

Enjoy life



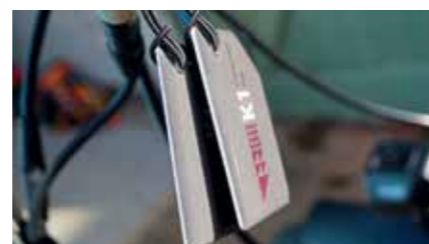
Freedom on two wheels

Clive Nicholls lets the battery take the strain when he tries out the Volt Pulse LS e-bike.

The Volt bike performed well for Clive as a country cruiser but would be equally at home on the city streets



The power screen and trip computer tells you everything and, right, it comes with bike lock and electronic security as well



and I'm embarrassed to admit it but I turned the bike around, rode back up the hill to have another run to see if I could break the 40mph barrier on the way down.

With experience now I went for it from the off, the pedals spinning like propellers, and I got to 37mph with a couple of hundred yards still to go. A car was coming towards me from the opposite direction and was closing fast; I had to abandon my attempt and sat up.

I exchanged waves with the driver but it was game over – my quest for speed unrequited.

Down to details: the Volt bike comes with lights, which I had on all the time. It's got a built-in lock and an electric tag to activate the electrics. It's protected as much as it can be but like any bike these days it's only safe from theft while you are sitting on it.

All e-bikes are expensive; this one tips the scales at £1950. Pricey yes but it can change your life. I loved it and was sorry to see it returned to Volt. I've got a conventional bike but I'm seriously considering getting an e-bike. Cycling without the threat of headwinds and uphills is just wonderful!

Find out more at (www.voltbikes.co.uk).



The e-bike revolution

REMEMBER the first time I was introduced to electric bikes more than a decade ago.

After years of expensively trying to save fractions of an ounce off the weight of a bike, along comes this heavyweight, piling on the pounds and going against all the conventional rules.

Like many cyclists I was a touch cynical and a bit dismissive. But then I rode it! What a revelation.

I was on the lower slopes of some pretty high mountains in Austria and was taking on hills steeper than I'd ever imagined without going into cardiac arrest. Maybe there's something in this after all. I was hooked.

Over the years they've just got better and better as the battery technology improves and every time I ride one, I don't want to get off.

Fear factors in cycling are hills, headwinds and falling off. Hills and headwinds are effectively neutralised; change down a couple of gears and turn up the power. Falling off? Yes, you're still on your own on that one.

The battery governs your range. Sixty miles is certainly possible but 40 is safer



Take on bigger hills than you thought possible, and in town e-bikes are equally useful



and more realistic. The tougher the ride, the more power you'll use. You'll never be stuck; even without power e-bikes function as a normal (though heavy) bike and you can pedal your way home.

You'll ride more, ride further and enjoy cycling more – no wonder there's an e-bike revolution. Find a pub that'll let you recharge over lunch and it gets even better.

City commuter or country cruiser, they serve both markets pretty well. Riding in the country is special. Every villager has a smile and wave for you, the wildlife senses that you're not a threat and the fresh air embraces you with open arms. Perfection.



Powerful lights which I left on all the time, and you can charge the battery on or off the bike