



Whether you are new to BRCC or cycling in general, then joining a Club Run is one of the best ways to learn more about the Club and cycling. Any non-members/prospective members are welcome to join us on any of our Club Runs.

There are several Club Runs during the week and on Sundays, as follows:

Sunday Club Run

The BRCC Sunday Club Run is reasonably paced, averaging about 14-15 mph. It is a social ride, an opportunity to share in the company of the Club's many leisure cyclists and newer members. The Club Run is **not a chain gang, nor a race simulation**. Neither is it an opportunity to show off how fit you are by racing ahead of the group.

The start point is the **Bedford Swan Hotel** in the centre of Bedford where the High Street meets the Embankment. There is free parking (on Sundays) just 100 yards down the road along the Embankment.

The start time is **9:00 am in winter** and **8:30 am in summer**. We leave at those times exactly.

There is always a cafe stop at a convenient half-way point.

The following advice is intended to help newcomers to Club riding, and anyone thinking of giving it a go. Of course, once you get into it, you will learn what works for you personally, largely by trial and error.

Summer Rides



Summer rides start on the first Sunday in April and run through to the last Sunday in October. These vary in distance from 50 to 70 miles, alternating between a shorter distance to allow newcomers to have a go at a lesser distance ride, and a long distance ride to give the seasoned Club Runner something to get their teeth into.

There will be two rides in the summer which will be "centuries" (100-mile events) and will be run on the Sunday of the 2nd May Bank Holiday and the Sunday of the August Bank Holiday. There is also the annual

challenging "Beast with Two Backs" ride in late June or early July - an extremely hilly ride of about 76-miles.

Summer rides can be of challenging distance. Many consider the winter rides are mere training for the long distances of the summer rides. If you are new to cycling, please be sure that you are comfortable riding up-to 38 miles without stopping, and spending over 2-hours in the saddle at a time. If you are not sure, choose one of the lesser distance rides, especially in spring or autumn when we are winding down/up the distance to/from the winter rides.

All the rides are published on the BRCC forum at <http://forum.bedsroad.org> along with a link to the route that will be followed.

What you will need:

Food: Bring a banana or similar energy-rich food, or a couple of energy bars.

Drink: Bring a large bottle of water mixed with one of the proprietary [energy drinks](#). On the longer rides bring an energy drink powder sachet so you can refill your water bottle at the tea stop.

Tools: If you keep your bike well maintained, a basic tool-kit is all you will need. A spare inner-tube is essential however. Please do not rely on a puncture repair kit. Bring a spare tube, and if you get a puncture, use it and patch the damaged one when you get home.

Raincoat: Check the weather forecast the night before the ride. If there is any chance of rain, bring a lightweight cycling jacket.

Bike Lock: Not always required. The event listing on the calendar will advise if you DO need one. It will be required if the bikes will be left some distance away from the cafe stop.



Medications: Anything for your personal requirements (asthma inhaler etc.). Bee and wasp stings are a regular feature in summer. If you know you react badly to stings, bring your adrenalin pen.

Money: £10 - £15 is all you will need to cover a cup of coffee/tea and a large peice of cake. Longer rides include two stops so bring a little more.

The event listing on the calendar will tell you if there is more than one stop.

Mobile phone: Occasionally we lose people enroute, for a variety of reasons. A mobile phone is very useful to help retrieve people, or arrange a suitable re-group place. If it is your first time with the Club, please advise the ride leader of your mobile phone number.

Winter Rides

Winter rides are a lesser distance, 35 to 60 miles, but bring challenges of their own. These rides start on the first Sunday in November and run through to the last Sunday in March. Keeping warm and dry is just the start.

As well as all the equipment of the summer rides, you will need the following:

Mudguards: If you cannot fit full length mudguards on your bike, get some "[Race Blades](#)" or "[Crud Guards](#)" as an absolute minimum. These go a long way to keep you, the rider, dry. Without them, you WILL get wet to the skin, your shoes will fill with water and your whole ride will be miserable, even if the water is only that which is on the road from the rains of the previous night. An addition of a mudflap modification will keep your colleagues dryer for longer as well. If you turn up for a Club Run in winter without mudguards, you will be asked to ride at the back of the bunch.

Rain coat: A heavier coat is required. One which is specifically designed for cycling in winter.

Lights: A good modern set of LED or halogen lights is required. Winter days can be dull and a cyclist is difficult to see by motorists, especially in the rain. We recommend you have your lights switched ON during the whole ride.

Old Clothing: You WILL get very, very dirty. The mud stains are often difficult to wash out of clothing. Don't wear your best expensive Club kit.

Hi-Viz Clothing: Wear anything that is hi-viz, such as a fluorescent jacket or gillet, or arm/leg bands. Even on a bright sunny winter's day, the sun can be so low that motorists are often blinded by glare and cyclists can be totally obscured from their vision. Any such clothing gives you a better chance of being seen rather than becoming another statistic of [SMIDSY](#).

Warm Gloves and Overshoes: In sub-zero temperatures, warm cycle-specific winter gloves are essential. It is not unknown for Club riders to have to abandon a ride because their hands are too cold. Bring a spare pair in a plastic bag too. Waterproof overshoes will keep your feet dry in all but heavy downpours. Bring a spare pair of socks in a plastic bag, so at the tea/coffee stop, after a downpour, you can pour out your shoes and you will thank the day you decided to pack those warm dry socks.

To find out where the Club Run is going this coming Sunday, get a route map and see the profile (i.e. how hilly it will be) see https://www.bedsroad.org/club_rides.php

Club Riding Etiquette and Rules

- Ride in a pack less than 1 metre between you and the rider in front.
- Do not overlap wheels (known as "half-wheeling"). It is dangerous.
- We will **ALWAYS** ride 2 abreast only going to single file when the ride leader advises. E.g., on narrow roads, busy roads (Highway Code Rule 66)
- There will always be 1 rider at the back who will be the anchor man. He/she will be required to ensure that no one is dropped and that we all work towards these etiquette rules. The anchor person will be chosen on the day.
- When the back of the group call 'Car up', this means – Keep 2 abreast, but bunch up and close in on the wheel in front. It does **NOT** mean single file or slow down.
- If a person behind calls a warning this **MUST** be repeated up the line to ensure everyone is aware.
- When calling a warning, if you are the last caller and do not hear it being repeated you **MUST** repeat the warning until it is repeated up the line. (Calls up the line are usually warnings in regard to yours and others safety). Assure the front knows if the back are struggling with the pace.
- Communicate with the other riders by pointing and calling out holes, walkers, joggers, parked cars and horses.
- Slow down for horses, give them lots of room. Call ahead "bikes-up" if approaching horses from behind, so as not to startle them.
- Call out "stopping" or "slowing" if that is what you are doing, to avoid the rider behind you crashing into you.
- When pulling out at junctions, you have the best view of any traffic coming from the left or right. Call back to the riders still at the junction "clear", "car left" or "car right" as appropriate.

- On tight bends and narrow lanes call out "car down" or "car up"; remember that cars go down your throat and up your a**e.
- Keep your lines. On corners, do not cut the corner, or understeer the corner. Remain parallel to the road centreline/edge. There **WILL** be someone to your rear left or rear right whom you will be forcing off the road or into the path of an oncoming car.
- **DO NOT OVERTAKE THE RIDE LEADER.** The lead rider is controlling the pace. The exception to this is when "rotation" action is being used to share the load against a headwind. If you are unfamiliar with this, you will be briefed on what to do. Anyone accelerating ahead of the group will be assumed to be on another ride of their own devices. They will not be called after or chased after if they miss a turn or take a wrong turn. We wait for people who go off the back of the ride. We do **NOT** wait for people who go off the front.
- Do not try to "up the pace" of the ride. The Club Run is **NOT** a training ride. If 16mph (at zero wind, zero gradient) is too slow for you, you are respectfully advised that the Club Run is not for you. The Club organises several other events and rides that may be more suited to your pace.
- Please do not overtake another rider on the left without shouting out a warning to the rider first.
- If you are on the front of the pack, after reaching the top of a climb, do not accelerate immediately as you go down the other side of the hill. Remember that in a big group, the rear riders will still be labouring up the hill even after you are descending down the other side. Keep the group together.
- Do not break-up the ordered group. Only on significant gradient climbs should you break away if you want to, as all people have a different comfortable climbing pace. In this case, always wait at the top of the hill to allow a re-group and a short recuperation.
- When pulling out from a junction, or turning into a road, slow down a little to allow the riders behind to catch up. Everyone takes time to set-off, clip-in and get settled back in the saddle. Keep the group together.
- Do not litter. If you eat on the move, or take a gel, put the wrapper in your pocket. Do not throw it on the side of the road.

The Family Rides

SECOND & FOURTH SUNDAYS IN THE MONTH.

These rides are designed for the less confident rider, or for those who wish to bring children on "tagalongs", tandems or their own bikes. The route is planned so that short cuts can be taken if necessary, with the

intention of a coffee and cake stop after about an hour and a half riding.

We leave from the Swan at 09.00 and are usually back there by 15.00, weather and punctures permitting. Due to the great variety of tyre and wheel sizes, you are strongly advised to bring spare inner tubes and a pump to fit your particular machine - we can help change a punctured tube but can't carry spares for all the different types now available.

For more information and advice on any aspect of the Family Rides, please view the forum at <http://forum.bedsroad.org>

Wednesday & Friday Rides

There is a small group of members (mostly retired) who usually meet at 09:30Hrs at the Barkers Lane entrance to Priory Park. Pace is a little slower than the Sunday Club Run, so is ideal for the newcomer as a taster of club riding. Club Run Rules - Ride Etiquette apply.

For more information and advice on any aspect of the Wednesday & Friday Rides, please view the forum at <http://forum.bedsroad.org>

