

Knutsford Triathlon Club Group Rides

Riding bikes is fun. Doing so safely, alongside your club-mates and with a smile on your face is even better. Please read the information below to understand how our group rides work around the principles of **SAFETY, RESPECT & FUN**.

What Can You Expect On A Club Ride?

- Ride Leaders – this is the club member nominated to lead the group ride. The ride leader will not necessarily have to ride at the front but will be familiar with the route and have some cycling experience. Please respect the leader's decision, if for example they decide to shorten a route due to weather/light/safety concerns.
- Group Selection – depending on the number of riders, we may split up into different groups. Based on average speeds per hour, these are likely to be slow (12-14 mph), medium (14-16 mph) or fast (above 16 mph). If you are not sure which group you should go in, speak to the ride leader a couple of days before the ride and they will be able to help you choose. If there are not enough riders to split into multiple groups, we will ride as one group and our pace will be as fast as the slowest rider. As a rule, it will be worth starting with a slower group than a faster one.
- Routes – we will have planned routes and undertaken risk assessments. Before the ride sets off, the ride leader will inform the group about distance, elevation, things to look out for and of course café stops.
- Communication - roads are full of traffic, rocks, twigs, signs, potholes, parked cars, animals, pedestrians, etc. and visibility is limited for the cyclist in a pack. It is important to communicate to the riders in the group of potential hazards by shouting and pointing out hazards.

Key Guidelines for Group Rides

Cycling on the public roads come with inherent risk, as a club we support and encourage people to ride safely and enjoyably, respecting their fellow riders and other road users. It is not possible to eliminate all risk; however, these guidelines and associated risk assessments are in place to protect individuals, clubmates and members of the public as far as reasonably practical.

By following a few basic guidelines, we can achieve this, so please read, and if you are unsure about anything then please email info@knutfordtriclub.co.uk in advance of the rides or ask your ride leader before the ride sets off.

The following guidelines are based on best practice issued by British Cycling, and on the cycling experience of our ride leaders.

SAFETY This is the single most important consideration for our club rides, and we ask you to take this very seriously:

Ensure you have ICE details with you, hardcopy in a pocket, on the bike, on your phone under ICE and/or a bracelet or similar:

<https://iceid.co.uk/cycling-id/>

It is essential that your bike is in a safe and roadworthy condition. Below are key parts of your bike to check before riding:

- Check that your brakes work. Ensure they slow your bike effectively and are not rubbing on your tyres or wheels
- Check your tyres. Ensure that they are not worn, are pumped up to the correct pressure and mounted securely on the wheel rim
- Ensure your wheels are securely clamped to your frame
- Check that your stem, handlebars and headset are all secure and that there is no rocking / excessive movement
- Make sure your pedals are tight
- Clean and oil your chain
- Frequently inspect your frame to ensure it is not damaged / cracked

For further information visit the M-Check steps at the Sustrans website ([Sustrans M-Check](#))

Please see below for important information on key equipment and clothing:

- Working rear lights are **mandatory** for our club rides – no rear light, no club ride
- Working front lights, whilst not mandatory, are **preferred** and should be used
- Dress for the conditions in which you will be riding. If it's cold, make sure you have suitable layers. If it's raining, make sure you have a rain jacket.
- Helmets are **mandatory** for our club rides – no helmet, no club ride
- I know we are a triathlon club but riding in a group with TT bars on your bike is dangerous for others. If you are club riding, remove your TT bars.

The club will have undertaken a risk assessment for each group ride and will have an emergency action plan. Should there be an incident while on a group ride, please support the ride leader and offer any help you can.

RESPECT We ask everyone, when riding on a club ride to have respect for their fellow riders and other road-users:

- Adhere to the high-way code. Stop at red lights.
- Respect other road users – drivers, pedestrians, runners, horse-riders. With respect to horses, slow down, make your presence known in a calm manner and provide plenty of room when passing. They are big, have hooves and could hurt you!
- Respect your club-mates, we are all there for the same thing and we all want to go home happy and healthy at the end of it. Don't take risks that jeopardise your own or others safety.

- Respect the ride leader. They have taken on the role of planning and executing the ride and are there to help and guide. They have your best interests in mind.
- Do not ride more than two-abreast and where safe, allow traffic to pass on narrow roads by moving to single file (ride leaders and experienced riders will help to direct this)
- Turn up to rides on time – this will benefit you and your club mates and will allow time for a briefing before we set off.
- Whilst not essential, it is useful to be able to fix punctures. However, there will club-mates who are more than happy to lend a helping hand but you should have the right kit and the right inner-tubes etc. for your tyres.

FUN Let us not forget that we do this because we love cycling, so let us do it with a smile on our faces. Do not take it too seriously. Chat to your fellow riders. A cheery “hello” to a passing cyclist helps spread the fun to everyone else.

Hand Signals and Calls for Group Rides

If you are riding in the middle of the group/bunch, you won't be able see very far ahead, hence the need for everyone in the group to warn everyone about obstacles and hazards that lay ahead.

Hazards – The most common are glass and potholes. The calls are simply ‘Glass’ and ‘Hole’ accompanied by a hand pointing to the hazard (if safe to do so)

Parked Cars – ‘Car Left’ is the call and the left arm swings back and goes behind the back.

Slow Rider – ‘Rider Left’ or ‘On the left’ followed by the left arm swinging behind the back.

Lights or Stopping – ‘Lights’ or ‘Stopping’ is the call and the arm goes up above the head.

Junctions –When approaching a junction, it is important to warn the bunch of the direction to be taken ‘Left’, ‘Right’ or ‘Straight over’ if the junction is clear the call is ‘Clear’ otherwise call ‘Stopping’

ALL of these warnings are calls that should be called out from the front of the bunch and passed back by each rider as quickly as possible.

Car Behind – ‘Car Back’ is the call and no hand signal. It is the last rider in the bunch’s responsibility to call out to the bunch of cars approaching from behind.

Riding in the Group

The Lead Rider – The two riders on the front can significantly impact the experience of the riders. They set the pace, call all road obstacles and warn the bunch of any traffic change. Remember that the bunch is effectively one vehicle so at junctions ensure there is sufficient time for the whole bunch to cross so as not to cause a split or sudden braking.

Inside the bunch – Maintain your separation far enough from the rider in front to avoid any risk of touching wheels, but stay close enough to stay in the slipstream of the rider in front. Less than half a wheel for experienced riders, and a maximum of 1 wheel for less experienced riders. Watch the rider in front, not just their back wheel, it is easier to maintain your separation that way. Warn those behind and in front of hazards.

Back of the bunch – The riders at the back also support an enjoyable ride experience, particularly the rider on the right outside side. This person must call the bunch across lanes of traffic and warn of vehicles approaching from behind.

Single File – When a car approaches from behind or the road narrows you should single out as quickly and safely as possible. The outside rider should move in front of the inside or left hand rider, and only move out once it is safe to do so. At all times maintain your speed!

Insurance:

The club insurance covers club events attended by club members, a non-member may attend as a potential new member, but this limited to 3 occasions and thereafter membership must be obtained.

Risk management is an essential factor in the Clubs ability to demonstrate that the Club is meeting the requirements of the club's insurance. Every time we ride our bike we are exposing ourselves to various risks and effective risk management (guidelines, Risk Assessment, incident reporting, Emergency plans) helps us to focus our minds on these risks and eliminate or reduce as far as is reasonably practicable.

Much of this is common sense and the actions detailed are ones we are already familiar with; the key word here is reasonable. As a ride leader or ride participant it is not reasonable to guarantee the safety of others, merely to act reasonably.

All riders are reminded that they are responsible for their own safety and that they have a duty of care not only to themselves but to members of the public and to the persons they are riding with. i.e. the duty of care requires you to consider the consequences of your acts or omissions and to ensure that those acts and/or omissions do not give rise to a foreseeable risk of injury to another person.

Part of fulfilling this responsibility is to read and understand the ride guidelines, risk assessments, listen to briefings, pay attention on the road and contribute to supporting effective risk management.

All riders take part in group activities at their own risk, we strongly urge all riders to obtain appropriate 3rd party insurance as a minimum. It should be noted that no liability shall be attached to Knutsford Triathlon Club (including its officers and members) for any injury, loss or damage suffered.