

Oxford Mail



News



Can you get all you need within 15 minutes?



By [Oxford Mail](#)



Cyclists using a variety of bikes in Oxford. Picture: Alison Hill/ CycloX

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Jonny Ives of CycloX on the idea of the '15-minute city'.

How far can you walk in fifteen minutes?

How far from home could you be if you hopped on a bike and pedalled for a quarter of an hour?

And if you drew these two circles on a map with your home at the centre, how much of your day-to-day needs would be within reach?

This is the theory of the 15-minute city, a concept developed by Professor Carlos Moreno at the Sorbonne that has been embraced by, among others, the mayor of Paris.

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The idea is that our cities should be shaped to enable people to meet their daily needs, including work, education, shopping, entertainment and healthcare, within a 15-minute journey on foot or bike.

If you live within, or near, the **Oxford** ring road, the chances are that you already live in a 15-minute city, but it is a concept that has captured the imagination of many interested in developing liveable, more sustainable cities.

During the **coronavirus** crisis it has also found a host of new advocates, so our traditional understanding of urban land use and demands for work-based travel is being rapidly rewritten.

The bike is central to the 15-minute idea, particularly in order to cut down on the need for journeys by car.

As Professor Moreno acknowledges, "We need to reduce the presence of cars on the streets."

So what do you need to prepare for the 15-minute city?

Try walking for 15 minutes and see how far you get.

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Chances are it will be further than you think.

Try cycling for 15 minutes and you will get a lot further.

Think about what you do that takes 15 minutes, like waiting for a bus or a train, or sitting in a car in traffic.

The 15-minute city means that you will probably need a bike – but what sort of bike?

The distinctive Dutch bike is growing in popularity around Oxfordshire and beyond but their weight (they are very heavy) and their approach to gearing (Holland is very flat) might make them less than perfect for anywhere with a hill.

by Taboola











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It is no accident that the hybrid bike has come to dominate the UK commuter market.

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They are practical, stable and versatile, with plenty of gear options to make light work of the most demanding terrains – including hills – and plenty of carrying options should you need them.

The e-bike is now a well-established option that is transforming the bike market.

Not only does it make the steepest of hills something of an afterthought, but it also makes the 15-minute city a reality for anyone who might not think of themselves as a cyclist.

Alternatively it can extend the boundaries of the 15-minute city for those who do.

Just as significant as the e-bike is the development of the cargo bike, the two-wheeled equivalent of the estate car. Add an e-assist option to your cargo bike and you really do have a vehicle that can change your life and change your city.

With a commitment to the 15-minute city, all things are possible.

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