Group Ride Etiquette

Our adult group rides are open to anyone over the age of 18. Under 18’s must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or in loco parentis

These are basic rules when riding in a group so that the ride is safe and enjoyable.

\*\*It is worth mentioning that if you cause a crash within a group ride our club insurance does not cover you, which is why we strongly advise you to have suitable personal cover via BC or equivalent.

When riding with the club, please remember you are representing Tyneside Vagabonds (TVCC) and need to conduct yourself accordingly. Bad riding could get the club a bad name. Be courteous at all times. Stick to the guidelines below and remember that riding in a neat orderly fashion makes the group look better, is more efficient and more importantly safer.

Non-Members – Non-members may participate on a club ride if it is for a trial on no more than 3 occasions before deciding to join or not. If you want to organise a ride and invite non-members and members you’re welcome to do so but if you publish it on Spond then please make it clear on Spond that this is a private ride and not a club ride but there is an open invitation to Tyneside Vagabonds members.

* No ride we offer is a coaching session unless by a qualified BC Coach on closed roads. If the term Training Ride is used this is a ride to help your personal fitness.
* Observe all aspects of the Highway Code [THE OFFICIAL HIGHWAY CODE](http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/uploads/3/2/9/2/3292309/the-official-highway-code-with-annexes-uk-en-12-04.pdf) See rules for cyclists 59 to 82.
* Always keep a well-maintained bike. Always carry at least two spare inner tubes, tyre levers, pump, phone, emergency contact details and some ID. Other tools such as allen keys, a chain tool and a magic link are desirable.
* Ride in pairs, “handlebar to handlebar” there should be a gap of 30 to 46cms. (12-18 inches) between the inside and outside riders handlebars. Do not "half wheel" your partner. That is riding slightly faster than your partner so that your wheel is slightly ahead of theirs. This results in disorganisation of the group if you are in front of the person to your side, slow down, don’t expect them to catch you. Keep consistent and smooth at all times. The gap between a rear wheel and the front wheel of the following rider should be no more than a metre, depending on the following rider's competence. If there is a space in front of you or on your inside, fill it. This is important as it keeps the group compact and makes it easier for traffic to overtake. Ride slightly to one side of the wheel you are following so that you have a view ahead and in case the rider ahead slows unexpectedly. Do not overlap the wheel in front. When getting out of the saddle make it a smooth transition so that the bike does not thrust back.

 [How To Ride In A Group](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=group+ride+ettiquette+cycling+gcn&&view=detail&mid=51336B2792520C74301851336B2792520C743018&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dgroup%2520ride%2520ettiquette%2520cycling%2520gcn%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dgroup%2520ride%2520ettiquette%2520cycling%2520gcn%26sc%3D0-33%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D234B6C7715444A7698B3C401D67B8DD6)

* Riders on the front should shout and point out any hazards (potholes, debris, parked cars, pedestrians, etc.). Warnings should be passed back through the group so that all riders are aware of the danger. Never swerve suddenly or brake sharply in a group. The front riders should also shout back at a junction to indicate whether the way is clear or not and wait for the whole group to cross the junction. [How To Use Hand Signals Whilst Cycling](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=how+to+group+ride+gcn+videos&&view=detail&mid=8CC2C9052829D6FAB6348CC2C9052829D6FAB634&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dhow%2520to%2520group%2520ride%2520gcn%2520videos%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVRMH%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dhow%2520to%2520group%2520ride%2520gcn%2520videos%26sc%3D0-28%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D4D5947A05A5B4975B145C802B222E9BB)
* Shout "car back" to indicate traffic behind (or "car front" to indicate traffic in front) do not automatically single out because this makes the group twice as long and harder for traffic to overtake safely. On narrow single track roads it may be necessary to single out on a straight section when it is safe for a vehicle to pass. The riders to the outside should then drop in behind the rider on their inside. If a lane is too narrow for a car to pass safely, consider stopping and allow the vehicle to pass, remember to let the group know you are stopping and do so in an orderly manner.
* DO NOT wave traffic past the group. There are virtually no circumstances when this is a good idea no matter how good your intentions are. It is up to the driver to decide if it is safe to overtake.
* A club run is not a race; do not attack off the front to show how strong you are. Chasing Strava segments on a club run is not permitted, this disrupts the group. The only exception being major climbs if there are any and the final burn up, only if agreed as part of the run. The average speed of each club run is decided at the start. If there is a fast group, it is restricted to riders who are experienced at riding fast in a group and capable of taking their turn at the front. If you begin to struggle consider cutting it short. You may want to consider moving up or down the ability groups on your following run out.
* Resist the urge to be first to the top of a major climb or every little pimple as it disturbs the rhythm of the group, drops out riders who may be at their limit, causes the group to become disorganised, more difficult for traffic to overtake and annoying. On descents stick to your lines. Keep to the left and overtake on the right. Allow plenty of room when overtaking, and let the rider know you’re coming through. Remember we are not riding on closed roads. Descending sitting on the top bar is not allowed on club runs.
* The group should always wait for riders who have a problem be it mechanical or otherwise. If the mechanical cannot be resolved, it is up to the rider concerned to find their way home. Unless otherwise agreed before setting out the group should collectively ensure that no one is left behind, knows where they are and is able to get home. Riders towards the rear have a responsibility to keep the rest of the group informed.
* When passing horses ALWAYS shout "Bike!" or other such warning in good time to make the rider and horse aware that you are approaching from behind, always slow down and be prepared to stop if necessary. Give horses plenty of room and take into account other traffic.

[Horses on the road (britishcycling.org.uk)](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/knowledge/skills/article/izn20150106-Horses-on-the-road-0)

* Be courteous to pedestrians and other cyclists – don’t forget to wave, it’s nice to be nice!

General Points

* Helmets are mandatory (\*exemptions apply by prior agreement)and wear appropriate clothing for the time of year.
* Between 1st October and 31st March or inclement weather TVCC request you have mudguards fitted. These should come below the height of your axle. (backside protectors are definitely not permitted and demonstrate a lack of respect for your fellow cyclist) This not only keeps your bike clean and helps prevent damage but it prevents road grime from flicking up into the following rider's eyes and mouth, as well as showing some respect to the cafe owner. Riders without mudguards may be asked not to ride with the group, if it is an unavoidable reason you must ride at the back of the group.

* No littering! If you have brought it to the club run take it home, unless you can dispose of it properly en-route.
* In winter and poor visibility always have front and rear lights. Always wear some form of reflective gear and don't forget the importance of being seen from the side!

A Finer Point - Peeling Off

It is unreasonable to expect the front two do all the work while those behind derive the benefit of the shelter they provide. Of course, the leading riders may decide that they want to stay there but if they decide to have a rest, this is the accepted way to do it: -

The points described here are firstly to keep you safe and secondly to maximise the enjoyment for you and your fellow riders. Most importantly though, enjoy the riding. Have fun but be safe and considerate.

