

Notes for leaders planning 2* rides.

The intention is to make the rides sociable and inclusive. We aim to attract as many as possible to our rides, and for them to be enjoyable for all. These are not 'training' rides.

All ride leaders must be members of CUK to comply with insurance requirements - but all riders are encouraged to join CUK once they have ridden 3-5 times for the Club, which is a member group of CUK. Send your membership number to your ride co-ordinator to be registered with CUK as a ride leader. Ride leader insurance will cover you for any 3rd Party claims (from riders, motorists, pedestrians &c) on any UK or foreign ride that you lead and that is listed on our website, US & Canada are excluded, and the cover doesn't extend to privately arranged rides. Full details are [here](#).

For weekday rides: Regular riders are expected to lead a ride once a month or so, and it would greatly assist the ride co-ordinator that they volunteer to do so immediately when prompted.

For Sunday rides: Riders who have been out with the Club 5 or more times should make themselves available to lead rides and discuss with the Ride Coordinator.

Midweek rides are usually about 60km - 80km, Sundays 60km – 90km. Occasionally in summer there may be a longer ride, in winter perhaps shorter to avoid cycling on unlit roads. Sunday rides use an outbound train after 09.00, Midweeks at 09.30 to allow for Freedom Pass times.

Generally, no more than 1% overall gradient (i.e. 700m in 70km). Try to avoid gradients over 6% unless short enough to be walked. Sometimes there may be a more challenging 'Hilly Ride'. These rides, and those with extended bridleway sections, may be shorter to allow for lower speed. Gradients should be checked on RidewithGPS or Komoot.

If possible, it's best to plan a ride to go anti-clockwise. That will ensure most turns are left turns, which are safer than right turns. Sounds complicated, but it isn't and can be a real safety advantage.

We usually keep to minor roads where possible. Apart from very short stretches, dual carriageways should be avoided. It is best not to use bridleways which haven't been checked. Shared use paths (e.g. Canal paths) may be unsuitable when popular with walkers. Just because a route planner says it is possible doesn't mean it's safe or enjoyable for a group on road bikes. Try to avoid road or rail bridges with stairways to high gantries.

- The leader needs to choose a station from where the ride starts and where the ride ends (not necessarily the same). Try to limit the train journeys to one hour or less. Please suggest an outbound train - this will be checked by the co-ordinator.
- The station staff have final say as to who gets on a train, whatever the policy might be. If some choose to come to the start point by their own route, that is up to them. We don't rely on advance tickets, and avoid trains with cycle booking requirements or limited cycle space.
- Before you choose or plot your ride, look at the calendar of rides around your date. It will be appreciated if you choose an area different to recent or upcoming rides.
- The leader should also select and book somewhere about halfway for a lunch stop – a pub or café. Booking is important as it will confirm that it's definitely open and will welcome us.
- There should also be somewhere relatively safe, preferably in sight, to leave the bikes. Please check there are vegetarian options on the menu.
- If a picnic is the option, please make sure there are toilets available (not everyone can or will use bushes), and that there are handwashing facilities for both hygiene and cultural reasons.
- When working out timing for stops, it seems we usually manage around 15kph from train to train, plus 60-90minutes for lunch and 30minutes for any other stops. This allows for traffic & unscheduled delays. Our rolling speed is about 17-22kph, depending on the terrain.
- While experienced leaders can often manage without a recce, it is generally a good idea to ride the route a week or so in advance (ideally on the same day of the week as planned) to refresh yourself on the route and any quirks as well as being aware of road works, changes in road layouts etc.
- Please submit your plan to the Ride Co-Ordinator at least two weeks before your ride date. This should either be a RidewithGPS route or a GPX Track, with details and train times in the body of the email – not just the date of a previous ride, which entails unnecessary extra work. The default number on a ride is 15, Please advise if you wish to change this, but be aware that you may be depriving others of their ride if set too low.

The ride co-ordinator will check trains and may suggest alterations to the route before opening booking on the ride. Any subsequent changes should be discussed by the co-ordinator and the leader.

On the day, you will get a list of riders at 08.00. Please use this to remove any no-shows. If anyone turns up without registering, please ensure you take their details. (You can ask the Ride Co-Ordinator if you want an earlier progress report).

Should conditions for the ride change materially (e.g. severe weather or train disruption) before you start, as Ride Leader you should decide whether it is still safe/feasible to continue with the planned ride. If you feel it is not, you should cancel the ride informing all ride participants by phone/SMS and email, as well as letting the ride co-ordinator know.

Before the ride starts, the Ride Leader, having confirmed all are present, should give a very brief overview of the ride and in particular hazards to be aware of, and appoint an All-Upper/Back Marker. If there are any new (to us) riders the ride leader should let them know our group safety etiquette: Indicating/Calling out obstacles inc. 'Car up/Car down';&c.

The ride should be led in such a way that the group stays together, this includes using waymarkers to advise the following members of the group of turns or hazards, and ensuring that there are stops to allow all to regroup, especially after climbs or traffic lights. If riders go 'off the front' they are not your responsibility, so don't speed up the ride for their sake.

If the group needs to stop for some reason, find somewhere suitable where riders can get off the road rather than gather at a corner.

In the unlikely event of an accident having occurred during the ride, please contact a committee member and complete an [Incident Report Form](#).

After the ride, tell the ride co-ordinator if any registered rider didn't show up, or if anyone showed up without registering. Any incidents (disputes, improper behaviour) must also be passed to the co-ordinator in private, not as a group message.

Finding a route from the CLCTC database

There are many suitable rides from the past available on the CLCTC database if one searches.

- Open the Central London Home Page
- Click on Rides. Set the date parameters as you wish, choose 2*, Select Sunday and/or Other (for Midweek) – note that not all Sunday rides are suitable for midweeks and vice versa.
- Now click on Show Advanced Option. Select With Maps Only, then OK
- Choosing a named leader is optional, as are Keywords – which only work if that word is used in the ride details.
- There is now displayed a list of potential rides
- Go through the list looking for favoured rides
- Choose a ride of interest. Transfer it to RidewithGPS, as old RwGPS links probably don't work. Instructions are in the RwGPS Guide.
- Look at the distances and climbing (gradient & elevation), check road surfaces.
- Is the refreshment stop available on the day of your ride? Are the trains suitable for that day?
- Will riders enjoy the route?
- If in doubt, try another ride from the list.

There are other good sources of routes. RidewithGPS and Komoot both have search functions, as does <https://cycle.travel/>. If you have a print copy of [Jack Thurston's book](#), his routes are listed for downloading. Most of the routes will need editing to be suitable for a day ride, see instructions in the RwGPS Guide.

Whatever you use, any ride sent to the Ride Coordinator should either be a RwGPS route or a .gpx file.

First Aid (in brief)

1. Make the area safe. Send people to warn traffic, get all others off the road.
2. Check the casualty is breathing - if not, immediately start CPR
3. Find your exact location
4. Call 999.

Safety Guidelines

Please read [Central London CTC - frequently asked questions](#) to check if a ride is suitable and for further information.

All riders should be aware of the following guidelines:

- We welcome any newcomers
- This is a social ride, not a race.
- Obey The Highway Code
- There will be a synopsis of the route from the leader, including any changes from that published
- Tell the leader of any relevant medical issues - this will be treated confidentially.
- If you are not going to join the ride, please advise the Ride Leader.
- If you are meeting the ride somewhere other than the London start, please warn them. Don't forget to include your name if sending a text message.

There are separate WhatsApp groups for Sundays and Midweeks. Please think before using these whether your message should really be a direct message to the leader / a specific rider, or if you definitely think everyone in the group needs to hear from you. On the road, it is best to use phone calls or text messages as there may be no internet.

Group riding etiquette

- Signal - shout if you prefer or if the weather is bad
- Warn if stopping or slowing (easy), and for pothole, glass, gravel &c.
- Look over your shoulder before veering off your line
- For new riders: car up = car behind; car down = coming from ahead
- No undertaking
- On sharp descents and bridleways, keep back from the rider in front of you. If you feel unsteady, drop to the rear of the group.
- No flashing or super bright lights
- No headphones. No speakers (music / sport &c.).
- If a climb feels too steep for you, walk - we'll wait, no shame.
- Don't leave the ride without telling the leader.
- If approaching horse-riders from behind, call out to warn (DO NOT USE BELLS), when safe, pass very wide - if in doubt, wait.

Navigation

- No rider in front of the leader except for short periods (e.g going up hill at a different pace, but then wait at the top)
- Everyone to take responsibility that all are together - at every turn off, have the riders behind you seen you? If not wait until you hear the All Upper/Back Marker shout.
- If asked to mark a turn or obstacle, stay in position until the All-Upper/Back Marker appears.
- If no wayfinder / marker, it's straight on.
- The All-Upper/Back Marker will ride at the back, waiting with anyone who has to stop. If there is a delay, they will warn the leader to find a safe place for the others to get off the road and then re-group.

Equality and Diversity

We are a small, friendly and inclusive cycling club and all riders and ride leaders are expected to reflect this in their behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and will require action from the club. Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to, bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual innuendo or comments, and any other behaviour that creates a hostile or offensive environment.

This is covered in further detail in the [Cycling UK Equality and Diversity Policy](#) which applies to everyone participating in our rides, including all riders and ride leaders, at all times

