

GUIDE FOR GROUP RIDE LEADERS

If you are arranging or leading a club group ride, you should adhere with the following to ensure the safety of the group;

The role of the leader

The ride leader has a duty of care towards the riders and must ensure as far as reasonably practicable that the safety and enjoyment of all participants and the public has been taken into account in the organisation of the ride.

The role of leader is usually voluntary and it is not expected that the leader has any specific authority over the group. However, the Organiser/s of the ride group must be certain that the person selected can carry out the requirements detailed within this guide to the standard expected.

Before the ride

The ride leader should have a potential route in mind and where practicable should consider in advance known physical hazards, likely weather conditions and the ability of the participants. Descents, main or busy roads and poor road surfaces all possible hazards that can be identified and possibly avoided through route choice or made safer by communication with riders.

Above all consider the impact of weather and the ability of riders especially in wet and icy conditions, and be prepared to slow the group or alter your plans to suit the conditions.

At the start

Avoid causing an obstruction or noise at the meeting point. Welcome new riders, introduce yourself and tell them about the ride. Ensure that all riders are carrying emergency contact details.

Where a non-club member is attending the ride, make them aware of the rules of Dunmow Velo and obtain contact details such that a disclaimer can be provided. No non-member should attend more than one introductory ride without having signed a disclaimer.

Where a new member has joined the ride, allocate a "buddy" to a new rider, not just for safety but to ensure they are socially welcomed and included. The buddy need not stay with the newcomer for the duration of the ride.

Use an experienced "backmarker" to accompany the last rider on the road and wait if someone stops without the front of the group being aware. Check for the presence of the backmarker at junctions. This is especially important in large groups, groups of very mixed ability or with novices.

Consider splitting very large groups, appoint an assistant leader if needed.

Choose a safe place to stop as a group. Warn riders before stopping and keep the carriageway clear. In the event of enforced stops; clear the carriageway if possible or instruct the group to continue to a safe waiting place.

Assess the problem and decide whether to hold up the ride or leave a small group behind with details of the route to the next stop.

During the Ride

Adhere to the Dunmow Velo Club Rules at all times, therefore ensuring others also do so.

Set your standards of behaviour through clear instructions and personal example when dealing with hazards, junctions, potholes, vehicles, passing traffic, narrow roads, dangerous descents, passing horses, etc. Speak individually to riders who do not conform. Make sure the riders on the front clearly pass on indications of hazards, if in doubt stop the group to ask for co-operation. The same applies if riders have an unsafe technique or equipment.

In the extreme event that individuals put the group at risk through their behaviour you should ask them to leave the ride and inform the Dunmow Velo committee immediately such that further action can be taken including potential club disciplinary action to ensure the safety of other Club members.

Leaders do not have to be at the front all the time but should be able to communicate with leading riders to give directions, warn of hazards and indicate a stop if needed.

If a rider suggests they may leave the ride, or that the ride should carry on without them, check that you cannot change your ride to suit their abilities, or ask an experienced participant to assist the rider.

Make sure you are clear:

- that they are leaving, not left behind
- that the rider is not separating because they feel they are holding back the group or are unwelcome.
- that the rider has adequate knowledge and resources to get home.

Training

If you would like to learn more about leading rides in all situations Dunmow Velo can facilitate further training through our accreditation to British Cycling, if you would like further details please contact the committee.