



DUNMOW VELO CYCLING CLUB (DVCC)

HANDBOOK FOR RIDING ON DVCC ORGANISED GROUP RIDES

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Introduction:

Dunmow Velo Cycling Club (DVCC) was established in April 2016. The club provides a platform for enthusiastic cyclists to ride together on social rides, safely, around local roads in north west Essex and the surrounding area.

As the club develops and expands, with in excess of 100 members, we have produced this Handbook to promote:

- 1) The safety of the club riders
- 2) The development of club rider's skills and achievement of personal goals
- 3) DVCC's goal to remain as a friendly, welcoming club that encourages new riders whatever their riding experience

This Handbook details minimum requirements to comply with Club Rules, supplemented with further information that all Club Riders should be aware of such that risks can be effectively mitigated to acceptable levels. This Handbook is aligned with, and compliments, the general guidance contained within the DVCC website.

DVCC encourages all members to fully read and comply with this document.

Of particular note, DVCC members should also familiarize themselves, and comply with [rules 59 to 82 of the Highway Code](#). DVCC also recommends that members watch the readily available GCN videos that cover various aspects of cycling, including maintenance, equipment and riding skills. Examples are:

How to ride in a group (ridesmart) <https://youtu.be/QPXijIKgFVM>

Group riding etiquette <https://youtu.be/ODmB9LyZyKM>

Ride through and off (chain gang) <https://youtu.be/kWEoBFkwsc0>

How to use hand signals <https://youtu.be/cWWP7R-1Vi0>

Signals in a bunch <https://youtu.be/gDUTelegSNQ>

How to ride in rain and wet weather <https://youtu.be/2WWF-W9IBU4>

5 skills every rider needs <https://youtu.be/CsXGMeMc75U>

What to take (pack) on a ride <https://youtu.be/-1gv6Y5NSno>

How to ride at night <https://youtu.be/nZ9CGswQSc>

DVCC is reliant on club members to proactively support the Ride Coordinators and the Ride Leaders such that all group rides can be well controlled, safe and enjoyable for all riders. In this respect, the Ride Coordinator, or Ride Leader as appropriate, will have the final say regarding any issue regarding compliance with the requirements as identified within this Handbook.

Non-DVCC Organised Rides

The Club provides all DVCC members with the facility to post via the club website invitations to 'member rides,' 'social rides' and other 'sportive or charity rides.'

DVCC rules, handbook and risk assessment and the potential absence of club members acting as official 'ride leaders or co-ordinators' means that member initiated rides are outside the auspices of the Club's Risk Assessment and Handbook. The Club thought would encourage all members to recognise the sensible advice they provide and endeavor to ride safely at all times



The Handbook:

1.0	Preparation for the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
1.1	Condition of your bike	<p>Cycles must be road worthy and legal in all respects. Particular attention to condition of brakes. Check bike over before you leave.</p> <p>The use of all spinaci bars and tribars is strictly banned from all club rides. Whilst the club accepts that they may be permanently attached to cycles, they must not be used during a ride because they are a long way from the brakes and can be unstable in some circumstances which may cause danger to the group.</p>	<p>Carry out regular servicing intervals.</p> <p>Service the bike after any accidents.</p> <p>Quick bike check before every ride</p>
1.2	Tools & Spares	<p>Each rider should have adequate tools to fix common mechanical problems. You shouldn't rely on others to have tools.</p> <p>Toolkit to comprise the MINIMUM of:- Pump or means of inflating tyres. At least one inner tube. Minimum of two tyre levers (three is ideal in case of breakage). Allen keys / spanner/s appropriate for your bike.</p>	<p>Spare chain link/chain tool</p>
1.3	Clothing	<p>Riders should wear clothing appropriate for cycling and be prepared for changes in the weather.</p> <p>Clothing and shoes should be appropriate for the activity, flip flops or other non-sports cycling footwear are not appropriate</p>	<p>When cycling in poor visibility or at dusk riders should consider wearing higher visibility clothing.</p>
1.4	Cycle Helmets	<p>It is compulsory that riders wear a properly fitting EN standard cycle helmet for all club rides. The helmet should conform to the latest regulations.</p>	<p>Do not wear a helmet that has been involved in any previous accidents, or has visible damage. Helmets should be replaced as per manufacturer's recommendations.</p>



1.0	Preparation for the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
1.5	Lights	Working front and rear lights are mandatory for riding in low/poor light conditions e.g. dusk.	Spare batteries. Note: the dazzle from high intensity rear lights can be off putting to other cyclists/road users
1.6	Bike shoe cleats	Practice and familiarise yourself with cleats before riding with a group.	Check tensioner adjuster if cleats are too tight. Practice unclipping and stopping. Always unclip early when anticipating a stop
1.7	Communication/Mobile Phone		Take your mobile phone. Ensure that you have the ride leader's mobile phone number
1.8	Emergency Contact/Health Issues	<p>Always carry some form of 'In Case of Emergency' (ICE) details (this facility is available on the iphone 'medical ID' function. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXKb-Qhs9KU)</p> <p>Should be readily accessible without being hidden under clothing. Advise the ride leader before the ride of any relevant health issues they should be aware of.</p> <p>NOTE: DVCC cannot take any responsibility for dealing with any health issues, known about or otherwise.</p>	Before you set off on the ride tell somebody on the ride where your ICE details are
1.9	Food and drink	Ensure you carry water / hydration drinks and food. Drink regularly during the ride, do not wait until you start to feel thirsty.	Plan and make food & drink stops as required. Rehydrate after the ride also. Bring money to buy emergency drinks and food
1.10	New rider/Lack of experience	<p>All new riders to introduce themselves to the Ride Co-ordinator(s)</p> <p>New riders should be verbally assessed for the their standard of fitness and experience of cycling/group riding by the Ride Co-ordinator(s) and allocated to a group within their stated ability.</p> <p>Ride co-ordinator to give a short safety briefing to the guest / new rider, appropriate to their experience.</p>	Allocate the new rider to a competent club member as a buddy to teach ride / club protocol during the ride.



2.0	During the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
2.1	General Ride discipline	<p>Understand and be familiar with the Highway Code. Follow Ride Leader's instructions with regards single file or 'two abreast'. Never ride more than two abreast. Never 'half wheel' or overlap. Endeavour to ride smoothly and not to brake without warning unless necessary - one rider's actions impact those behind.</p> <p>Maintain an even pace when riding two abreast and stay level with the person next to you and do not increase the pace when a rider draws level with you ("half wheeling")</p> <p>Avoid cycling 'in the gutter' if you are on the front of the group as you'll be forcing everyone else to follow you increasing the likelihood of hitting obstructions such as drain covers and of picking up punctures. Where possible, ride 1 m out from the curb.</p> <p>Ride in single file on busy roads and where it would otherwise be dangerous or difficult for drivers to pass.</p> <p>Should the group split due to circumstances, riders should slow down or find a safe place to stop and reform before proceeding.</p> <p>The group has an obligation to always stop and assist any riders suffering from mechanical or physical problems.</p> <p>The group should always wait for the last rider unless the rider requested to be left, or an agreement has been made (with the consent of all the riders in the group).</p>	<p>Ride consistently - be aware of those around you and remember your movements will affect everyone in the group. i.e when in the lead position concentrate on the road ahead and lead the group smoothly around obstacles, avoiding sudden unexpected swerves. Pedal continuously at a pace and cadence consistent with those ahead and when you lead try to maintain the same pace.</p> <p>Leave enough space to create your comfort zone, between yourself and surrounding riders</p>



2.0	During the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
		<p>Always follow the instructions/direction of the Ride Leader. If there is a particular concern, voice the concern clearly and positively at the time, avoiding confrontation.</p> <p>Remember safety is always the overriding priority</p>	
2.2	Communications – hand signals	<p>When safe, the front rider is to signal as appropriate with the left or right hand. Warning to be repeated (if safe) by those following.</p> <p>Pot hole - pointed signal</p> <p>Undulating / rutted road - pointed downward fist shake with open hand.</p> <p>Gravel/loose material - downward arm with a hand making a movement as if dusting fast.</p> <p>Stationary vehicle - use appropriate arm behind the back to point away from the obstruction to guide the rider behind</p> <p>Slow down "Slow" or "Easy" - one hand extended to pat an invisible dog.</p> <p>Left or right - change of direction</p> <p>Wave through with right hand - rider at front wants rider behind to come through and take a turn at the front. Stop - hand straight up in the air.</p>	
2.3	Communications – verbal	<p>Warn of approaching / overtaking vehicle by rear marker shouting "car back" and warn of an oncoming vehicle the lead rider should shout "car front".</p> <p>Warn of other hazards as appropriate to supplement hand signals e.g. pot holes, gravel etc</p>	<p>This shout can be followed by "single" when road / traffic is judged to be dangerous and there is time.</p>



2.0	During the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
2.4	Riding appropriately to the prevailing conditions e.g. ice, wet roads, surface conditions, also extremes of hot and cold weather	<p>Exercise due care and attention to road surface conditions. Ride at a speed and in a manner suitable to the conditions e.g. slow down, leave a larger gap to the next rider, ride in single file.</p> <p>Wear appropriate clothing</p> <p>Be aware of how extreme conditions are affecting either yourself or other riders and communicate any concerns to the Ride Leader immediately</p>	<p>Ride Leaders will give instructions for riding safely in adverse weather, may temporarily halt the ride to await a change in conditions, or abandon the ride.</p>
2.5	Road, Intersections, roundabouts and other junctions	<p>On observing a road junction warning sign, assess the type of junction, visibility into the junction and amount of traffic and ease the speed of the group as appropriate.</p> <p>On approach, try to establish eye contact with driver/s waiting at or approaching the junction from a minor road on your left, to encourage them to give way.</p> <p>Each person needs to look out for themselves and make their own decision if it is safe or not. Never turn across traffic if the Ride Leader has instructed 'stop'</p>	<p>Ride defensively, assuming that the driver may not give way to you and the group and leave sufficient stopping distance.</p> <p>Cyclist at front of the ride rides ahead to the junction to assess traffic before the main ride arrives at the junction, enabling advanced warning of 'stop' or 'clear' to be given</p> <p>Try to maintain ride formation and avoid bunching at the junction.</p>
2.6	Choice of stopping places	<p>Always choose a safe place to stop as a group and in particular avoid road junctions, bends and other physical road hazards.</p> <p>Warn riders before stopping and choose a position that, where possible, keeps the carriageway clear. In event of punctures or breakdowns, move off the carriageway if possible and decide whether to instruct the group to continue to a safer waiting place.</p>	
2.7	Interface with overtaking motorists	<p>Open gaps in the ride (at least 30 metres between groups of about 5 riders) to assist traffic to safely pass the group by 'leapfrogging' small, compact groups as appropriate.</p> <p>NEVER use hand signals to encourage a motorist to overtake unless</p>	<p>Be courteous and respectful at all times.</p>



2.0	During the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
		that without any uncertainty it is 100% safe to do so. By waving a motorist through you are taking full responsibility for any consequences if your decision is wrong.	
2.8	Loose animals on the carriageway or in the vicinity of the carriageway	It is common to encounter wild and farm animals on the road in the countryside. In the case of loose animals on the carriageway or in the general vicinity, front riders should shout warning and reduce speed and point in the direction of the animal/s. The warning should be passed back by the following riders.	
2.9	Horses on carriageway or in the vicinity	The lead rider should warn the horse and rider by verbal communication that cyclists are present behind shout "cyclists" from a distance and then repeat as you draw closer. Thereafter proceed and pass by slowly advising the horse rider roughly how many cyclists are following. Heed any advice given by the horse rider. Horses can be spooked by bikes (especially ones that arrive silently from behind) so it is essential that the horse hears the human voice before it sees the bike/s.	
2.10	Interface/confrontation with the public	The hierarchy is to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Avoid confrontation2) Diffuse3) Record and report Abuse aimed at members of the public will not be tolerated. It is incumbent on all riders to avoid conflict wherever possible and assist with calming situations down. Instances where confrontation has happened should be accurately recorded and reported to the Ride Coordinators, Club Secretary and Club Chairman as soon as reasonably possible (the severity of the incident dictating the urgency of reporting).	



2.0	During the Ride	Minimum	Recommended
		Common sense should prevail at every stage and if deemed appropriate/ necessary, instances of confrontation should be reported to the Police (preferably after discussion with the Ride Coordinators/Club Secretary/Club Chairman)	
2.11	Dealing with emergencies and reporting procedures	<p>Assist the Ride Leader, as appropriate, and follow his/her commands. Considerations are:</p> <p>Assess accident. Are people still in danger? Move group to a safer place.</p> <p>Send out warning parties up and down the road to warn vehicles of the danger ahead and to slow down / stop.</p> <p>Assess injured party, do not move unless in danger and do not offer any drinks or medication. (If first aider present let that person take charge of the injured party).</p> <p>Keep talking and re-assuring the injured person. Keep them conscious. If required send a free cyclist / member of the public to locate the road name.</p> <p>If necessary call 999 (emergency services can locate your position of your mobile if you are unclear of your location).</p> <p>Describe the nature of the injury and seek advice. Where available, wear gloves when dealing with blood producing injuries.</p> <p>Check for bike damage (injured person should not be relied on to check their own equipment) and if in doubt call for someone to retrieve rider and bike i.e. do not allow rider to ride a bike that may be dangerous</p>	<p>Common sense judgement if the injured rider declares themselves fit to ride. Monitor.</p> <p>Accident reporting form to be completed as soon as possible after the accident by the Ride Leader and sent to the Club Secretary. Details of accident requiring medical attention (other than minor cut/scrape) to be notified to the Ride Coordinators, Club Secretary and Club Chairman as soon as reasonably practical</p> <p>Riders report to the club any hazards / alerts that might affect other DVCC riders</p>



3.0	Post Ride/General	Minimum	Recommended
3.1	Improvement and development		Offer constructive advice to the ride leader/other riders after the ride. Ask for feedback on your own riding. Understand what you do well and where you need to improve.
3.2	Road conditions		Use social media (WhatsApp/Facebook) or email to advise the Ride Co-ordinators of particular road conditions they need to be aware of e.g. surface dressing operations, roadworks, closures etc