

Unusual creation saves on carbon as it carries goods and kids

Boxing on fine

Graham Readfearn

MAKING a pledge to push the car out of your life means you need to look for every alternative to get you around.

"We've been pretty much car-free for a couple of years and there's no doubt our lifestyle has improved," Emma Rose, 37, of Highgate Hill, in inner Brisbane, says.

The Rose household's latest innovation is a box-bike, which has been turning heads in the suburbs around West End.

Ms Rose's partner Robert Pekin, 45, the founder of community food organisation Food Connect, uses the bike with a small electric motor for the weekly vegetable run.

Bought from Victorian business Cargo Bike for \$1200, it can fit all the produce and even Emma's two children Joseph, 8,

and Darcy, 5, on board. Mr Pekin said the bike would help to cut their carbon footprint.

"I was really floored when I heard that something like 80 per cent of road travel is for journeys of 5km or less," Mr Pekin said.

State government figures show Queenslanders travel 14,800km for each passenger vehicle — the highest rate in Australia.

In Queensland, the average household emits about 13 tonnes of greenhouse gas every year — more than four tonnes of which comes from burning oil-based fuel.

The Courier-Mail is looking for four families and one small business to take part in the newspaper's One Degree Challenge campaign.

Each group will be audited on its power consumption by



NO car, no worries . . .

Robert Pekin and son Joseph, 8, unload produce from the Cargo Bike.

Picture: Rob Maccoll

energy company Origin and will be tracked at three months and six months.

Each group will feed information on travel habits and recycling into the One Degree Carbon calculator to give a comprehensive footprint of its greenhouse emissions.

1 For more information about how to enter our One Degree Challenge

couriermail.com.au/onedegree

Discuss the issues behind the campaign on **Graham Readfearn's Green Blog**

couriermail.com.au/blogs

Five ways to cut fuel emissions

- A car that uses 2L/100km less petrol saves more than 600kg of carbon dioxide emissions per year.
- For shorter journeys ride a bicycle or walk, and combine chores into one car trip.
- Driving styles can impact emissions. Go easy on the

- accelerator, anticipate early and keep the car rolling.
- Remove heavy items from your boot and regularly check tyre pressure to improve fuel consumption.
- Revisit the public transport option. Some weekly bus tickets have become cheaper.

R.M. Williams
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