



CLUB RIDE GUIDE

Our main activity is the weekly Club Ride, which takes place every Sunday morning. In addition to those we also have a Summer Series of midweek evening rides (from May through to August).

Our weekly Club Ride takes place every Sunday morning. We meet at 08:30 for our pre-ride coffee in the Colets Health & Fitness cafe before heading out for a 3 - 4 hour ride, usually into the Surrey Hills. We aim to be back for around 12:30, but on occasion some groups might be 30 minutes either side of that.

Through December - February we meet at 09:00 in order to allow temperatures to rise a little, but we still aim to be back by about 12:30.

PLEASE arrive as close to the meet up time as you possibly can.

Depending on turnout we generally have two to three groups each week, so in fairness to everyone please select the appropriate group based on your current level of fitness AND experience of cycling in a group (The faster group(s) do tend to ride in a much tighter pack).

If you do choose to join a faster group (and by all means please do 'have a go' now and again) when there are other options available, you must make sure that you know the route and are self sufficient in case you get dropped. The steady group will always wait for people.

If you opt for a slower group please don't try to ramp the pace up if you find it's too slow for you.

If there's not enough of us for two groups, then the steady group protocol will apply.

From time to time it may be deemed necessary to call off the road ride due to poor or unsafe conditions. We are fortunate to have been granted access to Colets' Spin Studio, so on such occasions we will ride indoors, which means VC Colets never has to cancel a ride!

Notification of this (or any revised timings) will be through the WhatsApp [Club Rides](#) group.

BEFORE THE RIDE

It is **ESSENTIAL** that **ALL** members carefully read and understand the club's [Risk Assessment](#), as it is a key facet of our insurance cover from British Cycling.

Please familiarise yourself with the hand signals and group riding skills by visiting our [Group Riding Skills](#) page. When riding in a group you do have a responsibility to the person behind you.

This short [video](#) and [article](#) about group cycling are recommended viewing/reading for all members.

Remember to carry the following:- inner tube (ideally two), tyre levers, pump, multi-tool, money/card and a mobile phone. We also recommend that you have a full water bottle and carry some food as well (e.g. a banana or an energy bar/gels). Please also have emergency contact details on your phone (the iPhone Health app or an ICE app on other platforms are best)

If a route has been shared in advance, please be sure to load it onto your GPS device.

If your bike is fitted with tri-bars / aero bars / TT bars, please remove these for club rides. Most cycling clubs ban these for group riding and a quick trawl of the internet will illustrate why this is.

In winter time it is advisable to fit lights. Please set the rear light to the dimmest setting and non-flashing (if possible) when on the club ride. If you are able to fit a full/long mudguard to your rear wheel for winter rides, then it will be greatly appreciated!

PRE-RIDE BIKE CHECKS

A few quick & easy checks before you head out can help reduce the chances of having a bike-related issue miles from home. Listed below are the ones that our Cyctech qualified 'club mechanic', Luis, recommends that you do.



BRAKES

Give each wheel a spin and apply the brakes to check that it stops the wheel. Check the pads for excessive wear. Remember to also check the calliper lever is closed.

TYRES

Check that they are properly inflated and for any embedded pieces of flint (remove these with a penknife or suchlike). Check that the tyre isn't excessively worn or cut. If the profile has worn square (as opposed to round) it is time to replace.



QUICK RELEASE LEVERS

Check that both of these are fully and firmly shut and not posting forwards. Also give the wheels a spin to check for any wobbles, buckles or brake rub.

HEADSET & HANDLEBARS

Check for any play in the headset by applying the front brake and trying to rock the bike backwards and forwards. Check that the handlebar bolts are not loose.



PEDALS & CRANKS

Make sure pedals and crank arms spin effortlessly and that the crank is secure against bottom bracket.

DERAILLEURS (BOTH)

Check for debris and/or damage (an annual "tune-up" will ensure limit screws and barrel adjusters are properly set to allow for precise shifting across all gears)



SADDLE

Ensure that the saddle is secure and at the proper riding angle & height. Also check your saddle pack contents (if you carry one)

LUBRICATE THE CHAIN AND...

Check that you have a bottle in the cage. If it is a summer evening or low visibility winter ride, check that you have fitted lights (and they are charged up!)



MONTHLY

Give the bike a thorough clean and....

Check for worn tyres and replace if necessary. Check the cables for fraying.
Check the chain for wear (with a chain checker or by trying to pull away from chain ring).
Check that the gears shift smoothly.

ANNUALLY

Get the bike serviced by a competent mechanic.

DURING THE RIDE

- Please remember that the Sunday Club Ride is not a training ride, a race or a test; we roll together as a group.
- We ride in pairs as our 'default setting' but be prepared to move into single file when necessary.
- Anybody accelerating ahead of the group will be assumed to be on another ride and will not be called or chased after if they take a wrong turn.
- Take care not to 'half-wheel' the rider next to you in order to try and push the pace up, always keep your handlebars level with theirs.
- For your own safety and for those behind you, you must avoid overlapping your front wheel with the rear wheel of the rider in front.
- Remember to both use and to pass on signals, as those at either end of the group may not be able to see or hear it. Hand signals are preferable to shouts.
- Please do not ride out of line to see road ahead, as this creates the illusion that we are MORE than two abreast.
- For your safety and of those behind, please spread out on fast descents as the person in front may not always be able to point out any hazards.
- Do not jump red lights on club rides, or when wearing our club kit on any other ride.
- At junctions stop in your group formation, do not push in front of others within our group and do not swarm around other road users, including other cycling groups.
- If & when you stop to regroup please move as tight to the kerbside as possible in order to keep the road & junctions as clear as we can.
- In the event of someone experiencing a mechanical issue then the whole group should stop and wait. The ride captain will decide what action needs to be taken from there onwards.
- When setting off from any stops please set off gently and gradually increase the speed, so as to allow those behind time to clip in and close up, before resuming the ride pace.
- Please follow any requests from your group's Ride Captain as they are there to oversee the ride for everybody's benefit and enjoyment.

Finally..... at the end of the ride all groups tend to reconvene back at Colets for post ride refreshments and chat; please try to allow time for this important aspect too!