



E-bike hybrid

WHYTE CONISTON

Everyone's doing e-bikes these days. Whyte's first is a capable all-rounder, as **Dan Joyce** discovered

THE CONISTON is the only pedelec in Whyte's range, a town-and-trail hybrid halfway between everyday transport like the Ridgeback Electron and a mountain bike like the Giant Dirt E+2 (see sidebar). It might be used for commuting, country lanes trundling, or gentle off-road riding. It's a shame it doesn't come with typical trekking bike accessories; most pictured are mine.

Much of the bike's 20kg weight is low down thanks to a Shimano STEPS bottom bracket motor and a down-tube-mounted battery. So it feels well balanced. STEPS stands for Shimano Total Electronic Power System, a misnomer: like any pedelec, it augments your pedalling. It does integrate neatly with other electricery: lights can be plugged into the

battery and controlled via the head unit; Di2 gearing can be set up to shift automatically.

POWER TO YOUR PEDALS

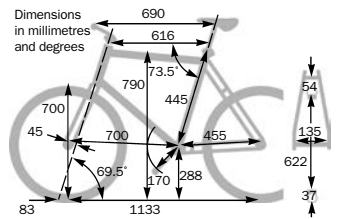
Handlebar buttons switch between off, eco, normal, and high power modes. 'Distance remaining' figures fluctuate according to the power you're drawing, so 10km remaining on the flat might plummet to 0km on a hill.

You can pedal without power – and will do so anytime you exceed 25km/h – but the bike is then heavy and, at lower speeds, over-gear. When I flattened the 418Wh battery, I wanted the 34t chainring available with the new mountain bike iteration of Shimano STEPS rather than the supplied 44t.

Under power, it's a breeze. I easily beat my best time climbing up onto the Yorkshire Wolds – and did so hauling a 20kg trailer! The 250W motor, usually innocuous, whined like a milk float. Shimano quote 60-125km for one charge. I managed 69km on that hilly ride, switching between modes as appropriate.

Purely as a bike, the Coniston is a nice enough, mid-range hybrid with an MTB-style long top tube and short stem, a damped, coil-sprung fork, and effective hydraulic disc brakes. As an e-bike, the Coniston is good but feels incomplete: I'd like a full suite of accessories, some lower gears for dead-battery days, and the facility to charge the battery in situ. I mostly used the Coniston not as an alternative to a normal bike but for trips I might have otherwise done by car. **C**

Tech Specs



WHYTE CONISTON

PRICE: £1999

SIZES: S, M (tested), L

WEIGHT: 20.4kg (as sold)

FRAME & FORK: Butted 6061

aluminium frame with fittings for rack, mudguard, 1 bottle, kickstand. SR

Suntour NCX-D LO coil sprung fork

with 63mm travel and tapered steerer

WHEELS: 37-622 Vittoria Randonneur

Trail tyres, WTB SX17 alloy rims, 32x3

2.0mm Sandvik SS spokes, 'Whyte'

alloy disc hubs (cup & cone)

TRANSMISSION: Platform pedals,

Shimano STEPS E-6000 chainset

with 44t chainring & 170mm cranks,

STEPS Drive Unit E-6000 bottom

bracket, STEPS E6090 chain,

Shimano Deore HG-62 11-34 10-speed

cassette. SLX M675 shifter, Deore LX

derailleur. 10 ratios, 36-110in

MOTOR & BATTERY: Shimano STEPS

Drive Unit E-6000, 250W Li-ion

battery (36V, 11.6Ah, 418Wh)

BRAKING: Shimano M445 hydraulic

levers, M447 callipers, 160mm rotors

STEERING & SEATING: ergonomic

grips, 620x31.8mm riser bar, 80mm

stem, FSA No57B Orbit ZS headset.

Whyte saddle, 400x30.9mm seatpost

ACCESSORIES: kickstand

WEBSITE: whyte.bike



Above: The head unit shows how much juice you've got left in different modes, but the figures are estimates only

OTHER OPTIONS



1 RIDGEBACK ELECTRON £1999.99

Utilitarian step-through with STEPS motor, rack-mounted battery, lights, mudguards and a Shimano Nexus 7-speed hub gear. ridgeback.co.uk



2 GIANT DIRT E+2 £1999

Hardtail mountain bike with damped, coil-sprung fork, wide range Deore/Alivio gearing (24-38 crankset/11-36 cassette) and Giant SyncDrive C motor. giant-bicycles.com