

Position paper

"Is the Trade Ready for the Future?"

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Is the trade ready for the future?
My simple answer is "I doubt it!"

In my experience in the UK., the trade has practically no interest in the future. Most Dealerships are little better than glorified toy shops, and the potential of the adult utility sector is persistently ignored. The Dutch Market has at least 90 adult fully-equipped basic models available; the UK has about four!

In addition, I think that the Bicycle Industry should 'grow up' and offer more choice to the Customer - even in a Country like the Netherlands, where it is already very broad. I am referring to the colours available and a degree of individual specification, if the Customer is prepared to wait for a couple of weeks. If one buys a Car, one has a comprehensive range of options based on each listed model; engine size and type, body shape (saloon, coupe, estate etc.) colour and trim, and so on. In contrast, with a few minor exceptions, if buying a Bicycle, the 'take it or leave it' rule applies. I believe that the Cycle Industry should follow the example of the Motor Trade and invite the purchaser to choose from a range of options to 'tailor' the bike to his/her particular needs or whim.

The British Dawes Co. has recently launched such a project, which they call 'a la carte,' but it applies only to their touring models at this stage. I would like to see a similar scheme for all a manufacturer's range.