

Ystwyth Cycling Club Group riding advice

YCC recommends that anyone who rides on public roads has appropriate Cycle Insurance cover (e.g. as provided by the British Cycling, British Triathlon Association or the Cycle Touring Club)

Club rides are unsupervised and The Club is not responsible for your safety., everyone on the ride must take responsibility to look out for others safety as well as their own. Always bear in mind that everyone in the group may not be as confident or have as good bike handling skills as you.

Below are some basic advice to follow to make group rides enjoyable and safe for you and other road users:

DO's

1. Follow the Highway Code at all times - it applies to ALL road-users.
2. Wear a cycle helmet this is at your discretion but encouraged.
3. Cycle a maximum of two abreast in 2 close parallel lines where appropriate, focus on keeping it neat and tidy.
4. Ride with 1ft approx. between your front wheel and the back wheel of the rider in front. There should also be 1ft between your shoulders and the rider beside you.
5. Be prepared on small or busy roads to ride in single file.
6. Riders at the back of the pack to shout "Car back, single file" if there are vehicles building up behind. Listen and act on their calls, DON'T look back and check for yourself, as you will move off your line and may cause an accident.
7. Lead cyclists to navigate and point out hazards in the road by either shouting or using hand signals. Listen to them and act on the calls, and most importantly, repeat them for the cyclist behind you.
8. Ride directly behind the wheel of the rider in front. If you cycle in the middle of the two wheels in front of you, you WILL push the cyclist on your outside into the path of passing vehicles.
9. Brake as gently and smoothly as you safely can when riding in a pack
10. Cover your brakes at all times.
11. When on the front keep pedalling, this is particularly important going downhill. If you freewheel everyone behind will have to brake.
12. If you are the back of the group and either see someone dropping off or are being dropped it is your responsibility to call to the cyclists in front that the pace is too high. The pack must communicate this up to the front. The lead cyclists will not be aware if you start to drop. Ask them to slow down; it is your ride too.
13. When asked to "ease up' or "slow a little" do not brake suddenly. Gentle ease your pace by pedalling less hard or freewheeling for a moment. Look at your speedo - if someone is being dropped you probably only need to reduce your speed by half a mile an hour to allow them to stay on.
14. Ride at a steady pace, keeping the pack as a compact unit

15. Check over your shoulder for other riders or traffic before moving out to the right
16. Slow right down when passing horses, and pass them as wide as it is safe to do so. Always call to the horse riders well ahead of catching them - a cheery "Good morning" or "Hello" will. Keep calling until the riders indicate they know you are there. They may want to turn the horse so it can see you.
17. If you are on the front, remember that people are following your calls. If you make a decision to pull out on a roundabout or junction, you need to call "Clear" or "Wait" to warn the pack of hazards.
18. Bring everything you might need. Prepare for every eventuality. For example, puncture kit, tyre levers, inner tubes, pump, multi tool (including chain tool), helmet, waterproof jacket, food, water, money, credit card, mobile, contact details in emergency.

CALLS

These are some calls you might hear. It is essential that you repeat them down the pack so everyone can hear:

1. 🚗 "Car Up/Front/Back" : Keep tight to the cyclist next to you, and be prepared to cycle in single file
2. 🕒 "Hole" : Upcoming pothole to avoid. This can also be followed by a direction i.e "HOLE LEFT".
3. 🚗 "Slowing" : Usually accompanied by a hand signal. The cyclist in front needs to slow down for some reason.
4. 🚗 "Stopping" : Brake!
5. 🚗 "Wait" : Usually at junctions to indicate there is a car coming
6. 🚗 "Clear" : To indicate that a junction is traffic free. You must check yourself and not rely on others.
7. 🚗 "Heads Up" : Hazard ahead, pay attention.
8. 🚗 "Single out/ single file" : Get into single file safely and promptly

HAND SIGNALS

These are some hand signals (other than the obvious left and right turns!) It is essential that you repeat them so everyone can see and pass it on:

1. 🚗 Single hand in the air (up or down) : Rider is signalling that he/she needs to stop or slow down. Usually followed by the call 'Slowing', 'Stopping'.
2. 🚗 Pointing down at the road : This is to point out hazards such as pot holes, manhole covers etc. PLEASE copy this signal, it stops accidents and punctures
3. 🚗 Arm out left or right : Everyone in the pack needs to indicate when turning left or right
4. 🚗 Left arm signaling behind back : Signal the cyclist is about to move out into the road, e.g. to pass a parked car, to go round debris in the road.

Please take it on board and keep safe.