Our top tips for making a ride go smoothly

Becoming a Ride Leader

• Speak to someone on your committee so they can register you in order to be covered by our insurance.
• Familiarise yourself with Cycling UK’s Riding in a Group Checklist (Appendix 2) and our Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Before the Ride

• Work out a route you think your group is likely to enjoy, taking into account: distance; terrain; traffic; refreshments; toilets; points of interest; weather; season; ability of the riders; and any other factors.
• Be prepared to vary the ride if any of these change.
• Decide how you will navigate: GPS, maps, local knowledge, or a combination of all of these?
• Advertise your ride – don’t forget to include: the meeting time and place; the approximate distance and pace; likely return time; and other essentials such as what the riders should bring, any planned stops and so on.
During the ride

• Find out the names of everyone on your ride – not just for insurance purposes but it’s also friendlier. Ask everyone to fill in their contact details on the Signing In and Out sheet.
• Enlist the help of any experienced riders to: keep an eye on newer ones; act as backmarkers; lead a second group; or even act as ‘human signposts’ at junctions or gates.
• Explain how you will lead the ride: any jargon and hand signals you might use; when and where you will wait for slower riders; how you will deal with traffic and so on but remind each rider they are responsible for their own safety.
• Point out any likely hazards in advance. In the unlikely event of an incident, please complete an Accident/Incident Report form as soon as possible.
• Avoid blocking roads and trails – choose stopping points carefully.
• Keep the ride flowing smoothly but do stop occasionally and give slower riders a rest before restarting.
• Some faffing is inevitable but don’t allow it to go on too long or other riders will begin to get cold and restless.
• You have a duty of care to the riders and the public, so if you think someone may endanger themselves or others, have a quiet word; if their behaviour persists, you are entitled to ask them to leave the ride.
• You should lead by example and remain courteous and considerate to all road and trail users, including fellow riders.
• Ensure anyone who wishes to leave the ride is happy to make their own way home.
• At the end of the ride, thank people for coming and let them know details of the next one.

Suggested list of things to bring as a Ride Leader. It’s a good idea to carry a few essential items such as:

• Maps or GPS unit
• Selection of small tools, inner tubes, tyre levers and a puncture repair kit
• A fully-charged mobile phone
• Cards or coins for phone box – in some areas there may be no signal
• A supply of: Photo Consent forms; Accident/Incident Report forms; Group Rider Checklist for new/returning riders
• A Signing In/Out sheet

For more ideas, see the Ride Leader Handbook in the Document Hub.