




CyclingUK

Handbook for Cycling UK Groups

**A guide to running a cycling group
with Cycling UK (for member groups
and affiliated groups)**

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Introduction

Our heritage

Cycling groups are the backbone of Cycling UK's activities: our volunteers have been running groups since we were founded in 1878. We believe Cycling UK groups should be run in a way that makes cycling with a group safe and enjoyable for everyone: both riders and the wonderful volunteers who organise rides and activities.

Our mission

We are Cycling UK, the national cycling charity. Our mission is to enable and inspire people from all backgrounds and abilities to experience cycling's joys and benefits. We speak up for all who cycle to make sure it's a safe and easy choice for everyone to travel, explore and have fun. Our charity works with diverse partners to maximise our impact.

Founded in Harrogate on 5 August 1878 by Stanley Cotterell, we promote all forms of cycling, inspiring people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to discover the joys of cycling. As well as supporting our members, we also play a prominent campaigning role, fighting to defend cyclists' rights for safer roads, better infrastructure and legal protection.

Our groups

Cycling UK has over 900 groups across the UK, offering thousands of rides and activities for all types of riders and abilities. These groups play a vital role in creating welcoming cycling communities, providing safe and enjoyable opportunities to ride, and helping people stay active and connected. They also make a big contribution to Cycling UK's wider mission by strengthening local networks, supporting volunteers, and inspiring more people to enjoy cycling in all its forms.



Introduction

Types of Cycling UK groups

1. Affiliated groups

Affiliated groups are independent organisations that choose to affiliate with Cycling UK. The group pays an annual affiliation fee in return for Cycling UK Organisers' Liability Insurance, along with access to other support where needed.

2. Cycling UK member groups

Member groups are formally part of Cycling UK and operate as a legal extension of the charity. Run entirely by volunteers and usually organised by geographic area, they deliver rides and activities on Cycling UK's behalf and welcome all Cycling UK members. We recommend you also review the [Member Groups Governance Framework for specific requirements and expectations](#).

Best practice

The guidance and policies referred to in this handbook have been set by Cycling UK and are designed to enable groups to carry out cycling activities legally and efficiently, with the minimum of bureaucratic intervention.

Groups may also set their own local policies, but these must not conflict with Cycling UK policies.

National policies

Cycling UK has a set of policies and guidance in place that protect not only the volunteers that run all Cycling UK groups, but also other Cycling UK members and the charity itself. These policies are available to download from the [Cycling UK website](#) or by emailing membership@cyclingsuk.org.



How to run an effective cycling group

Running a Cycling UK group should feel enjoyable, manageable and welcoming for everyone involved. One option we recommend is putting a simple committee structure in place. Many groups tell us that having a small team of people sharing responsibilities makes a big difference - it helps spread the workload, keeps things organised, and creates space for more members to get involved in ways that suit them.

A clear structure doesn't have to be formal or complicated. It's simply a way to make sure the essentials are covered, volunteers feel supported and the group can run smoothly without relying too heavily on any one person. These arrangements are usually set out in your group constitution. [See sample here](#).

Committees

A committee structure enables the workload to be evenly distributed throughout the members of the group, with various tasks allocated as required. We recommend groups should have a committee made up of at least three separate members in the following roles:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

In addition to the above, the committee should also include the following roles:

- Registration Officer (or Membership Secretary)
- Safeguarding Officer
- Promotions (or Publicity) Officer

These last three roles can be fulfilled by any member of the committee in addition to any other roles they hold. For example, the secretary can also take on the role of Registration Officer. However, it is recommended that the secretary is NOT also the Safeguarding Officer in order to maintain impartiality and confidentiality. Combining them can create conflicts of interest and compromise trust in safeguarding processes.

How to run an effective cycling group

Committee responsibilities

Role	Purpose of Role	Key Responsibilities
Chair (or President acting as Chair)	To lead the group and ensure meetings and governance run smoothly and fairly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair committee & AGM meetings, casting vote if needed Ensure meetings follow the constitution Deputise for the Secretary
Secretary	To manage day-to-day operations and act as the main communication link for the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee daily running of the group Act as main contact for members, staff, public Arrange meetings & take minutes Register officers/volunteers with Cycling UK Record serious incidents on an online Accident/Incident Report form Ensure compliance with Cycling UK policies (incl. safeguarding)
Treasurer	To manage and report on the financial affairs of the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate group bank account (if required) Process membership fees in/out Prepare Annual Statement of Accounts incl. asset list
Registration Officer / Membership Secretary	To manage member records and ensure eligibility for participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm members meet agreed criteria Handle personal data correctly (GDPR compliant)
Safeguarding Officer	To ensure a safe, respectful and inclusive environment and deal with welfare concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First point of contact for welfare/behaviour issues Informally resolve member complaints Promote safe, inclusive culture Raise awareness of safeguarding policies Report concerns confidentially Monitor safeguarding compliance
Promotions / Publicity Officer	To publicise the group and its activities to reach the widest audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote group activities Promote Cycling UK initiatives where relevant

How to run an effective cycling group

Committee responsibilities (continued)

Role	Purpose of Role	Key Responsibilities
Event Organiser	To plan, run and oversee cycling events safely and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set event date/time/meeting point Register event with Cycling UK Manage participant sign-on Obtain parental consent for under-18s Complete and record risk assessments Follow event organiser checklist Coordinate with Publicity Officer Register officials with Cycling UK Display filming/photography notices Report incidents or near misses
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Champion	To promote an inclusive, welcoming environment and support diverse participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage discussions about diversity Promote and raise awareness of inclusion Suggest ways to improve engagement with diverse groups Model positive behaviour Encourage diversity-focused events Raise awareness of discrimination issues Identify inclusion improvements Consult members with disabilities on participation needs
Marshals	To support safe and smooth running of rides/events by assisting leaders and guiding participants. Note: Marshals do not direct traffic but assist riders in making safe decisions with clear, timely information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight hazards & guide riders Provide route guidance Help manage group spacing Communicate issues to leader/organiser Support participants, especially newer riders

How to run an effective cycling group

Committee responsibilities (continued)

Role	Purpose of Role	Key Responsibilities
Social Secretary	To organise social events and activities that build community and engagement within the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and schedule social events Coordinate logistics Promote events to members Work with the committee to ensure events support group aims Encourage participation and gather feedback on activities
Rides Secretary	To co-ordinate the rides list, support ride planning, and allocate ride leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and publish the group rides calendar Allocate and support ride leaders Ensure rides meet safety and organisational standards Liaise with the Publicity Officer/Webmaster to promote rides Gather feedback from leaders and riders to improve future rides
Group Committee Member	To provide general advice, support and practical assistance to the committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend committee meetings and contribute to discussions Support delivery of group activities and decisions Assist officers with tasks when required Provide perspectives representing the wider membership Uphold group values, policies and constitution
Webmaster	To manage and maintain the group's website or publicity pages, ensuring accurate and engaging online information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update website content (rides, news, documents, events) Ensure accessibility, accuracy and timely updates Manage online presence, including social or publicity pages Support group officers with web-related tasks Implement basic site maintenance and troubleshoot issues Promote the group's activities through digital platforms

How to run an effective cycling group

Meetings

Committee Meetings

Many groups find it helpful to meet as a committee from time to time throughout the year. These meetings don't need to be formal, they're simply a chance to stay connected, talk through anything that's come up and plan ahead for rides, events, or other priorities.

Some committees choose to meet once a quarter; others prefer to get together a little more often. There's no set rule, it's about finding a rhythm that works for your group and keeps things running smoothly.

Annual General Meetings (AGM)

It's also good practice to hold at least one meeting a year for the wider group membership. An AGM gives everyone the opportunity to come along, hear how things are going and share their thoughts on the direction of the group. Letting members know about the AGM well in advance helps ensure that anyone who wants to take part has the chance to do so.

AGMs are also a useful point in the year to refresh roles if needed. All committee positions should be opened for re-election, giving current role holders the option to step down and creating space for others who may want to get involved or try something new.



How to run an effective cycling group

Business of AGM

The official business of the AGM is to:

- receive and, if approved, adopt the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
- elect officers and a committee
- elect an honorary group auditor, who should not be an officer or a member of the group's committee
- consider any notices of motion, which should have been submitted in writing to the secretary at least seven days before the meeting
- candidates for election should be proposed and seconded. In the event of contests, the election shall be by ballot, with the Chair having the casting vote

Special General Meetings

A Special General Meeting can be convened outside of the AGM season to discuss extraordinary business. This can be done by:

- resolution of the group's committee;
 - a written request to the group secretary signed by at least ten regular riders;
- or
- A written request from at least one third of the group's committee.



Rides, events and activities

A well-rounded programme of rides and activities can make a big difference to how welcoming and enjoyable a group feels. Many groups aim to offer a mix of options so there's something for everyone – from relaxed, social rides to longer or more challenging outings for those who want them.

The exact schedule will naturally depend on the volunteers available to lead rides, but offering a variety of days, distances, and paces can help more people get involved in a way that suits them.

It's also really helpful to promote rides as widely as possible so members and potential new riders know what's coming up. You can list your rides in the Cycling Events Guide by registering them through your publicity page on our website. Some groups also choose to share their calendars on their own websites or publish a printed "runs list" as part of a newsletter or similar publication.

Note: for Cycling UK purposes, an event is a ride or cycling activity open to members of the public and held on an occasional basis, whereas a 'ride' is a regular group activity put on for members of the group weekly, or monthly etc.

Risk assessments

To help keep everyone safe, a written risk assessment is required for all Cycling UK group rides and events. Completing this in advance helps ride leaders think through the route, identify potential hazards and take practical steps to minimise risk. A new or updated assessment should be created whenever the route changes in a meaningful way or when rider needs or conditions differ enough to introduce new risks. Written assessments support smoother planning, consistent standards and provide a clear record if anything unexpected happens. For full guidance, examples and templates, please refer to the [Ride Leader Handbook](#) and the [Cycling UK Risk Assessment template](#).



Rides, events and activities

Guidance area	What you need to know
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify hazards in advance, minimise risk, support good planning and provide a clear record if an incident occurs.
When a written assessment is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all Cycling UK events New or significantly changed routes When riders' needs or conditions introduce new risks
Planning considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast or busy roads, junctions, unfamiliar or challenging terrain, weather, participant needs; using maps and local knowledge to flag anything requiring attention.
During the ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic assessment to manage any new or unexpected hazards that arise.
Review and update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review at least annually Update when routes change Update after incidents or near misses Update following safety related feedback
Generic assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be used for regular rides on familiar routes, supported by dynamic assessment on the day.
Further guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See the Ride Leader Handbook for Cycling UK risk assessment template for full details, examples and templates

Rides, events and activities

Supporting you to run welcoming, confident rides

At Cycling UK, we believe cycling should be joyful, inclusive and accessible to everyone. Our groups play a vital role in opening doors for people who may feel unsure about joining a ride for the first time. Across the country, groups are already helping to broaden participation in cycling – welcoming more women, older riders, people from underrepresented backgrounds and riders of all identities and abilities. This commitment builds confidence, strengthens communities and encourages more people to discover the freedom of cycling.

While most group rides are naturally mixed and shaped by confidence levels, pace and experience, many groups also offer additional activities to support riders who are less represented in cycling. Women-focused and inclusive rides can be a powerful way to help people take their first steps into cycling and feel part of a supportive community.

Following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on the legal definition of “sex,” we sought legal advice so we can provide clear, up-to-date guidance for groups. Our aim is simply to give you the clarity you need to make decisions that best support your riders and reflect your group’s goals.

We’re here to help you create cycling spaces where everyone feels welcome, supported and able to enjoy the ride – especially those who are new to cycling or historically underrepresented. The following sections offer practical advice to help you plan and promote rides with confidence.

Understanding the change — and how to describe rides

A recent legal update means some groups may need to adjust how they describe and promote women-focused rides. All groups can continue to offer exactly the same kinds of rides as before, but it is important that ride descriptions reflect the legal advice clearly and accurately.

Putting the legal advice into practice

- Rides that welcome biological women, trans women and non-binary people should not be described as women-only rides or women’s rides. Instead, they can be described as inclusive rides.
- Rides that are open only to biological women may be described as women-only rides or women’s rides.

The format, themes, support and sense of community these rides offer can and should remain the same. The key change is making sure the wording used to describe them reflects the updated legal guidance.

Rides, events and activities

Promoting your rides with confidence and clarity

To ensure your ride descriptions follow the legal advice, here are some wording suggestions to support you promoting your rides:

Type of ride	Legal terminology*	Wording you can use
Inclusive	Rides open to all, including biological women, trans women and non-binary people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A welcoming women-focused ride open to anyone who wants to join. An inclusive ride aimed at creating a supportive and welcoming environment for people who may feel underrepresented in cycling. The pace is friendly, the atmosphere is encouraging, and the ride is open to all. Inclusive rides encouraging participation from underrepresented groups, including women. Some rides focus on women's cycling issues, but all are open to everyone.
Women-only	Biological women only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A supportive women-only confidence building ride only A women only cycling session that focuses on confidence, comfort and enjoying the ride together.
Mixed	Open to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A friendly group ride open to all, with the option to join the pace group that best matches your confidence and experience. A mixed ability ride that divides into confidence-based groups, offering a supportive experience for both newer and more experienced riders.

For the purpose of this guidance, we are using the terminology provided in our legal advice. The section titled 'wording you can use' offers suggested phrasing that groups may adopt when describing their rides.

Rides, events and activities

How this guidance applies across our network

Every Cycling UK group contributes to creating safe, supportive and confidence-building cycling experiences. The expectations around following the wording guidance differ depending on the type of group:

- **Member Groups:** Cycling UK is legally responsible for how rides are run. For that reason, Member Groups are required to follow this guidance when describing and promoting their rides.
- **Affiliate Groups:** You remain independent. The guidance is optional, and you can choose how to apply it. We're sharing the same clear, up-to-date information so you can make decisions that feel right for your riders and your community.

Our goal is simple: to support every group to run joyful, accessible rides where people feel safe, welcome and empowered to enjoy cycling.

We're here to support you. If you'd like further clarity or have questions, we're always here to help. You can also find more detail and a full set of FAQs on our website.



Rides, events and activities

Registering events

If you're running an event, we recommend you add it to your group's publicity page on the Cycling UK website to let us know it is happening and to make it easy for people to find. Regular weekly rides don't need to be registered - just the larger, one-off events.

If you're planning something big, with more than 200 riders, please let Cycling UK know in advance by completing an [event registration form](#). We'll always confirm approval in writing so you know everything is in place.

Activities

Alongside regular rides, many groups enjoy running a whole variety of activities throughout the year. These can be a great way to bring people together, try something new, or celebrate what makes your group special. Popular options include:

- Social evenings and club nights
- Themed rides
- Quizzes
- Visits to interesting places (e.g., local mosques or heritage sites)
- Hill climbs
- Reliability rides
- Rides themed around national or local celebrations (e.g., Christmas, Diwali, Pride)
- Treasure hunts
- UK or overseas tours (Please note if tours include transport and/or accommodation they may constitute a 'package' which would not be covered by the Organisers' Liability insurance. See [Insurance Hub](#) for more details).
- Audaxes
- Cycle festivals

And of course, you're not limited to this list - the possibilities are endless!

For more detailed guidance on leading rides, you can take a look at our [Ride Leader Handbook](#).

Incidents on a group ride

Incidents on rides are rare, but if something does happen, it helps to have a simple plan to follow. The steps below are there to support you and make sure everyone is looked after.

Immediate actions

If an incident occurs, the priority is always the safety and wellbeing of those involved. You may need to:

- Make sure the area is safe for everyone present
- Call the emergency services if needed
- Note down the key details, such as the time, location, and who was involved, while they're fresh in your mind

If a claim may arise

Very occasionally, an incident might lead to a potential claim under Organisers' Liability Insurance. If you think this could be the case, it's best to get in touch with Bikmo as soon as you can:

Phone: 01244 727 100 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Email: cyclinguk@bikmo.com

You can also submit a claim at any time via bikmo.com/cyclinguk.

Please note that Cycling UK can't advise on insurance cover or sell insurance policies, so Bikmo is the right point of contact for anything related to claims.

Personal injury claims

For help making a claim relating to injuries, call the Cycling UK incident line on 0330 107 1789.

Insurance cover

Group officials, including event organisers, ride leaders and marshals are covered for incidents arising from their negligence. Full details are available on the [Insurance Hub](#) if you'd like to understand the cover more fully.

Reporting incidents

Even if you don't think a claim will follow, it's still helpful to report the incident promptly. This allows Cycling UK to keep track of issues and offer support where needed. You can use the [Cycling UK accident/incident reporting form](#) to do this.

Safeguarding

Cycling UK is committed to creating a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk. All group leaders and committee members should follow our safeguarding principles: treat everyone with respect, avoid inappropriate behaviour and report any concerns promptly. If you have a safeguarding concern, it must be reported in line with Cycling UK's procedures. Full guidance, including reporting steps and toolkits, is available in our [Safeguarding Policy](#).



Further resources

- Further guidance, support, documents and resources for cycling groups can be found on our [group resources page](#).
- For more information on Cycling UK policies, please refer to our [group management and governance guidance](#).

Find us on: Facebook and Instagram

T: 01483 238301
[cyclinguk.org](https://www.cyclinguk.org)

Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 9JX

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