

THE PAPER BICYCLE

CTC's Adam Coffman reviews a stylish unisex town bike



The rather interestingly named Paper Bicycle (it is not made of paper!) is the first production bike from the stable of Glasgow-based mechanical engineer and silversmith Nick Lobnitz. He is best known for the Carry Freedom trailer.

Nick started work on the Paper Bicycle in 2006 whilst doing some work for the Royal Mail. His brief was to: 'design a bicycle that is easy to use and easy to look after – and make it look good.' On the last note, whilst riding I have never had so many people stop me and enquire about a bike, and much amusement was had at the name.

I enjoyed riding this bike from the moment I got on. I love the comfortable, upright riding position, which is in contrast to the more 'leaning forward' bikes I normally ride. This is truly a bike for everyone – it is 'one size fits

all' (70-95cm inside leg) and perfect for short commutes and carrying loads, but more than anything for someone who is looking for a relaxed ride but doesn't mind admiring glances.

I would have preferred slightly narrower tyres (it come with 26x2in Schwalbe Big Apples) but they do not feel overly ponderous. The 8-speed Sturmey Archer hub does not shift as smoothly as I would have hoped, but I would recommend this bike if you are looking for a low maintenance, stylish cruiser for the urban or semi-urban environment.

The bike has been designed so that the chaincase can be customisable – businesses and organisations who want to use bicycles will find this a novel way to promote themselves. The Paper Bicycle is already being used in bike sharing schemes in Europe and I think it may become a future classic.

RIVALS



Ridgeback Metro Avenida 8

£699.99
Alfine 8-speed hub gearing, hydraulic disc brakes – hence the chain tensioner. ridgeback.co.uk



Trek Paris

£549.99
The women's version of the Trek Manhattan, also with 3-speed Nexus hub, roller brakes, hub dynamo, chainguard, etc. trekbikes.co.uk



Fahrrad Manufaktur S200 Comfort

£795
Sram 7-speed hub gear, hub dynamo, suspension seatpost, Hebie chainglider. bikefix.co.uk

NEED TO KNOW

Price: £670 (single speed), £870 8-speed with dynamo

Contact: www.paper-bicycle.com

Sizes available: one size – suitable for 70-95cm inside leg

Weight: approximately 15kg

Frame & fork: CroMo, fittings for its own front basket (£50) and rear rack (£50)

Wheels: Silver double wall aluminium rims on 32 14-gauge stainless steel spokes.

Gearing: Either a single speed (61in), or a Sturmey Archer 8 speed (31-101in).

Brakes: Sturmey Archer 70mm drum brakes front and back.

Pros: A stylish head-turning, very comfortable bike, ideal for shorter journeys

Cons: Wide tyres won't suit all riders; scratchy gear shifting