



[Windsor Cycle Hub](#)

Ride Classifications – version 3.1, 2023

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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 help the environment, to enjoy our historic town and countryside, as well as meet new people. It could 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 different levels of 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 stick with it. Or 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 at their own pace, 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.

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) . 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 – or if you're endangering yourself and endangering/inconveniencing others on the ride or on path.

We don't insist on helmets, but you'll notice that our volunteers all wear them. Most of our routes are scenic, so 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 on your own. 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.

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

Safety

Your and the wider safety of the group is our no.1 priority. All our 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. 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.

Our ride volunteers will lead by example, but you are responsible for decisions you make on the road (e.g. pulling out of 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 do not overtake the Ride Leader, or cycle on their right.

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

Schedule

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

Guided Rides

We have 4 levels of guided ride, which we rotate through the month. We've also 2 special ride levels on request. **All start and finish at The Swan (unless we're on an Away Day – follow 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. **Levels 1-3 rides leave at 11:15, Level 4-5 at 11am.**

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 won't make cafe stops.**

NB Our 1st two levels are aimed at inexperienced cyclists – giving them a nice gentle pace and plenty of space to get confident. If you're looking for something faster, then please look at L3+. You're welcome to join if you ride slowly, maybe you've come to support a friend.

Also, 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 tried L1 or 2.

- **Level 1: Gentle (Easy)**

These are 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). L1 rides are at the pace of the slowest person – but 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: Gentle (Easy) Explorer**

A lot like a Gentle/Easy ride, also flat, a bit quicker and longer. Mainly on tracks, but we'll venture onto some quiet roads, so we can see more sites and build confidence – typically around Eton.

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: Explorer (Intermediate)**

The progression over Gentle Explorer is that we add hills, a 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 run. With less experienced visitors we'll stay within the Park's roads – unless the whole group is feeling more eager, e.g. we might pop out briefly to visit sites like the RAF Memorial. Often we'll have 2 groups, with people moving up from L2 and more confident visitors going 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: Adventurer (Advanced)**

Distance, pace and hills will build – if we cycle to WGP, we might go through the town, up to the Castle, then up Crimp Hill into the park. Normally, we'll come back on the track to Stag Meadow.

We'll also leave the Windsor area – e.g. heading to Cookham via the Maidenhead Greenway. 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 30 mins earlier at 11am sharp.

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 5: Pathfinder Ride**

Currently, unpublicised rides on Sundays, starting at The Swan, to check-out quiet routes that we can incorporate into our regular rides.

We sometimes we get a little lost and muddy on our mission to find routes suitable for everyone! Hillier, faster, further than our normal rides – but with stops to check maps etc.

Maximum of 4 riders – must be able to hold the pace (av. 13mph). Contact us for details.

At least 3 ½ hrs, stop once/twice & up to 40 miles

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

Aimed at adults who've not ridden since childhood, or perhaps not at all. We organise these on request, as it's important that you get our full attention. 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 a Gentle Ride.

We normally run these on 3rd and 4th Saturdays.

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