



## KINGS HILL WHEELERS RIDE ETIQUETTE

### Before a ride

1. Arrive for a ride in good time.
2. Carry Emergency Contact (ICE) details on all rides. This should also include reference to any medical conditions or allergies that may be relevant (i.e diabetes, allergy to Penicillin etc)
3. Check that your bike is safe, roadworthy and in good working order with regular checks of brakes, tyres etc.
4. Ensure you have some basic tools and equipment for minor mechanical issues, such as punctures. As a minimum this should include a multi tool, tyre levers, a pump or CO2 canisters and a method of repairing a puncture (depending whether using tubes or tubeless). Riders should also know and have practiced how to swap an inner tube, so they know it is possible on the road.
5. Use front and rear lights and wear Hi Visibility clothing in gloomy conditions.
6. Ensure you are prepared for the likely weather conditions, depending on the weather forecast and length of ride. Consider using mudguards in wet conditions.
7. Riders should also carry money, a snack and drinks for emergency situations and depending on the length of the ride.
8. Familiarize yourself with the route, which should have been communicated ahead of the ride. Ideally load it onto a GPS device if available.
9. It is expected that riders have a basic level of cycling fitness and skill before joining a club ride and are able to ride approximately 30 miles at an average speed of 13mph
10. Advise the Ride Leader if you have any medical conditions or concerns that may affect your ride.

### During a ride

1. Helmets must be worn at all times. No helmet no ride. The helmet should be in good condition – any damage/dents will compromise its safety. Most manufacturers also recommend that helmets are replaced between 3-5 years due to gradual degradation with sunlight etc
2. Follow the Highway Code at all times, especially the following:
  - a. You **MUST** obey all traffic signs and traffic light signals.
  - b. You **MUST NOT** cycle on a pavement  
Ride in the centre of the lane on quiet roads, in slower-moving traffic and at the approach to junctions or road narrowings where it would be unsafe for drivers to overtake you
  - c. Keep at least 0.5 Metres away from the kerb edge (and further where it is safer) when riding on busy roads with vehicles moving faster than you
  - d. Be considerate of the needs of other road users when riding in groups. You can ride two abreast and it can be safer to do so, particularly in larger groups or when accompanying children or less experienced riders. Be aware of drivers behind you and allow them to overtake (for example, by

moving into single file or stopping) when you feel it is safe to let them do so

3. Wear the club jersey where you can. It gives the club and our sponsor's valuable publicity.
4. Ride a safe distance from the rider in front.
5. Slow down for horses and let the rider know you are approaching. It is important to keep talking to the rider as often the horse won't see you approaching from the rear and may get startled. Most horse riders appreciate being given a wide berth.
6. Wait at junctions and the brow of a hill to ensure the group stays together.
7. Do not react to bad driving with gestures etc. or get involved in an argument with a motorist.
8. Always follow instructions from the ride leader. If you need to leave the ride early please inform the ride leader and add a note to the WhatsApp group to confirm that you got home safely.
9. When stopping for a mechanical issue or puncture, make sure it is in a safe place to do so, and if necessary move to a safer location to effect a repair.
10. Stop and help other riders with mechanical issues or punctures, *where it is safe to do so*. Depending on the group size, type of issue, location and weather conditions it may not be necessary for *all* of the group to stop and wait for the repair to be completed.
11. Don't signal that it is safe for another vehicle to overtake. It is up to them to make this decision.
12. The club has a strict "no drop" policy. Therefore, advise if a rider is off the back by using the term "easy up". A call of "all up" will inform the leader that the group is back together. If necessary split into sub groups to cater for a wider difference in pace.
13. Give support to the Ride Leader – they do not need to be on the front all the time and the group is more efficient if the lead is rotated!
14. Enjoy the ride. Remember, we are doing this for fun!

## Warning Calls and Signals

A big part of group riding is communication as often riders behind are unable to see the road surface, or any obstacles/junctions ahead. The main calls and signals used are as follows;

1. **'Car back'**: a general warning of a car trying to pass from behind. You don't need to shout out for every car that approaches from behind if there is no need to single out.
2. **'Car front'**: a warning of a car in front that might encroach on your road space (i.e on a narrow single track road).
3. **'Single out'**: used when a car is behind and needs extra space to overtake, or if the group is approaching a narrow road or overtaking a line of parked cars. The rider on the inside should move forward smoothly so that the rider on the outside can move in behind. Try to keep an even pace and do not brake.
4. **'All up'**: a communication from the last rider to the Ride Leader to indicate that all the riders are together and the group can continue.
5. **'Clear'**: indicates that a junction is safe to cross. If you see a car then shout **"car right"** or **"car left"**.
6. **'On your right/left'**: used when passing another rider or group of riders who may not be aware of you.
7. **'Hole/gravel/glass/ice'**: called out when there is a hazardous surface that may cause an accident unless riders take care.

8. **Pointing at the ground:** alerts riders to a hole or poor surface that needs avoiding.
9. **Pointing behind your back to the left or right:** communicates to the rider behind which way you are moving out to avoid a hazard or obstruction. The following riders should pass on the instruction to the rider behind you so that the whole group moves out.
10. **Hand waved to the side** as if patting a dog: means that the group should slow down.
11. **'Slowing/Easy/Stopping':** if you are slowing down and/or stopping so others don't ride into the back of you.

## Choosing a Ride

The Club Ride framework is shown below and on the [club website](#). Depending on numbers, sub groups are often formed to allow some pace differentiation and also to be less of a hazard to other road users.

All riders should choose rides within their capability and experience. New riders in particular should initially choose a group that they are comfortable with – if in doubt it may be better to start with a slower group and work up to the quicker ones.

In general the Sunday and Wednesday rides are slower and a good starting point, and these sometimes have a short mid ride coffee stop.

The Tuesday and Thursday evening rides have a varied pace depending on who is riding, but slower riders will always be catered for, so these are also a good starting point for new riders.

Saturday rides will either have a coffee stop mid or end of the ride, depending on the distance and preference of riders present.

Ride Group	Pace	Start Time	Distance
Saturday A Group	17+mph	0730 – BST 0800 - GMT	45 – 60 miles
Saturday B Group	15-17mph	0730 – BST 0800 - GMT	45 – 60 miles
Sunday C Group	13-15mph	0900	25 – 35 miles
Wednesday B Group	15-17mph	0915	35 – 45 miles usually with mid ride stop
Tuesday & Thursday Evenings(Apr – Sept)	A, B & C group pace	1800	25 – 35 miles
Café Stop Rides – (1 <sup>st</sup> Sat of the month Apr – Sept)	A & B group pace	0730 or 0800	65 - 100 miles with mid ride stop(s)

Details of all rides are sent out via the club WhatsApp including the route, distance and ride leader. All routes are numbered and the route file can be viewed or downloaded to a phone or GPS device via the 'Route Library' on the club website. All rides start from Liberty Square, outside the large Costa, Kings Hill.

## Leading a ride

### Introduction:

This guidance note is for Ride Leaders who will be leading an official ride on behalf of Kings Hill Wheelers Cycling Club. Where Ride Leaders need clarification or support with this guidance note they should refer to the Club Rides Manager.

1. The Ride Leader is in charge of the Club Ride on behalf of Kings Hill Wheelers. They should be someone who wants to support cycling within the club in a fun, sociable and positive environment. They should be focused on helping others and is able to ride a bike competently; but is not necessarily a 'super cyclist'. In the event of any incidents on the ride they are the person who should make decisions as to the best course of action, taking into account all members of the group.
2. The leader will decide on a route, preferably by reference to a numbered route on the website. This will be published via WhatsApp to all riders at least a day before the ride. Ideally the Ride Leader should have some familiarity with the route and possibly have pre-ridden it in advance.
3. At the start of the ride, the leader will announce the destination, route and mileage. Any known hazards or areas of risk should be highlighted to the group. He/she will also welcome and support new riders, and check if anyone has any medical conditions or other issues that may affect their ride.
4. Periodically the leader should remind riders of the following (not at every ride, but every once in a while, as a refresh or for new riders):
  - a. Standard calls – Car Front, Car Back etc(see Ride Etiquette)
  - b. Pointing out holes, obstructions etc
  - c. Etiquette – waiting at top of hills
  - d. Equipment to bring – Puncture repair, basic tools etc(see Ride Etiquette)
5. The ride leader should carry out a brief visual check that riders have the appropriate clothing and that their bikes look in appropriate condition, in particular for any new riders. The ride leader is NOT accountable for riders' equipment, however it is a useful check in order to not cause delays later in the ride due to poor equipment.
6. Where appropriate the leader could split the group into smaller subgroups. It is recommended that group sizes are kept to roughly 6 to 8 maximum, thus avoiding being a nuisance to other road users as well as giving better differentiation based on rider speed. The ride leader should agree for sub leader(s) to lead smaller groups and ensure that each sub group knows the route. The ride leader could also consider assigning a 'sweeper' or 'back marker' who will stay at the rear of the group, and ensure that everyone is together after completing climbs etc.
7. During the ride, he/she will ensure that the pace is consistent, and at a level that is comfortable to the whole group. This should aim to be within the advertised pace of the ride on the clubs website.
8. The Ride Leader does NOT necessarily need to lead from the front. Often the middle is more beneficial in order to keep contact with all of the group. However they should make sure that the person at the front has details of the route, or they are close enough to the front to shout directions. On descents it may be useful for the leader to be at the front in order to control the pace, especially if there are inexperienced riders present). On Climbs it may be better for them to be at the back, or to allocate a delegate to remain at the rear.

9. In the case of someone in the group experiencing a mechanical issue, the leader should ensure the group stops or moves to a safe place. They should assess the problem and decide whether to hold up the ride or leave the affected rider with helper(s) and details of the route. Depending on the group size, type of issue, location and weather conditions it may not be necessary for all the group to wait for the repair to be completed.
10. If any riders dropped off the ride for any reason (i.e peeled off to make their own way home), the ride leader should check that they arrived home safely (this can be done via the group WhatsApp, direct message, or even checking they got home on Strava). In this context 'Home' is considered back to the ride end point
11. If there were any accidents, incidents or near misses during the ride the ride leader will inform the Club Secretary.
12. In the event of dangerous weather conditions, the leader will cancel the ride or consider a later start time if conditions are likely to improve – this should all be published via WhatsApp. As a guide any Met Office Amber or Red warnings covering the local area will result in the ride being cancelled. In addition, the ride leader should consider other factors (including wind & extreme heat) and make a call on whether they feel the ride will be safe. They should discuss with the Club Rides Manager if unsure.
13. The ride leader could consider using a Paceline or Through and Off riding techniques where it is safe to do so. See examples;
  - a. Pacelines - [How To Ride In A Paceline | Through And Off Explained - YouTube](#)
  - b. Through and Off - [How To Ride Through And Off - Chain Gang | Racesmart - YouTube](#)

## **Complaints procedure**

In the unlikely event that there is a complaint from another road user or pedestrian, please refer this to the club secretary. The club will then decide how to respond.