# Cycling-UK Merseyside

## Code of Conduct for Ride Leaders

### Before the Ride

C-UK Merseyside recommends that you plan the complete route in advance, and carry maps/Sat Navs with you on the ride.

* Use your preferred navigational aids to choose the most appealing roads. Avoid main roads and use quieter B-roads or back roads as much as possible.
* Usually, routes are planned to be longer on the outbound legs (wiggles, loops etc.), but fairly direct on the inbound leg after lunch.
* A good route has contingencies built-in: a short cut to the destination in case someone has a breakdown, or strong winds; or an extra loop near the end if you go faster than expected. Knowing where the nearest train station is at various points on the route can also be very useful.
* First decide the approximate distance for each leg. This is calculated using the riding time available and the average ride speed depending on ride category (see Runs List). Factor in lunch/coffee stop times.
* Plan the full route from the start back to agreed finish point (note this may not be start point) via all the stopping places; measure the total distance and adjust the route until it fits.
* Except for Friday Trail-Rides, avoid longer sections of unsurfaced paths or bridleways.
* Most riders will have normal road/touring bikes and tyres, so try to avoid any rocky or very muddy paths altogether.
* It is helpful to assist riders decide whether a particular ride is suitable for them, if the ride leader can post a brief synopsis of the ride on Facebook and email the Googlegroup. The webmaster can then publish the information on the club website. Useful information includes the ride category and target pace, the distance, the terrain (flat or hilly or somewhere in-between) and any points of particular interest to whet the appetite of prospective riders; try to sell the ride but please strive to be as accurate as possible particularly in relation to distance and pace.

### At the Start

* Most riders arrive at the start just a few minutes before the start. As leader, aim to arrive early enough to welcome any new riders, introduce yourself and tell them about the ride.
* Tell any new or inexperienced riders the key details about the planned ride (total distance, route and expected finish time). This is necessary to allow such riders, and especially any adults who are accompanying children, to decide whether they will be capable of completing the ride.
* You can also introduce new riders to the rest of the group.
* Check that everyone has lights if needed.
* Note the total number of riders. Most will be regular adult members: no further action is needed.
* For riders new to the club, it will be necessary to add their details, including an emergency contact number, to the C-UK Merseyside Riders sheet, which all Ride Leaders should have with them when leading.

### During the Ride

The leader's main responsibilities are to set both the route and the pace of the ride. Both the route and pace should be as close as conditions allow to the published information and ride category (see Runs List).

* It’s generally better to start off slowly and speed up later when everyone is warmed up.

The leader is also in charge of the general ride conduct – taking account of other road users.

* You should normally expect the other riders to behave responsibly without any intervention. You can ask for help from other experienced riders if needed.
* Faster riders may overtake on hills or other fast sections. But don’t be rushed: expect them to wait at the top/bottom or *before* the next junction to regroup.

Consider splitting very large groups (12 or more).

* In large groups it helps to have an experienced rider as “backmarker” (the last rider on the road) who can stop and help if someone stops without the front of the group being aware.
* Big groups may work better in two subgroups (with a good sized gap), especially on busier roads.
* You can fully split the group and appoint an assistant leader if needed. This is a good option if there is a wide range of abilities and the groups want to go at different speeds.

The leader is not responsible for any repairs – but you are expected to keep the group together.

* Usually the whole group will stop and wait and lend a hand if there is a puncture or other problem.
* The leader can choose to split the group and continue with some riders if the others are able to catch up independently. This can be a good option if you are close to the next stop.

Try to keep track of everyone - check all are ready before moving off.

* If riders drop out early, check they are really leaving and have not simply been left behind.
* Try to ensure that the leaving rider has adequate knowledge and resources to get home.

### After the Ride

* Send updated Rider’s Sheets to the Run’s Secretary
* Try to talk to new riders and ask them how the ride was for them. Feedback from new riders is crucial if we are to continue to grow the club.

Finally, give *yourself* a big pat on the back – you’ve done well!!