



WHEEL EASY! GUIDE FOR RIDE LEADERS



Wheel Easy! is a CTC Affiliated Club.

This guide for ride leaders is based on CTC best practice and recommendations.

When riding as a club we each have responsibilities....

- to act in a manner which is a credit to the club,
- to ourselves in terms of our own safety and well-being,
- to our fellow riders by ensuring our behaviour does not threaten the safety of others, and promotes well-being and fellowship, and
- to follow the rules and advice in the Highway Code.

As a Ride Leader you need to lead by example and follow these straightforward rules. Please also make yourself conversant with the 'Wheel Easy! Guide to Cycling in a Group'.

Ride planning....

1. If you have not led a ride previously, seek advice and support from an experienced ride leader.
2. To avoid unnecessary stops, ensure that you are familiar with the route. Identify points of interest, cafe stops and toilets.
3. Check that the chosen cafes are open, that they can accommodate the likely numbers, and that food will be available. Advise on numbers eating if say more than 10, and approximate arrival times.
4. As well as your toolkit, it is suggested the leader should carry a first-aid kit, mobile phone, chain rivet extractor, spoke key, Allen keys, small adjustable spanner, and screwdrivers.

Before the ride starts....

5. The maximum number in a group should ideally be 8, and subdivision of a larger group should be based on faster/slower riders. It should be agreed who is leading each group before setting off. Appoint back-markers.
6. Swap mobile numbers with the back-marker, and offer your number to the group riders.
7. Before the start, describe the ride in brief detail. Introduce yourself and the back-marker, and ask newcomers to introduce themselves. Try to ascertain the group-riding experience of newcomers, tactfully check their cycle for safety and arrange for somebody to 'buddy up' and help them. Provide route and café stop details.

On the ride....

8. Always lead from the front! When the route turns off at a junction, request a rider to wait for any slower riders. This keeps the group moving. If the group has spread out due to the pace, slow the ride down.

9. Do not speed up to go with overtaking riders, let them go on ahead. It is more important to keep the pace comfortable for the main group and keep the group together.
10. When traffic is held up behind, the ride leader or back-marker should give instruction to open gaps in the ride (with at least 20 metres between groups of 4 or 5 riders) to help traffic to safely overtake these smaller groups.
11. Give positive instruction to ride in single file when road and/or traffic conditions dictate.
12. Always choose a safe place to stop as a group. In particular, avoid road junctions, bends and other physical road hazards, and keep the carriageway clear.
13. Warning of oncoming traffic should be given by shouting "car front". Similarly the last rider should give warning of overtaking traffic from behind by shouting "car back".
14. Warn riders before slowing and stopping, the warning must be passed down the line.
15. If unsure of the route, stop well before junctions to consult a map. Check for the presence of the back-marker at junctions. If necessary, wait for slower riders beyond and away from the junction and give them time to take a breather.
16. For dangerous road surfaces (pot-holes, glass, gravel, wet leaves, etc.), call out the nature of the hazard and point down with left or right hand. This must be done before arriving at the hazard to allow time for the following riders (who may not be able to see it) to react, and to pass the warning down the line.
17. For other hazards (e.g. walker, jogger, dog, parked car, etc.) requiring a change of direction call "on the left" or "on the right" or give a hand signal to indicate pulling out.
18. On approaching a road junction warning sign, assess the junction (type, traffic, visibility into junction) and ease the speed of the ride as appropriate. At a road coming from the left, try to establish eye contact with driver(s) waiting at, or approaching, the junction to encourage them to give way.
19. Directional hand signals must be given to the group (and other road users) in good time. Verbal direction should be given to a rider abreast. Give the group loud verbal warning of approach to a major road, dual carriageway, mini-roundabout, ford, etc.
20. On observing horses, warn the group and slow down. When closer, warn the horse rider verbally of the group's presence. Obey any advice given by the horse rider.
21. Ensure riders take extra care when leaving the ride, as motorists expect all riders to continue in the same direction.

Riders in difficulty.....

22. In the event of punctures, etc., instruct the group to continue to a safe waiting place. Assess the problem and decide whether to hold up the ride or leave the affected "victim" with helpers and details of the route to the next stop.
23. If someone becomes detached, consider how long you will wait for them. Your main responsibility is to the whole group and their welfare, so be aware of daylight restrictions and bad weather putting the group at risk.
24. A rider who is unwell or suffering mechanical failure obviously deserves more consideration. An experienced volunteer should stay with them, or you can advise they phone for help, or taxi if necessary, rather than delay everyone.
25. Leaders should check that a rider leaving the ride is capable of returning home by themselves. If in doubt, consider options.
26. If there is an accident, ensure the victim is safe, call 999, manage the traffic, clear the carriageway if possible and wait for the emergency services. Call the rider's emergency contact. Make notes as to what happened, take photos, and take the names of witnesses and group riders.

Remember.... The ride is for your enjoyment as well as those who you take on the ride. Relax and enjoy, and you can depend on the goodwill of the majority who will support you.