



## **LANGPORT CYCLE CLUB - Code of Conduct**

These are the basic rules to be observed when riding in a group so that the ride is safe and enjoyable.

By subscribing to Langport Cycle Club, you agree to abide by the following:

- When riding with the club please remember you are representing the Langport Cycle Club and need to conduct yourself accordingly. Bad riding could get the club a bad name. Each member is an ambassador for the Club, and should promote the benefits of being part of the Club whenever they can.
- Be courteous at all times, do not respond to, shout or wave abuse at motorists at any time, even if they are wrong. Stick to the guideline below and remember that riding in a neat orderly fashion makes the group look more professional.
- Ride steadily. Keep a steady line and a constant speed while in a group. Any sudden change is magnified as it reaches the back and so can have dramatic consequences.
- Ride two abreast where it is safe to do so but always be prepared to single out when necessary. Ride immediately behind the rider in front – do not overlap either forwards or sideways. Never ride more than two abreast.
- Electronic equipment including ipods, MP3 players and mobile phones should not be used whilst riding. Using this equipment has the potential to cause a distraction to the rider and could endanger the rider the group and other road users.

- When approaching a hill, anticipate the gradient and change gear in good time. Missing a gear change on a steep slope can bring you to a sudden halt – not a good thing for the riders behind you!
- The group should always wait for riders who have a problem be it mechanical or otherwise. The group should collectively ensure that no-one is left behind and that anybody who is dropped has no health problems knows where they are and is able to get home. Riders towards the rear have a responsibility to keep the rest of the group informed about riders who have any problems.
- Everyone who rides with the LCC is expected to comply with the following guidance and etiquette.
  - Although we ride as an informal social group, and not a disciplined chain-gang or peloton, it is essential that every rider remains constantly aware of what is going on around them, especially the position and movement of other riders in the group. To minimise the risk of an accident you must ride with care and consideration for all other road users.
- You must communicate to your fellow riders when you intend to change position or speed on the road or when you see a potential hazard, (see warnings and signals below).
- Follow the Highway Code and Country Code.
- Carry lights if there is any risk you may need to ride in poor light or poor visibility (but don't give fellow riders a headache by using a high intensity flashing light within a group). Hi-vis clothing is also recommended in poor light.
- Keep to the left if riding slowly uphill, to allow faster riders to overtake safely.
- Remain within sight of the next rider behind you; the whole group can then quickly be made aware if someone has stopped for any reason.
- There should never be less than 3 riders together at the rear. (If a rider has a problem, one person should stay with them while the 3rd rider goes ahead to tell the Ride Leader or get assistance). Be aware of who is behind you and offer to drop back if only 1 or 2 are 'off the back'.
- If the group is stopping in a lay-by or on the roadside make sure you leave enough space for riders behind you to move clear of the carriageway.
- Give priority to pedestrians on shared use cycle-paths.

- Tell the Ride Leader if you intend to leave the ride at any time.
- Do not 'undertake' by passing to the left of a rider.
- Do not 'overtake' by passing between riders.
- Do not stop on the road within 25m of a junction.
- Do not stop where you might obstruct the sight line of a driver.
- Do not signal to a driver to overtake – you may want to be helpful but this can place riders ahead of you in danger.
- Do not overlap the rear wheel of a cycle in front of you. Viewed from the side there must be daylight between your front wheel and the rear wheel of the rider in front.
- Do not answer your phone while riding. Stop in a safe place, after giving a warning (see below).

## **Communication**

### **Verbal warnings / instructions**

#### **a. Regarding other traffic**

'Car front' – vehicle approaching from the front, (or you may hear 'car down').

'Car back' – vehicle approaching from the rear, (or you may hear 'car up').

'Car front' and 'car back' may require no action; just be aware of the approaching traffic and avoid moving to the right. If riding two abreast you should normally only 'single up' (below) if the road is not wide enough for a vehicle to pass with clearance of at least 1.5m.

'Car left' – car approaching from the left, usually at a junction.

'Car right' – car approaching from the right, usually at a junction.

'Clear' – it is safe for following riders to proceed, usually at a junction. Anyone who calls 'clear' must be absolutely certain there is no risk to riders if they then proceed without slowing or looking for other traffic.

'Horse' - self-explanatory, but see additional note below.

#### **b. Regarding other riders**

'On your right' or 'On your left', answered by 'ok'. If you want to come alongside a rider, to right or left, you must warn them, and wait for them to reply 'ok' (to confirm they have heard your warning).

A rider in single file is entitled to use the full width of the carriageway, confident that a rider from behind will not move into the space to their left or right without permission.

'Passing on the right' - used by someone overtaking, who must leave clearance of at least 1m.

'Slowing' or 'Easy' – avoid slowing unexpectedly and never brake harshly, except in emergency. Aim for a smooth transition when changing down a gear or getting out of the saddle when climbing.

'Stopping' – never stop unexpectedly.

'Single up' – move from two abreast to single file. This can be hazardous if two riders try to move into space previously occupied by one. Each rider on the outside should drop back to slot in behind the rider on their inside. Riders on the inside should adjust their speed to create space for outside riders to drop back and slot in.

'Cluster' - move into compact small groups, with clear space in between them, to make it easier for following traffic to overtake (see 'Rule of 6' below).

c. Regarding road surface - these calls may be combined with the 'don't go there' signal (below)

'Hole' – self explanatory.

'Gravel' or 'Sand' - risk of skidding.

'Slippy' – slippery surface, e.g. mud, wet leaves, wet drain or manhole cover.

'Ice' - we normally don't ride when there is a risk of ice but residual icy patches may be found in sheltered locations.

**Hand signals** – (in addition to standard left and right turn signals)

Hand behind back with finger pointing to right or left: Warning to rider behind that they should move to right or left because of an obstruction ahead (e.g. parked car, pedestrian, jogger).

Arm down at 45 degrees to left or right, palm facing down, waving from side to side: Poor road surface, so 'don't go there'; possibly combined with call of hole / gravel / sand / slippy. (It is best not to point at poor road surface as this could be mistaken for a signal to turn left or right).

Arm out to the side with palm facing back: Indicates 'stay back', to another rider that they should not come alongside or pass, or to a driver that it is not safe to overtake.

## **The 'Rule of 6'**

Because we ride at a relaxed, conversational pace we take up more space on the road than a highly disciplined, tight-knit peloton. Drivers may find it difficult / frustrating / dangerous to attempt to overtake a large group of cyclists strung out over a long section of road.

On very quiet roads with long sight lines it may be acceptable to ride in large groups, but the default position is to split into small groups of no more than 6 with a gap of at least 6 car lengths between each group. This enables drivers to overtake by leap-frogging from one gap to the next.

Do not ride in a gap between groups; either catch up with group in front or drop back to join the group behind.

## **Horses**

A horse may be confused or startled by brightly coloured alien creatures on cycles, but it will recognise and be reassured by a human voice. Greet the rider and, if approaching from behind, call 'bike behind' from at least 30m. Wait for an acknowledgement before passing slowly with as much clearance as possible. Do not ring your bell.

## **Helmets**

Wearing a helmet on club rides is recommended but not compulsory. The poor condition of many road surfaces is a good reason to wear a helmet. Also, when riding close to others there is a slightly higher risk of a low speed tumble caused by accidental contact with another rider.

- Each member is responsible for maintaining their bicycle in a good and safe condition, and particularly during the winter months or when the weather demands it, fitting mudguards as a courtesy to other Club members.

*The points described here are firstly to keep you safe and to maximise the enjoyment for you and your fellow riders. Most importantly enjoy the ride, have fun, be safe and considerate.*