

Ride Etiquette



Welcome to Wild Bikes Club Rides

Wild Bikes Cycling Club (WBCC) wants riders to gain maximum enjoyment from their group rides in a safe and sensible manner.

These guidelines are intended to create the safest possible environment in which we can all enjoy our cycling and apply to all club group cycling activities organised by WBCC.

Whilst the following guidelines are not exhaustive, they seek to offer some advice on the expected level of skills and etiquette required to both other road users and your fellow riders, when on a WBCC group ride.

We would like everyone who rides with WBCC to make a point of reading this document and to follow the advice given. If you are unsure of any of the content, please talk to one of the Ride Leaders prior to joining your next WBCC ride.

Remember, these guidelines do not intend to curb anyone's enthusiasm on a ride, they are implemented to ensure yours and the groups safety and enjoyment are maintained whilst riding with the WBCC.

Ride Etiquette

Safety and risk management

All riders taking part in WBCC group rides ultimately do so at their own risk and are expected to ride within their own ability. Although some risks can never be totally eliminated, they can be minimised by following these useful guidelines. WBCC welcomes all riders, but do not assume any liability for your participation.

WBCC strongly recommend that all members take out appropriate third-party liability insurance for their cycling activities. Appropriate discounted insurance cover is available through the club's affiliation to British Cycling and the CTC and is open to all club members.

Ride Leaders and senior club members will be happy to offer general advice on group rides and will politely point out any deviations from the guidelines to the rider(s) concerned. If they believe that a rider's conduct is putting others at risk, then WBCC provide Ride Leaders with the authority to exclude the offender from the ride and can subsequently report the circumstances to the club committee who may wish to take further action.

Etiquette and group riding technique

- An ethic of WBCC rides, is that the group will travel at the pace of the slowest rider (except designated training rides) and no one will be left behind. Obviously if a rider struggles week on week when on a ride to the detriment of the majority of the group, the rider needs to consider whether they need to step down a group and work on their own fitness or competence before re-joining the stronger ride.
- Ride two abreast where it is safe to do so but always be prepared to adopt single file when necessary. The Ride Leader will offer direction to when it's necessary to adopt single file, be that for safety reasons, or to offer courtesy to other road users waiting to overtake. Remember, adopting single file is not always the safest way for a group to ride, being that it stretches out the group into a long line and may encourage other road users to overtake when it is not safe to do so.
- When riding in a group, it is the outside rider on the front right that sets the pace, if you are the rider on the inside (left), do not push the pace, otherwise known as half wheeling. This style of riding is seriously frowned upon, not only by WBCC, but the cycling community in general.

- WBCC utilises the Anti-clockwise rotation method for group riding. This strategy comprises two lines in which the outer front rider will move ahead of the inner front rider when they wish to initiate a move off the front to the more sheltered rows.

Riders in the outside line then all move forward to take up the vacated positions. The rider in the inner back row position moves to the outside.

Front row riding is more tiring. There is a general expectation that riders should take a turn on the front however there is no rule about how long anyone should ride in this position.

A group riding rotation system will mean that a rider that cannot sustain a front row position will find themselves on the front row eventually. In this case the new outer front row rider should initiate a rotation by signalling their intent to move ahead and inside. Be aware transition to the inner row remains a front row position until either the new outer front rider rotates in front of you, or you ask for that to happen.

- WBCC riders should watch out for other riders in the group. If anyone is struggling or has to stop for any reason, everyone has a responsibility to communicate this up to the front of the group. Additionally, if you are struggling with the pace please shout "Pace" rather than suffering in silence and possibly causing the group to fracture.
- Ride steadily and try to maintain an even pace. Keep a steady line and constant speed whilst in a group. Any sudden change is magnified as it reaches riders at the back and so can have dramatic consequences, don't overreact, be alert avoiding sudden braking and don't look back unnecessarily.
- Other examples of poor group riding technique can be suddenly sitting up to stretch whilst riding in a group or pushing your bike back when standing out of the saddle to peddle. The Ride Leader will point out any issues to rider(s), if they consider their actions are putting others at risk.
- Do not react to bad driving incidents with gestures or provoke retaliation.



- Ride immediately behind the rider in front, pick a wheel and follow it! Do not overlap either forwards or sideways. Overlapping wheels gives you no chance to avoid the rider in front if they swerve suddenly.
- Don't ride around the outside of the pack unless it's an absolute emergency. Riding around the pack can push you out into traffic and endanger others in the group. If you are frustrated about the pace, or that the front is not being rotated quickly enough shout up and say so.
- When dropping into single file, it is the outside rider that drops behind the rider on the inside. So the outside lead rider will drop behind the left front rider, and so on until the final rider in a group has adopted single file. Using this method is a quicker method of adopting single file because you are slowing down rather than speeding up.
- When approaching a hill anticipate the gradient and change gear in good time. Missing a gear change on the steep section can bring you to a sudden halt which is not good practice for the riders behind you. Try to stand up out of the saddle smoothly rather than pushing your bike back into a following rider.
- Riders may ride up hills at their own pace. Hills tend to split groups up, so in the spirit of the ride; riders will regroup at the top, or on longer sections of hilly terrain at a pre-determined point decided by the Ride Leader.
- Let others know if you are unable to keep up, have a problem, or if you have decided to leave the group let the ride leader know.
- Do not clear your nostrils whilst riding in a group. If you do need to do this, warn others and move out of the group, or wait until you are at the rear of the group. Nobody wants a face full of your bodily fluids, it's disgusting, and really frowned upon in the cycling community.
- The use of club runs (except for training rides) to set segment times for uploading to speed comparison websites such as Strava, is discouraged. This practice is disruptive in a group and could be dangerous. The only exception is on a climb where riders may and will climb at their own pace.
- Do not "wave through" a following vehicle that is waiting to overtake – let the driver make this decision. This will avoid the risk of being held responsible if the overtaking manoeuvre results in any form of accident.

- All riders must obey the Highway Code at all times. Remember cyclists may notice only the inconsiderate or bad drivers, likewise other road users see poor behaviour by some cyclists.
- Make sure that you do not provide ammunition to the anti-cyclists' lobby whilst riding in the WBCC colours.



- Treat other road users with courtesy, acknowledge with a courteous wave. (Many oncoming motorists will slow down or stop when they meet a large group of cyclists, whilst others allow the whole group to join or cross a major road).
- When passing other riders, always pass on the right, never on the inside (left).
- When on a WBCC ride we ride as one group and where possible stay together as one unit. This means slowing as a group at junctions/traffic lights etc. and not swamping around cars waiting their turn to move away, as this practice is not only unsafe, it is discourteous to other road users.

Warning calls when riding in a group

These calls and signals are universal to all experienced cyclists, please use them at the appropriate times

- **"Car back"** There is a vehicle coming up from behind the group.
- **"Car front"** There is a vehicle approaching towards the front of the group.
- **"Single out"** A call from riders at the back of the group when a vehicle is unable to pass the 2 abreast columns safely. This call must be relayed forward by everyone to ensure that the move to single file is executed quickly and safely.

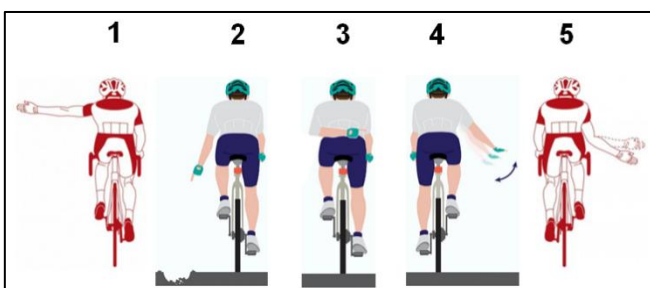
The standard procedure is for the outside rider to drop back behind the inside rider. **DON'T SPEED UP TO MOVE AHEAD THIS SPLITS THE GROUP.** The call "single out" alerts everyone to the need to slow down and create spaces in the inside file.

- **Pace** A call to the riders in front indicating that the pace is too high and the group needs to slow to allow riders to catch up. This must be communicated through the pack to the lead rider. The lead cyclist will not be aware if you start to fall behind.
- **“Clear” and “Car” on Left/Right** These calls let following riders know at junctions, when the group is joining or crossing another road, whether the road is still clear. If the group cannot stay together the first ones across ride slowly until the others catch up. Don’t take risks to stay together and ensure you slow to allow all riders to regroup if you are the first across.
- **“Horse(s)”** The group is about to pass horses and special care is needed. Pass as widely as possible. Make sure that both the horse and rider are aware of your presence and if you are approaching from behind call out.

Keep pedalling slowly as you pass to keep noise from your freewheel and gears to a minimum. Pay attention to any request by the horse rider – they know the temperament of the horse and its likely reaction to a group of cyclists.

Having confidence in how those around you ride comes from good communication rather than expert bike handling. Make warnings simple and loud and repeat them all the way down the group.

Hand signal examples



- **TURNING Left or Right.** We're turning left or right, extend the arm fully in the direction you wish to turn.
- **Hole / Hazard.** Any pothole, deep puddle or obstacle that could cause a rider to fall, not every small crack and crevice. If possible indicate where it is so that following riders can steer away from it and

not into it. Do this by either pointing or adding to the call “on the left (or right).”

- **On the Left or Right.** A general warning of some kind of hazard – usually parked cars or pedestrians. For hazards on the left, an alternative warning is to put your left hand behind your back, pointing to the right, away from the hazard. Give way to pedestrians – they can feel intimidated by cyclists just as we sometimes feel intimidated by motorists.
- **Stopping, Slowing, Easy.** Right Hand moving in an up and down action”. If you brake without letting those behind know your intention, they can easily run into you. This is particularly important when approaching road junctions.
- **Allowing a rider to pass.** Right hand beckoning a rider to come forward.

Disclaimer

Wild Bikes Cycling Club (WBCC) Participation and Risk Acknowledgement

Wild Bikes Cycling Club (WBCC) is committed to promoting safe, enjoyable and responsible cycling. Participation in any club ride, event or activity is entirely voluntary, and all members are required to take personal responsibility for their own safety and conduct.

Cycling takes place in environments that may involve hazards and unpredictable circumstances. These can include road or trail conditions, traffic, weather, surface defects, mechanical failures, interactions with other road users, rider error, and other factors beyond the control of the club or its volunteers.

As a result, participation carries an inherent risk of accident, injury, serious harm, or death.

By taking part in any activity organised, promoted, supported or coordinated by WBCC, participants acknowledge and accept that:

- They choose to participate voluntarily and understand the risks associated with cycling activities.
- They are responsible for assessing their own fitness, health, experience and ability to take part safely.

- They will ensure that their bicycle and equipment are suitable, properly maintained and in a safe condition before participating.
- They will comply with all applicable laws, highway regulations and instructions given by ride leaders or event organisers.
- They will ride in a responsible manner and show consideration for fellow riders, pedestrians and other road users.
- They remain responsible for their own actions, decisions and personal safety throughout any club activity.

Whilst WBCC and its volunteers endeavour to organise activities responsibly and provide information believed to be accurate at the time it is shared, participants should not rely exclusively on club communications when making decisions relating to their safety, route selection, equipment or participation.

Members are strongly encouraged to maintain appropriate insurance cover, including third-party liability insurance, to protect themselves against claims arising from damage, injury or loss caused to other people or property whilst cycling.

Nothing in this statement is intended to exclude or limit any liability which cannot lawfully be excluded. However, participants acknowledge that WBCC, its committee members, ride leaders and volunteers cannot eliminate the inherent risks associated with cycling and that participation is undertaken at the individual's own risk.

By joining WBCC and/or participating in club activities, members confirm that they have read, understood and accepted this participation and risk acknowledgement statement.

Comments and feedback are welcome in writing to the Club Secretary to improve rider's enjoyment and safety

- ❖ wildbikesmail@gmail.com
- ❖ www.wild-bikes.org.uk
- ❖ www.strava.com/clubs/wildbikes
- ❖ www.spond.com (Wild Bikes Cycling Club)
- ❖ www.britishcycling.org.uk