

## **Sunday – Elmers End Group Ride**

The club meets at 08.45 for a 09:00 departure from Elmers End every Sunday. Riders will be divided into groups dependant upon who turns up. Groups and routes will be determined by the ride leaders on the day. The groups will aim to average 17 – 18 mph; 14 – 16 mph and 12 – 14 mph. These are only averages and will vary according to the riders and the route. Obviously if numbers don't allow, we may only have two groups.

These are not coached rides, but volunteer led rides to show riders the chosen route and to try and keep everyone together. The leaders are not qualified cycle coaches. There are 5-6 regular routes that the rides take – details are available on the club website and it is recommended that you have this information with you.

### **Additional information for group riding**

The priority is a bike in good working order that you are comfortable cycling for 2-3 hours on roads – good brakes, smooth gears (that you are familiar with using), hard road tyres (at least 100psi front and back). You will also need 2 spare inner tubes, a pump/gas cylinder, set of tyre levers and know how to use them.

A mountain bike will be too heavy, a hybrid will be very hard work, so a road bike is strongly recommended. Drop handle bars and cleats/toe clips will also make life much easier but are not essential.

When first riding in a group you may be slightly unsure as to what is going on; where you should be riding in the formation or who is in charge etc. There are a few rules to riding in a group safely and effectively.

### **Be prepared**

Wearing a helmet is compulsory on CPT led rides. Wear plenty of warm clothes and carry the following with you: a rain jacket, a pump, essential tools, spare tubes, food for three to four hours and don't forget to take more water/energy drink than you think you'll need (most people carry at least 2 x 500ml and some 2 x 750 ml even in winter). A mobile phone is a must and it's worth taking the numbers of other people on the ride in case of emergency. Also consider taking some ID, plus money for a tea stop or train fare home. You shouldn't need a map, but take one if you need some added reassurance, or if you are unfamiliar with the main routes that we cover.

### **Ride single file in town**

Contrary to the belief of some road users, riding double file is legal, but experience suggests it's not practical until we get a little further out.

### **Don't switch suddenly**

Hold your line and keep a steady cadence, this is for the rider who may be riding behind and needs to be close and confident that you won't move suddenly or wobble. The riders in front should not stop suddenly without warning, but always be prepared for any sudden moves.

### **Tell someone if you have a problem**

Always tell the riders around you if you have a puncture, mechanical problem, or just aren't feeling too good. Don't drift to the back and off it without telling anyone. It is

normal practice for the faster riders to wait if a slower rider is dropped, for example, on a hill.

### **Punctures**

The group may ride on and then retrace so they keep warm whilst you fix your flat. If you are a slow mechanic ask for help. There will be experienced riders who can fix a flat in quick time, so don't feel afraid to ask if it will save the group time. However, everyone attending club rides should be able to fix a puncture without assistance, in case they get separated.

### **Send the message to the front**

If you are riding at the back and a rider is dropped for whatever reason, tell the riders in front of you and ask them to shout up to the front. The pace can then be adjusted to suit the problem or the group can stop.

### **Other general shouted instructions:**

*'Car down' or 'Car up'* A general warning of a car trying to pass or one coming around a corner. A car coming towards you is usually *'Car down'* and a car approaching from the rear which might try to overtake the group is usually *'Car up'*.

*'Easy'* If this is shouted it usually means there is a bad junction or potential hazard ahead and to pay attention yourself, it's often very easy to rely on the ride leaders to warn you of pending problems in the road. This is especially important if you are in a large group and it will take a while to get around the hazard.

*'On your left'* means that there is an obstacle on the left and the group will move to the right to avoid it e.g. a single parked car, walkers or obstacles

*'Single out' or 'Single'* 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.

*'Stopping'* The group is stopping – usually for traffic lights or busy junction.

### **General hand signals**

*Hand up in the air* Usually signifies that the rider signalling is stopping (e.g. for a puncture) or there is a hazard in the road that the whole group may have to stop for.

*Pointing out holes in the road* This is essential. You must point out drain covers, holes, dead badgers, glass or anything else which may cause harm to a cyclist. Basically if you have to go around it, tell the rider behind about it before they hit it.

*Indication directions to riders behind* Whether it is slowing down or turning at junctions, large groups need everyone to indicate for other road users, so let them know what you intend to do.

*Waving for parked cars, horses and pedestrians* When overtaking riders will sometimes wave a hand behind them. This signifies there is a hazard that means the group will have to move out. They will do this by waving in the direction you will need to move. Remember you are expected to do the same so the rider behind you has seen the obstacle.