

A group of cyclists, including men and women of various ages, are riding their bicycles along a paved path that runs alongside a river. The cyclists are wearing helmets and colorful cycling jackets. The path is bordered by green grass on the left and a line of trees and bushes on the right. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated angle, looking down the path as the cyclists ride towards the camera.

**we are**  
**cycling**  
UK

# Group Leader Course Manual

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# Introduction to your Group Leader Handbook

Welcome to Cycling UK's Group Leader Course. This course is for everyone who can ride a cycle and is interested in leading group rides.

## Aims of this course

This course aims to:

- Create confident, proficient Group Leaders who understand the benefits of cycling
- Enable you to prepare, lead and review a variety of Group Rides for various client groups
- Give you practical experience of leading rides and dealing with incidents.
- Enable you to share knowledge and learn the course content in an enjoyable environment.

## What does cycle training mean to Cycling UK?

Cycling UK has a long history within cycle training and is one of the main providers in the UK. We created the Cycling Proficiency test in 1936 and played a key role in the development of Bikeability in 2005. We have designed bespoke courses for national governing bodies such as Club Ride Leader for Triathlon England. Cycling UK is one of a handful of accredited Mountain Bike Leadership providers in the UK.

We believe a love of cycling is something to be shared. By learning the skills you need to be a leader or instructor, you can help more people experience the joy of riding cycles.

## Course Objectives

The course has been designed to teach you how to assist in leading small groups of people on cycle rides on quiet roads and traffic free paths.

During this course we will:

- Examine what makes an enjoyable ride & a good Group Leader.
- Understand what information group riders need ahead of the ride.
- Learn how to plan a good group ride.
- Ensure understanding of Cycling UK's current Policies & Procedures in relation to leading rides.
- Develop understanding of how a group ride may be led.
- Examine how a group can be managed on various roads and practice some of these skills.
- Practice how to deal with incidents whilst on the ride.

## About the course

This manual is designed for use after the course. It is divided into units and includes information supporting the course, expected outcomes and resources.

If you have any questions about the Group Leader course, please contact: [Training@cyclinguk.org](mailto:Training@cyclinguk.org)





# Who is a Group Leader?

**A Group Leader is someone who wants to bring cycling to a community in a fun, sociable, interesting and positive environment. A Group Leader is focused on helping others, has experience of assisting on Group Rides and is able to ride a cycle competently; but is not necessarily a 'super cyclist'.**

**To be ready to both take and pass the course, participants will need to:**

- Be confident riding on the road both in a group and independently
- Be able to control a cycle steadily
- Be able to use the brakes safely and start and stop riding in a controlled manner
- Be able to turn corners in a controlled manner and manoeuvre the cycle safely
- Be able to look over both shoulders whilst controlling the cycle
- Be able to take hands off handle bars to indicate that they're turning, both for left and right, whilst controlling the cycle
- Have an understanding of how gears work, how to change gear and which gears are suitable for varying inclines and descents etc.
- Have a high enough fitness level to match the intended rides
- Be age 18 or above
- Understands the principles of leading a ride
- Is enthusiastic, punctual and responsible

## Assessment Process

The assessment process will be one of continuous assessment against the principal outcomes. At the end of the course the Group Leader will be given recommendations for the next stage of the process or become accredited.

In order to receive a certificate for Group Leader, you will have had to complete approximately 8 hours of learning through an e-learning course and practical assessment. Any leading of cycling groups subsequent to this course by the named person is undertaken based on the principle that they employ effective good practice techniques. Employers should take their own steps to ensure that they are appropriately skilled and qualified with associated certificates (first aid, child protection etc) and undertakes any leading appropriately.

Cycling UK recommends that all Group Leaders hold a current 8-hour First Aid certificate.





## What are the benefits of riding a cycle?

Leading cycling groups is not just about the practicalities of managing a group, it is about sharing a passion for cycling. One way to begin that is to understand people's motivations. People ride cycles for a number of reasons. They may or may not think about it but, generally, everyone rides a cycle for one of the following reasons.

### It's free

*Cycling is a very cheap form of transport. There's no fuel or tax to pay for.*

### It's good for the environment

*Aside from carbon dioxide you breathe out whilst cycling, there are no harmful emissions from your cycle.*

### It's good for us

*Cycling is not just an easy way to stay fit, it can also help with our mental health.*

### It's fun!

*Perhaps the most important reason. We cycle because we enjoy it.*

## All Group Leaders will be assessed on whether they are

**1.1** Able to demonstrate appropriate use of front and back leader positions.

**1.2** Able to use effective communication to manage the group.

**1.3** Able to identify and use safe stopping points.

**1.4** Able to manage a group at busy & minor road crossings.

**1.5** Able to modify the ride according to changes in the weather or group.





# Ride preparation - Section 1

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This unit looks at what needs to be done prior to a Led Ride, it includes: -

- **Route planning**
- **Paperwork**
- **Equipment**
- **Risk management**
- **Operating procedures**

Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance. The 5 'P's are often quoted when things have gone wrong, but remembering them beforehand should lead to a fun, enjoyable, trouble free ride.

A good Group Leader will check group numbers, the weather, the route, their own equipment, the equipment needed by the group, the suitability of the start/finish and any stops and their Assistant Group Leader's needs before meeting the group. Sometimes, not all of the above can be checked thoroughly but every effort should be made. An Assistant Group Leader may assist the Group Leader with some of these tasks.





## 1.1 Route planning

**Planning a route is not just about using a map and how far you can travel in the time allowed.**

**When planning a route, you should consider:**

- **Participant motivation**

Think about why the participant is taking part in the ride.

Will your route increase or decrease this motivation?

*e.g. If an attendee is interested in the social elements of cycling, would a fast-paced ride on busy roads be appropriate?*

- **Participant skill level**

Think about how difficult or easy your route is.

Is it pitched at the right level for participants?

*e.g. Are there lots of busy roads to cross or follow that may make riders uncomfortable?*

- **Participant fitness**

Think about the length, terrain and gradient changes in your ride.

Will your participants be able to complete and enjoy the route?

*e.g. Would a ride of 50km be suitable for a family ride?*

## Creating a route

Once you have determined the reasons for the ride, you can start to plan a specific route.

There are multiple tools that can be employed to help plan a ride including:

- Ordnance Survey maps
- Local cycling maps
- Online route planning tools like Google maps or CycleStreets

Whichever method you use, you should be comfortable reading it and understanding the differences between the types of terrain and what they look like.



## Where can you ride?

When leading a group it's important that you only ride where legally permitted.

Terrain	Permitted?
<b>Motorways</b>	No. You are not legally allowed to cycle on a motorway.
<b>Dual carriageway</b>	Unless otherwise signified on the road, you are technically allowed to cycle on a dual carriageway. You should question whether this is suitable for your ride participants though.
<b>Single carriageway roads</b>	Yes. Whether a specific road is suitable for your ride is at the discretion of the Group Leader.
<b>Pavement</b>	No. Cycling is forbidden on regular pavements. If the footway is marked for shared use (a blue circular sign with a person and bicycle on it) , then you are entitled to cycle on it.
<b>Footpaths</b>	No. For walkers only.
<b>Bridleways</b>	Yes. These are open to non-motorised traffic including pedestrians, horses and cyclists.
<b>Byways</b>	Yes. These are open to non-motorised traffic including pedestrians, horses and cyclists. If the route is marked as a 'byway open to all traffic' (BOAT) the motorised vehicles are also permitted to use it.

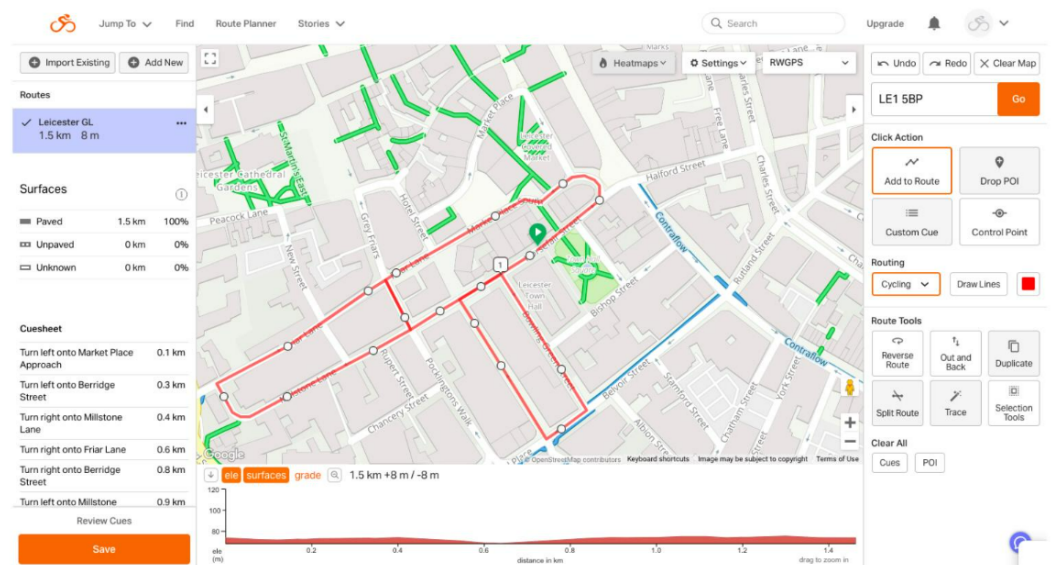




## 1.2 Paperwork

A Group Leader should have the following relevant paperwork prepared or ready to use before taking a group on a ride.

Name of document	What the document includes
Individual attendance form	Contact and emergency contact details for each participant
Ride register	A record of who is on each ride
Route map/card	A ride route
Normal operating procedure	A plan for the ride
Emergency operating procedure	A plan in case there's an emergency
Risk assessment for the ride	Risks on the ride and how to mitigate them
Emergency record form	Information about an incident and steps taken





## 1.3 Equipment

It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to organise the relevant resources and equipment required to effectively lead a ride.

This equipment doesn't have to be carried by one individual, sharing the load is a good idea, but the responsibility of organising and knowing where each item is also sits with the Group Leader.

### Essential equipment

#### 1 Multi tool

You'll need a multi tool that has spanners and allen keys as a part of it.

#### 2 Inner tube

You need to take inner tubes which have the correct valve and wheel size for your cycle, and some extras for participants' cycles.

#### 3 Tyre levers & repair patch kit

You will need this in case anyone gets a puncture.

#### 4 Pump

Bring a handheld one like this with schrader and presta compatible valves.



### Optional equipment

#### 5 Master link

Also known as a quick release link. Will allow you to connect or disconnect a chain without breaking it.

#### 6 Chain tool

Another way to fix a chain is using this tool to break the chain in a way that it can be mended again, by pushing the pins out of the chain.

#### 7 Master link pliers

It can be hard to remove a master link due to dirt and grit, so this tool can help here.

#### 8 Nitrile gloves

Handy for cycle maintenance to stop getting bike grease on your hands.



## Additional tips

### Take extra clothes, food and water

Sometimes it does get cold and wet, we do live in the UK after all! It's worth taking spare gloves and waterproof clothing if the weather isn't looking great.

As a Group Leader, it's always handy to have extra food and water to keep riders (and yourself) motivated throughout the ride.

### A note on clothing

Think about the clothes your participants are wearing. Baggy or long clothing and dresses may get caught in the cycle and should be tucked in. If the weather is cold or wet, check if they have enough layers to be warm and dry. If it is hot, will they be overheating in the clothes they are wearing? Are they wearing the appropriate shoes?

### Remember first aid requirements

At least one member of the ride staff should be first aid qualified. As the Group Leader, it's your responsibility to ensure ride staff remember and have access to:

- A first aid kit
- A foil blanket
- Emergency contact details for all riders including staff
- Registration forms for each rider

### Bring cash and charge your phone

Although you might not use it, bring some cash along with you in case of emergencies.

Make sure your phone is fully charged and working before you leave for your ride.

## First aid kit

**At least one member of staff on the ride should be first aid trained. You should ensure that the first aid kit being carried for the ride has the following.**

- |                                      |                      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Plastic face shield                | • Sterile eye pads   |
| • Disposable gloves                  | • Antiseptic wipes   |
| • First aid guidance card or booklet | • Triangular bandage |
| • Safety pins                        | • Adhesive tape      |
| • Medium sterile wound dressing      | • Adhesive dressing  |
| • Large sterile wound dressing       | • Biohazard bag      |



## 1.4 Risk management

**Ride Leaders should understand how to minimise risks in Led Rides. In this section we will look at: -**

- Understanding the basic principles of risk management.
- Carry out a site specific risk assessment.
- Demonstrate dynamic risk assessment.
- Understand Normal and Emergency Operating Procedures.

### Why do we risk assess?

The HSE say that there are 5 steps to risk assessment. They are:

**1. Identify the hazards.**

- Pre ride route and walk around any venue to check risks
- Ask other people what they think
- Check the HSE website for advice
- Check manufacturer's instructions for equipment

**2. Decide who might be harmed and how.**

- Be clear
- Identify people at risk e.g. participants, leader, pedestrians
- Look out for particular groups of people e.g. new, young, old, pregnant, part-time
- Ask other people for advice

**3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.**

Review safety controls in place and compare with best practice

- Aim to mitigate risk, if you cannot get rid of hazard
- Consider reducing access or exposure to hazard
- Consider providing equipment or facilities to deal with the hazard

**4. Record your findings and implement them.**

- Keep it simple and clear
- Don't expect perfection, expect it to be suitable and sufficient
- Needs to show a check was made and you asked who might be affected
- Needs to show you dealt with obvious hazards, the precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low

**5. Review our assessment and update if necessary.**

- Reviews should be ongoing as things change over time
- Watch out for near misses
- Learn from accidents
- Keep risk assessments up to date

### What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a document used to record any potential hazards and risks that might affect the safety of an activity. A new risk assessment document should be completed for every activity that you deliver. It should be treated as a 'living' document that should be referred to, amended and updated before, during and after events.

## There are three primary areas to assess:

1. **People:** their behaviour, their road position and confidence, their fitness for the ride, their clothing and cycle.
2. **The Environment:** the route, the behaviour and amount of other road users, the weather and the condition of the road surface/furniture.
3. **Equipment:** cycle has been checked and is safe to ride, first aid kit, tools in working order.

## There are two primary types of risk assessment: -

### 1. Generic

Not every hazard or risk needs to be written on your risk assessment as some are common to all rides. These are 'generic' risks. Any generic risks must be accounted for and appropriate controls put in place on the day.

### 2. Dynamic

A dynamic risk assessment is the continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk, taking action to eliminate or reduce risk, monitoring or reviewing in the rapidly changing circumstances and situations of a ride.

It means reacting to your surroundings to keep yourself and keep your group safe throughout the ride. You should add any situations or risks encountered to your risk assessment after the ride.

## Examples of generic risk

Hazard	Control measures
<b>Riders' equipment, health and stamina</b>	Group leaders fully brief participants and check all equipment is suitable and functioning before activity occurs. Participants have fully completed registration forms including medical information. Leaders to carry these documents on the ride in case of accident or incident.
<b>Event terrain/road type/ elevation/distance/ difficulty</b>	Detailed information about the likely conditions is provided in advance so riders know what to expect.
<b>Highway design or maintenance, trail features and obstacles</b>	Ride the route beforehand, ideally near to the date of the event, and point out any specific hazards or details at the start. Provide an alternative route where appropriate.
<b>Adverse weather</b>	If adverse weather is forecast, riders should be warned before the start about such conditions. If extreme weather is forecast, organisers should consider cancelling the event and informing public in adequate time.
<b>Other road/trail users</b>	Plan routes away from busy roads/trails where possible. Explain road etiquette or specific difficult sections in advance, whilst emphasising riders are responsible for their own safety at all times.

## What can you include in a risk assessment?

1. The starting point of the ride.
2. The finishing point of the ride.
3. The Group Leader.
4. The name of additional ride staff.
5. The difficulty of the ride.
6. The terrain of the route.
7. Distance of the ride.
8. Approximate number of participants.



## Creating a risk assessment

Once you've included some ride details in your risk assessment, it's time to list the risks and the plan to control, reduce or eliminate those risks.

It's essential to include what the risk is, who may be involved, the control measure/s and whether the level of risk is acceptable. Here are some examples that you might include in a risk assessment document.

Hazard	Who may be involved?	Control measure	Is the level of risk acceptable?
Mechanical failure of cycle on ride	Ride staff Participants	Pre-ride information outlines expected condition of participant cycles. All cycle safety checked prior to ride start. Basic adjustments made to cycles by suitably experienced member of ride staff. Any cycles deemed unsafe, excluded from ride.	Yes
Unleashed dogs on ride through park may bark and intimidate riders. Risk of dogs running between riders.	Ride staff Participants Other park users.	Riders briefed of risk at entrance to park. Riders encouraged to be alert, cover brakes and allow more space between each other. Rider prepare to stop suddenly if necessary. When stopped, position cycle between rider and any aggressive dog	Yes
Steep descent on gravel on ride route - risk of collision with other participants or other trail users; risk of slipping; risk of falling off cycle	Ride staff Participants Other trail users.	Stop and warn the group just before the hazard. Ensure the group are well spaced when tackling that part of the route - advise 1-2 cycle lengths between participants.	Yes

## Assessment Outcome

**1.2** Able to complete a Risk Assessment for a led ride.



## 1.5 Operating procedures

**Leaders create operating procedures to have a plan for most situations that may occur during a ride. They outline what action to take if a situation occurs.**

A normal operating procedure (NOP) is used to outline what you would do normally on a ride to minimise any risks and maximise enjoyment. If nothing goes wrong during a ride, a leader would follow their NOP step by step.

It's important for a leader to create and follow an emergency operating procedure (EOP) too. This would be used if you have to involve outside resources or personnel (e.g. the emergency services).

**A normal operating procedure (NOP) can be broken down into 3 separate stages:**

- 1** Pre-ride i.e. what to do before you and your group set off on the ride
- 2** During the ride i.e. what to do while out riding with your group
- 3** Post-ride i.e. what to do once the ride has finished

### **1 Here is a standard pre-ride Normal Operating Procedure-**

- Check leading and first aid qualifications of ride staff
- Ensure generic risk assessment is up to date and complete
- Ensure dynamic risk assessment is done for each ride
- Check the weather and account for any adverse conditions and hours of daylight
- Ensure you have your paperwork and equipment ready to go
- Arrive early with other staff at the ride location and discuss route and any issues with ride staff
- Carry out pre-ride cycle checks
- Carry out pre-ride briefing
- Register ride participants and ensure staff have the correct emergency contact information
- Conduct a final head count of participants before setting off



## 2 Here's a standard Normal Operating Procedure for during the ride

- Stick to the starting time for the ride
- Stick to the planned route (more on this in our online learning later)
- Go out and have fun!
- Adapt the ride to account for any issues, changes or suitable techniques (the next section will tell you more about what exactly to look out for)
- End the ride on time

## 3 Here's a standard Normal Operating Procedure for after the ride

- Conduct a head count of participants
- Check the cycles used on the rides to see if they are still working well
- Get feedback on the ride from the participants
- Provide information about future rides
- Report venue/responsible person of safe return, if needed

**Sometimes we have to adapt our ride as it is happening.  
Here are some common things to look out for!**

### Dynamic changes

These are things that might happen during the ride and mean you have to deviate from your plan or route. They should be highlighted in your dynamic risk assessment to minimise risk. Examples of these include: fallen trees, debris on the route, inaccessible paths or roads, road closures, damaged equipment or cycles, injured/tired participants, missing participant and loss of daylight.

### Leadership techniques

You'll want to adapt your leadership techniques depending on your ride. For example, you should:

- Allow riders to freely ride on traffic free straight routes however strictly control routes with heavier traffic.
- Adapt leadership to suit type of riders considering their experience, any disabilities or Special Educational Needs.

### Mechanical issues

Unfortunately sometimes cycles do break! You'll want to have a plan in place to deal with mechanical issues such as punctures, broken chain, slipping gears and any brake problems.

Emergency operating procedures (EOPs) are triggered when a serious incident occurs.

### Here's a standard EOP:

- 1** If an incident occurs, contact emergency services if needed
- 2** Record relevant information at the scene e.g. witness statements, photographs of the scene, what kind of medical assistance has been carried out and by who
- 3** Follow Cycling UK emergency process
- 4** Use Cycling UK Accident & Incident form to report incident

### Here are our top tips for dealing with emergencies

Make staff details accessible	Check participant medical details	Locate safe places on route	First aid
Securely attach to ride pack and give to participants a laminated sheet containing leader and staff information and medical details.	Ensure all medical and emergency contact details are correct, up to date and carried with you for all participants attending the ride, plus the contact details for the responsible person from your organisation if applicable.	Ensure all ride staff are familiar with the route and stick to it. Be aware of any safe spots along the route that you and the group can stop if you need to. You'll want somewhere dry, warm and close such as a church, school, community venue, leisure centre or train station.	Carry a well stocked first aid kit and ensure staff have knowledge of how to use it. A kit should have, at least, foil blanket, mouth resuscitation shield, mixture of bandages and plasters and sterile gloves. Call 999 immediately if it's serious.
Think about an EOP for you	Charge your phone and bring extra equipment	Carry tools	Be seen
Arrange prior agreement for what will happen in case of injury or illness to the leader of the ride.	Carry charged mobile phone and change for payphones. Carry spare clothing if possible, waterproofs, water, food and sun cream in case you or participants need extra.	Carry relevant tools and ensure staff know how to use them.	Carry an additional set of lights with working batteries or ensure it's fully charged just in case.





## Pre-ride Checks - Section 2

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There are several elements that should be in place and verified immediately prior to a ride. Some can happen earlier, but others need to be implemented directly prior to the activity itself. This section deals with these and comprises:

- Cycle safety checks - M check and ABCD check
- Equipment checks – Leaders equipment
- Equipment checks – Participants equipment and clothing
- Helmet check
- Cycle size and adjustment
- Procedural checks for the Leader
- Ensuring safety

## 2.1 Cycle safety checks

### The M Check

This simple check is used as a way of ensuring that a cycle is safe to ride.

All bikes must undergo an M-Check prior to setting off on a ride. Although the activity leader does not have to personally conduct each check, they must be confident that each cycle is safe.

Starting from the rear wheel hub (axle), the check proceeds as shown below: and verifies the components and principles outlined in the picture.



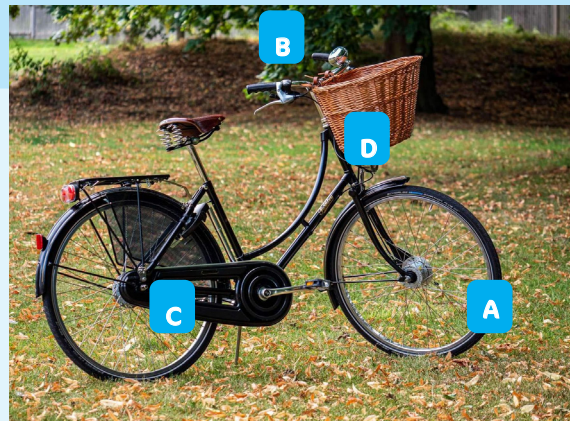
- 1 Is the rear derailleur fitted correctly and does it shift smoothly?
- 2 Ensure that the axle nuts/quick release are tight. No side-to-side play in the hubs.
- 3 Are the brakes fitted securely?
- 4 Ensure spokes aren't loose.
- 5 Are the tyres inflated and free from glass, thorns and nails?
- 6 Is the saddle fitted securely and at the right angle?
- 7 Is the frame free from rust damage and cracks?
- 8 Is the seat post clamp tight?
- 9 Is the front derailleur fitted correctly and does it shift smoothly?
- 10 Do the cranks spin freely with no side-to-side play?
- 11 Are the pedals fitted correctly?
- 12 Are the brakes working correctly? Check right lever (front brake). Check left lever (rear brake). Will they stop you in an emergency?
- 13 Ensure that the steering operates freely. With no excessive play or obstruction. Check the cables do not obstruct steering.
- 14 Are the right reflectors fitted?
- 15 Ensure front and rear suspension travel freely (if present).
- 16 Ensure that the axle nuts/quick release are tight. No side-to-side play in the hubs.
- 17 Wheels should be spinning freely and straight.



## The ABCD check

The ABCD is another cycle safety check. It is less comprehensive than the M-Check, is quicker to complete and so is good to use after every stop on a ride.

It is also easier to remember for participants.



**A**

### is for air.

Squeeze each tyre between your thumb and forefinger. A correct inflated tyre should feel firm. The correct tyre pressure for each tyre will be written on the sidewalls of the tyre.

**B**

### is for brakes.

It is a legal requirement for cycles to have two working brakes. Test them by standing to the left of the cycle and applying both brakes. With the levers pulled, push the cycle forward. The rear wheel should lift off the ground. Repeat whilst pulling backward from the handlebars. The front wheel should lift. If the brakes do not act strongly enough to allow the opposite wheel to raise into the air, the brakes need adjusting/servicing.

**C**

### is for chain.

Check to make sure that the chain is not rusty. A chain should be silver, grey or black - never red! Turn the pedals backwards to make sure that the chain moves freely.

**D**

### is for drop.

Lift the front wheel from the handlebars and drop the cycle when the front wheel is 10cm above the ground. Listen for harsh metallic sounds and watch out for any bits falling off. Repeat with the rear of the cycle.



## 2.2 Equipment checks – Leader's equipment

You are likely to be carrying some specific equipment as part of your role in leading and instructing groups. This will need checking in the same way as any other piece of equipment; that it is, and will remain capable of, completing the task(s) required of it under potentially expected conditions. Should the equipment be showing signs of deterioration to the point of not being able to perform effectively or of future failure, it should be replaced as appropriate.

Potential indicators of such failure can include, but are not limited to:

- **Tears**
- **Holes**
- **Cracks**
- **Splits**
- **Fraying**
- **Change in colour (UV exposure or rust for example)**
- **Deformation**

## 2.3 Equipment checks – Participant's equipment and clothing

From the feet up, participants clothing checks should include:

- **Footwear** – suitable sole, knobbed (or not smooth); not open toed / sandals; laces tucked out of the way.
- **Trousers** - either tighter around the ankles, tucked into socks or held close to the ankle with a band
- **Upper body** - layers and materials appropriate to the conditions of day and season; during the winter, participants may need garments with close fitting necks.
- **Hands** - gloves should be worn in cold or wet weather; winter ones should have sufficient feel to change gear effectively, summer ones should protect the palms in the event of a fall.
- **Headwear** - other than helmets (covered below), participants may, during winter months, need to wear further hats to maintain warmth; very thin hats and headwear such as material tubes, thin beanies and skull cap hats are recommended so that the helmet remains securely positioned on the head.

## 2.4 Helmet check

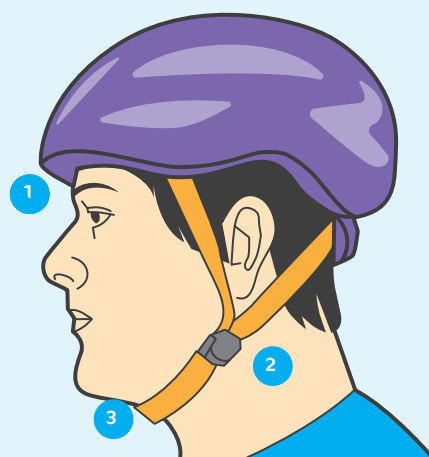
**Before the ride, gather the group and ask them to have their cycle helmets in their hands. Ask them to check:**

- Is the helmet free from any visible damage (inside and out)?
- Does the helmet circumference fit the rider's head?
- Does the helmet cover the forehead and is it level?
- Does the chin strap buckle work properly?

### Fitting a helmet

**When you shake your head from side-to-side, a correctly fitted helmet will stay in place.**

- 1 Place level just above the eyebrows.
- 2 Side straps meet below the ear to form a Y shape.
- 3 Less than two fingers space between your chin and strap.



Helmets should be checked prior to use, even where the participant is providing them. Look for cracks in the polystyrene, dints and cuts in the shell, and double check that the shell is still adhered to the polystyrene inner. The helmet strap should be free of abrasions and cuts. Helmets also deteriorate with age due to exposure to UV light. Manufacturers recommendations are generally to replace helmets every 2 or 3 years (depending on the manufacturer).



## 2.5 Cycle size and adjustment

### A cycle should be sized to suit the rider in three measurements:

- Frame height
- Cycle length
- Saddle height

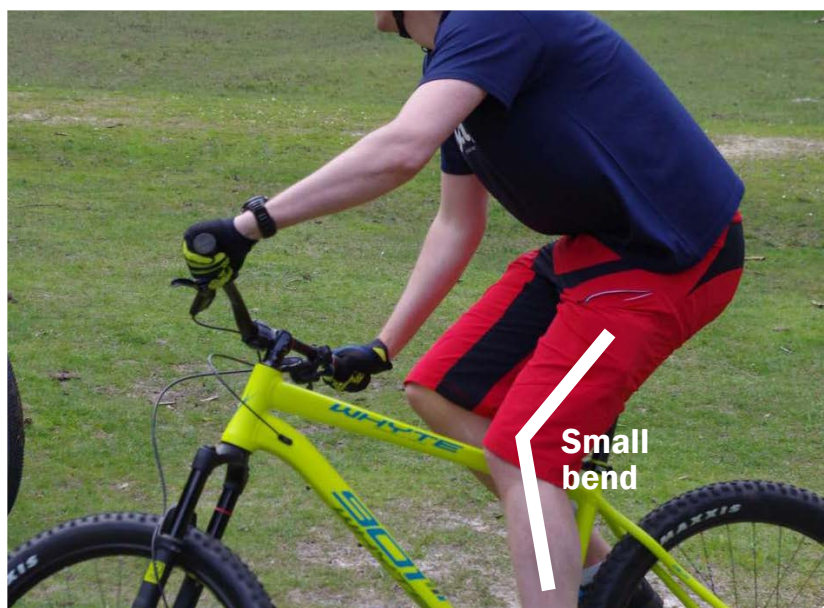
Saddle height is the only factor that can be adjusted at the start or during a ride. The other two are fixed, by the frame and stem dimensions. Therefore cycle size choice is vital.



Saddle height is the factor that we can tailor specifically to the rider. As a rough guide before the rider gets on the cycle, if they put their thumb on the top of their hip bone, with their hand flat against their hip, fingers together, the top of their saddle should reach their hand.

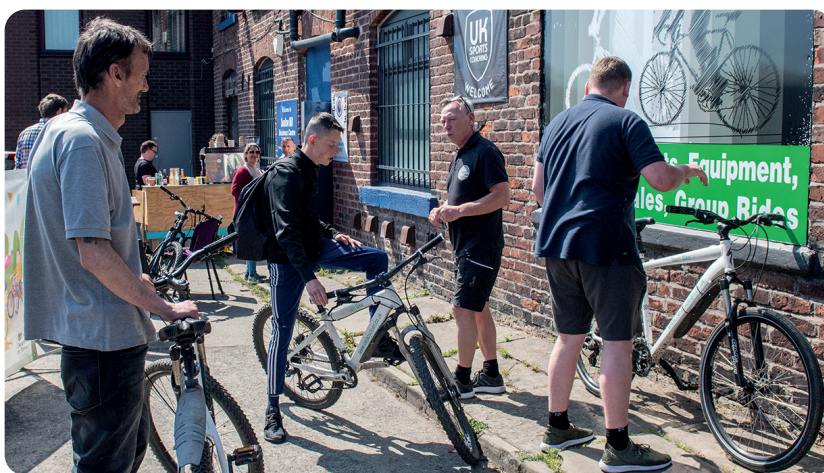
When sat on the cycle and supported, get the rider to place one of their heels on a pedal when in the lowest position. They should be able to straighten their leg without having to stretch or lower their hip to reach.

To observe saddle height when riding as shown in the picture, there should be a small bend at the knee when the pedal is at the lowest position, with the sole of the foot being flat.



To determine cycle size for a rider, the frame height should be such that when stood astride the cycle, the rider should have clearance between the top tube and their crotch of at least 50mm. Modern frames are designed to be lower, giving even greater clearance here.

The cycle length, a function of the frame and stem lengths, should not be long enough to generate an angle of more than 90° between the riders arms and upper body. If the rider comes close to hitting the handlebars with their knees when stood out of the saddle, it is too short.



## 2.6 Procedural checks for the Leader

There are some specific checks and verifications that any leader should undertake prior to a session start. These are as fundamental as the ride itself, and ten minutes here could have a dramatic effect on the appropriateness, and therefore success of the ride.

As there are several checks, you may find it useful to set up your version of a prompt card for yourself, to ensure that nothing is forgotten.

- Prior to the group arriving, the Leader should ensure that they have:
- A map of the route, or know where they are going and what to expect on the ride.
- Put in place emergency procedures in the event of an incident occurring involving a member of the group or themselves.
- Group members and own medical info has been checked and is stored / carried as appropriate.
- On the group arriving and being fitted with appropriate cycles and equipment, the following additional checks should be undertaken:
  - Appropriate clothing.
  - Waterproofs carried if required.
  - Suitable and sufficient food and drink is being carried.
  - Any changes to group members' medical details are provided, including colds etc.

You may want to continue with the following elements, or add them in after the riding ability verification, but they should occur prior to leaving the start area:

- Toilet visit prior to leaving.
- Set appropriate ground rules according to the participants, route and environment.
- Define what to do if they find themselves unable to see anyone else in the group – stop and wait – you will return shortly to find them.
- Outline any codes of conduct (country code; highway code) where needed at this stage.

## 2.7 Ensuring safety

This can also be considered as 'setting the ride environment'. Participants can have mixed feelings about cycling. For those with little or no prior experience, riding on a road where there is traffic is enough to make them feel uncomfortable or 'unsafe', even though they may be perfectly capable of doing this.

Safety is also about perception. As a Group Leader, you are experienced in the activity and in leading groups, therefore know what is safe for a participant to do: your task is to help them realise that and to help them construct trust in you. At the other end of the scale, some participants may not appreciate the limits to safety. They may feel they can cycle much faster than you want them to, or not be aware of rules of the road as written in the highway code. It is your role to clarify and assist your participant's understanding of why it is important to follow the instructions of the group lead and cycle safely and at the same speed as the group.

Critical elements therefore to ensuring safety include:

- Using an appropriate area – reducing external influences (pedestrians, traffic etc) which may make them nervous.
- The environment they are riding in should marry in part to their previous experience.
- Ensuring the weather is appropriate for the ride.

## Assessment Outcome

**2.1** Able to identify correct clothing / equipment for participants, themselves and the group





## Leading Groups - Section 3

Leading groups has certain challenges, particularly in fast-moving, dynamic or difficult environments where things can quickly go wrong. To ensure rides are always safe and enjoyable, these three core principles and their techniques can be adapted for any given situation.

**1**

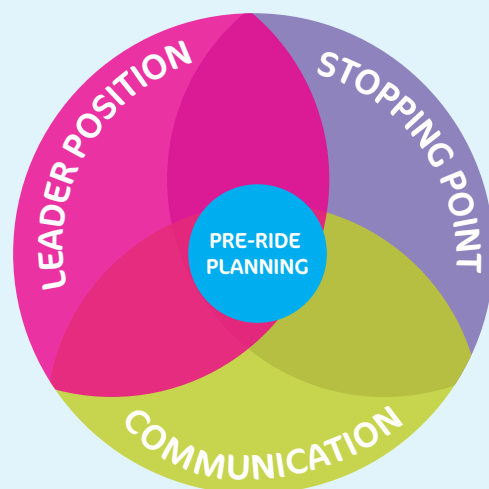
**Leader position**

**2**

**Stopping point**

**3**

**Communication**





These three principles can be used to manage a group, depending on hazards and their level of skill and experience, in different environments and circumstances.

**Hazards for your participants might include (but are not be limited to):**

- Trail obstructions - under tyre, overhead or to the side
- Excessive speed
- Other people (including other riders)
- Traffic - towards, across or in the same direction
- Group separation
- Themselves
- Use (or incorrect use) of equipment

Further, motivational factors can in themselves be considered hazards to the success of a ride, and therefore to the participants’ riding experience. Factors which affect motivation are shown in table (right):

1

Leader position

We use leader positioning to manage group members and identify / counter hazards.

Reduces motivation
The ride being ‘too hard’
Not being involved in the ride (e.g. if an individual is repeatedly singled out to be assisted)
Being cold, tired or hungry
The group being rigidly contained throughout

Increases motivation
Recognise participant achievement
Being incorporated in roles and involvement in managing the ride
Keeping energy levels topped up, remaining warm and riding in the right conditions
Flexibility in where participants can ride within the group; changes (swaps) in those assisting.

To use positioning effectively, it’s important to know about any potential hazards. This can most effectively be done by undertaking a pre-ride.

Positioning is also vital to consider in the eventuality of potential hazards on a route, when riding on a single track road and traffic is approaching towards the front, and to the rear of the group.

Group management technique	Context	Hazard being prevented
Leader at front of group	Downhill	Excessive speed
	Approaching obstacle, road junction, forestry workings, other users or other hazard that the participants may not manage themselves	Late stopping
	Single track road	Approaching vehicle
	Varied participant fitness and/or abilities	Preventing the dispersion / splitting of group
	Where the stopping point isn’t obvious	Going the wrong way / too far / encountering hazards
Leader at rear of group	Uphill	Participants at back struggling; group splitting; loss of motivation
	Mechanical problem, either real, or poor ability to use (e.g. gears) by participants	Equipment damage; group splitting; loss of motivation
	Busy or narrow road	Traffic approaching from behind

## The use of an Assistant Leader

As well as your own position, the use of an assistant can greatly support your management of the group and hazard minimisation. The context and hazard prevention where assistants can help is defined in the table below

Group management technique	Context
Use of Assistants overall	Using different riders who are capable to help plan and deliver a led ride.
	Use of able adult assistant in the roles as per the Leader position above (usually at the opposite end of the group to the Leader)
Assistant* at front	Approaching hazards
	Where the stopping point isn't obvious
Assistant* at rear	Quick evaluations that all the group are together (the assistant must stop with the participant)
* Assistant can be an adult assistant, or one of the participants. Where the assistant is capable of making appropriate decisions, they can help fulfil the roles of the Leader at the front or rear of the group	

## 2

### Stopping points

People ride at different speeds according to their fitness, skill and desires, so it's often necessary to stop at regular points to regroup. However, the use of stopping points also fulfils several other purposes.

The use of stopping points also fulfils several other functions:

- Rest points for riders to recover
- A briefing opportunity for the next section of the ride
- Regular drink and small bite opportunities
- Keeping the group together throughout the ride
- Educational or developmental opportunity, such as skills technique, navigation, local history or other focused session.

It is critical to establish stopping points ahead of where a group may encounter a hazard, which are determined by riders' level of experience.

Adults may be able to make successful decisions about situations that children or young people may not, and the fitness, skills and abilities of the participants to ride at a similar speed will change the length of sections between stopping points.

A group which has comparable levels of fitness, skills and abilities may be able to cover longer distances between stopping points than a more diverse group with differing abilities.

For example, where a group is all together and the reason for stopping is minor (e.g. to choose which direction to go), as long as the group members know the next stopping point, the group can continue.

## What makes a good stopping point?

**1**

**Safe**

Means a stopping point sufficiently large to contain the group, with minimal impact on other people, and away from passing cars, cycles and walkers or other activity.

**2**

**Quiet**

Means somewhere a briefing to the group can be heard and understood, and where there are limited or no distractions.

**3**

**Obvious**

It's crucial whenever you request another rider to be at the front of the group that the stopping point is obvious as they approach it. This is one of the most important things you should establish on your pre-ride check, as indicators on the ground are highly likely not to be shown on a map. Where a stopping point is vague, use a 'catch feature' which the rider at the front, and the rest of the group, can clearly identify.

## Stopping points and identifiable features might include:

Stopping point	Identifiable feature	Additional environments where the identifiable feature is relevant
Top of the hill	Start to descend	Vague hill top (i.e. gradually rounded)
Road junction	Next section of road, particularly if there are many options	
Distinct change of environment e.g. entering a towpath	New environment, e.g. open land, park, change of road or track surface	Where new skills may be required or other users may be encountered
Gate	Whether the gate is open or closed	
Just prior (50m-200m) to a busy road junction	You, as the leader, will reach this point first	Approaching other noisy environments such as construction and road works



1. What you say (i.e. the words you use);
2. How you say it (i.e. your emphasis and your tone);
3. Your non-verbal cues (body language, gesticulation);
4. Enabling others to contribute (providing opportunity, listening, reinforcement)

The extent to which you use these elements of communication will be influenced by both your own characteristics and those of the group.

#### It's vital you communicate effectively to:

- Define boundaries (throughout the session, but especially at the start)
- Build learning opportunities (starting with the achievable and developing).

#### You can do this by:

- Being consistent and open
- Using repetition to reinforce
- Asking questions to ensure understanding
- Being positive about the environment, context and participants' contributions

#### Key points

Remember to use an appropriate number of points for a group to remember. This is likely to be three for most groups (e.g. section surface, hazard and stopping point) and could be as few as one for some sections and group types (e.g. hazard where you are leading). Keep this number low to match the group's abilities.

## Other leading factors

There are some specific factors you should remember from your Group Leader Course and use as fundamental principles throughout your leading career:

- **Leading on roads**
- **Road crossings**
- **Modifications to the ride**

### Leading on roads

#### When using roads remember to:

- Avoid busy roads whenever possible.
- Keep the group in one unit, according to the ability of the group members. This has less impact on traffic and the group benefits from 'safety in numbers'.
- Remain in single file where the road is narrow.
- You can ride two abreast and it can be safer to do so, particularly in larger groups or when accompanying children or less experienced riders. Be aware of drivers behind you and allow them to overtake (for example, by moving into single file or stopping) when you feel it is safe to let them do so

- Position yourself on the outside at the back of the group (or put your assistant there if you need to be at the front). This creates a larger impact to the traffic behind and helps to ensure the safety of your group. You are also best placed to gain eye contact with any driver behind.
- It is often useful to think of your group as a single vehicle, especially in an urban environment or at junctions. Participants need to move as part of a unit rather than making decisions for themselves.
- Look directly at drivers. Eye contact is the most effective way of communicating with drivers and is usually sufficient to indicate your right as a road user to be there, and the nature of your group.

## Road crossings

Assuming that participants have a high level of road awareness, are able to act as a group, and have the capacity to set off quickly, then riding across a road at an opportune moment should not pose any problems.

However, it may be necessary to go back to basics and identify some control elements if any of these assumptions are not met. Remember to explain what is going on, why, and provide roles to members to aid the crossing.

### The time window

To cross a road safely, you need to be in a location that provides sufficient notice of vehicle arrival (i.e. you should be able to cross in less time than an appearing car reaches you – the time window). You can extend the time window if necessary by:

- Moving to a clearer location
- Using listening skills as well as vision (only possible when in a quiet location)
- Using a group member to extend your vision-based time window (by moving to a corner or bend in the road, for example). Note that in this situation, they should cross at the same time as you to ensure their safety too

### You can also reduce the time window by:

- Arranging the group so they all set off at the same time – they are listening and attentive
- Getting the group to walk, pushing their cycles (with less experienced riders, this is quicker and reduces the likelihood of collisions between participants)
- Defining what happens on reaching the opposite side of the road - where to stand, which direction the group is to travel in, and that they wait before setting off
- Where space is limited, split the participants into two or three smaller groups, all under your direction

## Modifications to the ride

It is very difficult to define how long a ride may take. Factors such as the weather, group abilities, ground conditions and mechanicals all change the speed at which a ride runs, as well as how it might operate, and therefore the finish time.

There are several techniques to extend the ride time; very few to reduce it! It is always best to err on the side of caution as additional time can be filled with:

- An additional loop, or route extension. These are usually called contingencies
- Additional riding skills development
- Other skills development (other associated skills – navigation, puncture mending etc.)
- Games

### Reducing the time of a ride can only happen by:

- Riding faster (unlikely in most cases).
- Reducing the ride distance – modify the route accordingly with a contingency you have planned in.

Changes to the route itself are fundamental to the route planning role, and it may be the group isn't even aware that the route has been modified (a very positive situation). Of course, you should have always pre-ridden your contingencies too!



# Leading Groups during the ride

## - Section 4

### This unit will enable you to:

- Observe and demonstrate various leadership techniques.
- How to snake with a group.
- Identify and deal with some common problems you may encounter on a group ride.

### During the ride you might want to:

- Be sociable.
- Have regular stops.
- Observe all riders.
- Compare notes with other Group Leaders.
- Identify points of local interest.
- Be aware of people's limits.
- Check that everyone is physically managing with the pace of the ride.

### Position during rides / activities

Here are some of the suggested roles of the Group Leader and the Assistant Group Leader.

- Route finder
- Group management
- Hazard spotter
- Supporter
- Pace setter
- Observer
- Junction management

Where do you think are the most likely places a Leader (or assistant) could put themselves within a group to perform each of the above tasks?



## Road positioning

### Before leading a group, a Group Leader should have a good understanding of the positions to take whilst riding

If you ride close to the pavement, you are less likely to be seen by other road users and you've got to navigate pot holes, road debris and bad surfaces.

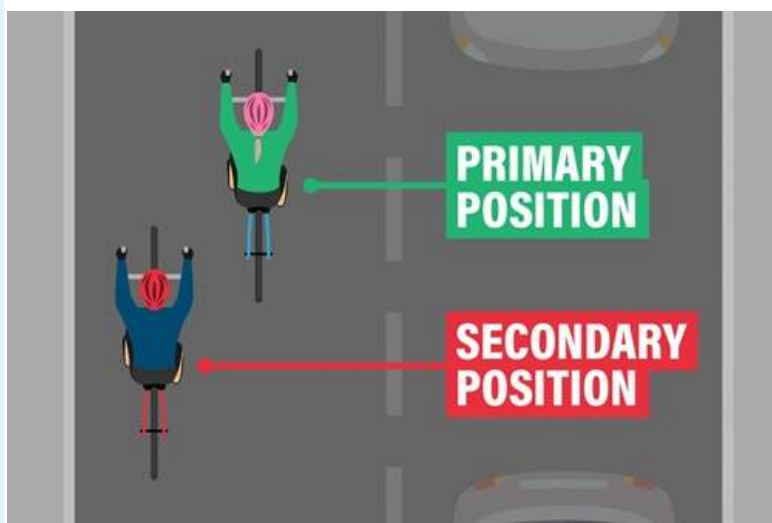
Typically, the distance from the kerb is the same distance that drivers will give you when overtaking so your position when cycling will help influence how much room passing cars give you or your group when you're out riding.

#### Primary position

To cycle here, you position yourself in the centre of the lane you are using. This position is best suited to slower urban moving traffic, such as around town where you can keep up with traffic.

#### Secondary position

This position is ideally 75cm to 1m from the kerb, whilst ensuring you are not riding in the gutter. This position gives you room to manoeuvre and still offers a good degree of visibility. It's best suited for faster moving roads or when you are cycling in a straight line as you will not be turning in the road or overtaking parked vehicles.



## Snaking

### Snaking is a method used by ride staff to move cyclists around safely

A Group Leader and other ride staff can use snaking to safely and effectively direct and move ride participants. At least two members of ride staff are needed for snaking. One member of ride staff stays at the front of the group at all times and the other member of ride staff alternates between the rear, middle and front of the group.

It is recommended that snaking is done with a maximum of 14 ride participants including ride staff.

### The ride staff member at the front should:

- Control the pace to keep the group together.
- Show the group where to ride in the road.
- Signal turns etc. on behalf of the group.
- Stop at Give Way & Stop junctions and wait for the second ride staff.
- Know where the group is going.
- Ensure suitable stopping points as and when necessary.

## The ride staff member at the rear should:

- Monitor the group's riding and behavior.
- Signal for the group to other road users behind the group.
- Encourage other road users not to overtake at unsuitable moments.
- Ride to the front of the group whenever they are approaching Give Way and Stop junctions and roundabouts.
- Monitor the group through these junctions before taking up position at the rear of the group again.
- Encourage and motivate the group, thus keeping them reasonably tightly together – especially at junctions.

## The rest of the group should:

- Maintain their position within the group and not overtake, swerve or stop.
- Keep a reasonable distance between each other. 2 metres is a general recommendation, but this often becomes less with experience and/or lack of concentration! If brakes are covered and concentration is kept up, then smaller gaps can be maintained satisfactorily.
- Double up at junctions and on some roads to make the group roughly half the length.
- Watch the front instructor for signals and an idea of where they should be riding in the road. This is especially important as the group approaches a junction as the rear instructor needs to pass by the group on one side or the other.
- Listen to the rear instructor for information about speed, route, hazards, general tips and encouragement.

## How to create a snake

1

The rear rider should place their cycle on the road first to form the end of the snake before the rest of it. When it is safe they will instruct all the other riders to join the road and form the 'snake' from the rear rider up to the front rider.

2

Once the rear rider has told the group it is safe to do so, the front rider and the rest of the group put their cycles on the road at the same time. This creates a 'snake' from the rear rider up to the front rider.

3

The rest of the group need to watch and listen to the rear and front riders to follow their leads. Once the rear rider has told the group to put their cycles on the road at the same time as the front rider.



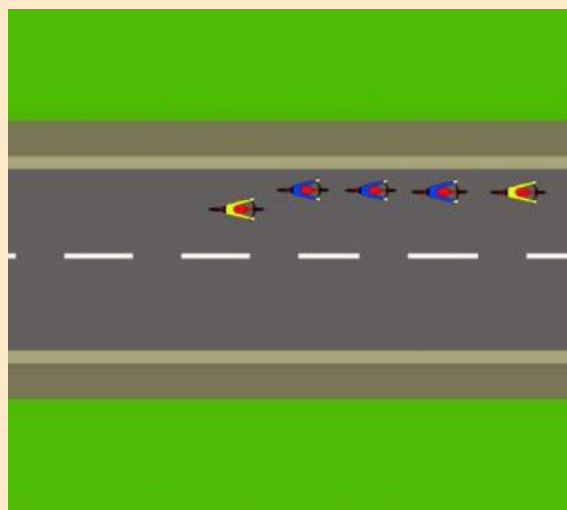
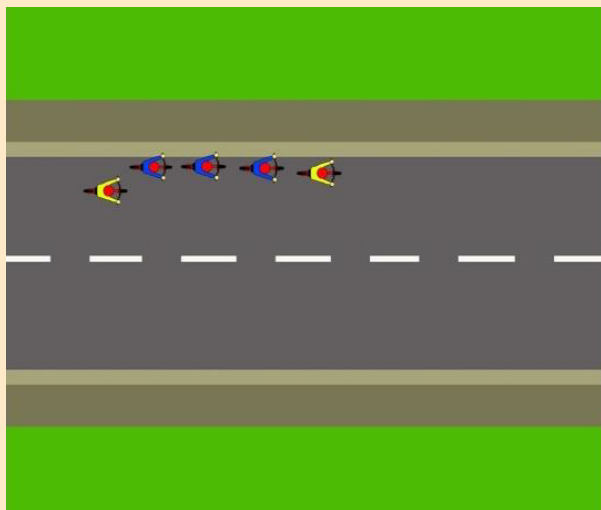
## Moving onto the Road

When taking positions on the road, the front rider will be in the secondary position.

The rear rider will be between the primary and secondary positions, ensuring they are not blocking traffic.

It's the rear rider's job to inform everyone it is safe to start cycling.

Once they've done that, the front rider will begin and the rest of the group will follow.



## Passing a side road

It's best for the whole snake to be in the primary position when passing a side road. This is important to avoid accidents with cars giving way and to slow cars approaching from behind.

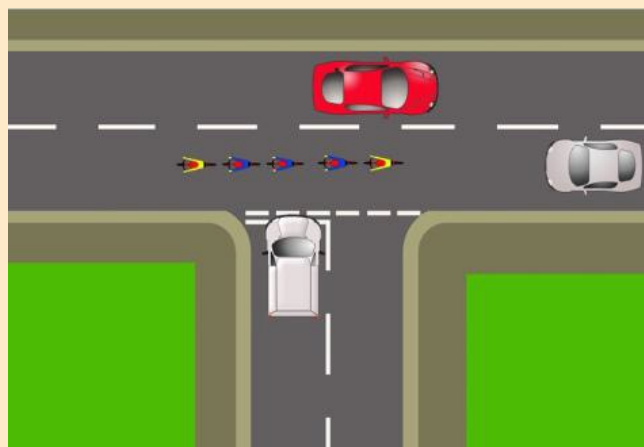
The rear rider will first move out into the primary position after checking behind and in front of them to ensure it's safe.

The rear rider will then look behind them again and communicate with the front rider whether it's safe for them to move.

If it's safe, the front rider will join the rear rider in the primary position and the rest of the group will follow.

Once all of the riding group is clear of the junction the front rider will move back into the secondary position, followed by the group.

The rear rider will then return to their standard position in between primary and secondary position.





## Passing a parked vehicle

Like with passing side roads, it's best for the whole snake to be in the primary position when passing a parked vehicle. This is important to avoid accidents with other road users or with a side door to the parked vehicle opening unexpectedly.

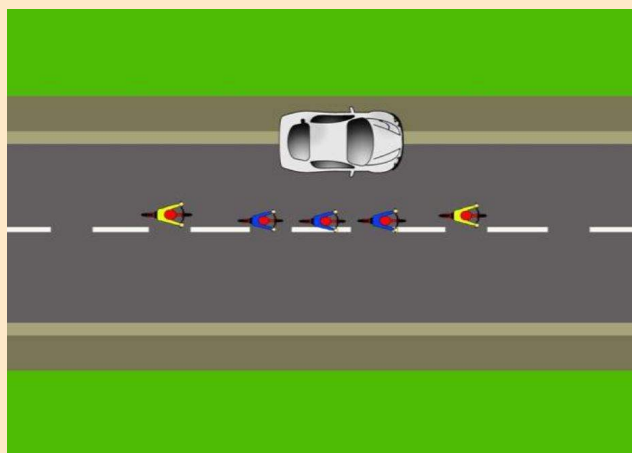
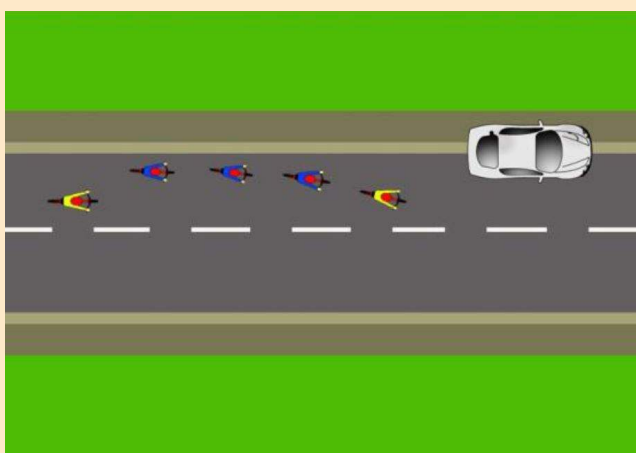
The rear rider will first move out into the primary position after checking behind and in front of them to ensure it's safe.

When the lead rider sees the rear rider has moved, they move into the primary position, followed by the rest of the snake.

The rear riders need to be very observant, making decisions as early as possible to give the group enough time and space to move into the primary position.

If passing multiple parked vehicles with gaps between vehicles, don't weave in and out of the gaps, maintain your primary position until you've negotiated the line of parked vehicles.

Once the whole snake is past the parked car or cars, the lead rider moves back to secondary, followed by the rest of the snake with the rear rider moving back to their standard position in between primary and secondary.



## Left turn from a major road to minor road

The front rider should first raise their left arm straight into the air, before lowering it to a left-hand signal. This will inform the rear rider of the intended direction.

When it's safe to do so, the rear rider moves into the primary position. The front rider, after checking to see the rear rider is in position, will move out into primary position followed by the rest of the group.

The whole group then turns left as a complete snake in the primary position.

Once the turn has been completed, the group return to their standard positions.



## Left turn from a minor to a major road

The first steps are the same as turning left from a major to minor road.

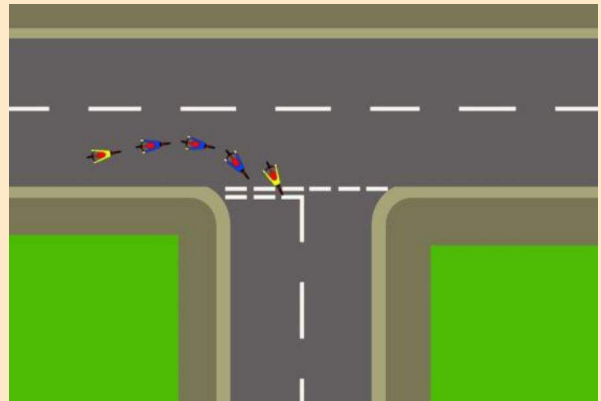
The front rider should make the same signals, the rear rider should move first into primary position. Then the front rider, followed by the rest of the group. The group will line up behind the front rider at the give way lines.

The rear rider, after signaling the group's intention to traffic behind, moves up alongside the front rider at the give way lines.

At this point, the rear rider takes control of the snake.

The front rider begins the turn when instructed by the rear rider, followed by the group and, lastly, the rear rider.

If a vehicle approaches on the major road, the rear rider will need to stop the snake continuing the turn. The best way to do this is instructing riders verbally or physically holding the arm of the next rider about to turn. Once it's safe, the rear rider will let the rest of the group complete the turn and re-join the rest of the group. If this happens, it's the front rider's job to be aware some riders have not completed the turn and to instruct the group to wait or slow down for them to catch up.



## Right turn from a major road to a minor road

The front rider raises their right arm, which turns into a signal, to let the rear rider know the turn is coming.

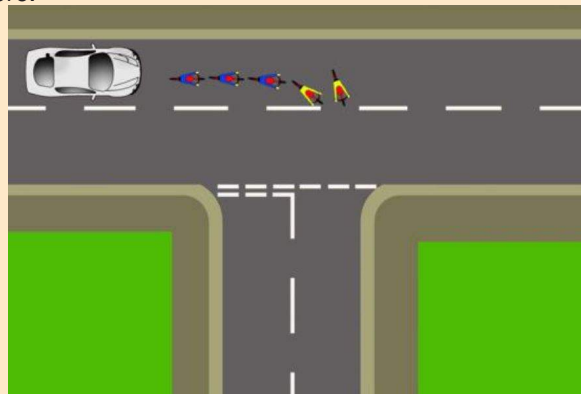
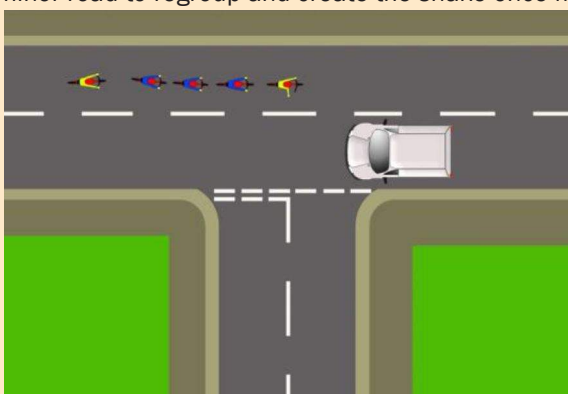
The rear rider moves into primary position. Then the front rider, followed by the rest of the riders in the snake.

The rear rider then moves forward down the left hand side of the group (this is the only turn that the rear rider moves up the left hand side) to come alongside the front rider, giving the rear rider a clear view of the road. If there are obstacles, such as parked cars, then the rear rider will need to come down the right-hand side.

The rear rider takes control of the group again here and feeds the front rider first followed by ride participants when it's safe across the road into the minor road.

After the final participant, the rear rider follows on at the back of the snake resuming their standard position.

If the group gets separated, the front rider and the riders who have completed the turn will wait or slow down on the minor road to regroup and create the snake once more.



## Turning right from a minor to a major road

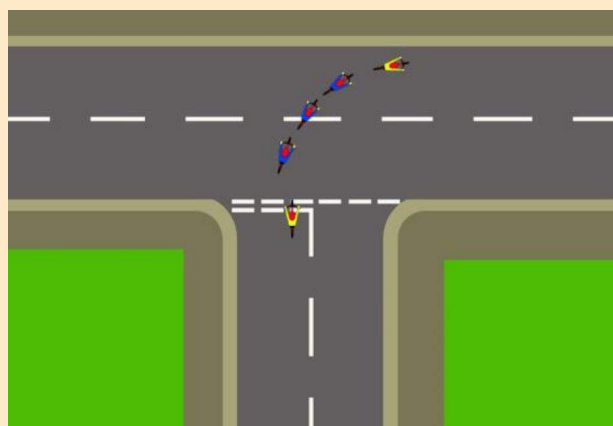
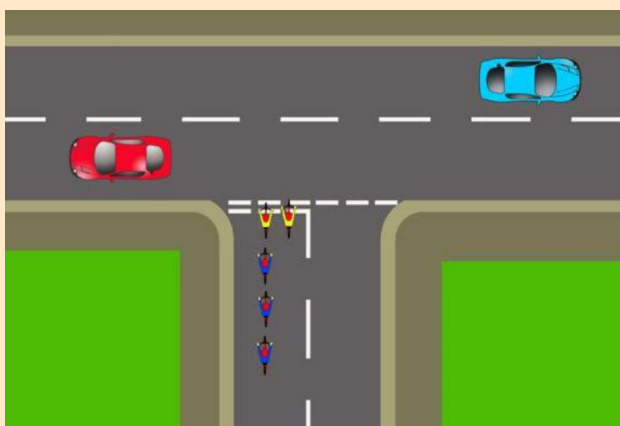
This turn is very similar to the left turn. The front rider raises their hand into the air which turns into a signal. The rear rider moves into primary, and the front rider follows into primary, then the rest of the snake move into this position too.

The rear rider, when it's safe, cycles up the right hand side of the group and checks if it's safe to pass the give way line. If the rear rider arrives at the line before the group, and the road is clear, then the group can continue on. If the road is not clear, the group will need to stop at the give way line.

At this point the rear rider takes control of the group. When the road is clear, the front rider will continue onto the major road and the rear rider will follow the last participant out of the junction to join up at the end of the snake once more.

**Remember - the rear rider here needs to look out for oncoming traffic!**

If the group gets separated, the front rider and the riders who have completed the turn will wait or slow down on the major road to regroup and create the snake once more.



## Traffic lights

### Step one - it's red

The junction should be approached in the same manner as that of a give way.

The rear rider moves into primary, followed by the front rider and then the group. The group can double up to reduce the length of the snake and lower the chance for a vehicle to overtake.

The rear rider cycles up the right hand side to join the front rider. Before setting off, ensure the group is ready in position with foot on pedal.





## Traffic lights

### Step two - it's green!

Once it goes green:

The front rider is the one who is first to move

The front rider will gesture their intended direction by raising their arm up and then signalling as before. If the snake is going forwards at the lights, the front rider will raise their arm straight up in the air and then point forwards. If riding with inexperienced riders, try and avoid turning right at traffic lights as oncoming traffic could be a hazard or make the group concerned.



### But what if there's traffic?

If there's traffic at the lights, it's best practice to queue behind cars with the whole snake in the primary position.

The group should "double up" in this situation. This means the third rider cycling up alongside the second rider, the fifth rider cycling up alongside the fourth rider and so on to create pairs.

## Roundabouts

### Avoid roundabouts if possible

Due to the complicated setup of larger roundabouts, there's a high possibility of losing one or two of the group or them being out of sight for the ride staff whilst trying to navigate their way around. We would advise to avoid larger multi-lane roundabouts wherever possible if you're taking out groups of novice cyclists and discourage the use of snaking in these situations as well.

However, snaking can be used at mini roundabouts. They do still come with some risk so you'll need to think carefully about your route and the ability of your riders to decide whether they are suitable for your group.

### Step one - approaching

The junction should be treated similarly to a give way junction:

- The rear rider moves into primary, followed by the front rider and then the group
- The rear rider cycles up the right hand side to join the front rider, the group may double up here.

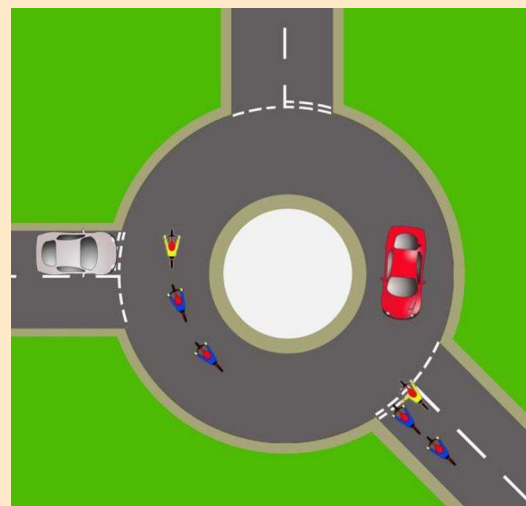
### Step two - getting around

When it's safe to do so:

The rear riders begins to feed riders, starting with the front rider, onto the roundabout

The ride staff will signal intention to other road users

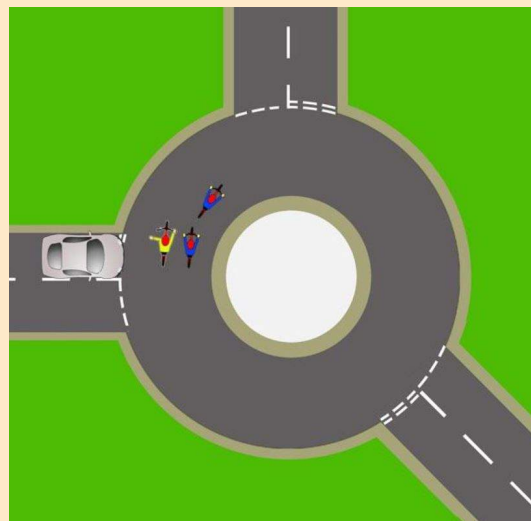
If a vehicle approaches, the rear rider can stop riders from entering the roundabout and feed them out when it is safe to do so



### Step 3 - exiting

If the group separated, the front rider and the riders who have completed the roundabout will wait or slow down on the exit road to regroup and create the snake once more.

Once they have joined the roundabout, the rear rider will move into a position on the left hand side of the remaining riders to guide them off at the right exit. This will act as a barrier from traffic entering the roundabout. It also allows the rear rider to signal effectively and have a clear view of the rest of the group.



## Ending the ride

### Gaining feedback from Group Riders

The end of a ride can easily become chaotic. Riders may decide to leave the ride as they go past a road going to their own home. They may be tired or cold and want to get inside or home as quickly as possible. Gaining valuable feedback about the ride doesn't need to be too time consuming or arduous. Questions could be asked at the last café stop, during the last couple of miles or quickly at the end as you tell them about future opportunities etc.

### Checking equipment and returning borrowed equipment

Borrowed equipment should be checked and possibly logged on return. Any repairs that you have completed during the ride should be noted so they can be checked again in a more appropriate environment. If a repair has been done to a participant's cycle then they should be advised that it should be checked out or done more completely before its next use, or as soon as reasonably possible. If you have concerns about a cycle that has been borrowed you should inform the person responsible for storing the cycles.

### Reviewing Group Leader and Assistant Group Leader performance

"What went well?" and "What could have been done better?" are two questions that Leaders should not only ask themselves but each other at the end of a Group Ride.

Using your leader feedback and combining this with the feedback from participants will result in improvements for you next ride.

Engendering a feeling that we are enabling each other rather than criticising each other is very important to this process.



# Incidents and Safeguarding - Section 5

Incidents and emergencies happen. If we plan for them, and set up preventative measures they will happen less, and usually be of lower consequences but they still occur.

This unit revisits safeguarding issues which may be introduced in the Group Leader course. We will look at the following subjects -

- Reporting incidents
- Forms of abuse
- Potential situations in cycling
- Social media
- Data protection
- DBS



## 5.1 Reporting incidents

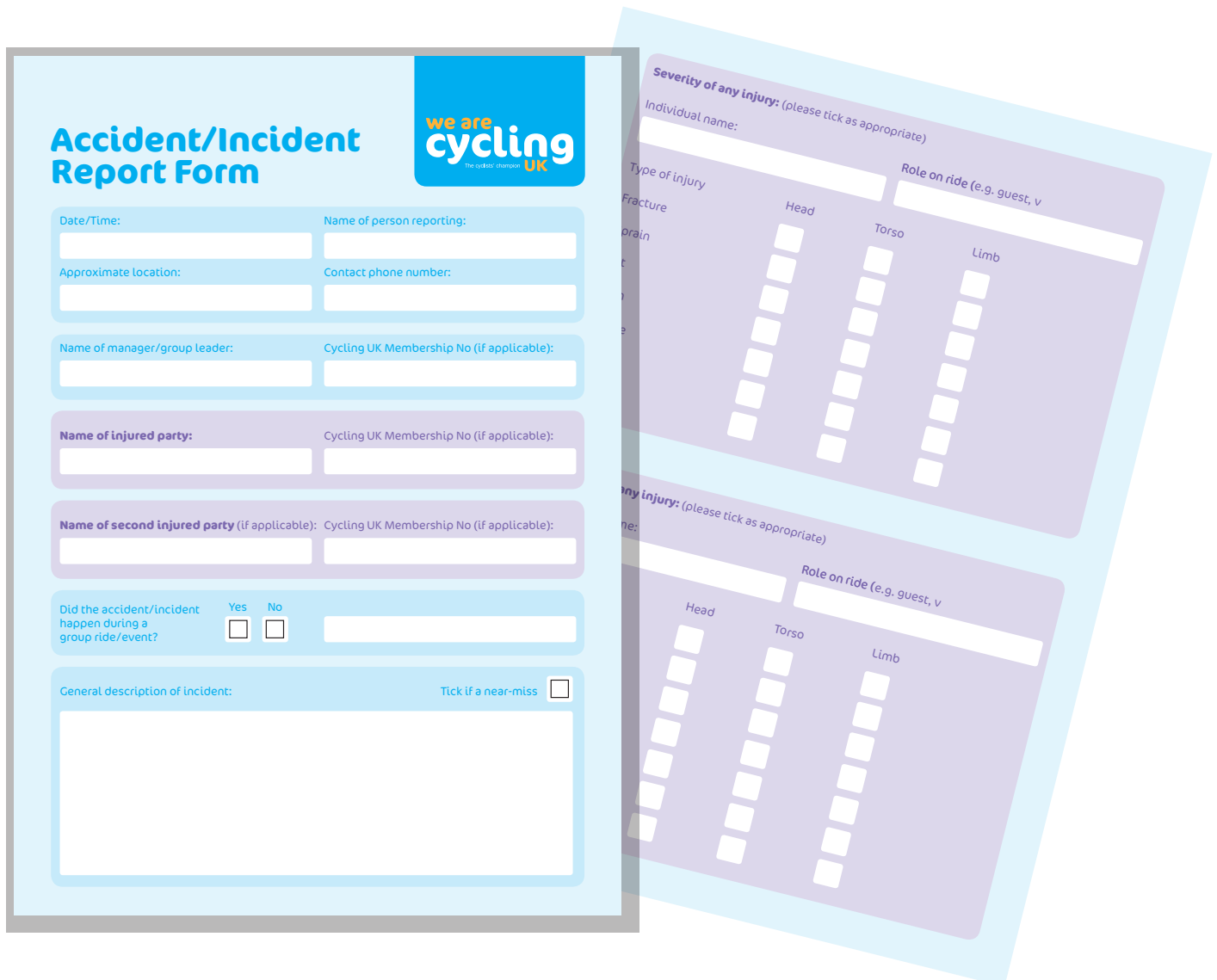
Accidents, incidents and near misses should all be reported and anything that you consider might lead to an insurance claim should be reported to Cycling UK National Office.

An accident could be construed as something where first aid has been administered and/or the emergency services involved.

An incident could be described as something where no first aid has been administered but the ride stopped and/or was changed as a result.

A near miss could be described as something where a lesson can be learnt or where management should be notified and possibly consider changes.

Cycling UK has an accident report form which you can use to record any incidents. If you are leading a group as part of a Cycling UK Community Cycle Club or Member Group, then all accident report forms should be completed and emailed to [incidents@cyclinguk.org](mailto:incidents@cyclinguk.org).



The image displays the 'Accident/Incident Report Form' and an 'Injury Severity' grid. The form is titled 'Accident/Incident Report Form' and features the 'we are cycling UK' logo. It includes fields for reporting details, injured parties, and a description of the incident. The injury severity grid is used to record the severity of injuries for multiple individuals, with columns for Head, Torso, and Limb, and rows for different types of injuries like Fracture, Head, and Limb.

**Accident/Incident Report Form**

**we are cycling UK**  
The national charity for cycling

Date/Time:  Name of person reporting:

Approximate location:  Contact phone number:

Name of manager/group leader:  Cycling UK Membership No (if applicable):

Name of injured party:  Cycling UK Membership No (if applicable):

Name of second injured party (if applicable):  Cycling UK Membership No (if applicable):

Did the accident/incident happen during a group ride/event? Yes ☐ No ☐

General description of incident:  Tick if a near-miss ☐

**Injury Severity** (please tick as appropriate)

Individual name:  Role on ride (e.g. guest, v):

Type of injury:

Fracture ☐ Head ☐ Torso ☐ Limb ☐

Head ☐ Torso ☐ Limb ☐

any injury: (please tick as appropriate)

Head ☐ Torso ☐ Limb ☐

## 5.2 Forms of abuse

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self neglect

For more information on the indicators of the types of abuse listed above please visit the scie website [HERE](#).

## 5.3 Potential situations in cycling

In your cycling group, you may have a wide variety of people from different backgrounds. It is important that the ride is a safe space which is free from discrimination. Your cycling group may have a safeguarding policy or an equality and diversity policy in place. It would be helpful to familiarise yourself with these and who to contact in the case of an incident.

If you witness discrimination or abuse between ride members, you will need to think about the best course of action to safeguard the group. This may be speaking privately to the attendees involved, or finishing the ride early if necessary in order to address the situation.

Another aspect of safeguarding is recognising the signs of abuse listed above and whether any ride attendee may be experiencing this outside of the ride. If you have any concerns, you should consult your designated safeguarding lead for the cycling group. Similarly, if an attendee discloses abuse to you, you should consult with the relevant safeguarding lead or support service if they are in direct danger of harm.

Cycling in public may mean your group experiences or witnesses abuse from other members of the public or drivers. The primary importance is protecting the group from danger. If there is an aggressive driver, this may mean getting the group off the road safely, whilst providing a barrier between the car and the group so they do not come too close to other riders.

Can you think of a scenario where you have needed to respond to an incident on a ride? How did you react?

## 5.4 Social media

Social media is everywhere and can be a very useful promotional tool for cycle rides. However, not everyone is a fan and it is very easy to upset people.

If you are taking photos of participants on a ride, make sure you have permission from them. Ideally this will be a signed photo consent form, but for a small group who you know well, verbal permission will suffice.

Do not use people's names without permission, similarly do not tag them without permission.

## 5.5 Data protection

Cycling UK adheres to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Cycling UK staff and volunteers must ensure compliance with the Act by protecting riders' confidentiality, so stored data should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

If your cycling group has a data protection policy, you must make sure you are adhering to it when collecting attendee information.

Look at some of the examples below about data protection.

Scenario	Data Protection breach – Y/N?
EXAMPLE A Ride Leader contacts a rider after the ride using the details on the signing on sheet and invites them out for a drink.	Yes, because they have this information for emergency purposes only.
EXAMPLE B Ride Leader collects paper attendee forms and registers, and leaves these out on their kitchen table in a pile.	Yes, any form with personal details should be securely stored where other people cannot read it. Ideally, an online copy will be kept on a computer and paper copies destroyed.
EXAMPLE C A ride leader stores a list of the emergency contacts for attendees on a note in their phone, which has a password.	No, this information is protected behind a password and will only be viewed by the ride leader. There may be a condition in the data protection policy of a group that a ride leader shouldn't store this on their own phone, but a work phone or app instead.

## 5.6 DBS

If you are leading groups of children under 18, or vulnerable adults, without guardians or carers in attendance, then you should have a Disclosure and Barring Service certificate. If you are a volunteer ride leader, your cycling group may be able to apply for a free basic DBS certificate.



## Cycling UK Training courses

### The Next Steps

- **First Aid** – Outdoor First aid Courses
- **Basic and Trailside Maintenance**
- **Advanced Maintenance**
- **Tour Leader Award**
- **Club Leader Award**
- **Mountain Bike Trail Leader**
- **Mountain Bike Technical Leader**
- **Expedition Module**
- **Night Ride Module**

For more information about our other courses or to book, email [training@cyclinguk.org](mailto:training@cyclinguk.org)