

Valley Striders Cycling Club Risk Assessment

VSCC RISK ASSESSMENT (Generic - Road Rides)

VSCC Risk Assessment Introduction

It goes without saying that looking out for one and other is very important and lies central to the ethos of the Valley Striders Cycling Club. Some of the things contained in this document are things that we already do or what you would consider to be common sense. There will be things as well that you may never have considered. In order to comply with the requirements of the club's insurance with Cycling UK all of these things have to be formalised into what is known as a 'Risk Assessment'. VSCC is registered with Cycling UK – Membership Number 90070904

A Risk Assessment is an important step in protecting both our members and our Club as a whole. Every time we ride our bikes we are exposing ourselves to various risks and the Risk Assessment helps us to focus our minds on these risks and hopefully help to reduce them.

As previously stated the club is required to have in place a Risk Assessment in order to manage and hopefully reduce or even eliminate the risks. It is not expected that the club eliminates all risk, but we are required to protect people as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

What is Risk Assessment?

HAZARD = something with the potential to cause harm

LIKELIHOOD = the chance, great or small, of coming into contact with that hazard

This Risk Assessment is a careful examination of what, in our sport, presents a hazard and could cause harm to people. Once a hazard has been identified it is then a matter of assessing what the risk is in relation to that hazard. A grid system is then used to combine the two and give a graded level of risk LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH.

Hazard (Impact)	High			
	Medium			
	Low			
		High	Medium	Low
		Likelihood (Probability)		

When that has been done the next stage is to think of ways to reduce / eliminate that risk. These are the control measures. Once the control measures have been implemented you are then left with the residual risk (or the risk could have been completely eliminated). The Risk Assessment can then be reviewed on a regular basis to assess a number of things e.g. are the existing control measures working, have any new hazards been identified, have any

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existing hazards been eliminated. A review of the risk assessment will be conducted annually or earlier if the Safety Officers considers it prudent.

Duties of Care

As a Committee Member and/or Ride Leader, you have accepted the responsibility of leading others. You owe them a duty of care to ensure that they are not exposed to a foreseeable risk of injury, as far as you reasonably can. If you accept a position, you are likely to agree to carry out certain functions, which may affect the safety of others both inside and outside the club. You are accepting responsibility and you must fulfil those duties to the best of your ability without negligence. That is, you must not create a foreseeable risk of injury and you must take reasonable steps to deal with any foreseeable risk of injury, which exists or arises.

For example:

- If you are a **Committee Member**, you must implement, discharge, communicate and review the club's safety policy, risk assessments, training requirements etc.
- If you are a **Ride Leader**, you have agreed to lead a ride and you must take reasonable measures to see that the ride is as safe as it can be.
- **VSCC Ride leaders will have been on a club training course, have been on a Cycling UK (CTC) or British Cycling course, have other similar training or coaching qualifications or otherwise been authorised by the Committee, as having demonstrated the necessary skill and experience.**
- It is also important to note that individual **Members of the club** have a duty of care not only to themselves but to members of the public and to the persons with whom they are riding. i.e. The duty of care requires you to consider the consequences of your acts and omissions and to ensure that those acts and/or omissions do not give rise to a foreseeable risk of injury to any other person.

In summary

Reading this you may be thinking *'this is scary I am never going out on my bike again'*. However, as stated earlier, most of this is common sense and is action that we already undertake. The key word in all of this is REASONABLE. Clearly, one is not expected to guarantee the safety of others, merely to act reasonably.

Importantly, please respect the Ride Leaders. Without them, club rides would not be possible. Listen to the briefings, pay attention whilst on the road and feel free to contribute to the end of ride debrief.

Please read on and make yourself familiar with the contents of this document.

If you have any questions/comments/ideas do not hesitate to contact a member of the committee or a nominated club official.

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All riders are reminded that they are responsible for their own safety; individuals take part in any group activities at their own risk. We strongly urge all riders to obtain appropriate 3rd party insurance as a minimum.

It should be noted that no liability shall be attached to the Valley Striders Cycling Club (including its officials and members) for any injury, loss or damage suffered.

Risk Nr	Phase	Who	Identified Hazard	Hazard (Impact)	Likelihood (Probability)	Risk Rate	Control Measures	Further Measures	Residual risk
1	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Lack of Equipment	Unable to continue / breakdown			<p>Each rider should have adequate tools to fix common mechanical problems. You shouldn't rely on others to have tools.</p> <p>Toolkit to comprise the MINIMUM of:- Pump or means of inflating tyres At least one inner tube. Minimum of two tyre levers (three is ideal incase of breakage).</p> <p>Allen keys / spanner/s appropriate for your bike.</p>	To be included in general guidelines to all riders.	
2	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Lack of Communication	Abandonment / Lost / unable to contact loved ones if involved in an incident			<p>Take your mobile phone.</p> <p>Add ICE number (In Case of Emergency) within the phone so others can access if necessary.</p> <p>Carry VSCC Membership card Ensure the ride leader has your number and that your emergency contact number is on club registration form</p>	Bring enough money for tea stop, food, drinks and taxi home.	
3	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Bike Shoe Cleats	Falls due to not unclipping			<p>Practice and familiarise yourself with new cleats before riding with a group.</p> <p>Check tensioner adjuster if cleats are too tight. Practice unclipping and stopping. Always unclip early when anticipating a stop.</p>		
4	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Condition of Bikes	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>Cycles must be road worthy and legal in all respects.</p> <p>Working front and rear lights when conditions dictate.</p>	<p>Carry out regular servicing intervals.</p> <p>Service the bike after any accidents.</p>	

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							Particular attention to condition of brakes. Check bike over before you leave home. Check tyre pressures.		
5	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Lack of visibilty or protection - clothing	Not seen by other road users. May cause accidents, serious injury or death			Riders are advised to wear bright clothing appropriate for cycling and be prepared for changes in the weather and carry high visibility waterproofs, ideally with reflective strips. When cycling in poor visibility or at dusk riders should wear high visibility clothes, or reflective vests Front and rear flashing lights are recommended. Plan safe limits ahead of the ride.	Remember to check batteries before you leave home.	
6	Pre-Ride	Ride leaders	Group Sizes to big contributing to increased risk	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			Number of riders per ride to be at the ride leader's discretion. Advisory 8 with 1, 12 with 2. Maximum for daytime 1- 16 Summer nights 10 with 1. 12 with 2 Winter Nights 8 with 1. 10 - 2 Back marker to be nominated when group is deemed to be large / varying levels within the group / new route etc.	If circumstances do not allow for splitting a large group. Use a familiar route known to most riders. On country lanes, locally split the group (30m apart) to allow a passing space for vehicles.	
7	Pre-Ride	Individual Members	Lack of drinks and food	Dehydration / lack energy. Accident			Ensure you carry water / hydration drinks and food. Drink regularly during the ride, especially if you start to feel thirsty. Plan and make food & drink stops as required. Rehydrate after the ride also.	Bring money to buy emergency drinks and food.	
8	Pre-Ride	Individual members	Blocking footpaths or access to the Thomas Osborne car Park etc at meeting point	Accident or complaint from public / Thomas Osborne. Bad publicity.			Do not obstruct the pavement or entrances to the Thomas Osborne car park to members of the public, customers or staff. Choose your ride group and leader and follow his / her instructions. Do not leave ahead of the leader in case they want to brief the group before departing. Enter and leave by the vehicle entrance not the footpath	Ride leader - group brief. Choose a safe stopping point.	

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9	Pre-Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Lack of stability in a group, due to Tribars	Ride leader should brief accordingly			<p>Tribars & Spinaci Bars:-</p> <p>The use of all spinaci bars and tribars is strictly banned from all club rides. Whilst the club accepts that they may be permanently attached to cycles, they must not be used during a ride because they are a long way from the brakes and can be unstable in some circumstances which may cause danger to the group. No bikes are permitted on club rides with angel bars or similar.</p>		
10	Pre-Ride	Individual Members	Helmet use - Falls and slips	Various injuries to the rider			<p>It is compulsory that riders wear a EN standard cycle helmet for all club rides. The helmet should conform to the latest regulations. Do not wear a helmet that has been involved in any previous accidents, or has visible damage. Helmets should be replaced every two years (plastic deteriorates).</p> <p>Duty of care on rider to ensure correct and secure fit.</p> <p>Wear gloves / mitts.</p>	Ride leaders should refuse to allow riders without helmets. Individual riders are responsible for the quality and fit of their own helmets.	
11	Pre-Ride	Ride Leaders	Lack of preparation by Ride Leaders	Lost and increase of risk hazards			<p>Ride Leaders to be conversant with the ride details including:-</p> <p>Precise route Any destinations, Distance and approximate timings</p> <p>Refreshment locations, Known hazards (steep hills, sharp bends, roads known to flood etc)</p>	Ride leaders to explain route to group before setting off.	

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12	Pre-Ride	Ride leaders and new members	New / Guest riders lack of knowledge - skill level	Increased risk of accident			<p>All new riders to introduce themselves to the ride leader.</p> <p>New riders should be verbally assessed for ride standard by the ride leader and allocated to a group within their stated ability.</p> <p>Ride leader to give a short safety briefing to the guest / new rider.</p> <p>Ride leaders to consider to allocate the new rider to a competent club member as a buddy to teach ride / club protocol during the ride.</p>	<p>All new riders are to acknowledge this risk assessment before becoming a full club member.</p> <p>To be included in the ride leaders briefing notes.</p> <p>The new riders should join the slowest group unless the ride leader believes they are capable of meeting the standard</p>	
13	Pre-Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leader	Club members - medical conditions	Medical emergency, reaction to first aid			New riders to report any medical conditions to the ride leader. Ride leaders to consider implications	Duty of care on the individual rider.	
14	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Lack of ride discipline or failure to comply with accepted standards	Risk of Accident			<p>Understand and be familiar with the Highway Code. Ride no more than two abreast unless overtaking. Endeavour to ride smoothly and not to brake without warning unless necessary - one rider's actions impact those behind. Ride in single file on busy roads and where it would otherwise be dangerous or difficult for drivers to pass.</p> <p>Remember that the club promotes safe cycling.</p>	To be included in guidelines for ride leaders.	
15	Ride	Individual Members	Hazards arising from the road surface (loose surface, gravel, pot holes, leaves, diesel spills, fords and the like)	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>When safe, the front rider is to shout / signal as appropriate with the left or right hand. Warning to be repeated (if safe) by those following.</p> <p>Pot hole - pointed signal</p> <p>Undulating / rutted road - pointed downward fist shake with open hand.</p> <p>Gravel/loose material - downward arm with a hand making a movement as if dusting fast.</p>	In the case of fords, it should be noted that beneath the water's surface the road surface may not be suitable for cycling, or very slippery. Proceed with extreme caution.	

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							Stationary vehicle - use appropriate arm behind the back to point away from the obstruction to guide the rider behind.		
16	Ride	Individual Members	Group Riding (Riding in close proximity to other riders)	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>Slow down "Slow" or "Easy" - one hand extended to pat an invisible dog.</p> <p>Left or right - change of direction. Warning to be given from the front and passed down in relation to any dangers such as parked vehicles or other obstructions. (OUT)</p> <p>Elbow flick - rider at front wants rider behind to come through and take a turn at the front.</p> <p>Stop - hand straight up in the air. (SLOWING / STOPPING)</p>	Ride leaders briefing	
17	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Group Riding (Riding in close proximity to other riders) - additional signals	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>All riders in group to learn to communicate within the group.</p> <p>Slow / easy braking when slowing when road / traffic is judged to be dangerous / potentially dangerous.</p> <p>Shout "clear" if junction is safe to cross / turn. Immediately shout "Stop" if situation changes and traffic appear. Do not use the shout "not clear" as this could be misheard.</p>	Riders responsible for their own safety and should counter check that the road is still clear before progressing.	
18	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Group Riding (Riding in close proximity to other riders) - Consistency	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			Ride consistently - be aware of those around you and remember your movements will affect everyone in the group. i.e when in the lead position concentrate on the road ahead and lead the group smoothly around obstacles, avoiding sudden unexpected swerves. Pedal continuously at a pace and cadence consistent with those ahead and when you lead try to maintain the same pace.	<p>Adjusting ride intensity to suit ability of riders present.</p> <p>Leave enough space to create your comfort zone, between yourself and surrounding riders</p>	
19	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Group Riding (Riding in close proximity to other riders) - 'Half wheeling'	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>Do not let your front wheel overlap the rear wheel of the rider in front. Learn to stay at a comfortable but safe distance away from the rear wheel. Learn to look up and relax. If you are nervous then ride to one side of the person in front.</p> <p>Change of speed should be gradual where possible. Do not finger your brakes.</p>	Leave enough space to create your comfort zone, between yourself and surrounding riders	

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Maintain an even pace when riding two abreast and stay level with the person next to you and do not increase the pace when a rider draws level with you ("half wheeling")

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20	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	Rider unaware of motor vehicles approaching the group on narrow roads, from the front or rear	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			Warn of approaching / overtaking vehicle by rear marker shouting "car up" and warn of an oncoming vehicle the lead rider should shout "car down".	This shout can be followed by "single" when road / traffic is judged to be dangerous and there is time.	
21	Ride	Ride Leaders and Individual members	Weather conditions/ Environment -	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			Exercise due care and attention to road surface conditions.	Leader to get weather forecast and assess conditions pre-ride.	
			Icy Roads				Ride leaders should share concerns when the weather forecast is un-favourable and with the safety officer make a decision based on safety	All riders to monitor changing conditions (rain, snow, wind, fog etc) as these can have an adverse effect on stability and overall safety.	
		Wet Roads	Exercise due care and attention to road surface conditions				Carry and switch on lights as necessary within the group.		
		Individual Members	Cold weather	Hypothermia & Frost nip / bite			Wear layered and appropriate clothing as prevailing conditions dictate.		
			Hot weather	Dehydration & Sun stroke			Carry sufficient water to prevent dehydration. Wear sun block or cover exposed skin.		
			Surface conditions (road markings, gravel, diesel spillage etc)					Ride leaders will give instructions for riding safely in adverse weather, may temporarily halt the ride to await a change in conditions, or abandon the ride.	
								Adjust riding speed, walk or call for assistance.	

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22	Ride	Individual Members	Road, Intersections, roundabouts and other junctions	Heightened risk of accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>On observing a road junction warning sign, assess the type of junction, visibility into the junction and amount of traffic and ease the speed of the group as appropriate.</p> <p>On approach, try to establish eye contact with driver/s waiting at or approaching the junction from a minor road on your left, to encourage them to give way.</p>	Ride defensively, assuming that the driver may not give way to you and the group and leave sufficient stopping distance.	
23	Ride	Ride Leaders and Individual members	Choice of stopping places	Stopping point locations dangerous			<p>Always choose a safe place to stop as a group and in particular avoid road junctions, bends and other physical road hazards.</p> <p>Warn riders before stopping and choose a position that where possible keeps the carriageway clear. In event of punctures, breakdowns move off the carriageway if possible and decide whether to instruct the group to continue to a safer waiting place.</p> <p>Assess the problem and decide whether to hold up the ride or leave the rider with helpers and details of the route to the next stop.</p> <p>If unsure of the route, stop well before the junction to consult map.</p> <p>Check for presence of back marker at junctions. If necessary wait for slower riders beyond the junction.</p>	To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.	
24	Ride	Ride Leaders	Traffic held up behind the group – leading to poor driving	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>Ride leader or rear marker to give positive instruction to open gaps in the ride (at least 30 metres between groups of about 5 riders) to assist traffic to safely pass the group.</p> <p>Give positive instructions to ride in single file when road and or traffic conditions dictate</p>	To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.	
25	Ride	Individual Members (All group riders)	Farm animals on the carriageway or in the vicinity	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>It is common to encounter wild and farm animals on the road in the countryside.</p> <p>In the case of loose animals on the carriageway or in the general vicinity, front riders should shout warning and reduce speed and point in the direction of the animal/s. The warning should be passed back by the following riders.</p>	To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.	

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26	Ride	Ride Leaders and Individual Members	Horses on carriageway or in the vicinity	Accident causing injury to the rider, fellow member or third party			<p>In addition to the above on how to approach a ridden horse, the lead rider should warn the horse and rider by verbal communication that cyclists are present behind shout "cyclists" from a distance and then repeat as you draw closer.</p> <p>Thereafter proceed and pass by slowly advising the horse rider roughly how many cyclists are following. Heed any advice given by the horse rider. Horses can be spooked by bikes (especially ones that arrive silently from behind) so it is essential that the horse hears the human voice before it sees the bike/s.</p>	To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.	
27	Ride	Individual Members	Dust / Debris & Insects	Eye infection / soreness			<p>Wear suitable and comfortable eye protection.</p>	<p>Ensure that if sunglasses are used that the grade of darkening does not obscure vision especially when under trees in tunnels etc</p>	
28	Ride	Individual Members and Ride Leaders	General sporting injury	Muscle strain and cramps			<p>Ride leaders to commence the ride at a warm up pace. Correct cycle position and clothing. Riders to be properly hydrated.</p>	<p>Adjusting intensity of ride to suit ability of riders present.</p>	
29	Ride	Ride Leaders and Individual Members	<p>Lack of general ride information resulting in;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unnecessary stops <p>Riders joining - late</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inappropriate groups -Medical issues 	<p>Stopping point locations dangerous</p>			<p>The distance, expected average and any stops should be clearly explained to the group members by the ride leader before setting off.</p> <p>All riders should arrive before the advertised start time for a proper briefing by the ride leader. Brief riders of route to be taken and any planned stops. Be aware of the ride leader and any nominated back marker.</p> <p>Know how many riders in your group.</p> <p>Riders with any medical condition that may affect their ability or performance should make this known to the rider leader.</p>	<p>Ride leaders to have telephone contact with nominated back marker and other group members if possible.</p> <p>To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.</p> <p>Do not use mobile phones while moving.</p>	
Risk Nr	Phase	Who	Identified Hazard	Hazard (Impact)	Likelihood (Probability)	Risk Rate	Control Measures	Further Measures	Residual risk
30	Ride	Ride Leaders and Individual Members	Management of the group during the ride ; Dynamic ride management				<p>When riding as a part of a group always allow for riders following behind.</p> <p>Groups should allow appropriate gaps in traffic and slow to allow enough time for the entire group to negotiate obstacles.</p> <p>Riders at the back of a large group will be affected by the "concertina effect" which means they will have to slow a lot more than those in front of them.</p>	To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.	

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							<p>The rider at the front should slow or even stop at the next appropriate place to allow the group to reform.</p> <p>Should the group split due to circumstances, riders should slow down or find a safe place to stop and reform before proceeding.</p> <p>The group has an obligation to always stop and assist any of its riders suffering from mechanical or physical problems.</p> <p>The group should always wait for the last rider unless the rider requested to be left, or an agreement has been made (with the consent of all the riders in the group).</p>		
31	Other	Ride Leaders	Dealing with emergencies and reporting procedures	Various			<p>Take charge.</p> <p>Assess accident. Are people still in danger? Move group and injured to a safer place.</p> <p>Send out warning parties up and down the road to warn vehicles of the danger ahead and to slow down / stop.</p> <p>Assess injured party, do not move unless in danger and do not offer any drinks or medication. If first aider present let that person take charge of the injured party.</p> <p>Keep talking and re-assuring the injured person. Keep them conscious. If required send a free cyclist / member of the public to locate the road name.</p> <p>If necessary call 999 (emergency services can locate your position of your mobile if you are unclear of your location).</p> <p>Describe the nature of the injury and seek advice. Wear gloves at all times when dealing with blood producing injuries.</p> <p>Check for bike damage (injured person should not be relied on to check their own equipment) and if in doubt call for someone to retrieve rider and bike ie do not allow rider to ride a bike that may be dangerous.</p>	<p>To be included in general guidelines to ride leaders.</p> <p>Common sense judgement if the injured rider declares himself fit to ride. Monitor.</p>	
Risk Nr	Phase	Who	Identified Hazard	Hazard (Impact)	Likelihood (Probability)	Risk Rate	Control Measures	Further Measures	Residual risk
32	Other	Ride Leaders	<p>Failing to learn from incidents</p> <p>Accident reporting</p>	n/a			<p>Riders report to the club any hazards / alerts that might affect other VSCC riders, so that members, other clubs, the police, local authority and the local cycling clubs can be emailed and made aware of the issue.</p>	<p>Ride Leaders - Take notes when you can after the accident and pass on any lessons that can be learned to the club for general circulation to the membership and put onto the Risk Assessment</p>	
33	Other	Parents of young riders	Lack of Safeguarding				<p>Parental consent form required signing by legal Guardian.</p>	<p>If the legal Guardian can ride with the minor then there is no child welfare</p>	

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		VSCC Committee Junior Lead Ride Leaders	(Children under the age of 18)				Child Welfare officer to be informed and to brief / inform ride leader of procedures. A young rider policy is available on 'VSCC facebook' documents	risk. It is best if the legal Guardian can ride first with the club on his own so that he can see the risks and learn before he / she introduces the minor into the club / rides	
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Risk assessment owner Paul Dixon (Directeur Soigneurs – Safety Officer)

Author Paul Dixon (Directeur Soigneurs)

Consulted John Bucktrout (Ride Leader training officer)

Becky Murray (Ride Leaders rep)

Date completed 5th Feb 2017

Date reviewed	By whom	Sections amended /added	
Spring 2019	John Bucktrout/ Paul Dixon	Document Owner/ Consult.	