



## EDEN VALLEY Cycling UK - Basic guidance for Ride Leaders

### Introduction.

Although riders must take responsibility for their own health and safety, as a ride leader, you do have a duty of care towards them. Therefore, it is your responsibility to plan a suitable route, create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere and lead the group in a safe and enjoyable manner. Please use this basic guidance and our generic risk assessment to plan a suitable route and use a pre-ride briefing to engage with the group to have an enjoyable and safe ride.

You will find in the Documents section of the Club website, Cycling UK's [Ride leader standards handbook](#). Take time to read this, especially pages 17, 'Keeping the Group Safe,' and page 18, 'Common Hazards.'

### Before the ride.

- Plan a route your group is likely to enjoy, taking into account the club's [Generic Risk Assessment](#) and any hazards specific to the ride: distance; terrain; traffic; refreshments; toilets; points of interest; weather; ability of the riders; and any other factors (e.g. busy or fast roads and junctions, steep descents). Also decide how you will navigate: GPS, maps, local knowledge, or a combination of all of these.
- Complete the entry on the Runs List ([accessed by this link](#)) for publication, including likely lunch and coffee stops, distance, likely grade ([see Ride Grading](#)) and your mobile number for members to text that they would like to join your ride. It is sometimes good to not only check that a venue is open but also to warn them ahead of when and how many may stop.
- A few days ahead of the ride date, publish further details on the Blog, which may include amendments to the ride, route details, wet weather alternatives, etc. It may be appropriate to publish further details/changes on the morning of the ride early, before 08:00, to be effective. If ice or snow is forecast or expected on the route, e.g. frozen overnight, club policy is to cancel the ride or amend the route accordingly. Road closures can be checked on the council's roadworks webpage.

### Leading the ride.

- Be at the start ahead of the published start time so that you can get to know who is on the ride and register guest riders, also check that you have ICE details for all riders. A simple way to do this is to print or download the club ICE document to your mobile and use the guest rider form. Do not keep a printed version longer than you need to, for GDPR compliance. *Note - Non-CUK members are allowed 3 rides before joining.*
- Ensure you know the number of riders and the name of all riders in the group. Where the numbers are small and riders familiar to you, a mental note will suffice. For larger groups or if any rider is unfamiliar to you, make a note on paper or on your phone. This is necessary to keep the group together on the ride, in case of emergency and for recording attendance later on.
- Remind riders that when riding with the Club, **safety** is of the **utmost importance**, and **all riders are ultimately responsible for their own safety** and should ride in such a way as to reduce the risk of accidents or injury to themselves, other group members and all other road users.
- Also, we all have a responsibility to create a good image of the Club and of cycling itself and so we should abide by the provisions and spirit of the Highway and Countryside Codes.
- Outline the ride and pace to the group, inform them of any potential hazards you have identified (e.g. *busy road crossings, poor road surfaces etc*) and to choose stopping points carefully and remind riders to avoid blocking roads and junctions.



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- Appoint a lead and back marker (depending on where you intend to ride in the group) saying these may be changed and others may be invited to take on these or other roles during the ride. Where the group is small, it is not necessary to appoint a separate lead or back marker. However, in this case, ask the group to wait in a safe place at the top of hills and near junctions to allow the group to reassemble and position yourself to ensure no one is left behind.
- Remind the group to stay behind the nominated front leader, and if they do get ahead, it is at their own risk, and they should wait at a safe place at the top of a hill or near the next junction for others to catch up. This caters for different paces on hills and flats, which depend not just on fitness levels but also on differing bike set-ups, gearing and e-bikes.
- Remind the group of the potential hazards of rural or urban riding. For example, rural riding with narrow roads, mud, higher speed limits and urban riding where speed limits may be lower but with much more traffic, pedestrians and junctions.
- Remind the group to follow the club's Code of Conduct, including the use of hand signals and shouts etc, as summarised below. For rural riding, special considerations apply compared to urban riding e.g. narrow roads, mud, higher speed limits and care needed when riding 2 abreast.
- Key elements of ride etiquette to point out in the pre-ride briefing are:
  - Ride 2 abreast but only where safe to do so, where the road is wide enough and not too busy: max 4 in a subgroup. Leave a 2-car space every 4 riders.
  - Single out or even pull in safely to let traffic pass on narrow roads. Outside rider slots in behind the inside one.
  - Leave plenty of space behind the bike in front (1m) and don't overlap wheels.
  - Horses and livestock: avoid noise, don't ring bells, slow down and leave plenty of space.
  - Warn others of hazards and when stopping: Use hand signals **when safe to do so**. Otherwise, use shouts.
  - Don't rely entirely on other riders - keep your own lookout.
- Clarify hazard warnings, if necessary, i.e. with guest or less experienced riders:
  - **"Car back"** – To advise of approaching vehicles from the rear.
  - **"Car Front"** - To advise of approaching vehicles from the front.
  - **"Stopping"** – Stop slowly, except in an emergency.
  - **"Slowing"** – Slowing.
  - **"On the Left"** – Parked cars, obstruction etc. **Signal: Prepare to indicate, pull out and pass.**
  - **"On the Right"** – Oncoming hazard etc. **Signal: Put right arm behind your back.**
  - **"Pothole"** or **"Loose"** – Pothole or loose surface. **Signal: Point down with left or right hand to indicate location.**
  - **"Single out"** – Due to road conditions, ride in single file with the outside rider dropping back behind the inside rider.
- Remind members of the group not to leave the ride without letting the leader know. Give them an opportunity to reassure you as to their reasons. Consider modification of pace, distance, etc, if that would be appropriate.

### **After the ride**

- Add the names of all who are on the ride to the worksheet "[For recording attendees on club rides](#)" (Accessible via Rolling Runs List or documents section of the website). Some may join the ride at an intermediate stop, and some may leave - all are deemed to have been on the ride. There is a guest rider form available to download on the documents page of the website. If completed, this should be returned to the Secretary after the ride.