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VELO VISION AND VELO-VISION
We weren't first with the name.
Velo-Vision (note the hyphen) is a progressive HPV-friendly bike shop in Körten, near Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany, who also make their own recumbents. Velo Vision magazine is working in friendly harmony with Velo-Vision in Germany. Contact them on www.velo-vision.de



Cover photograph: Peter Eland.

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IN 24" GEAR

A nasty slip on some ice at the beginning of January put me off my bike for a month with a bashed elbow. So for a while, I saw urban life from the pedestrian side of the street. The arm's now healed and I'm back on two wheels, but this non-cycling interlude was an interesting reminder of just how good cycling is as urban transport.

First, of course, is the speed. A ten-minute journey by bike is over half an hour on foot. I enjoyed my slower journeys at first – walking along, it's easy to mull things over and just enjoy the journey. Unlike on a bike, you don't need to be sharply alert and concentrated at all times. But after a while, and as deadlines approached, the novelty had definitely worn off.

In comparison to the alternatives, cycling is also enormously convenient. Just jump on one end, and off at the other, door to door. If I'd not been able or willing to walk the few miles home, I'd have been messing around calling and waiting for taxis, or walking to and waiting at bus stops – and maybe even changing buses. Or, if I had a car and could drive, I'd have been sitting in jams, looking for parking and then walking the last bit anyway.

None of those is convenient compared to cycling. And anyway, cycling's fun!

It was the first incident I've had serious enough to put me off my bike in almost 15 years of daily cycling. That's not a bad record for any form of transport. But it's also a reminder that nobody should take health and fitness for granted. Ride safe, and enjoy every moment that you're on your bike!

Peter Eland

PS If you were wondering about the title of this column, it's an old pre-metrification joke. 24 inches is two feet...