

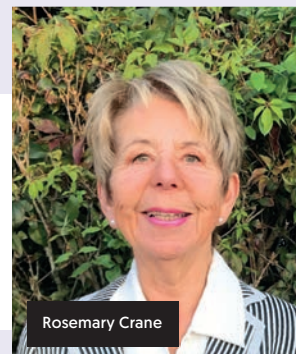
CYCLOPEDIA

Bike finder

Which bike should I buy?
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Lightweight e-hybrid

• **For:** Rosemary Crane, aged 77, from Fareham, Hants. • **Bike needs:** I cycle every day on road. My knees are starting to cause problems so I want an e-bike that's not too heavy. I looked at a Cannondale but it seemed to suggest in multi-language hieroglyphics that it didn't like rain. I live in the UK! • **Must have:** E-bike, extremely robust tyres, step-through, straight handlebar, rainproof. • **Budget:** £3,000



Rosemary Crane



Dave Atkinson

Whenever anyone asks me to recommend a lightweight e-bike, my first question is always: are you sure you want a lightweight one? Weight affects non-powered bikes but with e-bikes it's just not an issue unless you actually

have to pick your bike up for any reason; storage and access are the main culprits there. If you want the motor because you need the assistance, a heavier bike with a more powerful motor can often be a better option. Try both before you commit, if you can.

Mahle's excellent **ebikemotion X35** system is the obvious choice for a lightweight bike like you describe, though. It's IP54 rated for sealing, which is the same as Bosch mid-motors, and both systems are designed to cope with wet conditions. **Ribble's Hybrid AL e Step Through** (from **£2,299**, ribblecycles.co.uk) and **Islabikes' eJanis** (**£2,699**, islabikes.co.uk) are good choices with the X35 motor.

The **Neomouv Open Ticket** (**£1,865**, juicybike.com) uses an Aikema motor system that I found to be at least as powerful as the X35, and it's cheaper and gets a larger 380Wh battery compared to the 250Wh of the ebikemotion bikes. All three have good city tyres but a swap to something like **Schwalbe's Marathon Plus** (**£43.99** each) is worth it for peace of mind.

If you want to try a heavier bike for comparison, it's hard to look past Cube's excellent Touring Hybrid range (from **£2,399**, cube.eu/en). With 14 spec levels to choose from you're bound to be able to find one that suits you perfectly.

**RIBBLE
AL E STEP
THROUGH**
£2,299+



Dan Joyce

While I agree with Dave that an e-bike's motor more than offsets the extra weight, in practice I've had to pick up every e-bike I've tested. If you'll be putting your e-bike onto a workstand, carrying it up steps, or lifting it onto a car rack,

an 8-10kg weight difference is a big deal.

Of the **ebikemotion** bikes, I'd recommend the **eJanis** (13.5kg). It has other features that make it suitable for an older rider: twist-grip shifting; short-reach brake levers; and easy-change tyres. You're wanting tougher tyres, however. The eJanis won't take much wider than 30mm if you're keeping the mudguards, and in narrower widths Schwalbe's Marathon Plus is hard to fit and gives a 'wooden' ride feel. I'd suggest **28-622 Schwalbe Durano Plus** tyres (**£43.49** each) instead. As a flat-bar *road bike* with electric assistance, this may be your lightest practical option.

Specialized's Turbo Vado SL 4.0 Step Through (**£3,150**, specialized.com) is arguably more versatile. It takes wider tyres with mudguards, and has a larger (320Wh) battery and range. It uses Specialized's own SL 1.1 mid-motor. This is much lighter than other mid-motors but delivers less torque (35Nm) so you can't just stomp up hills; you'll need to go through the gears like you normally would. The motor has marine grade seals and is waterproof to the demanding IP67 standard. It stretches your budget and is a bit heavier than the eJanis at around 15kg – or ~16kg with a pair of **40-622 Schwalbe Marathon E-Plus** tyres (**£49.99** each) fitted. Otherwise it ticks all your boxes.

**SPECIALIZED
TURBO VADO
SL 4.0 STEP
THROUGH**
£3,150

