

CTC Oxfordshire

Guidelines for rides – discussion document

"We expect leaders and riders to conduct themselves ethically and with integrity. Our relationships and activities are based on trust and respect, cooperation and companionship. We work together in a way that is supportive, constructive and participative. We expect all to strive for continuing growth, learning and development of individuals, groups and communities". (CTC Guide to Cycling in Groups)

Introduction

These guidelines have been produced in order to make rides safer and more enjoyable for everyone taking part. In particular they are intended to clarify what you, as a rider, can expect from both the leader and the sweeper of a ride as well as what other riders can expect from you. However, please remember that they are only guidelines and that they cannot cover every possible situation that can arise on the road during a ride. It is, and will always be, an individual rider's responsibility to take full responsibility for their actions and to use their own judgement as to what is best for their own and the group's safety in any specific situation. One of the most important facts to remember is that good communication between ride members is one of the key aspects of safe, enjoyable group riding. Try never to do the unexpected without announcing it in advance.

1. Leader

Planning the ride

- The Rides Secretary will alert leaders if their proposed ride duplicates recent routes.
- Leaders should check that the coffee and lunch venues are open and can accommodate likely numbers.
- Busy roads should be used as little as possible, unless there is a suitable cycle track.
- If ice is a possibility, consider starting later or cancelling the ride. Inform the membership by email (or ask the Rides Secretary to do so).
- When crossing busy roads, if you have the choice, bear in mind that turning right, then left is safer than turning left, then right.

At the start of the ride

- The leader must know how many people there are in the group.
- Gather everyone together to give essential information about the route.
- Unless the group is very small, always appoint a sweeper, preferably one who also knows the route.
- If there are more than 15-20 riders, consider splitting into 2 groups. Appoint additional leader and sweeper if one group is designated as a slower group.
- Announce clearly when you are setting off.

During the ride

- You are the leader with a duty of care and may need to remind riders of the basic CTC rules of courtesy and safety.

- If there is a unexpected hazard on the route, stop to discuss alternatives with the whole group.
- Keep an eye on how the group is progressing, slowing or stopping as appropriate to wait for slower riders and to discuss any problems with the sweeper.
- Signal clearly at junctions.
- Be prepared to adjust your pace to match the slowest.
- Always re-group after traffic lights and junctions, until the sweeper informs you that everyone is present; if necessary ride back to help the sweeper with any problem.
- Stop in a safe place away from junctions, preferably off the road.
- Consider using cycle tracks, whenever it is safe to do so.
- You do not have to be in front all the time, but must be able to communicate with leading riders to give directions, warn of hazards and indicate a stop if needed.
- Always make sure that everyone is ready to go before restarting after a stop and do not set off at top speed.

2. Sweeper

- Stay behind with the rear-most rider, including a stopping to address a mechanical problem.
- At junctions, signal to the leader that everyone is present.
- Ride up to join the leader if you need to discuss any problems.

3. Riders

- We recommend carrying emergency contact number(s).
- Respect the leader's role and help him or her to ensure a safe and enjoyable ride for all participants.
- If you do go ahead, wait at the next junction or at the top of the hill.
- Do not leave the group without informing either the leader or the sweeper.
- Avoid overlapping your wheel with the rear wheel of the rider in front.
- Do not stop suddenly: shout "stopping" and give a slowing down signal if possible.
- Warn riders behind of potholes or other hazards by pointing, whenever it is safe to do so.
- Shouting "on the left" or "on the right" are standard ways of drawing attention to possible hazards.
- Never ride more than 2 abreast and keep in single file on narrow or busy roads when cars need to pass.
- We use "car up" to mean that a vehicle is approaching from behind and "car down" to draw attention to vehicles coming from ahead. Also it can sometimes be useful to use more specific words such as lorry, bus or large vehicle to give extra information.
- Pass on "car up" and "car down" messages.
- When a rider behind you shouts "car up", move into single file (unless the road ahead is wide and clear of oncoming traffic). Inside rider should move up, allowing the outside rider to tuck in behind.

- On many roads, vehicles have difficulty overtaking long groups. If you find yourself 5th in a group, drop back to leave a 30 metre gap.
- At junctions, do not block the line of sight of other road users.
- When you stop, pull off the road if possible.
- Let the sweeper or leader know if you are getting tired and need to stop for a while.
- Always wave to thank drivers who slow or stop to let us by.
- Avoid behaviour that is likely to annoy road users.
- Follow the leader's decision when to use cycle tracks.
- Do not overtake the cyclist ahead on the inside.
- Do not ride no-handed in a group.
- Do not shout or gesticulate at drivers who behave badly (cyclists make mistakes too).
- Keep calm when drivers use their car horns inappropriately.
- At a junction, ensure the person behind has seen you turn, if in doubt, stop and wait.

References

CTC Guide to Cycling with a Group

http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Go_Biking_with_CTC/Guidetocyclingwithagroup.pdf

CTC Cycling Guidelines for Group Leaders

http://www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Go_Biking_with_CTC/Rideleaderguide.pdf

Wantage Guidelines for Riders (WCTCGuidelinesForRiders v1.doc)

Wantage Guidelines for Leaders and Sweepers

(WCTCWantageGuidelinesForLeadersAndSweepersV1.doc)

Notes submitted by various members of CTC Oxfordshire Committee

Original version produced by CTC Oxfordshire Committee, discussed and amended at Oxford City AGM and further amended by Oxford City Committee members. Please feel free to email your comments and suggestions to info@ctcoxfordcity.org.uk