

ACC Guidance for Riders

Club Rides

We all love cycling, and club rides should be fun and we want everyone to have a good time, here are a few tips, suggestions and requirements that you might find useful.

- Please arrive in a timely manner before the ride start time. Any special riding plans or tips should be discussed at the start. It's important everyone on the ride has a clear idea of what to expect.
- Riders are advised to ride as a tight group, 2 abreast, and single-out when the call is made or as demanded by road conditions.
- Riding in two parallel lines is the safest and most practical riding formation, contrary to some road users opinion this is legal. All riders should try to hit the front even for short periods, hence gaining experience of peeling off and filtering through the bunch.
- All groups (except by agreement) should ride at the pace of the slowest rider. On a hill, an individual can suggest that riders take it at their own pace for training purposes and regroup at a safe location.
- A rider may be asked to move to another group (faster or slower) if their pace is considered unsuitable for the group they are currently with.
- Riders should advise the group if they decide to peel off for any reason.
 - Your bike must be in a roadworthy condition.
 - Ensure you have downloaded the route this avoids confusion and delays during the ride.
 - Tri-bars should never be used on group rides.
 - Riders should carry a spare tube(s) and appropriate tools including a puncture repair kit with tyre levers.
 - Fit full length mudguards if it is wet.
 - Wearing a helmet is compulsory.
 - Please wear ACC club kit on club rides, wearing the kit helps to promote the club.
 - Follow the highway code at all times, remember we share the road with others
 - 3rd party insurance is a requirement, this is available from British Cycling, Cycling UK or other providers, you may also be covered on your home insurance. It's generally accepted that if you have an accident then you cover the cost of repair yourself (you cannot blame another rider and claim it from them).

Requirements for all Riders on Club Rides:

- To have fun and enjoy the ride.
- To welcome and support new riders.
- To keep an eye out for riders who are struggling and call for a moderation in pace if required.
- Carry a ICE card or other ID just in case.

Group Riding

- Hold the wheel in front and stay close. You will save around 20% of your energy when sitting in the bunch. If you are nervous about hitting the wheel in front, ride 6 inches either side of it and do not stare at the tyre, try to look up, this way you will relax more and see any problems before they arise. Also do not overlap your wheel with the rider's rear wheel in front of you.
- Relax: Try to relax your upper body as much as possible. This will help prevent fatigue and prevent you from making sudden changes in direction. Bend the arms a little and keep your head up.
- Do not 'half wheel' or race ahead! Half-wheeling is when one of the two riders on the front continually pushes his wheel ahead of his fellow rider to try and push them to go quicker, this is bad practice and will affect the pace of the ride. If a rider half-wheels just stay at your pace and ask him to ease up.
The rides are not a race and are more effective if they are ridden at a pace that everyone can keep up with. Stronger riders should just spend more time on the front and make their efforts on the hills and then re-group.
- Depending on the type of group you are riding in, the main principle of group riding is to ride together (either socially or 'through and off'). Riding off the front upsets the discipline and pace of the group. A long hill or other section might give an opportunity for some hard riding, likewise a sprint for a town sign, but remember it isn't a race and not everyone will want to ride in this way.

Heading off the front also applies to descents, if you wish to descend at a faster pace than the group, try to be on the front over the top of the climb. Remember not everyone is confident descending at speed.

- Point to or call out potholes or other obstructions, and follow/pass on instructions within the group.
- Advise immediately if a rider is off the back (in this case a stronger rider(s) should drop back and bring the person/persons back onto the group.
- Tell someone if you have a problem, for example a puncture, mechanical problem, feel tired or have run out of food or drink.
If you are dropped on a hill the group will wait or send a rider back to pace you up to the group.
- Punctures: If you puncture, shout "puncture" and pull over. The group may ride on and then retrace so they keep warm. If you struggle to repair it then ask for help, there will be experienced rider who can help you fix it quickly, so don't feel afraid to ask as it will save the group time.

AYLESBURY CYCLING CLUB

General Shouted Instructions

All of these should be passed down the line, as the riders at the back will not hear calls from the front rider(s):

“Car up & Car down” – A general warning of a car trying to pass or one coming around a corner or one coming towards you on a narrow road. If a car is coming towards you, call “Car down”. If a car is coming up from behind call “Car up” to warn the riders ahead of you.

“Easy” – If this is shouted it usually means there is a bad junction or potential hazard ahead and to pay attention yourself. This is especially important if you are in a large group and it will take a while to get around the hazard.

“Single out” – When a car is behind and needs extra space to overtake, or if the group is approaching a narrow road or overtaking a line of parked cars.

“On the left” - When approaching a parked car, this is also accompanied by waving your left hand behind your left lower back (from left to right). Remember to give cars plenty of space as car doors will often be opened.

“Hole” – When there is a hole or other object in the road that needs to be avoided, this is accompanied by pointing down to the floor in line with the obstruction and moving steadily to the side to avoid this.

“Clear” – When pulling out from a junction this is called to inform riders behind that it is safe to carry on. If it is not safe, either shout “Stop” or “Car”.

Have a look at these youtube clips for more information:

GCN group ride video part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK5MPtMrMqU>

GCN group ride video part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itcemqkuL_Y

GCN group ride video part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPXijlKgFVM>

GCN hand signals part 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prYMM7D2qF8>