

Electric cycle trailer helps pick up Dutch Cycling Ambassadors

Dutch cycling ambassadors Marjam and Edward arrived at Christchurch Airport Wednesday night 9/11/16 to see how we are going on our cycleway rebuilds. Cycling ambassadors of course love to travel by bike and so I (Steven Muir) revamped my 'clean green limousine' and picked them and their gear up using my cargo bike. Because the airport is a reasonable distance (12km) and the cargo bike is built for strength not speed and I'm on the tail end of a cold & lacking in energy, I decided to add on my new addition to my bike trailer fleet – an electric assist trailer with 300W motor in the back left wheel powered by a lithium ion battery (tucked in the trailer) with the additional advantage of 98 litres of spare luggage space.



I have a 3 speed sturmy archer hub in the rear wheel and under my own power almost never use the top gear, however with the electric assist I was always in top gear and still not raising even a slight sweat on the way to the airport in a gentle westerly wind. I was carrying two spare bikes for Mirjam and Edward and only using the medium power assist mode.

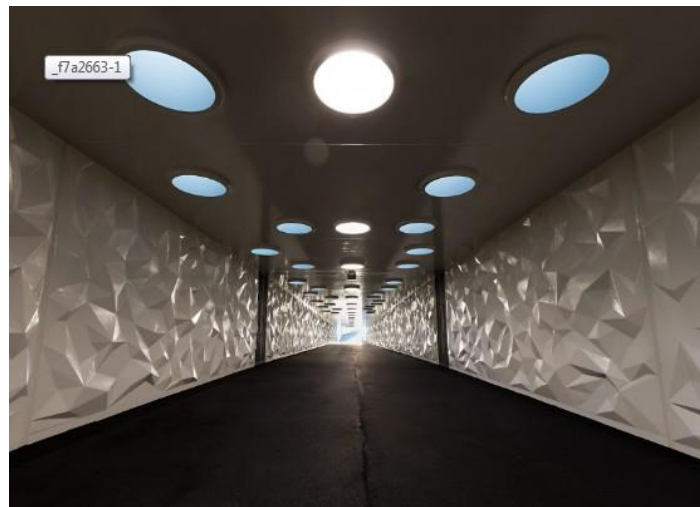




After a successful pickup of Mirjam & Edward and with several heavy suitcases & bags in the cargo bin, we returned via the new Harewood Road underpass which I'd have to say is the most pleasant underpass I have ever experienced, particularly when comparing it to dicing with the Memorial Ave roundabout. It was very well lit, smooth and looks great.

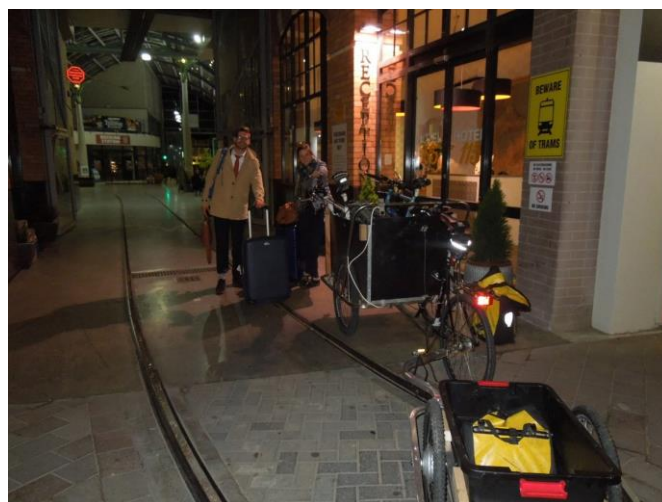


Mirjam and Edward were delivered safely to their central city accommodation and I threw the bikes back in the cargo bin to return home feeling like I'd had an enjoyable bit of light exercise, but certainly not exhausted like I would have been without the electric trailer to assist me in keeping up with Mirjam & Edward on the single bikes.



Harewood Road underpass

The two big advantages of the electric trailer over an electric bike is the load carrying capacity (which is often when you need the assist to help with the extra load), and the ability to switch the expensive motor & battery between two or more bikes. With a second \$40 controller I can use the trailer to power a standard bike or my cargo bike, depending on how much load I need to take, or leave the trailer at home and bike under my own steam on an ordinary-weight bike, rather than always having the heavier electric bike. It's also a bit cheaper than a standard electric bike. Disadvantage is trying to get the cables looking tidy – still working on that! I have been very pleased with my standard cycle trailers for their ability to help me leave my car at home more often, but sickness if often one of the few times I tend to take a car around town. Now with the electric assist I can still bike and exert almost no energy, so it's yet more journeys I can escape from the confines of the car.



Electric trailers have been done in other parts of the world (e.g. <http://ridekick.com/>) and handle very well. There is no noticeable tendency to push the back of your bike off centre.