

# Mass Ride 2: GUIDANCE TO RIDERS

**It's nearly here!**

**Hopefully you are excited as we are at once again taking over the streets of Winchester for a short while to demonstrate the strength and diversity of our cycling community and the joy of pedal-power.**

**And it's not too late to invite friends and neighbours to join in ...**

**It would be great to have warmth and clear skies but let's show that cyclists get out whatever the weather - well, within reason!**

The reasons for cancellation would be ice/snow or a severe weather warning – in which case a notice will be put on [cyclewinchester.org.uk](http://cyclewinchester.org.uk) by 8am on the morning of the ride.

**Guidelines to help make things as safe, smooth and fun as possible:**

- Wrap up warm. But don't let that stop you making it a celebratory ride by way of costumes, lights, bells and whistles!
- The rides are aiming to arrive close in time to each other and merge by filling the left hand lane above the Sports Centre traffic lights on North Walls. Once assembled the ride will stay in the left-hand lane to King Alfred's Statue, passing round the roundabout without stopping, and heading back along Eastgate Street to Friarsgate. As the ride enters Friarsgate it will spread to occupy both lanes, only narrowing at points where necessary ie at a right turn.
- Each ride will have at least four marshals. Their role is to direct how the ride proceeds ie protecting the front and rear of the ride and keeping the group together, creating a shield for less experienced riders, setting an appropriate pace, negotiating junctions in an orderly fashion and so on. They are very experienced riders but they can't be responsible for every individual. Many of you will be similarly experienced and hopefully you will play your part in protecting and encouraging younger and less experienced cyclists eg by keeping traffic side whenever you can.
- For safety, minimum disruption and maximum visibility we want to make every effort to keep the ride as a single cohesive group around the two loops without traffic getting caught up in-between.  
To that end:
  - if tired you can exit the ride on the first visit to King Alfred's Statue and go straight to Abbey Gardens.
  - if the top end of St George's Street is too steep to maintain a reasonable speed *consider using Parchment Street as a short-cut and re-join the Mass Ride as it comes down North Walls.* There will be a Ride Leader assigned to this route and no shame in choosing this option!
  - when stopped at lights and junctions be alert to what is going on and ready to get going again when the front riders make a start.

- If the ride gets split at any time, around the loops or riding into the city, the rear group should continue as a single unit rather than getting stretched out trying to catch up the front group. Marshals will split between the groups. At some point, if safe, the front group will pause for the rear to reconnect or at worst and especially if close to completion the two groups will continue separately to the finish.
- At the finish keep cycling up the Broadway to the zebra-crossing and enter Abbey Gardens through the wide entrance by the Guildhall so that cyclists are clear of the main roundabout as quickly as possible. Take extra care here at the end of the ride where there will be buses and coaches doing their thing.
- We won't be charging for the hot drink and mince pie but would appreciate a donation in a bucket to CycleWinchester which at the moment has no funds to support campaigning. Bring a re-use cup if you have one.  
Thanks go to Winchester Quaker Meeting House for letting us use their kitchen.

### **The Mass Ride philosophy.**

The mass ride is organised as far as possible to be an informal, community affair: a lot of cyclists doing what they like to do and are lawfully able to do – albeit, all at the same time. It is meant to be a fun and sociable celebration of cycling and a chance to demonstrate to others - and remind ourselves - what a large, diverse crowd we the cycling community are.

To that end it is not an 'event', something occasional and special where roads are closed, signs put up and the police are involved. We could do a Mass Ride *any* Saturday.

Of course, we have informed the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) at WCC and explained our general approach to managing the ride which has been approved.

It is important that *we obey traffic lights* and *we have no right to block traffic*.

On the other hand most of us when out with young cyclists or a larger group will occasionally at difficult crossings position our bikes as a shield to protect the tail of a group across a busy road. It is done with discretion, presuming on the good nature of motorists for a moment and always with a clear wave of thanks afterwards. This is the spirit of the Mass Ride which the marshals will be aiming to implement and which you can help to support, especially around the inner-city loops.

The ride is not anti-car and we don't want to create undue resentment amongst drivers. Our approach should be quietly determined but unfailingly good-humoured.

On the other hand the Mass Ride does have an element of protest. We are tired of being poorly served by the road systems, by the priority given to motorists and, sometimes, by the way people drive. Until Winchester actually is 'Better By Bike' we are going to be a little bit assertive for an hour or so in order to make it that way: hopefully a taste of things to come!