

Burg Wheelers Cycling Club: Code of Conduct for Road Cyclists.



This Code of Conduct has been drawn up to ensure that members experience a safe and enjoyable riding environment which is dependent on the cooperation of every member. It is essential that courtesy and consideration is shown to other motorists, cyclists and road users.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may jeopardise the safety of other riders.

Safety will always be a critical issue and it is the responsibility of each member to practise it at all times.

1. Personal Equipment

- **Helmet**
Must be worn on all rides.
 - Gloves and glasses are also recommended for protective purposes.
 - **Road Worthiness**
Bicycles and equipment must be properly maintained at all times.
 - **Lights (both front and rear)**
Compulsory (at all times): Front lights are to be used in flasher mode during the day.
 - **Reflector tape (belts or anklets)**
Advisable: these increase visibility.
 - **Cell Phone**
Advisable: should be carried for use in emergencies.
 - Emergency contact numbers should be on hand.
 - **Identification (e.g. ER 24 band/ICE ID)**
Recommended: ID information to include:
 - Name
 - Emergency contact number
 - Any major medication, conditions, or allergies
 - Medical Aid name and number.
 - **New Riders**
To introduce selves to the group-ride captain.
 - **Club Kit**
To be worn at all Club rides and races. Creates identity, brand awareness and support for sponsors.
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2. Riding Etiquette & Conduct

- **Be Predictable**

Always ride in a predictable manner:

- Avoiding sudden swerves or braking,
- Try to avoid 'throwing your bike back' when standing,
- Ride in a straight line when taking a drink or eating.

- **Indicate**

Use the accepted cycling hand signals when warning of obstacles:

- Turns coming up in the road ahead - outstretched arm in direction of turn,
- Slowing Down for an obstacle - wave one hand up and down slowly,
- Debris or road surface irregularities ahead – point hand down on the side where the debris or road surface irregularities are,
- Obstacles Ahead – slap buttocks and point behind back indicating the direction in which the group must move.
 - This normally applies when passing pedestrians, slower cyclists or stationary vehicles.

- **Riding in a group**

When riding in close formation avoid riding directly behind someone. Ride slightly to the left or right of the rider ahead, allowing you see up the road and space to 'slide' alongside when the pace slows.

- **Obey the rules of the road**

You must conduct yourself with the same degree of consideration as you would expect from any other road user, especially motorists. Aggressive gestures and behaviour by cyclists only serve to alienate motorists and can quite likely impact negatively on other cyclists.

- Where routes cross over intersections and there is a group of riders following, do not cross over, even if the traffic light is green, unless you are sure that the whole group will be able to cross safely before the light changes.

- **Avoid holding up traffic**

It is safer to ride two abreast. However, it is not always safe to do so.

- On narrow or busy roads, it is essential to ride in single file.

Do not stop in the road.

- **Bike skills**

This is acquired in time and with experience. Bike skills training courses are advertised from time to time.

- **Aggressive or abusive behaviour**

Avoid this at all times; it never results in the desired response. No one deliberately tries to cause an accident. An encouraging word e.g. "Hold your line.... etc" has a great chance of attaining that desired response. Words expressed in anger normally result in a negative verbal spiral.

- **Citing dangerous incidents**

Cycling together in bunches requires strict enforcement of discipline to ensure everybody's safety. Dangerous incidents with motorists or cyclists should be reported to a Club Committee member, providing as much relevant detail as possible: date, place, registration numbers, motor description, witnesses etc. The Club may wish to pursue the matter.

- **Cell phone usage**

For official cycling and emergency use only. Private calls or SMSs (causing the group to be held up) are not acceptable.

3. Organisation & Support

- **Ride Captain**

Is appointed or elected for each group ride. Such individuals will be responsible for ensuring that good order and safety are maintained at all times. This could include:

- Regrouping for stragglers at regular intervals,
- Stopping for accidents,
- Identifying someone to assist another in the event of a puncture or a breakdown,
- **No rider is to be left on his own.**

It is expected that members obey the requests/instructions of the Ride Captain at all times.

- **Groupings**

It is preferable, from a logistical point of view, that cyclists of equal ability and fitness ride together. No more than 10 to 15 is a manageable group for a Club Ride, therefore groups should be divided when necessary.

It is important to choose a group where one is comfortable and can adapt easily within one's capability. It is inconsiderate to expect a group to wait for a rider who is 'out of his depth.' Should a rider choose to join a weaker group he is not to be the 'pace-setter.' The Ride Captain determines the pace.

The Ride Captain may choose to split the group due to size or strength variance and nominate a second Ride Captain for the second group.

No women cyclists are to be left on their own.

- **A & B Groups**

A & B groups are generally racing groups.

- Pre-requisite for this group is having a high level of fitness and competence to ride on busy public roads in all weather conditions, self-maintained road repairs, punctures etc.
- Members compete regularly in races and riding pace range between 25-30 km/h for A's and 23-25 km/h for B's.
- Routes are a mixture of hills and fast flat sections.
- Routes and distances to be communicated before the ride by the Ride Captain.

- **C & D Groups**

C & D groups are generally social riders.

- The focus is on general fitness and basic to intermediate riding skills in a group.
- It is for those getting back into cycling after a long break or starting out in group riding and have the physical fitness level that allows them to go moderate distances and a lower average pace than that of the A or B groups.
- They compete periodically in races and riding pace ranges between 18-23 km/h for C's and 15-18 km/h for D's.
- This group will use quieter country roads where the route is a mixture of hills and flats with various distances.
- Riders should be able to ride in most weather conditions and be able to deal with basic road repairs: punctures etc.
- Routes and distances to be communicated before the ride by the Ride Captain.

- **The "Buddy" System**

It is advisable that every rider teams up with another (buddy) rider prior to the start of a ride. Buddies are accountable to each other for the ride and look 'out for' each other.

- **Bailing**

If you bail during a ride it is your responsibility to advise your buddy or Ride Captain of your intention.

4. Club Spirit

Healthy Lifestyle: Cycling is all about enjoying a healthy, outdoor sport that enhances your lifestyle, encompassing the physical, social and emotional aspects of your life.

Club Kit: We urge you to celebrate Burg Wheelers Cycling Club by riding together and in Club kit whenever possible.

Courtesy: Make a point of greeting fellow members, and other cyclists, when you pass them, in a polite and friendly manner. After all, it is a great privilege to have the health and strength to do so. Be courteous. Acknowledge patient and considerate conduct by others with a friendly 'thank you' wave of the hand. Try to attend Club socials and other functions where possible: 'you get out what you put in'.

Hospitality: Particular care should be taken to make visitors feel welcome: after all, they are the lifeblood of our Club. At the start of the ride the Ride Captain should welcome them and make sure they will be looked after. Please note that after two or three rides with the Club, visitors will be expected to decide whether or not to join the club.

Respect: Club members are expected to treat everyone in the cycling 'eco-system' with mutual respect. Please avoid doing anything that could bring the Club or its sponsors into disrepute or, alternatively, cause some embarrassment to take place.

***We appeal to all members to adhere to this Code of Conduct
for the benefit of all cyclists and other road users
to promote this great sport;
The King of Sports!***