

Darlington CC - Group riding Etiquette

> Safety 1st - Remember, tarmac is harder than you! We strongly recommend that you wear a cycling helmet on all rides.

Members of the group are individually responsible for:

- a) Ensuring that their cycles are legal, roadworthy and in good state of repair.
- b) Having capability and the tools etc to deal with basic mechanical problems including punctures to tyres.
- c) Being prepared for adverse weather conditions and mechanical problems.
- d) Riding within their capability and in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Code.
- e) Ensuring their personal well-being on the ride.
- f) Carrying their current ICE contact details. (Club membership card and/or ICS Sticker)
- g) Informing the Ride Leader if leaving the ride at any time.

Group members should also:

> Obey traffic signs and signals, point out and call out any road hazards ahead. This is particularly important in a group of riders, as those at the back often can't see oncoming traffic or road hazards. "Car Front" means car approaching from the front, "Car Back" means car behind.

> If road conditions permit groups normally ride two abreast. Remember that TWO is the limit, unless overtaking, single out if necessary to stay safe and avoid holding up other traffic. Large groups may need to split to allow traffic to pass.

- If you need to go to the front of the group for any reason, do not try to squeeze through the group, this is dangerous and could cause a group crash, wait until it is safe to do so and cycle around the outside of the group.

> When the riders on the front of the group decide they want a break, there are 2 options:

1. the inside line slows to let the whole group rotate one position anti-clockwise
2. the two riders on the front single out and allow the group to pass them and generally go to the back

- If you're struggling to keep up, try and ride at least third row back, where you will get the most protection from the wind.

> Carry basic tools, at least a pump, spare tubes and a mobile phone, even if you are unsure of how to change a tyre, at least you have the equipment needed if you require assistance. Decent mudguards will be appreciated by everyone behind you during the winter months!

> Shout and signal if you intend to move out or stop. Riders at the front shout "clear" or "stopping" as they approach a junction, depending on the circumstances.

> Don't overlap wheels, if you contact the wheel in front, you will probably come off, along with anyone behind you.

> Be aware of riders behind you. Try to ride smoothly and do not brake without warning if it can be avoided.

> When climbing hills, avoid following a wheel too closely, some riders move back when they get out of the saddle.

> If you're leaving the group, drop to the back and let someone know.

> "Half wheeling" is when one rider pushes the pace a little harder and moves slightly ahead of their riding partner. If you're on the front and the pace is too fast, take a break (and ignore any sarcasm)

> If you are riding two abreast at the front and feeling strong avoid half wheeling, as this can push the pace up to unsustainable levels for the group. Or if you are at the front and feeling tired, don't be afraid to drop back and take a break. The idea of a group ride is that everyone rides together and its as fast as the slowest rider.

> Riders should ride no more than two abreast, unless overtaking.

> The idea of riding in a group is just that, you ride together. It is bad form to ride off from the group, as this encourages others to chase, which can split the whole group up. This also means a Ride Leader may have to wait for riders behind, ultimately requiring those at the front to slow down or stop and wait.

> At times the group may need to ride in single file, and this is best achieved, by the outside rider slowing down and moving into a space behind the rider they were previously riding next to.

> If you need to clear your nose on a group ride, before doing so you should move to the back of the group behind other riders.

> Repeated failure of members to adhere to the club riding etiquette, may result in membership being reviewed and ultimately if behaviour doesn't improve members will be asked to leave the club. This is extremely rare, but the club committee has a duty to ensure club rides are enjoyable and run in a safe manner.