

# Whittlesea Bicycle Users Group Ride Leader Guidelines

June 2023



## Introduction

These guidelines aim to provide a consistent approach for planning and conducting organised Whittlesea Bicycle Users Group (BUG) social rides for the enjoyment of participants and to demonstrate due diligence for participant's safety. These guidelines must be used by ride leaders to help plan each social ride.

## Definitions

'*Should*' means the preferred choice or recommendation of Whittlesea BUG.

'*Must*' means this is the expectation of Whittlesea BUG and requires compliance.

*Relay rider* – A rider designated by the ride leader to communicate on their behalf with other riders including the tail-end rider.

## What is a social ride?

A social ride is a ride primarily in and around Melbourne with some rides in regional Victoria, organised and conducted free of charge, by a Whittlesea BUG volunteer. A range of rides are offered to suit different rider capabilities and interests. Distances vary from 10km to over 100km with speeds and terrain also adapted to meet different riders' needs.

Social rides occur weekly and are open to financial members and non-members, with non-members encouraged to become financial members if they wish to continue riding with Whittlesea BUG after 3 rides.

## Role and responsibilities of a ride leader

As a social ride leader, your responsibilities for organising and managing a social ride are outlined below:

1. Prior to the ride:
  - Identify a safe route (previous rides are available from the rides library <https://www.wbug.org.au/rides-library/>) including the approximate distance, estimated average speed, date of the ride, start time, start location and approximate end time.
  - Prepare a map of your ride.
  - Publish details of your ride on the Whittlesea BUG Team App ([https://wbug.teamapp.com/?\\_webpage=v1](https://wbug.teamapp.com/?_webpage=v1)) at least 7 days prior to the date of the ride.
2. On the day of the ride:
  - Determine whether the ride is to proceed and whether all riders should participate - see further guidance below.
  - Check that you have marked the attendance of all riders on Team App, or if they are not on Team App, you have recorded their full name and contact details on your phone.
  - Brief riders at the start of your ride (refer to the 'Give a Pre-Ride Briefing' section below).
  - Manage riders during the ride by assigning a tail end rider and if desired, a relay rider.
  - The ride leader, tail end rider and relay rider (if chosen) must be able to communicate by mobile phone or two-way radio (Whittlesea BUG can provide two-way radios if required)
  - Manage all incidents and emergencies that may happen on your ride.

### 3. After the ride:

- Complete the Ride Attendance Spreadsheet available at:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DMxlyS5AEiuBrw6X0ohw\\_CreKMrwNXvEvjmEOIkNI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DMxlyS5AEiuBrw6X0ohw_CreKMrwNXvEvjmEOIkNI/edit?usp=sharing)
- If applicable, submit any completed incident report forms to: [whittleseabug@gmail.com](mailto:whittleseabug@gmail.com)

## Key attributes of a ride leader

Ride leaders must be financial members of Whittlesea BUG. Additionally, a ride leader must be a confident bike rider with:

- Strong communication skills
- A calming and competent demeanour during the ride
- A patient and positive attitude
- Empathy towards participants of differing personality types, ages, races, religions, backgrounds and beliefs
- An ability to manage ride logistics outlined in this document.

## Planning a ride

The planning stage of a ride is critical to the success of the ride. There are no restrictions on the type of social ride that can be conducted, if you and your group follow all road rules, other relevant laws and Whittlesea Bicycle User Group guidelines. Generally, rides should be planned that provide a practical and safe route consistent with the aim of the ride and the expected abilities of the intended riders. Whittlesea BUG aims to make our rides as inclusive as possible.

When planning a ride, consideration should be given to the following:

- Destination
- Route (consider using an online tool like Google Maps, Map My Ride or Ride with GPS to produce a .gpx file of your route which you can load into your smartphone or other GPS-enabled device)
- Terrain (e.g., bike paths, gravel, road, off-path, elevation, gradients)
- Starting location
- Starting time
- Approximate distance
- Approximate average speed
- Approximate end time
- Location of suitable stopping and regrouping points, water, food and toilets
- Any potentially difficult areas or hazards (e.g., detours, road works, steep inclines/declines, loose stones, changes in terrain)
- Identify possible alternative/escape routes, which may include the use of public transport (this may help attract riders who are uncertain of their ability or if the weather conditions change during the ride)
- Where possible, check the route prior to the day of the ride (unless the ride is a rail trail)

Note: Ride leaders will have a degree of flexibility to adjust in accordance with the conditions on the day of the ride.

## Promoting a ride

The aim of promoting your ride is to make people aware which rides are available to increase participation rates. By providing specific details of your ride in advance, you are more likely to attract riders who will enjoy the ride by allowing them to select rides that match their abilities and/or interests.

You must publish details of your ride on the Whittlesea BUG Team App ([https://wbug.teamapp.com/?\\_webpage=v1](https://wbug.teamapp.com/?_webpage=v1)) at least 7 days prior to the date of the ride, and preferably, earlier.

Instructions on how to post a ride are available from:  
[https://wbug.teamapp.com/clubs/512900/documents?\\_list=v1](https://wbug.teamapp.com/clubs/512900/documents?_list=v1)

You should select the 'Attendance' option in Team App during this process to enable the details of riders participating on your ride to be captured on the day of the ride.

- Comments
- Duty Roster
- Ticketing
- Feature (showcase image)
- Enable Attendance

Rides will also be promoted on your behalf on the Whittlesea BUG Facebook page(s) and on our website.

When promoting your ride, you should provide as much accurate information as possible, which may include:

- Destination
- Route details, including map.
- Terrain (e.g., bike paths, gravel, road, off-path, elevation, gradients)
- Date of the ride
- Starting location
- Starting time
- Approximate distance
- Approximate average speed
- Approximate end time
- Types of bikes suited to the ride.
- Traffic conditions
- Any known hazards
- Requirements specific to your ride e.g., working lights required.
- Whether food/refreshments need to be carried or will be available at the destination (in which case, participants will possibly need money).
- Escape options, when available – if public transport is an option, people will need to be prepared to cover the cost of fares.
- Basic requirements, e.g., helmet, pump or CO<sub>2</sub> cannister, spare tube, tyre levers.

## Cancelling a ride

There may be occasions where a ride needs to be cancelled before the ride commences. This may be due to:

- adverse weather forecast or conditions.
- illness of the ride leader.
- unavailability of the ride leader from unforeseen circumstances
- other circumstances

If a ride leader becomes aware that they are no longer able to lead a ride before the day of the ride, they should contact other ride leaders to determine whether they are able to lead the ride.

Where this is not possible, the ride should be cancelled.

Notification of cancellation should be communicated to other riders using the Team App by updating the Event to indicate it has been cancelled and sending a push notification via email and mobile phone number.

If a ride is to be cancelled, notifications must be sent a minimum of two hours (and preferably earlier) prior to the advertised ride start time.

## Conducting a ride

### 1. What to bring on your ride

As ride leader, make sure you bring:

- Your bike and helmet
- A pump, tool kit and spare tubes
- Water, snack/food
- Mobile phone for communication and marking attendance of riders.
- Copy of your cue sheet
- Copy of incident report form
- Two-way radios (if mobile phones are not available for use)

### 2. Prior to commencing your ride

Arrive early.

1. You must attend the start of your ride at the advertised time and location.
2. You should arrive early to welcome the riders, especially any new riders.
3. Use the Team App on your mobile phone to mark the attendance of riders participating on your ride, or if they are not on Team App, record their full name and contact details on your phone.

If you are unable to be present at the start of the ride or during the ride, arrange for another ride leader to replace you. Otherwise, the ride will need to be cancelled or the participants advised that the ride is no longer endorsed by Whittlesea BUG.

Confirm that the ride should proceed.

Before commencing the ride, decide whether the ride should proceed and whether all riders should be accepted on the ride.

Consideration should be given to:

- Adverse weather conditions
- Whether there are too many riders or too few experienced riders to help manage the group
- Each rider's ability to complete the advertised ride safely, including whether:
  - their bike is suitable for the terrain,
  - their bike appears to be mechanically sound, using **ABCD**:
    - **Air** – are the tyres inflated and do the tyres show any signs of wear in the tread or cracks on the side walls?
    - **Brakes** - Do both brakes stop the bike when applied, while leaving a gap at handlebar? Are the brakes allowing the bike wheel to roll freely (not rubbing)?
    - **Chain** - Is the chain able to spin backwards freely? Is the chain free of dirt/muck and not dry/rusted?
    - **Drop** - Drop the bike to the ground from about 5cms. Are there any funny clanging sounds due to any loose parts/fittings?
  - riders have brought all required equipment e.g., a helmet that meets the relevant Australian Standard
  - there are any concerns about a rider's health on the day.

Give a pre-ride briefing\*.

A pre-ride briefing must be delivered by the ride leader before the ride commences in which you advise all riders of the route and its characteristics, including any potential hazards. Use the following list as a guide for things to cover in the briefing:

- Welcome all riders, especially new riders, and introduce yourself.
- Advise details of the route, terrain and road surfaces, mentioning:
  - Known or possible hazards e.g., cars, potholes, gravel, road works, steep gradients, etc.
  - Approximate length and time to complete the ride.
  - Locations for re-grouping, toilet stops and breaks.
- Advise on road rules and etiquette:
  - Bike path rules: keep left, stop off the path, give way to pedestrians and watch out for oncoming bicycles.
  - Road rules: obey traffic rules, keep left, stop at red lights and stop signs, use cycle lanes, ride single file in cycle lanes where the road is narrow, take care in traffic, especially roundabouts.
  - Group etiquette and signals: call out when slowing and stopping, point out hazards to following riders, including bollards or when there are riders or pedestrians on the path ahead and signal when turning.
  - Riders are to remain behind the ride leader unless instructed otherwise by the ride leader.
- Ask any participants whether any of them plan on leaving the ride before the finish.
- Designate a tail-end person if all riders are unlikely to remain in clear view of the ride leader.
- Ensure the ride leader, tail-end person and relay rider (if chosen) each have mobile phones that are fully charged and operating and that they have each other's numbers programmed in their phones to enable communication if required.
- Ensure all riders are aware of the identities of the tail-end person and relay rider.
- Do a head count of riders.

- Check that you have marked the attendance of all riders on Team App, or if they are not on Team App, you have recorded their full name and contact details on your phone.

\*A pre-ride briefing cue sheet is available at: <https://www.wbug.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Whittlesea-BUG-Pre-Ride-Briefing-Cue-Sheet.pdf>

### Check helmets.

Before you start, check that all riders are wearing a bicycle helmet, securely fitted and fastened. Assist any riders if their helmets appear to be incorrectly fitted or fastened.

Riders without a helmet cannot participate in a ride endorsed by the Whittlesea BUG.

### 3. Starting the ride

- Aim to start the ride as close as possible to the advertised starting time.
- In the first few kilometres, assess the requirements of new riders and, where required, assign a person to support them.
- Consider starting off slowly to allow riders to warm up.
- As a ride leader, you are required to ride in a safe and courteous manner and to adhere to our Code of Conduct (available at: <https://www.wbug.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Whittlesea-BUG-Ride-Leader-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>)

### 4. Monitoring progress

During the ride, review your progress. Consider any changing weather conditions, conditions of the selected route and the health of participants on the day and make any changes required to ensure the ride can be completed safely.

The ride leader and only the ride leader has the authority to make changes to the ride, including who participates on the ride.

### 5. Following your ride

After your ride, use the details recorded earlier of riders attending on Team App or your phone to update the [WBUG ride attendance spreadsheet](#). If there are any concerns arising from your ride, please contact the Whittlesea BUG President to discuss on 0434 730 163.

### 6. Managing incidents and near misses

An incident is any unplanned event resulting in injury, ill-health, damage or any other loss.

A near miss is any unplanned event happening that does not result in an injury or illness or damage but had the potential to do so.

If an incident occurs during a ride you are leading, assess whether it requires attention and completion of an incident report form. Some minor incidents, such as minor scrapes or bruises, can be handled on the spot and most likely do not warrant an incident report.

More serious incidents e.g., a serious injury to a rider, significant damages to property and/or an incident involving a third party like a motorist or pedestrian require a written report.

Priority should be given to assisting an injured party, including calling an ambulance if a person is incapacitated or the extent of an injury is uncertain.

Request police attendance where in circumstances where there is an emergency, particularly for incidents involving a significant injury to a rider or third parties or when traffic flow is affected.

Obtain witness details, where relevant, after persons have been treated.

When a serious incident has occurred or if there are any questions about whether an incident report is required, please contact the Whittlesea BUG President immediately on 0434 730 163.

The incident reform can be downloaded at: <https://www.wbug.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Whittlesea-BUG-Incident-Report-Form-template-2023.docx>

Completed incident reports should be forwarded to: [whittleseabug@gmail.com](mailto:whittleseabug@gmail.com)

## 7. Rail Trail Rides

All requirements outlined in previous sections apply to rail trail rides. In addition, because rail trail rides are often conducted in remote areas, the ride leader (or relay rider, if chosen) and tail-end person are required to carry two-way radios for communication.

Whittlesea BUG will provide two-way radios for this purpose.

It is the responsibility of the ride leader to ensure that the operators of the two-way radios confirm the batteries in each of the two-way radios are fully charged prior to the ride and an appropriate channel is selected to enable effective communication.