Inflation: good for tyres, not so good for everything else. Prices are shooting up across the board. While energy and food are rightly in the spotlight, the cycling industry isn’t immune. Have you seen the price of new bikes lately?

It’s easy to forget how much prices have risen over recent years; we quickly become accustomed to the new normal. So I had a look back at some older issues of Cycle. In our June/July 2016 issue we reviewed entry-level tourers, one of which was a Ridgeback Tour costing £549.99. The closest equivalent today is the Ridgeback Voyage, which admittedly has 3×9 Sora instead of 3×8 Claris and a Reynolds 520 steel frame instead of an aluminium one. But it’s broadly similar and is the current entry-level model in the line-up. It’s £1,349.99.

How’s that for inflation? 245% in six years. This is not a dig at Ridgeback. They’re at the mercy of shifting economic realities, like every manufacturer. Go take a look online. How many touring bikes can you find for less than £1,000? One? Two?

Lower the bar to £500 and the answer is easy: none. That’s partly why we’ve tested £500 gravel bikes this issue. They’re as close as we could get to drop-bar tourers at that price point.

The real bargains, as ever, are secondhand. And here the news is better. Last century I wrote an article about buying/building-up a hack bike for £100. I had another go this summer – and ended up with a better bike.