**CTC SUFFOLK:**

**ADVICE NOTE FOR NEWCOMERS & PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF UNDER 18’s**

CTC Suffolk welcomes cyclists of all ages. The CTC council lays down strict rules on how riders under 18 years old must be treated. Young persons under 13 can only attend our rides if accompanied by a parent or responsible adult with the parents’ permission. Participants aged 13 to 18 years can ride unaccompanied if they have provided the ride leader with a signed parental consent form. All new riders must complete the guest registration form. [CLICK HERE](https://www.cyclinguk.org/sites/default/files/document/2018/10/cyuk_guest_registration_form_1_1.docx) for the forms.

Our web pages relating to Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday Rides set out our programme of regular rides, where you can meet us, and a short description of the ride categories relating to distances and typical speed. All our rides are led by an experienced club member and the rides co-ordinator’s telephone number at the top of the pages is the contact point for enquiries regarding these rides.

The Cyclists Touring Club is Britain’s national cycling charity. It is not a commercial company or a cycle racing club. Our emphasis is on sociable group cycling for leisure on quiet country roads. Club activities are run by volunteer members and therefore the level of support to individual attendees on Club rides is limited. The members of the club have a ‘duty of care’ to their colleagues. **Our members will, whenever possible, assist their fellow riders if problems occur, but there is no organised 'rescue service' for our rides,** **and riders are expected to come with roadworthy maintained cycles and sufficient resources to enable them to be independent on the day.**

A rider with any medical condition which may affect their riding should make the ride leader aware of this at the start of the ride.

Parents should note that generally rides do not return to the start point as riders disperse to their homes. This means that a parent may want to make specific arrangements to meet and collect their child.

For newcomers and young persons new to cycling we advise:

* Read our Guidance for Riders document and links within it.
* Familiarise yourself with the general location of the published ride destinations for morning lunch and afternoon tea before coming on the ride. Even if the destination is not far from the start, the routes are often circuitous.
* We will always have regard to the capabilities of newcomers attending on rides and leaders will ensure any newcomer is not unduly overstretched. However the onus must lie with the attendee (or their guardian) to judge that the ride is within their capabilities.
* Newcomers to cycling are strongly advised to start out by attending our Easy Rides and to have experience of riding at least 20 miles in a half day prior to joining our longer rides.
* Consider the expected terrain and weather conditions on the day of your intended ride, and prepare accordingly.
* Do bring drink and some food with you. Refreshment stops are usually at tea shops and pubs at lunch time although a number of our regulars have picnic lunches at public spaces at the ride destinations.
* Do bring sufficient money with you to buy a drink and/or food at the destinations or for emergency sustenance.
* Do carry a puncture repair outfit and replacement inner tube of the size to fit your tyres. For those with wheels which have deep rims, ensure the tube has a long presta valve. It is wise to always carry a pump and ensure the connector matches the tube valves. Many off road tubes are fitted with motor tyre valves requiring special pumps.
* Tyres should be inflated to recommended pressures and should be puncture free at time of arrival. Soft tyres are more likely to attract punctures.
* Do carry a weather proof outer garment and warm clothing if rain is forecast.
* It is advisable to carry a mobile phone on club rides so that you can call up help in event of a breakdown or fatigue. For youngsters, ensure the phone has sufficient credit. An experienced club person will always be wiling to lend a hand to deal with fixable breakdowns such as punctures on the road.
* We normally ride in a group of between 4 and 12 riders, double file when road and light traffic permit.

When riding with us:

* + Always abide by the Highway Code
  + Do not ride close to the wheel in front. Leave a minimum gap of 1.5 metres, and stay alert at all times to changes in pace of the person in front, especially when changing gear.
  + Do not overlap with the rider in front, especially not on the inside.
  + Do carry out the calls and abide by the leader’s advice during the ride regarding slowing, turning, and ‘singling out’ procedure as set out in the Guidance for Riders document.
  + Inform, call out, or otherwise let the rider adjacent or in front know if you are struggling with the pace. We want you to enjoy your ride. It is not a contest.
  + Do let the leader know if you intend to leave the ride at any destination or intermediate point.
  + Ensure that you are able to navigate safely to home or to your pick up point as rides generally do not return to the starting point.

In CTC Suffolk we think there is no better way to enjoy our county than by cycle. Riding in the company of other like minded cyclists enrich the experience. One learns more about the county, countryside, and cycling in general, get fit, and partake in a sustainable recreation that can be a life long experience. We hope you choose to come and give us a look. You will be most welcome. Have a look at our picture gallery for a flavour of our typical age range, bikes and personalities!

We hope to see you with us soon.