

Trailnet Group Rides

Rider Guidelines

Riding as a group is a great experience but you are responsible for your actions and safety: it is essential that you adhere to the Highway Code and are respectful of other road users and the rest of the group at all times so we all get around safely. For that reason you should familiarise yourself with the following safety guidelines and put them into practice on rides.

Before the ride:

- Choose a ride to suit your ability: It's no fun if the group is too fast or too slow for you.
- Please arrive at least 10 minutes before ride start time; 15 minutes if you need to hire a bike.
- On arrival, please test ride your own or your hire bike to ensure it is in good working order before each ride (effective brakes, tyres fully inflated, saddle height correct etc)
- We strongly advise you to wear a cycle helmet on all of our rides. High visibility clothing is also recommended, especially when cycling on the road.
- Bring a mobile phone and ensure that the ride leader has your number and you have theirs.
- Notify ride leader of any current medical issues or any changes in your health since completion of your latest health questionnaire.
- Team up with a ride buddy/buddies and check on these regularly during the ride.

During the Ride

- Ride safely and considerately at all times; follow the highway code when on or near roads.
- Stay alert, don't follow the person in front blindly, especially at road junctions. Don't worry, the group will wait or slow down so you can catch up.
- Never assume that cars are going to stop for you.
- Don't cycle more than two abreast and only do so where it is safe (not on busy roads or narrow lanes).
- Please indicate when you intend to slow down, and use hand signals when turning.
- When stopping, ensure you do not cause an obstruction and immediately get off the track/road onto the verge or pavement.
- Be alert on crossing railway tracks – do not enter unless your exit is clear.
- Always ensure that any gates are closed behind the last rider.
- Notify ride leader of any mechanical issues that arise during the ride.
- Because of the risk of choking, eating sweets or other food on the ride is not encouraged and is at your own risk. If you choose to do so please do this at an appropriate rest stop.
- If you decide not to continue with the group, please notify the ride leader.
- Leaving the group is at your own risk.
- Don't forget that the ride is for everybody so be courteous to everyone in the group
- If you see any member of the group transgressing these rules please don't leave it to others to tell them. If you receive such advice then please act on it because the impact of what you are doing may not be obvious to you.

After the Ride

- Inform the ride leader of any issues with the ride or with your hire bike
- **Don't forget the coffee and cake!!!**

Ride Leader Responsibilities

- Rides should start as close as possible to the published start time.
- Ride leader to nominate a back rider who will stay at or close to the back of the group.
- Ride Leader & Back Rider MUST wear High-Vis clothing.
- Rider leader to conduct a rider count before starting and agree this number with the designated back rider. Numbers should be checked at appropriate points on the route.
- There must be at least 1 qualified first aider on the ride.
- Ride Leader must carry first aid kit & a mobile phone, plus tubes, puncture outfit, pump etc.
- Ride Leaders to have contact details of riders plus those for Thorndon Country Park, Essex Wildlife Trust and Geoff in case of emergency.
- Ride Leader must answer their phone in case a rider is trying to contact them.
- Ride Leaders to advise of rough route/mileage/return time prior to leaving the start point.
- The group should stay together where possible and must regroup at agreed points.
- It is against Trailnet policy for any Ride Leader to give out sweets on the ride.
- In event of an accident the accident report form must be completed – this can be found in the bottom drawer of the desk at the cycle centre.
- Report any mechanical problems to Geoff, Dave and the Office.

Rider Checklist

We recommend that all riders bring the following items with them:

- Suitable, well maintained, correctly sized bike
- Undamaged, well-fitting helmet
- Mobile phone – ensure ride leader and some fellow riders have your number
- Spare tube – check correct size and valve type
- Pump – ensure compatibility with your inner tube valves
- Water bottle & drink – preferably carried in a bike-mounted bottle cage
- Appropriate clothing – dress in layers; carry a waterproof; no baggy leggings; suitable shoes
- Money for car park
- Money for coffee and cake!

Some useful lingo

If you hear another rider call out the following, please respond accordingly:

- 'Car back' – vehicle is waiting to pass, move to single file
- 'Car up' – vehicle approaching from ahead; proceed with caution
- 'On your left/right' – cyclist is about to pass you on that side
- 'Hole', 'Gravel' etc – SLOW DOWN as road or trail surface is hazardous
- 'Horse(s)' – be prepared to slow down or stop; horses often respond badly to cyclists

THANKS FOR HELPING US MAKE RIDES ENJOYABLE & SAFE