

## Group Riding Guidance

*The guidance is issued in order to ensure a consistency of expectation, approach and experience in the conduct of our group riding in a safe and responsible manner.*

### Introduction

Derbyshire RoSPA encourage all members (associates under training to advance tutors) to come out on our group rides. Not only do they provide a great way for us to share in a passion we all enjoy but they also provide a fabulous opportunity to improve our own skills by seeing how other more advanced riders ride.

Group riding at Derbyshire RoSPA aims to be safe, legal, supportive, welcoming and friendly. Any full member or associates under training is welcome to attend. We are completely inclusive and try to reasonably accommodate all skill levels and choice of machinery.

### Arrangements

The ride should be publicised in advance via usual social media and email. Be sure to give an indication of the technical nature and duration of the ride to ensure that those choosing to join the group check that it is suitable for them. This should ensure everyone understand in good time the start point, the starting time and the general route and destination.

### Before You Set Off

Ensure everyone is known and has current membership. Due to insurance constraints non-members cannot be allowed onto group organised rides, however pillions are welcome.

New full members and associates who have come along for their first group riding experience are to be warmly welcomed, introduced to everyone and generally allowed to settle in. Consider noting name and details of new attendees.

Conduct a pre-ride brief. Does everyone know how 'second man drop off' works? If not give them a simple introduction to ensure there are no surprises. Ensure everyone has a general understanding of the route, where you may be conducting stops and who the 'last man' is.

Ensure everyone understands that this is a RoSPA group organised event. It is therefore expected that:

- The ride will be conducted within the spirit of 'Motorcycle Roadcraft'
- The ride will be conducted in a safe and legal manner
- The riders will respect one another, and other road users at all times
- Overtaking is allowed providing it is clean, respectful and legal
- Everyone knows that they are to ride their own ride, ride at a pace they are comfortable with and are responsible for their own safety
- Individuals have a good understanding of the additional hazards that arise from riding in a group and the associated mitigation measures as noted in Appendix 1
- The group will not knowingly leave anyone behind

Ensure you know how many people are in the group.

Appendix 1 expands on how the ride leader should adapt the ride to ensure the group ride is safe.

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## Conducting the Ride

In conducting the ride:

- The leader and the 'last man' are a team. Ensure you both know the route and any deviation of changes to the plan are known to everyone
- It is beneficial if the ride leader and 'last man' are in radio communication with each other
- The 'last man' should ensure he will be clearly visible to all in the group (e.g. wear Hi Viz and ensure headlight is on)
- Any observed behaviour not compliant with the group ethos and codes of behaviour, are to be tactfully dealt with by the ride leader (any members of the training team on the ride should support when required)
- Periodically check that the group is together, and the last man can be seen
- If anyone is struggling with pace or style, consider slowing the group to suit or ensure 'last man' understands the issue and is accommodating the pace
- If anyone has an accident or breaks down, we all help. Ensure the: -
  - scene is safe
  - rider is OK
  - emergency services are called if required
  - machine is OK and recovery is arranged where needed
  - everyone gets home safely.
- Any event with safety or reputation implications, must be promptly reported to the group's chairman.

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## Appendix 1 – Adapting Your Ride to Group Riding

As an advanced rider, or training to become one, you should approach the additional hazards posed by Group Riding using the systematic approach as detailed in Roadcraft.

### **Additional Hazards**

1. Differing rider abilities (experience, predictability, their reaction to hazards)
2. Proximity to each other and impact on visibility
3. Complacency. Impact on risk awareness/observation (blindly following the rider in front into overtake)
4. Human factor impacts on one other (e.g. differing speeds, possible frustration, uncertainty of the route or losing contact with the group)
5. Adverse reaction of other road users

The aim of these guidelines is to assist in mitigating these hazards to ensure the whole group returns safely having had an enjoyable responsible ride.

### **Mitigation Measures**

Hazards 1 to 4 are very much inter-related. We can try to minimise them by: -

- Individuals riders in the group to show respect and consideration to the other riders in the group by adapting how they ride
  - To the rider in front
    - Give them Space
    - Give them Time
    - Be 'In Their Mirrors' so they can see you
    - Ensure your spacing meets the "2 second rule".
  - To the rider behind
    - Don't be Unpredictable
    - Signal Your Intentions
    - Signal them past if you feel you are holding them up and they want to go past
- Overtaking within the group is permitted but must be undertaken safely with the same preparation and consideration as you would if you were riding on your own including considering a lifesaver check before moving out
- Watching how the rider in front positions their bike on the road and reacts (e.g. unexpected braking or movement) can provide advance warning of an approaching hazard but try not to fixate on them. You need to also read the road (particularly bends) for yourself. Don't just blindly follow the same track as the rider in front
- Ride leader should progress at an appropriate pace to suit the general ability level within the group; there is little point pushing on if there is no one able to follow you.
- Remain alert to other riders who are not part of the group working their way forward; it is safer to allow them to overtake

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- Individual group riders taking proactive steps to try and keep the group together and/or reform where safe and appropriate to do so such as: -
  - Ride leader slowing down early when approaching urban areas to allow the rest of the group to catch up.
  - Adopting a staggered formation on dual carriageways, motorways and appropriate sections of single lane. This allows the group to ride closer together but maintaining adequate safety margins. A more compact group provides a greater deterrent to other road users trying to “squeeze” into an inappropriate gap within the group.
  - Closing up and adopting a staggered formation when stopping at traffic lights or at junctions. Being more compact should allow more group members to get through.

If we ride as described above, we should not have any negative impact on other road users (Hazard 5).