

Solihull CC Club Runs (rides)

Club rides are the non-competitive cornerstone of Solihull CC. For some they provide a foundation for competition, and for others they offer a way to extend their enjoyment of cycle sport once they have retired from racing.

Participation in formal club rides is entirely at rider's own risk. It is a condition of SCC membership that club members have full 3rd party liability insurance, and we recommend one of the national cycling bodies (BC, Cycling UK) to provide comprehensive insurance.

- 1. What is a club run?**
- 2. Which one is right for me?**
- 3. Rules and safety guidance - What are my responsibilities?**
- 4. Tips for group riding**
- 5. What safeguarding is in place for young people?**
- 6. Additional guidance for ride leaders.**

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1. What is a club run?

Up to 15 members riding together around a course (usually via a café stop), led by a ride leader who will provide audible instructions/warnings (eg. coming to a stop/turning left/potholes etc), which are cascaded through the group. There is a wealth of experience within the club helping to provide a safe and enjoyable experience whilst improving riding skills as part of a group.

Bikes are typically road bikes including hybrids. Specialist time-trial bikes are not permitted on club group rides. E-bikes are welcome, however they are not really suitable on our sporting (A and B) rides.

We recommended new members to pick a level below their ability, until they are comfortable to move up.

2. The Core Recreational Programme – which ride is right for me?

We have a full programme of graded rides via café stops, led by volunteer club members. Our aim is to support everyone to find a suitable ride which is enjoyable and safe. Some rides are more challenging than others, giving members complete flexibility to relax or push themselves, dependant on their personal goals/fitness levels.

We plan the programme around the four seasons and publish each 3 month schedule on the club website. Changes to the published programme will be notified using Club Members' Facebook and WhatsApp groups

Solihull Cycling Club							
Core recreational club runs programme							
Grade	What, when and where						
A	A very brisk run at 18+ mph - Long and challenging. Riders should be confident they can match the pace of the group. Not suitable for e-assist bikes. This is a ride of anywhere between 65 miles in the winter, back by 2:00pm, and 95 miles in the summer, aiming to be back by 3:00pm.						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start time/place		Return	Distance
	Sunday	Mike Wood	07917 368275	9am	Solihull Town Centre	2-3pm	up to 95 miles
B	A brisk run at around 17 mph. Riders should be confident they can match the pace of the group. Not suitable for e-assist bikes. This is a ride of anywhere between 65 miles in the winter, back by 2:00pm, and 90 miles in the summer, aiming to be back by 3:00pm.						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start time/place		Return	Distance
	Sunday	John Wright	07480 418 539	9am	Solihull Town Centre	2-3pm	70-80 miles
C	14-16 mph Steady and sociable – even on the hilly bits! These are runs of between 40-80 miles depending on conditions, time of year and riders. Sunday ride at the top of the pace range. Tuesday ride includes an optional lunch stop making it a full day, and expected to be towards the lower pace especially when longer.						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start time/place		Return	Distance
	Sunday	Graham McKean	07941 642039	9am	Solihull Town Centre	2-2:30pm	50-80 miles
	Tuesday	Ian Spencer	07484 211 594	9:15am	Earlswood	4pm (S) 2pm (W)	50-80 miles
	Thursday	Colin Eagle	07789 956453	10am	Punchbowl	2pm	40-60 miles

Solihull Cycling Club							
Core recreational club runs programme							
Grade	What, where, when						
D	13-14.5 mph. Steady and sociable – especially on the hilly bits! These are runs of between 40-70 miles depending on conditions, time of year and riders. On summer Sundays we may do a few longer rides returning after 2:30 pm. Tuesday run starts 9:30am Mar-Nov, 10am Dec-Feb. Thursday runs are shorter with an optional pub stop to finish						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start time/place		Return	Distance
	Sunday	Cliff Dobson	07805 324242	9am	Solihull Town Centre	1:30-2:30pm	50-70 miles
	Tuesday	Cliff Dobson	07805 324242	9:30(S) 10am(W)	Punchbowl	2pm	40-60 miles
	Thursday	Geoff Hankinson	07969 662 198	10am	Punchbowl	2pm	40-60 miles
E	12.5-14 mph Steady and more sedate. We particularly look after all the newer riders to the club. We usually ride 35 - 60 miles depending on the time of year. Returning to the pub social stop at approximately 1-2 pm.						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start		Return	Distance
	Sunday	John Persaud	07814 557 515	9am	Solihull Town Centre	1-1:30pm	40-60 miles
	Thursday	Malcolm Smith	07930 311655	10am	Punchbowl	1:30-2pm	35-45 miles
F	** Suspended December 2021 **						
	A gentle Sunday morning's cycling, designed for riders who are new to cycling and would like to go a little further. The ride is for about one and a half hours to a café, and home again by a shorter route. Destination, route and pace are often changed mid ride to suit the participants.						
	When	Co-ordinator	Contact	Start time/place		Return	Distance
	Sunday			9:15am	Boat Inn C-d-B	Lunchtime	up to 30 miles

In addition to these runs to specific destinations, we may offer fixed route/destination rides which are not "led". These will be published on the club website with **indicative** A-F gradings.

3. Rules and safety guidance for club run participants and leaders – ‘what are my responsibilities’

Safety and enjoyment are our primary concerns.

Must dos/haves:

- Riders should carry their club membership card with ICE contact details together with any medical conditions.
- Young riders' cards should be counter-signed with parental contact details. (see 'safeguarding' below for < 13 years old, who must be accompanied on rides)
- It is a condition of Club membership that participants have adequate personal liability insurance.
- Always ride a well-maintained bike (gears, brakes, wheels, tyres, etc).
- Carry spare inner tubes, tyre levers, pump, phone and some ID. Other tools such as Allen keys, a chain tool and a replacement chain link are recommended
- Although not a legal requirement, we expect riders to wear a well fitted helmet
- Keep at least one hand on the handlebars when riding in the group. Hands free riding is for victory celebrations!
- If you wish to respond to your mobile phone you must drop off the back of the group before answering. Do not expect the ride to wait for you.
- The maximum group size is 15 riders, but ride leaders may sub-divide into smaller groups at their discretion, to limit the impact on other road users, and to ease the pressure at refreshment stops.
- Riders should let the leader know if they plan to leave a ride early/take a short cut home etc., so that support can be provided where appropriate. As a general rule, we prefer not to leave riders alone.
- In winter (GMT) mudguards must be fitted, with a rear mud flap that extends below the rear axle to limit spray on following riders.

Additional Guidance

- Observe the Highway Code, e.g., traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, do not ride on pavements (unless designated as cycle paths), etc.
- Be respectful and courteous to other riders and road users
- Do not drop litter.
- No spitting or nose clearing unless you have dropped well off the back of the group.
- The lead riders may not be aware of the situation at the rear of the group. Riders towards the rear have a responsibility to keep the leader informed about riders who have a problem.
- Do not jump across junctions when other vehicles are approaching, this encourages other riders to do the same. Leaders will decide when it is safe for groups to cross together.
- Pass horses with care, singling out, and when approaching from the rear always give the horse rider an audible warning.

- Ride in single file on busy roads to help other road users to pass safely. **Consider carefully** whether and when to single out on lanes.
- In the event of a puncture or other mechanical problem, the group should pull over in a safe area to carry out repairs.
- Do not wave on vehicles from behind, even when you think it's safe to do so. It is the responsibility of the driver in the overtaking vehicle to make this decision.
- Be equipped for the weather. Be aware of the risks in cold and wet weather, and the need to be protected on hot and sunny days.
- Consider fitting and using daytime front and rear lights during the darker days, or when there is low sun.

4. Top tips on group riding

We offer occasional practice in group riding in a safe 'traffic free' environment at Tudor Grange

- A club run may be a challenge, but it is not a race. Do not attack off the front to prove how strong you are.
- Ride in pairs - bar to bar
- The gap between a rear wheel and the front wheel of the following rider should be about 50 cm for optimal and safe riding. Continue to observe the road ahead to anticipate hazards.
- Overtaking other riders on a climb should normally be done on the right-hand side, calling "on your right" provides a useful warning to other riders
- Singling out - often called by the ride leader, there are occasions when riding in single file is safe and helpful to other road users. When riding in pairs, singling out should be undertaken carefully, signalling intention to pull in by pointing your arm to the inside and calling "pulling in".
- Rotating the ride leadership – this is encouraged to provide all riders the experience of riding on the front, and to protect the ride leader from the wind. This should be undertaken carefully and with appropriate advanced warning to fellow riders.
- Through and off – this is an advanced riding technique for continuous rotation within the group. It is best demonstrated by an experienced ride leader.

5. Safeguarding our younger members

This guidance for parents should also be read and acted upon by all club members.

- Written permission from a parent or guardian is required for all young people under the age of 18 to take part in club runs. In addition, children under 13 must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or other responsible adult such as a club coach.
- Adverse weather may affect the ride and your child should be prepared for this by wearing suitable clothing, particularly on cold mornings when thermal layers, gloves and a warm hat under the helmet are essential; a waterproof jacket should be carried on all club runs.
- The leaders of club runs are given guidance on the care of young people and this is published on the club website. Young people will not be left unattended.
- If, in the opinion of the run leader, an accompanied young rider appears to lack sufficient ability to enable the club run to continue safely, it is the duty of the accompanying parent or adult acting *in loco parentis* to escort the young rider home.
- Run leaders are not obliged to accompany home a young or inexperienced rider who is tiring, and is not accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult. In these circumstances two adult club members will accompany the young person to a point where they can be met by a parent or other responsible adult.
- If, for whatever reason, an unaccompanied young person is unable to continue to ride at all, it is the duty of the parent or other responsible adult to come to collect them from wherever they are immediately. Whilst the whole ride is not obliged to wait with the young person, two adult club members will stay with the young person until collected.
- Whilst run leaders have no specific responsibility for young riders, as leaders of an organised club event they are asked to monitor and report to the club welfare officer via welfare@solihullcc.org.uk any incidences of physical or verbal bullying or abuse.
- Run leaders and all fellow riders are asked to avoid excessive physical contact; this is as simple as asking if the young rider wants a push, as opposed to assuming.
- Inappropriate language can be an issue, particularly in a physical sporting environment. Run leaders try to encourage fellow riders to act as ambassadors for Solihull Cycling Club and discourage anything they feel is inappropriate.
- Selecting the correct ride level to suit your child's capabilities is not always easy, but you can be assured that the runs leaders will be happy to advise you.

6. Additional guidance for ride leaders

We recommended all club members should read this section

Club runs are dependent on volunteer members agreeing to lead rides. The club aims to have a steady supply of ride leaders by encouraging members to take their turn planning and leading rides. Most groups have a bank of navigable routes available on Garmin/Strava etc.

Most groups now have a 'Run Coordinator' who organizes all rides in a certain category, say Sunday C ride, usually via a WhatsApp Group. The coordinator isn't necessarily the ride leader, It is the coordinator's choice whether they actually participate in the ride, as with any other club member.

'Run Leader' is the club member allocated to lead an individual ride. Their role is to conduct the ride in a safe manner, to plan the route and to ensure the pace is consistent with the grade for the run. All riders carry equal responsibility for the safety of themselves and fellow riders, this should not be abdicated to the run leader.

The run leader has latitude to shape the ride within the overall run parameters set out above. For example, sharing the lead, sprints, attacking hills, supporting new members/juniors etc. Riders should not be surprised to be on the receiving end of some gentle banter if they regularly attack hills but don't take their turn on the front during the ride itself. It is recommended that these plans are discussed at the outset of the ride.

Whilst all riders are responsible for themselves and their fellow riders, the leader will undoubtedly feel additional responsibility. As such members are encouraged to support, share the load and not openly criticize if, for example, a wrong turning is taken. Most leaders will welcome individual off-line suggestions that will help them become better leaders.

Document history

Version 1.6 7 December 2023

Addition of "at own risk" introduction, and minor wording changes to improve clarity