

Winchester Mass Ride 8, GUIDANCE TO RIDERS

April 2025

We hope you are excited as us at taking over the streets of Winchester again for an hour or two to demonstrate the diversity and size of our cycling community and the pleasure of cycling when we are in the majority on the streets.

MAKING THE RIDE AS SAFE, SMOOTH AND FUN AS POSSIBLE

- Each ride into the city will have at least three marshals. They will decide when and how the group moves, keep the ride moving at an appropriate pace, negotiate junctions in an orderly fashion and so on.
They are experienced riders/marshals, but they can't be responsible for each individual. Parents should keep a close eye on their children, *always stay traffic side of them* and later on around the one-way system ensure they don't get separated at traffic lights.
- Many of you will be experienced riders and we hope that you will play your part in watching out for, protecting and encouraging younger or less experienced cyclists - acting as informal marshals, supporting our volunteer team.
- *Please stay behind the front marshal* who is carefully monitoring progress for a well-timed and efficient merging of incoming rides on North Walls.
There will always *be a back-marker, so no-one gets left behind*.
- For safety, minimum disruption and maximum visibility we want to make every effort to keep the ride as a single cohesive group without traffic getting caught up in-between.
 - *young riders* to form a group at the front of the ride with their responsible adult(s);
 - *slow/tired riders* can exit to Abbey Gardens as the ride reaches King Alfred's Statue for the first time or use the short-cut along Parchment Street;
 - *all riders* should try to keep close together to prevent cars filling into gaps;
 - *all riders* should be ready to move off promptly.
- Once the rides reach the one-way system two or three PCSO's will be in attendance on bikes. They will be riding around with us helping to ensure safety and assisting in keeping the ride together in order to minimise disruption.
- Please read and remember the following guidelines below about merging on North Walls and riding around the one-way system, *particularly as our approach is different to that of previous years*.

MERGING ON NORTH WALLS

Due to increasing numbers of riders we will now be merging on the left-hand lane of North Walls *from the Park Avenue traffic lights*. If the group stretches back far enough, we should leave the entrance to Hyde Abbey Road clear and continue to group above the lights.

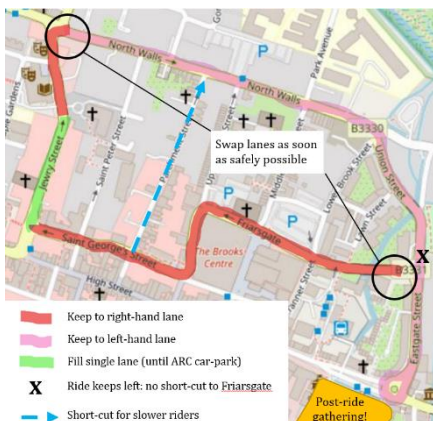
RIDING AROUND THE ONE-WAY SYSTEM

Unlike previous years, we have permission from the relevant authorities to briefly hold back traffic at nine key junctions around the city. This will significantly reduce the number of cars joining the one-way system. The aim is to give us more of a free passage around the city to minimise disruption.

Although the streets will be quieter there are many sets of traffic lights, pedestrian crossings and places where cars/buses can join - all potentially delaying our progress and splitting the riding group.

The authorities recognise that it's safer if marshals encourage pedestrians and drivers to let the group through *even when lights turn red*. That will be done good-naturedly with the help of the PCSOs and street skaters who did such a fantastic job last time around. It is about creating the right atmosphere and hopefully people enjoying the sight of a cavalcade of bikes passing by.

So the guidance to you as an individual rider - if directed by a marshal – is to pass through red lights and keep the group together, doing so safely and at an appropriate speed with a big smile and a thankyou wave. But if there are individuals who insist on exercising their right to cross then of course we stop and let them do so.



Also note that we keep to one lane at any time - see map – and join Friarsgate *via King Alfreds roundabout*.

ABBEY GARDENS

The Mass Ride finishes on the Broadway *after one loop of the city centre*. Riders should aim to disperse quickly to avoid congestion and are encouraged to congregate in Abbey Gardens for refreshments, a bike doctor, children's activities and more ... and a chance to socialise and enjoy the moment!

THE MASS RIDE PHILOSOPHY

- The mass ride is organised to be an informal, community affair: a lot of cyclists doing what they like to do and are lawfully able to do. It is a celebration of cycling and a chance to demonstrate to others - and remind ourselves - what a large, diverse crowd we are.
- The ride is not anti-car. We aren't aiming to create disruption or annoyance. There will always be drivers who hoot their horn whatever the situation. Our approach should be quietly determined but unfailingly good-humoured. We have every right to be on the road and would be causing far more disruption had we all driven into town.
- Of course, 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 by the way some people drive. Until Winchester is 'Better By Bike' we are going to be a bit assertive for an hour or so in order to make it that way: a taste of things to come!

The ride will go ahead unless there is extreme weather or a major incident in which case there will be a notice on our webpage and on social media by 8am on the day.