



[Windsor Cycle Hub](#)

Ride Classifications – version 4.2, 2024

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Page: 1/6

Intro

At Windsor Cycle Hub we believe that **cycling's for everyone**. People with different fitness levels, ages, experience and confidence in riding. We aim to help everyone enjoy cycling – firstly by feeling comfortable and confident on your bike. Then, by helping you get even more from it.

Maybe you're looking for quiet cycling routes in and around **Windsor**. Perhaps to get to work or the shops, for exercise, to 'do your bit' for the environment, to enjoy our historic town and countryside, as well as meet new people. It could even be all of the above.

We're all volunteers, from different walks of life, but we all have one thing in common: we love riding our bikes, and we want to share that passion with everyone.

Because everyone's different, we organise graded levels of regular rides. All aim to be as traffic-free as possible, and **we'll always pick the scenic route over the fastest**. You may like one level of ride and decide stick with it. Or you see a natural progression, set yourself a challenge and 'move up' to the next level. You could do that over a summer, a year or take as long as you like. Our goal is simple; for everyone to enjoy their cycling, safely.

We've run a lot of rides now, so what follows is based on our experience (and will evolve with time). **By signing-up for one of our rides we expect you to have read this document**. It's important that everyone understands that, for the safety of the whole group, we may have to issue very brief and precise instructions to you. If you prefer to do your own thing, then our group rides may not be right for you.

Bikes, Clothes and Kit

We aren't a cycling club, **you can wear and ride what you like**. The key is that you feel comfortable and are safe – so we check bikes before all rides (and show you how to do it yourself) . We have experienced Ride Leaders, with a Sweeper to make sure we don't drop anyone, and **everyone follows the Highway Code**.

We're happy to advise on kit, and provide tips, but only if you want us to – unless you're endangering yourself and endangering/inconveniencing others on the ride or the path.

We don't insist on helmets, but you'll notice that our volunteers all wear them. Most of our routes are scenic, so regularly take us under low hanging branches etc.

We recommend, especially on longer rides (Level 3+), that you carry a spare inner-tube, pump, tyre levers and multi-tool. **It's advisory on L3 and mandatory on L4+**. We'll show you how to use them if required, and we can supply them if you don't have any. Being able to make basic repairs gives you independence to ride solo. On Level 3 rides you'll be expected to have a go at the repair yourself, by Level 4 you should be able to do it alone. Obviously, we won't leave you behind or not help if you're struggling.

We also ask that you bring a drink and a snack on **all** summer rides, and any from Level 2+ year round. With our weather as it is, we recommend a waterproof jacket too, certainly for autumn, winter and spring.

Safety

Our rides are **insured by Cycling UK** (we're affiliated to them), provided we follow their procedures and our own. By joining us you agree to these too. This may be a more formal experience than riding with friends – but it's for everyone's safety and a requirement of our insurance.

The safety of the group is our no.1 priority. All ride volunteers are trained in First Aid, and we carry kits with us.

We expect everyone to be equipped to ride safely and be physically fit enough to do so. If you've any doubts, then please speak to your GP before joining us. If there's something we need to know, then please use the space on the sign-up

form **and** speak to the Ride Leader before we depart. We can find a way to address many things, we just need to know in advance.

Our ride volunteers lead by example, but you are responsible for decisions you make on the road (e.g. pulling out at junctions). We may need to speak to you about your bike handling if it's endangering yourself and others – we'll try to do this in a respectful manner, but if circumstances dictate we may need to be more assertive. Please don't be offended, it's not a judgement, we just want you to be safe – we've all had to learn too.

Please do not overtake the Ride Leader, or cycle on their right. They ride in the **primary position**, with a clear view ahead and need to be able to look back down the group.

Everyone must provide an Emergency Contact, with phone no., even if that person is in another part of the country.

Schedule

It's really simple: the 1st Saturday of the month is Level 1, the 2nd Saturday is Level 2 and so on...

Guided Rides

We have 4 regular levels of guided ride, which we rotate through the month. We also run **Ride Skills** sessions for adults on request, plus we have an **Early Bird** ride most months for the very experienced. **All start and finish at The Swan (unless we're on an Away Day – follow us on social media for details)**, a great place for a coffee or something cold and lunch.

We'll sometimes theme rides to tie-in with events, such as royal occasions and the changing of the seasons (anyone up for an Autumn Watch ride?). Keep an eye on our social media channels for details. **Level 1-4 rides leave at 11:00, Early Bird at 8:30am.**

Because we support our hosts The Swan, **our breaks are for onboard drinks and snacks** (unless it's a really hot day and everyone deserves an ice-cream) – so please bring drinks and food, **we don't usually make cafe stops.**

NB Levels 1 and 2 are aimed at inexperienced cyclists – so are at a gentle pace. If you want something faster, then please look at L3+. Of course, you're welcome to join lower level rides if you ride slowly (maybe leave your best bike at home) and perhaps have come to support a friend (or see if you'd like to volunteer for us).

NB if you're unsure about your own stamina, hill climbing ability, bike handling skills etc. please don't attempt an L3+ ride until you've successfully ridden L1 or L2.

- **Level 1: Easy**

These are almost entirely off-road and flat. Typically on the tracks along the Thames, Jubilee River and edge of Eton.

They're popular with people starting to ride after a long break, young families and older riders. **Children must be accompanied, with one adult per child** (needn't be a parent for 1+, an adult that the child respects is fine). A minimum age of 7 is advised if they're riding under their own steam.

L1 rides are at the pace of the slowest person – we may split into 2 groups if we've enough volunteers to do so. All L1 rides are at a pace to allow a good chat as you cycle. We stop regularly to admire the view, wait for people to catch-up and say hello to fellow riders, walkers, horses, dogs and people on boats.

These rides will include some basic bike handling training; hand signalling, riding through tight gaps etc.

If you're uncertain of your ability to keep up/ride in a group, we suggest you book onto a Ride Skills course.

At least 1 hr, stop frequently, up to 8 miles

- **Level 2: Moderate**

A lot like L1, also flat but a bit quicker and longer. Mainly on tracks, but we'll venture onto some quiet road too, so we can see more sites and build confidence – typically around Eton and Slough's parks.

These rides are a great way to explore more of our surroundings, and start joining the dots between one area to another. They're suitable for accompanied **teenage children** who are already familiar with road riding and cycling in groups. If your children have ridden with us before, our Ride Leader may allow two per responsible adult

At least 1 ½ hrs, stop once & up to 12 miles

- **Level 3: Intermediate**

The progression over L2 is that we add hills, more pace and distance. These can be a good level to get involved, if you're already confident riding a bike, but perhaps don't know the area and want to see how you fit into our ride structure. An intermediate level in every sense.

Riding from The Swan to Stag Meadow up the cycle track to Windsor Great Park (WGP) is a popular ride. With less experienced visitors we'll stay within WGP's roads. If the whole group is feeling more eager, and we know you're OK, we might pop out briefly to visit the RAF Memorial etc. Often we'll have 2 groups, with people moving up from L2 and more confident visitors wanting to go a little further.

We strongly advise that you carry a spare inner tube, drink, snack and a waterproof jacket.

At least 2hrs, stop once & up to 18 miles

- **Level 4: Advanced**

Distance, pace and hills build – if we cycle to WGP, we may go through the town, up to the Castle, then up Crimp Hill into the park and head further afield.

We'll typically leave the Windsor area – e.g. heading to Cookham via the Maidenhead Greenway or riding around the Walthams. These rides will inspire you to join up our quiet routes to plan your own longer circular adventures.

Because the rides are longer, and aimed at more experienced riders (who we expect to have well maintained bikes) we set off at a much faster pace.

It's mandatory that you carry an innertube with tools and that you know how to use them (we offer training on 5th Saturdays). You must also carry: drink, snack and waterproofs.

At least 2 ½ hrs, stop once & up to 25 miles

- **Level 0: Beginner's Ride/Ride Skills**

Aimed at adults who've not ridden since childhood, or perhaps not at all. We organise these on request. Often they're one-to-one sessions, or we'll team you up with someone at a similar level or a friend for mutual support. Our trained ride leader will structure the session around your specific needs.

We'll work on balance, brakes, gears, turning and hand signals. We're situated on a quiet road with plenty of quiet places to practice nearby.

If it takes more than one session, that's fine. Hopefully you'll be confident to join us soon on an L1 ride.

We normally run these on 4th and 5th Saturdays. It's down to availability of our trainer, so please confirm before coming.

- **Early Bird: Fast Road Ride**

These differ from our regular programme, as they start a lot earlier and are ridden **entirely on the road**. You'll need to be able to comfortably do a Level 4 ride, or perhaps you're an experienced road rider who's not interested in chasing Strava segments. Most people on these rides have a road bike. You'll be expected to be able to repair your own bike, and to keep up with an average speed of 14mph.

At least 2 ½ hrs, stop once & up to 40 miles

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