

# Boxford Bike Club Ride Guidelines

This page sets out the club's ride guidelines, recommendations for the health and safety of members and the club's disciplinary procedures. The operational topics are preceded by an introductory section setting out the principles that underpin the rules and the definition of a club ride.

## Principles and definitions

1.1 The key principles that the club follows are:

- The club obeys all relevant laws of the road.
- The club wants to ensure everyone has a safe and enjoyable ride.
- The club protects the interests of its members by following and maintaining the General Data Protection Act procedures laid out by British Cycling.
- The club seeks to be inclusive for all its members and open to new members.
- The club does not discriminate and follows the Equality and Diversity Policy laid out by British Cycling.
- The club seeks to foster and maintain good relations with all road users and takes particular care when approaching and passing vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and horse riders.
- The club supports members who wish to organise events or acquire accredited training for the benefit of the club.
- The club seeks to foster links with external cycling organisations, event organisers and other clubs.
- The club encourages but does not require wearing club kit but riders on rides with others who may be wearing club kit must not wear anything that may be considered offensive.
- The club requires all riders on club rides to be wearing a cycle helmet.

A club ride is defined to be one of 3 types, these are:

1.0 Weekly Sunday Road rides, Sunday and Thursday MTB rides and a regular Ruff Stuff rides are organised and run according to the following constraints:

- The rides are open to all members provided they can meet the specified speed and skill level appropriate to their group.
- The ride meets at the published time and at the published venue.

- A ride that is organised by a club member and is published on the Boxford Bike Club Website and Relevant WhatsApp group.
- All rides that do not meet 1.0 are private rides for which the club is not responsible. Such rides are not discouraged but participants should appreciate that they may not meet the club's inclusivity and openness principles.
- Please note that should the temperature, as published on the BBC Weather App, be predicted to be below 5 degrees then club rides will not be sanctioned. Should groups, having assessed the conditions, choose to ride it will not be classified as a club ride.

## **Road Ride Guidelines**

2.1 The club divides its road rides into ability levels with divisions according to speed and ability.

2.2 Groups will ride within the advertised average speeds for their level. Riders should change groups if they want to go faster or slower, rather than disrupt their current group.

2.3 Special instructions when encountering horses

2.3.1 Please slow right down for them and give them a wide berth.

2.3.2 You should always call out to the horse rider so they know you are a human; Horses don't understand bikes and may react as if you are a predator in the wild. Also remember that the horse with blinkers can't actually see you until you are ride up next to them; wait for the rider to notice you as they may need to take a stronger hold on their mount or to reassure their horse.

2.3.3 Always be polite and friendly.

2.4 General Guidelines

2.4.1 In January 2022 the updated Highway Code introduced a 'Hierarchy of Care' for all road users. Members should familiarise themselves with these new rules and understand that cyclists have a duty of care to pedestrians.

2.4.3 Find a ride suitable for your level. If the ride is too slow for you, keep with the group and pick a faster group next time.

2.4.4 If a rider or riders are struggling, slow a little. Do not leave struggling group members behind unless they tell you to. If you notice one or more riders falling behind, call to the front for a reduction in pace.

2.4.5 On hills where less experienced groups may split, set a regroup point.

2.4.6 Listen to advice and heed the instructions of the ride leader.

2.4.7 Do not switch line without warning.

2.4.8 The whole group stops if a member has a puncture or a mechanical problem. Indeed, fixing such issues is faster if the whole group helps.

2.4.9 Tell someone if you have a problem or if you feel unwell. The group will make arrangements to accommodate your needs.

2.4.10 Do not ride off the front, it will annoy the rest of the group. If you disappear off the front and take a wrong turn, nobody will come to find you as they will not know where you went.

2.4.11 Passing on the inside can be dangerous. Pass on the outside when it is safe to do so. If you find yourself passing another rider on the inside let them know you are there. Before passing the front rider of the passing group must check that it is safe to pass and call "on your right" to the group to be passed in good time so that they are aware of the passing group and do not initiate evolutions of their own.

2.4.12 Where there is heavy traffic or the road is narrow you should ride single file. You should not ride more than two-abreast.

2.4.13 When the leader calls for the group to "single up", i.e. form a single file, do so as quickly and safely as possible.

2.4.14 When in a group and your group comes to traffic lights showing red, you must avoid trying to force your way to the front unless there is a cycling lane and an Advanced Stop Box. You should take primary position within the road and act like any other road user and wait in line using the width of one lane only. If you meet a queue caused by congestion, then stay as a group as filtering will break the group.

2.4.16 When stopping at a road junction, avoid taking up the entire width of the lane if possible and allow other road users to filter alongside you are turning left.

2.4.17 Greet other road users and thank them for considerate driving, this enhances the reputation of the club and fosters better cyclist-driver relations.

2.4.18 Listen for, repeat and give appropriate verbal instructions to inform the group of hazards.

## **Group Riding**

3.1 The benefits of riding in a group are more than just social. If you move into the faster groups you will find they may cycle in a "chain gang" – cycling close together, and taking turns to lead at the front. You cover more ground with less effort in a group, saving around 20% of your energy when cycling in the bunch.

3.2 It is important to note that all the groups welcome club members who are less experienced, the experienced members of the rides will help you in understanding the techniques.

3.3 When riding in a group it is essential to respect certain rules, both for safety reasons and benefitting of the work-out. See below:

- Be aware that everything you do has a knock-on effect on everyone behind and beside you.
- You are responsible for the safety of everyone around you as you are for your own well-being.
- Don't half-wheel. When you hit the front, keep the pace consistent and match to your riding partner.
- When you hit a hill, maintain your effort level not your speed.
- When you come through for your turn and move over to the recovering line, do so smoothly and close to the rider you are taking over from. Don't leave them with a massive gap to close.
- Don't leave gaps.
- Do your fair share of work at the front. If you are hanging and can't take a turn, stay back rather than disrupt the rhythm of those who are working.
- Don't exhaust yourself trying to do super-hard turns if the pace is above what you are capable of or you know you are tiring.
- If you start to get dropped, the group will slow down to look after you.

- Don't ever sit at the back of a group ride and do nothing all day and then break cover. If you are that strong, get yourself to the front. You are there to work and get fitter.
- If someone is repeatedly making mistakes, tell them discreetly towards the end of the ride. Don't shout at them at the heat of the moment. If it's you being given constructive criticism then try to learn from it.
- Hands on hoods the whole time, no Gangnam style.
- Be careful about braking, it creates a ripple effect which can be dangerous at high speed. Use your body to slow down (i.e. sit up to create more of a wind break). Look ahead and if necessary, reduce pedalling effort.

## **Health, Safety and Safeguarding**

5.1 The health and safety of our members is a key concern; these guidelines apply not just to the individual for themselves but also to the individual as part of a ride group.

5.2 Cycling can be beneficial to your fitness and well-being, however, if you have any health concerns or existing medical conditions please consult your GP before joining us on a ride. There are some important considerations before going on a ride. There is supporting material on many cycling organisation and health provider websites, and it is recommended that members and joining members consult these. There are some simple rules below:

5.2.1 If you are feeling unwell then please do not ride. You must not inconvenience others on a ride by requiring assistance or rescue while out on the ride because of illness.

5.2.2 If you are returning to cycling following an illness or injury, follow the advice of your doctor.

5.2.3 All new riders should ride at a level they are confident with, as advertised on the website. If you are already a Boxford BC member and have been away from cycling for a few weeks and have been without equivalent exercise then consider joining a slower group for your first ride back.

5.3 This section concerns the safety of riders and is mostly concerned with the safety of bicycles, the equipment riders bring on rides and planning for mishaps.

5.3.1 All riders on club rides will wear an approved (BS and/or EU) helmet. This is mandatory.

5.3.2 Riders should carry tools to enable them to carry out basic roadside repairs. Such items include: a pump and or CO<sub>2</sub> gas tyre inflator with gas, tyre levers, a multi-tracktool, spare inner tubes, tyre boot patches.

5.3.3 All riders should be appropriately dressed for the weather conditions they are likely to encounter during the ride.

5.3.4 All riders should carry enough water for the ride basing their decisions on the weather and the hilliness and duration of the ride. Riders should also carry sufficient "snack" items for the ride.

5.3.5 Bicycles should be in good working order. If in any doubt then fix the problem or take your bicycle to a bicycle to a repair shop.

5.3.6 In bad weather or during the winter months when the days are shorter, cyclists are advised to have appropriate lights.

5.3.7 Riders are advised to carry a mobile phone and sufficient cash or credit cards for café stops or for emergencies.

5.5 All members be they riding solo or in groups in the event of an accident should be aware of head injuries and especially of concussion.

5.5.1 Please make the committee aware there has been an incident. A simple reporting form is available for download on the British Cycling website.

5.5.2 It is not necessary to report everything, we rely on the common sense of members. Only accidents or incidents which have the following characteristics listed below need to be reported.

- Where there has been injury to a rider or riders or to a third party.
- Where there has been damage to the property of a third party.
- Where the authorities have been involved.