



London Cycling Club

Members Handbook



London Cycling Club
Ontario Canada Since 1971

7th Edition
2023

www.londoncyclingclub.net

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LCC Mission Statement

The London Cycling Club (LCC) is a not-for-profit recreational touring cycling club. We provide a safe, inclusive, social, and fun riding environment for all levels and abilities. We promote skill development, cycling education, and ride etiquette. We support and encourage a healthy and active lifestyle, while promoting cycling as a practical means of transportation. We act as ambassadors of the sport through participation in local charity rides and volunteerism.

LCC Values

Respect – Inclusiveness – Responsibility – Honesty – Integrity

Introduction

Group rides are popular for many reasons including camaraderie, efficiency, support, and security. Cycling in groups is safer and more enjoyable for everyone when cyclists act cooperatively and predictably. The Board of Directors has prepared this handbook as a guide to introduce our expectations, bylaws, and best practices for our group rides.

It is required that members familiarize themselves with this handbook to gain an understanding of ride lengths, average speed, and group riding etiquette. In addition to this handbook, members are also required to familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the LCC's internal documents including the Risk Management Plan, Code of Conduct, and the Bylaws and Policies Manual. In this handbook, the terms "members" and "riders" are used interchangeably. Both terms apply to those who have registered with the London Cycling Club and are members in good standing.

Club Rides

The LCC hosts rides for its members on Sundays and holidays, traditionally from April through October. As a touring club we ride predominately on roads, however we will use paths to navigate through the city. We also offer gravel rides at certain times in the season. Our rides range in distance from 35K – 160K, usually in groups of 8-12 riders. Groups are determined by distance and average pace. Average pace refers to the average overall pace of the ride as you would see in Strava. At different points during the ride the pace will be faster or slower depending on factors such as wind, terrain etc. All essential information for each ride, including start location, start time, and destination is posted on the [LCC website](#).

Holiday or Special Tour Rides

On holiday Mondays, the LCC typically hosts rides starting from a remote location. These rides allow members to experience different terrain, scenery, and rest stop locations. Special Tour rides are like holiday rides and usually include an overnight component. Details about these rides and their start locations will be posted on the LCC website and communicated through emails and social media. As there are typically fewer members who participate in these rides, the number of groups may be fewer as well. Those present should reach a consensus on the size of groups and the pace each will ride.

Bicycles

For the safety of everyone all bikes must be in 100% working order – tires inflated, brakes and drivetrain ready to roll. Social rides can be done on practically any bike in proper working order; however, a road style bike with drop bars must be used for the medium, and long rides (no straight bars allowed). We welcome riders with pedal assist E-Bikes (maximum assisted speed of 32 kph); however, due to our insurance coverage regulations, throttle assist bicycles are not allowed. All riders of E-Bikes are responsible to ensure that they are legal in the areas we ride in. All E-Bikes are subject to the same group restrictions as non-E-Bikes. (Example... straight vs drop bars)

Respect

The London Cycling Club uses a Ride Leader Program. Our mission Statement states “We provide a safe, inclusive, social, and fun riding environment for all levels and abilities.” The Ride Leader’s role within LCC is to ensure that rides are safe and enjoyable, while following the club’s Risk Management Plan, and Ride Guidelines. If at any point the safety of a ride is compromised, Ride Leaders are empowered to act. There must be at least one Ride Leader for each group, or the ride is cancelled.

- The Ride Leaders are volunteer “Hosts” of the ride representing the club and deserve respect
- There is simply no place for individuals who do not embody the LCC’s values and do not follow club policies. Ride Leaders are responsible to uphold these expectations for the safety and enjoyment of all riders
- Riders who pose a safety risk to others, and/or refuse to abide by the LCC’s Bylaws and Guidelines can be asked to leave a ride by a ride leader. All incidents will be reported to the board after the ride.

The philosophy of being a great Ride Leader begins with a simple statement: “being a ride leader is not about you!” Ride leaders make certain that everyone who attends their ride has a safe and enjoyable experience. Ride leaders contribute by “giving back” to the bicycle club they belong to through a commitment to the riders. They promote the positive aspects of safe cycling, as well as a positive impression of the bicycle club with which they are associated.

All members are expected to follow the information outlined in this handbook, and by default, all members should be prepared to show leadership skills in the group they ride in – the safety of all members is dependent on everyone sharing responsibility for safety and courteous riding. Any member can become a ride leader, please contact a member of the board if you have questions or are interested @ londoncyclingclubinfo@gmail.com

Dropping

It is the intent of the LCC to never leave a rider behind based on ability unless the ride is clearly designated as a “DROP” ride. If a rider is struggling, or has a mechanical issue, at least one rider will drop back and stay with them through the completion of the ride. If a rider decides to leave a group for any reason, they should notify the Ride Leader prior to doing so. *It is each riders' responsibility to ensure that they can maintain the pace for any ride they choose.*

OC Insurance

The London Cycling Club, and its' members, pay to be covered by Ontario Cycling's (OC) general liability insurance plan that includes the following: (see the [OC website](#) for specifics)

- Members are covered while participating in an approved “club sanctioned” ride or activity including direct travel to and from the event
- Members are covered by General Liability Insurance designed to protect a person against legal responsibility out of a negligent act, or failure to act as a prudent person would have acted which results in property damage or bodily injury to another party
- Sports Accident Insurance is structured to provide a core level of coverage and benefits such as loss of limbs, fracture, dislocation and other conditions, including death; sustained by a member due to external causes beyond the member's control
- This coverage is secondary to any other health care plan(s)
- A sanctioned event is described as an organized group ride which is documented prior to the date of the event and on file with the OC. Participants on the list must be on the member list filed with the insurer.
- If an incident and/or accident occurs, it must be documented and recorded immediately
- If there is injury or personal property damage the Board and OC must be notified immediately
- No coverage is provided for alcohol/narcotic related injuries. If a ride finishes with alcohol related activities, it is considered “officially finished”, ended and is no longer a sanctioned ride

Weather Policy

The LCC board will do their best to notify groups of a cancelled ride `prior to the start via email, or text or social media. Please be aware that club rides will be cancelled due to weather based on the following:

- It is raining at the start of a ride
- The forecast calls for a 70% (or more) POP or lightening; or Winds/gusts are forecasted at 50kph or higher.
- If the weather deteriorates during a ride and it is deemed too dangerous to continue, a ride leader will advise the group to seek shelter and/or redirect the ride back to the starting point in the most direct manner

A cancelled ride does not mean that riders are unable to ride. It is a statement by the club that we do not recommend riding. The ride will be considered a “non-sanctioned” (no OC coverage) event and any Ride Leaders will not be participating in an official capacity.

Know the route – Ride With GPS

A Ride With GPS account is provided to all members of LCC, this is included with your membership. Members get the benefit of paid features for all Club routes. Voice navigation and offline maps in the mobile app, advanced turn notifications on TCX files, and PDF maps and cue sheets are all available to our members.

Sign-up or Sign-in

- If you are new to Ride With GPS go to <https://ridewithgps.com/signup> follow the instructions to create a profile. It is important that you use the same email you used to register with LCC

Join the club

- Click on the club directory and search for London Cycling Club. Submit a request to join and an email will be sent to our admin team. Please allow 1-2 business days to activate your account.

Choosing a group

One of the most important riding decisions revolves around average speed and which group is the 'right' one for people to join. This doesn't just apply to new and beginner riders; we get questions from experienced riders who are also trying to gauge the pace of the ride or group. Following is a guide to try and help you choose the group or ride that suits your current level, and then give you options when you do feel ready to push yourself a bit more.

It's important to remember that most of our rides are **'no drop'** (no one's left behind), so everyone will be looked after by the ride leaders throughout the ride should they struggle with the pace or have a mechanical issue. On "drop" rides, no rider will intentionally be left behind, due to a mechanical or physical issue. It is our experience that riders will drop back and assist someone in distress or struggling.

It is each riders' responsibility to ensure that they can maintain the pace for any ride they choose, in "Drop" rides someone clearly not able to maintain the pace may be left behind.

If you find yourself in-between groups, then go out with the slower group and work on strength, take longer turns at the front (other riders will appreciate it and you'll get stronger). Work on keeping a steady pace into the wind. Go back and get a tired rider and bring them back to the group. There is likely someone else in the group who is also feeling like you so work together. Work on technique and strengthening your pace-line skills. If you are at all unsure about what group to join then please [email us](#) or message us on *social media*. We're always happy to have a chat about what would work best for you.

Our groups are formed based on average speed and distance. When choosing a group based on riding speed, it is important to know your average speed. The best way of knowing this is to have a bike computer on your bike. New riders should start with the shorter distance groups and move up as they get stronger, more proficient, and more confident riding in groups. (See Table below)

There are many factors that can change your average speed, all of which should be taken into consideration:

- **Hills** - How hilly the ride is, has the biggest effect on average speed. Look at the profile of the route. Fewer hills = higher average speed. *Note, don't think the downhills will balance out the speed - they won't
- **Weather** - Mainly wind, but rain and temperature have an effect too. A big headwind will slow your average down (a big tailwind will speed it up). If it's raining you will ride slower to stay safe, and if it's cold your muscles won't work as well. It all makes a difference, so look at the weather before picking your ride or group.
- **Length** - How long is the ride? The greater the distance the lower your average speed will generally be, as you must maintain the pace for longer.
- **Environment** - We live in a city and must navigate traffic and lights etc. at the start and end of our rides. This will reduce your average speed over the course of the ride meaning you can be riding 2-5 kph above the stated average on flats outside of the city.

Use the following table as a guide to help decide what group to join:

Group Name	Average Speed (km/h)	Uphill Speed (km/h)	Ride Distance (km)
Social	18 – 23	<18	40 – 70
"B"	23 – 28	15 – 20	60 – 120
"A"	28+	20+	75 – 120

There is some flexibility in these groups. For instance, if you wish to ride a longer distance at a slower pace, and can find a group willing to do so, you are welcome to, if there is a qualified Ride Leader. Please communicate your intentions with the rest of the members prior to leaving the starting location. The club is open to formally adding a ride at any distance or pace if there is enough demand. All rides must be filed with the OC prior to departure to be considered "sanctioned".

Social

Our Social group is for the cyclist mostly interested in socializing and getting a little exercise. This ride is focused on safety, moderate exercise, and socializing – not speed. The ride leader will make sure that no one is dropped. The group will stop whenever anyone needs water, a rest, or just wants to take in the views. Road bikes are not required – comfort bikes, hybrids, and cruisers are all welcome as long as they are in good working order. See “bicycles” (Page 4) for more information on E-bikes.

“B” Medium and Long

These groups are for the cyclist who is interested in a more recreational ride, with planned rest breaks and with the option of stopping along the way for, a quick snack, a water break, etc., but has the conditioning to ride longer distances. They have experience in group riding etiquette and like a challenge but are not interested in an environment where the pace is challenged by top end speed.

“A” Medium and Long

These groups are for the experienced cyclist looking for a challenge, and to ride within a group that will push the pace. However, our group rides are not races. These rides are designated DROP rides, although no rider will be left behind due to a mechanical issue or distress, slower riders not capable of maintaining the posted pace may dropped.

Gravel Rides

From time to time, the club will be offering gravel rides. These will be like our social rides where bikes are not limited to road style with drop bars. The same restrictions apply to E-bikes (no throttle assist) It is strongly recommended that tires be at least 28 mm or wider, and bikes can handle the demands of gravel.

Ride Preparation

The essential information for each ride, including start location, start time, and destination is posted on the [LCC website](#). From time to time, it may be necessary to rearrange the routes due to construction or special events; however, the route maps may not be updated prior to riding. Any changes after that time will be communicated at the start location.

Members are required to know the route they plan on riding on any given day. For each ride, members should print out the route map, have a turn-by-turn direction sheet, or download the maps onto their personal GPS device or cell phone. If members get separated from the main group on any ride, they will be able to follow the remainder of the route and return to the finishing point of the ride independently.

Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. Before the ride starts, a Ride Coordinator will ask that the members separate into their groups, and The Ride Leaders will discuss the days' route, give any known road hazards or construction concerns, and give any other club announcements.

For all LCC sanctioned rides, riders must:

- Abide by all LCC Bylaws and Policies, as well as rules and guidelines set out in this handbook
- Wear an approved helmet as per the OC insurance program
- Know the route before leaving the starting point
- Carry identification such as a Health Card, or Driver's License

All riders are strongly encouraged to:

- Wear proper cycling clothing which will provide greater comfort, including cycling gloves, cycling shorts, cycling jerseys, and any other clothing suitable for the weather
- Have lights on their bike
 - A flashing red light on the back enables drivers to see a rider up to a kilometer away
 - A flashing white light at the front makes a rider much more visible even in daylight (a light is a legal requirement up to 1 hour prior to dusk, and after dawn)
- Carry the following items:
 - Enough money for snacks/drinks along the way, as well as for a cab ride home in case of an injury, flat tire, or mechanical breakdown
 - Eye protection (such as glasses or sunglasses)
 - Sunscreen
 - First Aid kit
 - Food for energy
 - A sufficient supply of liquids
 - Cell phone.

Bikes are required to have the following:

- A tool kit, which includes as a minimum one spare inner tube, a patch kit, tire levers, a frame pump or CO2 cartridge. Even if you don't know how to use it – someone will
- A speedometer or GPS, to know the speed you are riding at
- A bell, as required by the Highway Traffic Act

The LCC does not permit the following items on LCC sanctioned rides:

- Headphones / earphones
- Aero bars – Bars do not need to be removed from bikes, but the rider cannot use them
- Kickstands are only allowed in the Social Rides, not A & B rides

Traffic Laws

In addition to understanding the LCC's internal documents members are expected to obey all traffic laws. Members are expected to have knowledge of the [Ontario Highway Traffic Act](#), especially the rules of the road as it pertains to cyclists.

It is in each member's own interest to obey traffic laws and follow the rules of the road. It only takes a few inconsiderate cyclists to create a negative perception of cyclists among the general public, whether they are an LCC member or not. LCC members are encouraged to do their part to create a positive perception of cyclists through their actions and attitudes.

Ride Formations

The LCC rides in two formations; the double pace-line and single file. The double pace-line is used on most roads, as it makes the group more compact in length and permits conversation. The single file formation is often used on busier roads. Both formations are explained below.

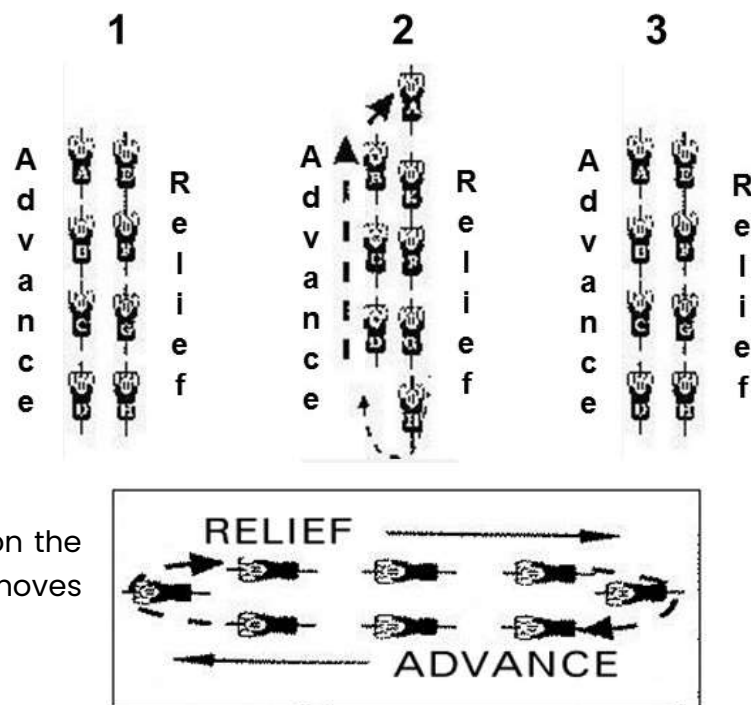
*Note – Riding in a group is a new experience for a lot of people, and not everyone is comfortable with riding close to the person in front or having someone that close behind. If you are not used to riding in a group, you should start out by leaving a gap of approximately one bike length between you and the rider in front of you. As your skills and confidence grow you should begin to close the gap. Alternatively, you may want to stay at the back and not rotate until you feel comfortable. This is ok, just communicate to the

rider ahead that you will not be rotating and leave room for them to get through. Please communicate within the group if you are uncomfortable in any way and more experienced riders may offer some tips or strategies to help build your skills, this will make your experience more enjoyable and ensure the safety of others.

Double Pace-line

The most efficient way of riding in a group is to ride in a double pace-line. In this formation, two lines ride side by side, one meter or less apart. The rider on the right sets the line and the rider on the left sets the pace. The rider on the right should be half a meter in from the edge of the road so as not to crowd the group onto the shoulder.

While the group maintains a certain speed, the left front (advance) rider increases their speed slightly to move up and across in front of the right front (relief) rider. The right front calls out "clear" when the left front rider is clear to come across to the relief position. The remaining riders in the advance line move ahead while maintaining their speed and the remaining riders on the relief line fall back one place. The rear rider of the relief group moves over to the left to become the rear rider of the advance group.



The key to getting a rotation working properly is not staying at the head of the advance line for too long before moving over to the relief line. The timing of the rotation is determined by the two lead riders who yell "rotate" while using the appropriate hand symbol as well.

Riders should ensure there is no one else coming up from behind before moving over. The speeds you reach in such a group can be exhilarating but it takes good bike handling skills to pull it off safely. When riding into a strong wind, it is recommended that rotations happen quite often so that the lead riders do not tire.

Done properly, riding in a double pace-line can save a significant amount of effort, with estimates showing it is about 30% harder pulling in front than drafting behind another rider.

Single File

Traffic and road conditions dictate when to ride single file. If motorists are experiencing difficulty passing the group because of heavy and continuous traffic in the opposite direction, the Ride Leader will decide whether conditions merit changing to single file.

The key factor is the width of the roadway. It may be safer to hold up traffic if there is insufficient width for motorists to pass comfortably. Riding single file may not benefit either cyclists or motorists - it doubles the length of the group and can make passing more hazardous because of poor sight and distance. Although it is important to try to accommodate the needs of other road users, riders' safety must never be compromised.

When single file is called, the inside riders put two bike lengths between them and the bike in front. The outside riders then move in ahead of the rider on the right. As soon as the heavy traffic has passed, the group should revert to double file. The LCC typically will not ride on roads where single file riding is required for long stretches; thus, passing while in single file is discouraged.

Communicating in the Group

When riding in a group, it is important to constantly be communicating. Sometimes it is easy to lose track of conditions while in a conversation, but a little communication goes a long way to prevent accidents and

mechanical incidents. The following table is a list of common calls / gestures when coming across obstacles in a group:

Obstacle	Verbal Call	Additional gesture/instructions
Hole, crack, glass	"Hole, crack, glass "	Point to it and gently navigate around it
Gravel	"Gravel"	Point to it and gently navigate around it
Railroad tracks	"Tracks"	Swing your arm behind your lower back like a wiper blade. Cross tracks in a perpendicular direction
Moving car	"Car up/back/left/right"	Point and safely move in the direction that you need to
Pedestrian, slower cyclist	"Bike on your left...Thank you"	Ring bell prior to over-taking or passing
Slowing, stopping	"slowing/stopping"	Put your right hand down at your side with palm facing rider behind
Speed Bumps	"Bump"	Point to it, consider standing up while going over it
Rotate	"Rotate"	Raise your hand in the air and move it in a circular motion
Turning	"Left/Right turn" ahead	Stick out your hand in the direction you are going to turn. Check over your shoulder before proceeding

Group Riding Ethics and Tips

Riding in a group has its benefits, but it also has its responsibilities. Riders should be respectful and considerate for others when group riding. Riders of all experience levels should keep in mind the following:

- Keep groups to a reasonable size, no more than 8 – 12 riders
- Take a moment to know who is in your group before you leave the start, or when the group is at a stop sign or quiet stretch of road
- Keep an eye on each other
- If someone is suddenly missing, the group should wait or go back
- If you decide to leave or drop out of a group, let others know so they don't go looking for you
- Groups should be minimum 200 m apart, especially while leaving London
 - For reference, 200 m is 25-30 seconds from the back of the group ahead to the front of the following group
- Rotate at regular intervals, especially on hot days or windy weather to stay fresh
- When climbing a hill, the lead riders should slow the pace down after reaching the top and regroup
- Last riders to the top should yell "Back on" once they have caught up
- At stop signs and intersections, after stopping, every cyclist should decide for themselves whether the way is clear or not ("Clear!" for the first cyclist is no guarantee for the last cyclist)
- After crossing the intersection, the riders should regroup prior to resuming previous speed
 - Sometimes traffic volume or traffic lights timing may not allow all members to cross at once
- The last riders in the group should yell "Back on" once they have caught up
- Never ride through red lights
 - If you are at the back of the group when the light changes to red, please stop. The group should wait for you on the other side or ride slowly so that you will be able to catch up
 - The last riders should yell "Back on" once they have caught up
- Never let your front wheel overlap the rear wheel of the rider ahead.
 - If a rider ahead suddenly turns you will likely be taken down
- Don't stare at the wheel in front of you; look at the road ahead of you

- Always have your hands close to your brakes so that you can react quickly
- Alert a fellow rider if their actions are dangerous
 - By not telling a rider what he or she is doing wrong, you are endangering everyone in the group, compromising everyone's enjoyment, and not helping the rider to improve.
 - Be receptive to feedback from your fellow riders
- If you are tired, drop off to the back of the group and stay there for a rest by skipping a rotation
- If you are still tired, ask the group to slow down if you feel they are going too fast for the groups' designated speed range
 - If you find that on every ride you have to ask the group to slow down, you should probably join a slower group
- Never leave a tired rider alone unless you can confirm that another group is close behind or that the rider can get home under his or her own power
 - Ensure that the group has communicated with that rider
- Try to keep an even gap — don't yo-yo back and forth. Stay relaxed
- Keep speeds under 20 km/h on City of London pathways
- When approaching slower path users, sound your bell and call out "on your left", then pass on the left when safe to do so. Say "Thank you" if you can
- Show courtesy to motorists, pedestrians, and other cyclists
- Keep out of right turn lanes when going straight or turning left
- Slow the pace over rough roads

These points all relate to common sense riding and on most occasions, all should go smoothly. All riders within the group should be able to remind each other of these rules in order to improve group riding techniques. Should anyone refuse to adhere to these rules after a few polite requests, please report this rider to any Board Member.

Riding Uphill

The riders in front should concentrate on maintaining a smooth steady effort up the hill, not necessarily a steady speed, while keeping a consistent line. The group should work to stay together, not sprint. If you must pass, do so with caution! Check behind you that there is no traffic, and then call out “passing”, only pass on the left. Never ride three abreast.

Riding Downhill

On the downhill, you should spread out a bit. *The riders in front should keep pedaling.* Riders behind will have to ride the brakes very lightly or sit up a bit in the air stream to avoid overtaking the rider in front. Keep it smooth and predictable and tighten up the group again at the bottom. Some riders tend to coast downhill quicker than others but avoid riding more than two abreast.

Illness, Injury, Concussion, or Exhaustion Response

In the case of an incident where a rider is not able to continue a ride due to an illness, injury, concussion, or exhaustion, the rider will receive care and consideration from the rest of the group that is reasonable to offer.

In response to an illness or injury the group will:

- Offer First Aid within their level of knowledge, ability and training, with the rider’s permission or ask that another qualified individual administer First Aid.
- Attempt to notify emergency response services if the health incident is serious or if there is reason to suspect that the health incident may become serious. If in doubt, call 911.
- One or more members should offer to escort an ill or injured rider back to the starting point of the ride if the rider opts to and is able to continue.
- Confirm that the injured or ill rider is accepting responsibility for themselves if they opt to return

without the group.

- Notify the LCC of the incident and provide the details required to complete an [OC Injury Report](#)

In response to an accident where the rider hits their head a concussion should be suspected, and the Concussion Protocols (as outlined in the Bylaws and Policies Manual) must be followed. Any injury or suspected concussion requires an [OC Injury Report](#) to be filled out. Those reports are to be emailed to londoncyclingclubinfo@gmail.com as soon as possible for OC insurance coverage purposes. In the case of rider exhaustion, the other riders must ensure that a reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point or a mutually agreed location where the rider can get any additional help from others.

Mechanical Issues Response

All riders are expected to carry a basic tool kit and be able to perform basic mechanical repairs, such as changing a tire. If a rider has a mechanical failure, the group should stop and wait until the rider either fixes the mechanical failure or deems the problem to be irreparable. In such cases, the rider or someone from the group should attempt to arrange transportation and provide an accurate location of the rider; or ensure that another reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point of the ride.

COVID Risk Management

Please see the LCC's Risk Management Plan available on our [website](#) for all COVID regulations, protocols, and ride impacts.

Conclusion

The London Cycling Club wants all its members to have a safe and enjoyable cycling experience. If you have any questions or concerns about any item in this handbook, please contact a Board Member or the LCC at londoncyclingclubinfo@gmail.com.



"Life is a beautiful ride"