between recharges and there are six gears in case a little help is needed if the power is exhausted.

Disadvantages: for a cyclist its speed limit is a bit frustrating on the flat and downhill; it could be ideal for older people, but its 57lb weight is a handicap if steps have to be negotiated; it would probably last five minutes if locked anywhere on the streets; and the price – – would make such a loss even more painful.

Verdict: great fun, but I think I'll wait until it's about £500.

Availability: to order from all Raleigh stockists and samples at selected outlets. I borrowed it from Shay Wolfe, Sundrive Road.