

# cycle

THE MAGAZINE OF CTC  
THE UK'S NATIONAL CYCLIST'S ORGANISATION

PLUS: BEST  
BUY BIKES  
FOR TOURING,  
COMMUTING  
& MTB

YOUR  
next  
BIKE

£1,000 BEST BUY  
FOR SPORTIVES



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## BIKE TEST



ROAD

P57



TOURING

P59



HYBRID/UTILITY

P61



MOUNTAIN

P62

EDITOR **DAN JOYCE** REVIEWS BIKES FOR CTC MEMBERS

## Your next bike

You told us what types of bike you're buying and how much you're spending. **Dan Joyce** suggests what to get at those prices

**YOUR NEXT BIKE** will probably be a road bike, tourer or hybrid, sold by an independent bike shop and costing a little over £1,000. That's what you told us in our online survey about CTC bike buying habits this summer.

We asked what type of bike you had bought in the last year or planned to buy in the next year, how much you had spent or planned to spend on it, and where you had bought or would buy it from. It's not an assessment of bike ownership within CTC but of your current bike buying habits.

We weren't greatly surprised to find that 0% of you are buying BMXs, but it was interesting to see road bikes poll higher (27.1%) than touring bikes (25.77%), hybrid/utility bikes (16.94%), and mountain bikes (8.54%). Folding bikes are as popular (6.92%) as we imagined, while a higher-than-expected one-in-25 of you are buying cyclo-cross bikes and just one-in-200 children's bikes.

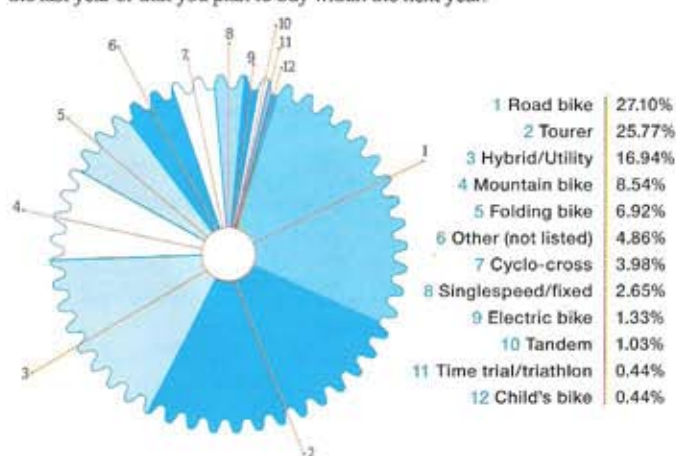
Your actual or expected purchase price for road, touring and mountain bikes clustered around £1,000 on average. Road bikes again polled highest (£1,165), above touring bikes (£1,060), and mountain bikes (£964). Those buying hybrid/utility bikes planned to spend less: an average of £589.

CTC members overwhelmingly (62%) buy bikes from independent bike shops, with 15% using chain stores such as Halfords and Evans, and 10% buying from online bike shops. Smaller numbers buy from CTC Shop, from bike-brand stores (e.g. Specialized concept stores), eBay, and mail order (using the phone).

We know what bikes you're buying and how much you're spending. But what are the best options in the four most popular categories: road, touring, hybrid, and mountain? I picked what I think are the best buys at your given price points, and tested them to see if they met my expectations. You won't necessarily agree with these choices (do post your suggestions on the CTC forum for the benefit of other members if you have different ones), but this should still provide some useful pointers.

### BIKE TYPE

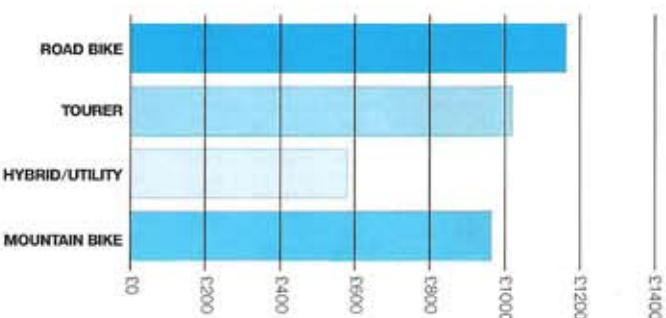
Survey completed by 670 members (1% of the membership). Bikes bought in the last year or that you plan to buy within the next year.



### AVERAGE SPEND

You mostly buy bikes from independent bike shops (62%). Just under 15% use chain stores like Halfords and 10% online shops. (Others use CTC shop, eBay, concept stores, etc.)

Road bike	£1,165.00
Tourer	£1,060.00
Hybrid/utility	£589.00
Mountain bike	£964.00



## HYBRID/UTILITY

## Islabikes Beinn 29

FOR ANYONE who just wants 'a bike', a non-specialised, all-purpose hybrid is a good choice. This new offering from Islabikes is a true jack-of-all-trades option. It's like a Beinn kids' bike writ large.

Scaling up for adults means 700C wheels, called 29 not for marketing reasons but because the bike can be ordered with 29x2in mountain bike tyres. If you'll mostly stay on tarmac, you can specify touring tyres. If you're not sure, the default, lightly-treaded 38mm Kwik Trax tyres will do fine.

The frame shows how multi-purpose the Beinn 29 is. Clearances are good and there are fittings for racks and mudguards front and rear (shared). There are disc mounts and a front gear cable guide for upgrades. It even has sliding dropouts, for a hub gear or singlespeed conversion.

The frame is aluminium, with a reinforcing gusset where the head tube meets the down tube to



strengthen it here. The fork is rigid chrome-moly – a better and lighter option for any usage than a sub-standard suspension fork. A larger than normal offset (50mm) keeps the steering sharp and the front wheel further from your feet.

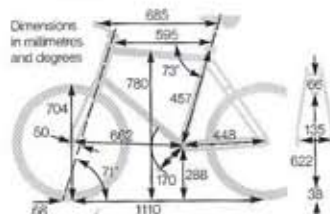
Gearing follows the keep-it-simple approach of the junior Islabikes: a single 32-tooth chainring drives an 8-speed cassette, gears shifted with an intuitive twistgrip. The range is fine, wanting only an 11-34 cassette instead of an 11-32 to make hills easier. I never lost the chain on the Beinn 29 but would add an N-Gear Jump Stop if I planned to ride it hard off-road.

The 32-spoke wheels are decent quality, although the test bike's front was out of true when it arrived. That may have happened in transit; Beinn 29s are sold boxed, front wheel off. Ten minutes with a spoke key fixed it.

The optional accessories (e.g. rack, guards, panniers) are all good, especially the Ortlieb Front Roller City panniers. I'd remove the rack's parcel spring to make these easier to attach.

The Beinn 29 is well-proportioned, with bar width and crank length matched to the small, medium and large sizes, and there's a good range of bar height adjustment. Its relatively low weight (for a budget hybrid) makes it rewarding to ride. If you – or a relative – wants one bike for commuting, touring, leisure riding, even mountain biking, the Beinn 29 is an excellent starting point.

Not a child's Islabike, but a big one slightly further away! It shares the versatility of the little Islabikes, and could be used for commuting, touring, or even mountain biking



## ISLABIKES BEINN 29

**Price:** £517.94 as tested (from £399.99)

**Weight:** 13.04kg/28.7lb (inc rack, mudguards, pedals)

**Size:** Medium (18in)

**Sizes available:** S (16in), M (18in), L (20in)

**Frame and fork:** 7005 T6 aluminium frame, with sliding dropouts, fittings for V and disc brakes, mudguard, rack, and 2 bottles. Chrome-moly fork with fittings for V and disc brakes, mudguard, rack

**Wheels:** 38-622 Kenda Kwik Trax tyres; DBM-1 double wall aluminium rims; 32 x 3 spokes; aluminium QR hubs

**Transmission:** Flat pedals; Truvativ 170mm cranks; 32T chainring with bashguard; square taper cartridge bottom bracket; KMC Z chain; Sram 11-32T 8-speed cassette. Sram X4 Gripshift; Sram X4 rear derailleur. 8-speed, 28-81in

**Braking:** Tektro V-brakes

**Steering & seating:** 640mmx31.8mm aluminium riser bar; 80mmx17" aluminium stem; 1 1/8in threadless headset. Unisex Islabikes saddle; 27.2x350mm aluminium seatpost

**Accessories:** chromo-plastic mudguards (£19.99); aluminium rear rack (£29.99); Ortlieb City panniers (£59.99); bottle cage (£4.99); bottle (£2.99)

**Contact:** [islabikes.co.uk](http://islabikes.co.uk), 01584 856881



1



2

## Also consider

## 1) Trek Soho £600

Shimano Nexus 7 equipped city hybrid with roller brakes, mudguards and a partial chainguard. Also has fittings for racks.

[trekbikes.com](http://trekbikes.com)

## 2) Cannondale Bad Boy V26 £499.99

Cannondale's fat-tyred street bike makes light of potholes and is more versatile than flat-bar road bikes. It takes mudguards too.

[cannondale.com](http://cannondale.com)