

# Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs.

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COACHING AND EDUCATION





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## Using the Guidelines

These guidelines are for anyone holding a British Triathlon Swim Bike Run Leader Award.

Guidance will be offered on many aspects of leading swims, rides and runs, from conducting risk assessments to safeguarding and etiquette.

Each leader or organisation that regularly conducts led swims, rides, runs should produce their own health and safety and risk assessment policies taking the Guidelines for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs into account. They should do this in conjunction with any other specific requirements from their own managers, organisations, providers, governors or local authorities (e.g. rules on educational visits, staffing, the use of minibuses). Policies should be in writing and all people assisting with the activity must be fully aware of them and know how to implement them if necessary.

Throughout this resource, the term led activity is applicable to any swim, ride, run or walk that a leader may be delivering. The term bike and bicycle should be read to include all types of pedal cycles that meet the minimum requirements for safe participation in a led ride. References to parents are intended to be inclusive of guardians.

This document should be regarded as complimentary to the British Triathlon Code of Ethics and supplemental to the Supervision Requirements for Children and Young People.

Further support is available by contacting [coaching@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:coaching@britishtriathlon.org)

## Section 1: General Guidance for Swim Bike Run Leaders

The guidance shared in this section is applicable to all led activity. Specific guidance relating to leading swims, rides and runs can be found in Section 2.

### Your remit and the leading environment

Led activity can only take place where the activity (i.e. swimming, bike riding, running, walking) is permitted. If intending to lead groups across private land/water, leaders must gain the land/water owner's permission, in writing, before commencing the activity. An example could be Forestry Commission estate.

### Leader: Participant Ratio

Leaders can work with groups larger than their remit allows but must appoint the appropriate number of leaders to work on this ratio. For example, a group of 16 bike riders would need to be led by at least 2 qualified Swim Bike Run Leaders. You should also review your risk assessment and consider the safety and regulations of the environment you are leading in.

Leaders are responsible for ensuring the group is adequately supervised. Leaders must only work with the number of participants with which they feel confident and competent, within the recommendations. The leader to participant ratio should be sufficient to enable meaningful help to be given to participants experiencing difficulties. For example, beginners and those with disabilities or additional needs may require extra supervision.

When working with children, leaders must only lead activities appropriate to their level of qualification and must comply with specified maximum leader to participant ratios outlined in Section 2 of this document and the guidelines given in the Supervision Requirements for Children and Young People document.

In some instances, it may be necessary to arrange for additional help during a led activity (e.g. from another leader, a coach or club official). It is important that anyone enlisted to help in a led activity is suitably qualified for the role and tasks they are required to undertake. This person should be present at the safety briefing held at the start of the led activity. Where an unqualified (according to the remit) assistant is used, they fall within the standard ratio.

### Planning

The leader should provide a record of the intended route including likely contingency plans. It is essential to leave this as well as approximate timings, and your contact number with a responsible person (base contact). It is also highly recommended to provide an action plan in the event of non-return by an Emergency Action Time (EAT) to the appointed contact. The telephone number of the base contact should also be made available to the parents of any riders who are under the age of 18 years.

### Managing Risk

Leaders must conduct/use a risk assessment on the following stages of a led activity:

<b>Before the day of the led activity</b>	Pre-activity route.
	Record risk assessment.
<b>On the day</b>	Check risk assessment and communicate any relevant details or control measures.
<b>During the activity</b>	Undertake continuous dynamic risk assessment and manage risk throughout the activity.

<b>After the activity</b>	Update the risk assessment as necessary.
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A risk assessment should detail information pertaining to the following points. For each point, it should identify appropriate control measures to reduce any risks to acceptable levels.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>Planning ahead</b>	
Route	The route should be chosen with the ability and fitness of the participants in mind and be appropriate in terms of length/distance, terrain/gradient. Ensure that the route falls within your qualification remit (see section 2 - Environment).
Terrain	The terrain should not present a level of difficulty that exceeds the participants' level of ability or potentially puts them at undue risk of injury.
Weather and surface conditions	The route should be selected based on the suitability of the surface to withstand the forecast and actual weather conditions. Be aware that surface conditions can change considerably with changes in the weather and the need for specialist equipment should not be required in those conditions.
Equipment	Equipment that meets the requirements of safety checks and is suited to the intended activity and route.
Wildlife and farm stock, environmental poisoning	Leaders should assess seasonal and area-specific considerations to determine the likelihood of wildlife attack (e.g. bee sting, jelly fish sting, nettle stings) and cattle on the route. The impact on a group can rise if there are young people present or participants with allergies. These factors should be evaluated, leading to adjustments in the route or specific remedies/treatments being taken on the led activity. Some insects and animals may be more active at particular times of day and where high risk is identified; activity times should be adjusted where possible. You should work with your venue manager and water safety team to ensure the water is safe to use, paying particular attention to water quality/pollution and blue-green algae.
<b>Working within your boundaries</b>	
Ability of the Leader	The led activity must not exceed the leader's ability and fitness. Leaders should not only be able to cope with the demands of the activity, but also still have energy in reserve at the end of the led activity.
Ability of participants	The led activity should be planned with fitness and ability of the participants in mind.
Other people and activities	Other area users should be considered; the leader should make participants aware of the appropriate behaviour in the event of encountering other people. Walkers and horse riders should be specifically considered during off-road activity and leaders should role model the proactive and polite interaction required.
<b>Being prepared</b>	
Safety equipment failure	The leader's equipment should be checked for serviceability prior to packing. It is important is that the leader's mobile phone

	is kept adequately charged, waterproofed, and protected from damage.
Additional needs	The leader should check if any participant has any disabilities or specific learning needs that require accommodations to be made. This may alter the leadership model for led activity, such as a lower number of participants to be supervised; the leader must always act within their remit.
Remoteness and support options	The leader should consider their route in detail, identifying likely escape routes and short cuts that may be taken if required. This should consider areas where mobile reception is unlikely to be available, leading to identification of how the leader might summon help if an emergency occurs in those areas.
<b>Mitigating incidents</b>	
Late back implications	The leader should operate within a simple but robust Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Both the leader and the base contact should be under no doubt what should happen if the leader has not returned by the Emergency Action Time (EAT) and the base contact has received no communication from the leader.
Lost participant	Leaders should identify areas where there is an increased likelihood of a participant becoming lost, such as where there are possible options to turn off the route. More control over the group may need to be exercised in these situations such as the leader adjusting their position in the group or stopping the group from spreading out. Leaders should ensure the participants know what to do if they become separated from the group.
Injury to, or incapacitated Leader	The leader must design simple and robust control measures to be followed if they sustain an injury or become incapacitated. Leaders may find that easy to follow and readily accessible checklists are useful if a participant needs to act.
Uncooperative behaviour putting other participants in danger	Leaders should take proactive steps to align individual goals with those of the group; being clear on this from the outset should mitigate the likelihood of later issues. Leaders should continually monitor the behaviour of their participants and take prompt action where individual behaviour is likely to affect the safety of others.
<b>Mitigating injuries</b>	
Climatic injuries	The risk of heat and cold injuries are present at all times of year; the weather does not have to be especially hot or cold for these to occur, work rate and exposure are significant factors.
Medical ailments	The leader should assess the risk of relevant medical conditions using the personal information made available before the led activity. The leader should know where any medications/remedies are carried and how they should be administered.
Slips and trips	These can occur throughout rides/runs, although the leader may identify specific locations where risk is higher. Information gathered in planning should be used to identify areas of heightened risk. A key control measure is for leaders to confirm that appropriate footwear is worn.

Food and fluid poisoning	Riders should be encouraged to eat and drink during the led activity, so leaders should take reasonable control measures to promote good hygiene; in most cases this will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid sharing food or bottles between participants.</li> <li>• Wash and/or sanitise hands before eating food.</li> <li>• Keep foodstuff taken on the activity sealed and as cool as reasonably practicable.</li> </ul>
Stress or trauma induced by the challenge of the activity	Observations during the led activity should identify participants that are excessively challenged by the activity. Leaders should identify alterations to the route or technicality of the activity that can be implemented in these situations. Openly reviewing the led activity on return will help participants that have found the activity challenging to identify constructive lessons that can be applied during later activity; leaders should take care to not stray into a Coaching role unless they are appropriately qualified, and that technical advice is appropriate.

## Responding to emergencies

Leaders should have an Emergency Action Plan including:

- knowing how to determine their exact location at all times.
- potential routes to shorten the activity.
- emergency contact details.
- how to contact the emergency services.
- have appropriate late-back procedures in place.

If they are operating at a venue, they must also be aware of the content of the Emergency Operating Procedures and the Normal Operating Procedures of the venue.

In the case of an emergency, leaders should carefully consider their mode of transport for gaining help. Whether swimming, cycling or on foot, leaders or delegated persons should cover the distance to help in a calm manner to reduce the risk of injuring themselves.

## Recording Incidents and Injuries

It is essential to record any incidents or injuries that occurred during a led activity. When documenting the occurrence of an injury or illness, leaders should record the full details on an Illness and Injury Record Form or in an Incident Record Book. The leader's priority will always be the safety of their group, but these notes should be compiled as soon as practicable following the incident.

Recording these details will help to identify any trends or re-occurring incidents as well as near misses, unexpectedly hazardous areas of the route and factors that could be addressed to improve safety. This record will be vital in the unlikely event of legal action. In a club environment, a copy of the incident report form should be submitted to the relevant person. Leaders should always keep a copy for their own records.

Serious incidents such as major injuries may need to be reported directly to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), which places a legal requirement onto employers, self-employed people, and those in control of premises to report serious cases of injury or ill-health in the workplace. The Health and

Safety Executive website ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)) contains detailed guidance on what incidents must be reported and how. Managed venues should record near misses with a view to identifying trends.

## First Aid

For all led activity, leaders must have first aid available by knowing the nearest first aid point. Leaders may choose to hold an Emergency First Aid certificate themselves. As a minimum, this should be a Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work Certificate and include the following elements:

- The role of the first aider.
- Dealing with the wounded and bleeding.
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.
- Primary Survey.
- Dealing with an unconscious casualty.

## Know your Participants

It is important to know who is coming on your led activity to plan and deliver an activity that meets the needs of the participants whilst minimising risk or harm to the group. British Triathlon's guidance is:

- That leaders should be able to access appropriate details regarding each participant including their name, address, and emergency contact, preferably using a Participant Information and Consent Form. In certain circumstances, such as outdoor centres, the responsibility for collecting and retaining this information may lie with the organisation, in which case the leader should ensure that they have access to it when appropriate. The information should be stored in line with data protection requirements, securely and appropriately to ensure it is kept confidential but should be readily available during every led activity (e.g. their name, address, emergency contact details and other relevant details such as medical conditions or health requirements).
- To facilitate safe participation leaders should know about any specific (health, behavioural, disability) requirements, medical conditions, or other needs of the participants. Where possible this information should be sought in advance of the led activity through the completion of a registration form or a Participant Information and Consent Form. However, it may be necessary to talk directly with the participant and/or parent before the activity.
- To talk to participants as they arrive, assessing their mood and confidence before the activity commences. Try to be warm, welcoming and create a relaxed atmosphere to ease any anxiety a participant may have.

## Monitoring Participants

Swimming, cycling, and running are fatiguing and all participants, particularly those new to the activity, will demonstrate a loss of skill and/or concentration as they fatigue. The leader should ensure that participants take appropriate rest breaks during the led activity to ensure the level of fatigue does not affect their safety.

Keep an eye on the supply levels of participants' food and hydration. Decisions may need to be made if there is a significant distance still to cover and participants are lacking food and water.

Leaders should continue to evaluate the suitability of the remaining route considering participant fitness and skill levels changing through the activity.



## Activity and Route Progression

If you know your participants and have been monitoring them, you will have an idea of how the activity or route may progress. Do not extend the difficulty of the activity if you have any doubts about the ability of the participants or their physical state. Remember, your role as a leader is to offer a great experience and to lead from start to finish, not to extend the competencies of the participants and push them outside of their comfort zone.

## Safety Briefing

A safety briefing should be conducted at the beginning of every led activity to ensure that participants and others involved have the relevant health, safety, and emergency information as well as a check of the leaders and participants equipment. Relevant information might include:

- An introduction of who you are.
- An explanation of the activity plan.
- An explanation of specific safety issues and hazards of the route (i.e. identified during the risk assessment).
- An explanation of any specific safety or operational requirements associated with the planned activity.
- An explanation of relevant ground rules and Code of Conduct.
- Advice/ reminder about the relevant safety and emergency procedures and how to obtain first aid if required.
- Actions to take if the participants get into difficulty or receive an injury.
- The procedure for if the leader is incapacitated.

Additional information for led swims might include:

- The importance of acclimatising to the water temperature before attempting to swim.

A clothing and equipment safety check must be performed at the beginning of every led activity. Allow time and opportunity for anyone to speak with you privately about any concerns they may have. Any participant with personal clothing and/or equipment that is deemed unsafe or inappropriate should not be allowed to participate. See Appendix I for details regarding the minimum requirements of a bike and helmet safety check.

## Know your Role

The role of a Swim Bike Run Leader is to deliver a safe, enjoyable, and inclusive swim, bike, run experience. During a led activity, leaders should avoid taking on the role of a coach, as this can jeopardise the safety of both themselves and the participants. This is particularly true if an incident were to occur, as the leader would need to focus on maintaining their own safety and that of the group, rather than coaching. Instead, leaders should prioritise their role in navigating the group safely and effectively. However, this does not mean that they cannot address safety concerns or provide basic top tips to participants, such as pointing out where to look.

## Leaders Aged 14-17

Leaders aged 14-17 years of age must be in the line of sight of a Swim Bike Run Leader aged 18 years or older or a qualified triathlon Group coach or above\* aged 18 years of older.

\* Qualified triathlon coach includes Group Coach, Level 2, Level 2 Diploma, Level 3 or HPCP.

## Using assistants

You may on occasions need to use assistants on your led activity to help with group management.

Examples of using an assistant include:

- Asking someone at the back to hold a signal whilst you move ahead to manage a road junction.
- Asking the person at the front to wait at a specific point so the group can gather.
- Asking the person at the front to assist with controlling the pace of the group (i.e. not shooting off).
- Asking a couple of people to find help whilst you remain with a casualty in the event of an incident.

Note, at all times it must be stressed that you are the leader and therefore responsible for the safety of the group and also the actions of the assistant. Only use people you trust and who are confident enough to assist you and you are confident will be able to find help when required. Where possible (i.e. if phone signal is available), splitting the group should be avoided.

## Use of coach qualifications

Where the leader also has a Triathlon coaching qualification with appropriate insurance cover, they could build in a coaching session during the led activity. These should be conducted as a discrete session within the whole activity rather than ongoing advice during the led activity; this clearly separates the leader and coach role. In this situation, it is important for the leader to understand the different remits of their various awards and how they apply to the activity's environment.

## Safeguarding, Equality and Equity in your Leading

At British Triathlon, we place the utmost importance on the safety and well-being of all individuals involved in our sport. In line with this commitment, it is mandatory for all leaders to obtain and maintain a UK Coaching safeguarding qualification suitable for the specific environment in which they lead. The safeguarding training must be either:

- UK Coaching Safeguarding and Protecting Children course.
- UK Coaching Safeguarding Adults course.

Everyone should have equal access to swim, bike, run opportunities so that they can benefit from the enjoyment it can offer at all levels.

Triathlon must build its profile and promote itself as a friendly, open, and welcoming activity for all - and this starts with the leaders in the sport, like you, behaving in an equitable manner. If existing or potential participants have a negative experience or feel that they may not fit in, it is likely they will choose not to take part. Equity on led activity will help ensure the future of Triathlon, as more people from all walks of life will be encouraged to join in.

As a leader, you can promote equity by making sure you:

- Treat everyone fairly.
- Eliminate discrimination.
- Allocate resources fairly.
- Use language, policies and procedures that are free from bias.
- Meet the needs of different individuals, groups, or communities.
- Create conditions that will be inclusive to the wide range of people that make up your community.
- Be sensitive to safeguarding issues and how to report them.

Remember that even where you think the language you use is appropriate, you must consider what language the recipient considers to be acceptable.

## **Etiquette**

It is in the interest of the sport to always promote responsible etiquette to participants and to swim, ride, run responsibly, being considerate of others.

It is in the best interests of the group to display good etiquette, therefore:

- Give way to pedestrians or other trail users.
- Thank other users who show you consideration.
- Adhere to the relevant codes (e.g. highway, countryside).
- Do not obstruct the area.
- Leave no trace – take your litter away and encourage participants to take their litter too.

## Section 2: Specific Guidance for Leading Swims, Rides and Runs

Leaders must only lead activities appropriate to their level of qualification and must comply with the specified maximum leader to participant ratios outlined below and the guidelines given in the Supervision Requirements for Children and Young People document.

### Leading Swims

#### Environment

Leaders must:

- operate in managed open water or pool environments where appropriate safety procedures including lifesaving staff and water quality checks are provided by the venue.
- operate in water above 11 degrees Celsius.

Triathlon England recommends open water managed venues which have achieved Beyond Swim accreditation.

Welsh Triathlon recommends open water managed venues which have achieved Safe Aquatic Facility Endorsement (S.A.F.E).

If leaders desire to operate in open water which is not a managed venue and take responsibility for safety procedures themselves, they must complete an additional open water safety module.

#### Ratios

The maximum leader to swimmer ratio is one leader per 8 swimmers (1:8).

If any swimmers are under the age of 18, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest swimmer in the group<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Ratio	Parental supervision required
6-7 years	2:12	must have 1:1 parental supervision in the water
8-12 years	2:16	must have parental line of sight
13-14 years	2:16	parental line of sight recommended
15-18 years	2:16	Not required

#### Length of Swim

Leaders can lead a swim up to a maximum of 2 hours with swimmers aged 15+.

If any swimmers are under the age of 15, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest swimmer<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Length
6-7 years	30 mins
8-12 years	45 mins
13-14 years	60 mins

#### Clothing & Equipment

All swimmers and leaders must wear wetsuits in water under 20 degrees Celsius.

Leaders are advised to have with them (not an exhaustive list):

- Map, suitability water resistant.

- Emergency food and water.
- Wetsuit.
- Toe float.

## Leading Bike Rides

### Environment

Leaders must operate in terrain that:

- consists of public highways and rights of way accessible by bike.
- has tarmac or another firm surface.
- does not require proficiency in any discipline specific cycling techniques to safely ride on it.
- does not require discipline specific equipment to ride on it safely and comfortably.
- is within 10 minutes' walk from a road vehicle access point (should emergency services be required).

If any riders are under the age of 15, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest rider in the group<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Environment
6-7 years	Closed setting
8-15 years	Traffic free

British Triathlon recommends that the terrain should not include:

- climbs and descents with a gradient of more than 14% (1:8).
- climbs or descents that are longer than 3km in length.

### Ratio

The maximum leader to rider ratio is one leader per 8 riders (1:8).

If any riders are under the age of 18, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest rider in the group<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Ratio	Parental supervision required
6-7 years	2:12	must have parental line of sight
8-12 years	2:16	parental line of sight recommended
13-18 years	2:16	Not required

### Length of Ride

Leaders can lead a ride up to a maximum of 80km with riders aged 15+.

If any riders are under the age of 15, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest rider<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Length
6-7 years	60 mins
8-15 years	2 hours

## Clothing & Equipment

### Bikes

Any bike used in a led activity must:

- be in good working order.
- have two brakes that work or be fitted with a front brake if a fixed wheel bike.
- be an appropriate size to allow the rider to participate safely.
- be appropriate to the environment, surface conditions and activity.

See Appendix I for details regarding the minimum requirements of a bike safety check.

### Power assisted bikes (eBikes)

Power assisted 'eBikes' are allowed on led activity for either participants or leaders.

Further checks required for eBikes include:

- Checking battery charge will be sufficient for the duration of the activity.

### Helmets

#### Leaders

The wearing of cycle helmets is compulsory for all leaders when leading a ride using their British Triathlon qualification and member insurance.

#### Participants

British Triathlon strongly recommends that all cyclists on all led activity wear a cycle helmet when engaged in any cycling activity. As such, adult participants on any led bike ride should be encouraged to wear a helmet despite the wearing of a helmet not being a legal requirement.

Any individual under 18 participating in a led bike ride must wear a helmet that:

- conforms to a recognised Standard (see Helmet Safety Check section).
- is undamaged.
- is in good condition.
- is the correct size for the rider.
- is correctly fitted and worn by the rider.

Leaders are within their rights to turn a participant away if based on their risk assessment they consider it inappropriate to ride without a helmet.

### Exceptions

Exceptions may apply when the wearing of a cycle helmet may not be compatible with a religious, faith or disability (an example is a cyclist wearing a turban). On such occasions leaders/participants may be permitted to cycle without a helmet but this will ultimately depend on the leader carrying out a risk assessment which will consider their capability as a leader, the participants ability, and the overall environmental conditions of the planned activity. Any leader or participant (using the exception rule) not wearing a helmet does so against the advice offered by British Triathlon.

Any such cyclist (with a parent or guardian if under 18) should discuss the matter with the leader at the earliest opportunity. British Triathlon is keen to include members from all sections of the community and reasonable adjustment will be made to led activity to facilitate progress for all in the sport.

### Helmet safety check

See Appendix I for details regarding the minimum requirements of a helmet safety check.

Helmets should have a CE mark and conform to an appropriate standard such as BS EN 1078:1997 (Europe) or SNELL B95 (USA). If a helmet is CE marked, the mark must be affixed to the helmet. If a

helmet conforms to a recognised standard, it should be indicated on the inside of the helmet, either directly on the inner material or on a sticker attached to the inside of the helmet. The CE mark and relevant standard number are usually included on the same sticker.

Helmets should be as far as it is reasonable to identify, within the manufacturer's recommended lifespan (usually 3-5 years from date of purchase).

It is important the leader checks the helmet is undamaged and fitted and worn correctly.

### Repairs

Leaders are not insured to carry out repairs on participants equipment prior to a led activity; participants should arrive with functional equipment suited to the planned activity.

Leaders are not insured to repair equipment on a led activity but may offer tools and guidance for participants to fix their own.

### Leader Equipment

Leaders are advised to have with them (not an exhaustive list):

- Bike pump.
- Puncture repair kit.
- Multi-tool.
- Spare inner tubes (leaders are not expected to carry each type, but it may be useful to carry a selection of the most common sizes of inner tubes). Presta valves are recommended as they should fit most rims.
- Map, suitably water resistant.
- Emergency food and water.
- Emergency clothing.
- Notebook and pencil, suitably waterproofed.

### Leading Runs (and walks)

#### Environment

Leaders must operate in terrain that:

- consists of footpaths, pavements or trails with obvious navigational features and rights of way accessible on foot.
- does not require specific equipment to run/walk on it safely and comfortably.
- is within 10 minutes' walk from a road vehicle access point (should emergency services be required).

If any runners are under the age of 15, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest runner in the group.

Age	Environment
6-7 years	Closed setting
8-15 years	Traffic free

#### Ratio

The maximum leader to runner ratio is one leader per 8 runners (1:8).

If any runners are under the age of 18, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest rider in the group<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Ratio	Parental supervision required
6-7 years	2:16	must have parental line of sight
8-12 years	2:16	parental line of sight recommended
13-18 years	2:16	Not required

## Length of Run

Leaders can lead a run up to a maximum of 2 hours with runners aged 15+.

If any riders are under the age of 15, the guidance shown in the table below must be followed for the youngest runner<sup>1</sup>.

Age	Length
6-7 years	45 mins
8-14 years	60 mins

## Clothing & Equipment

Leaders are advised to have with them (not an exhaustive list):

- Map, suitably water resistant.
- Emergency food and water.
- Emergency clothing
- Notebook and pencil, suitably waterproofed.



## Appendices

### Appendix I – Safety Checks

#### Bike safety check

To ensure riders can participate safely, a bike safety check should form part of every led ride. Leaders must be satisfied that the riders' bikes are safe to participate in the ride. Minor repairs and adjustments, if they can be done quickly, can sometimes be undertaken immediately by the riders. However, if this is not possible leaders should not undertake repairs or adjustments to a rider's bike. Instead, they should refer the rider to the nearest bike shop. Leaders must never be afraid to stop riders from participating in a ride if their bike could put them or others in danger.

The minimum check for bike safety are as follows:

Component	Look for:
Frame and forks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appear true and undamaged.</li> <li>• Fork seals and stanchions are clean and dirt free.</li> <li>• No excessive play in the suspension fork legs.</li> <li>• Appropriate amount of fork compression for the rider.</li> </ul>
Headset and brakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brakes work and are properly adjusted – when the brakes are fully on the lever should have been pulled approximately halfway to the handlebars.</li> <li>• Brake levers are securely attached, and the cables are not frayed.</li> <li>• The brake pads should not be excessively worn and there should be at least 1mm between the pad and the rim.</li> <li>• Check adjustment of the headset by engaging the front brake and seeing if there is any rocking movement when gently pushing on the handlebars – there should be no movement.</li> </ul>
Wheels and tyres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheels run freely, with no excessive wobbles/buckles.</li> <li>• Check for loose spokes by running a hand over the spokes.</li> <li>• Tyres should be inflated to a reasonable pressure – this will help avoid the possibility of impact punctures. More pressure means less grip, and less pressure results in more grip and increased risk of a puncture. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations regarding tyre pressure, which will normally be indicated on the side wall of the tyre.</li> <li>• The tread should not be excessively worn and the tyres should have no splits, cracks or holes.</li> </ul>
Hubs and axels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bolts and quick release mechanisms securely tightened.</li> </ul>
Saddle and handlebars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check to see if either are loose, but do not use undue force.</li> <li>• Saddle is straight and set at the right height. This is very important as if it is too low or too high it could cause an injury. The rider's knee should be slightly bent when the ball of the foot is on the pedal, and the pedal is at its lowest point. With novice riders you will probably find that the majority have their saddle set</li> </ul>

	<p>incorrectly. Do not try to change everyone at once – look to adjust the worse cases first.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handlebars and stem are straight and in line. Handlebars should have end plugs</li> </ul>
Pedals, cranks, and bottom brackets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No movement in the bottom bracket or cranks. Check by holding one crank still and trying to move the other crank.</li> <li>• Check pedals rotate freely.</li> </ul>
Chain and gears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chain is lubricated properly and is not slack or rusty.</li> <li>• Gears are properly adjusted, lubricated and cables are not frayed.</li> </ul>

## Helmet safety check

### Procedure:

- It should be placed on top of the head with the straps fastened under the chin.
- The front strap should be as vertical as possible, and the rear strap should join the front strap just below the ears (forming a 'V' just under the ears).
- The helmet should fit comfortably on the head – if you try to move the helmet there should be very little movement.
- If you can slide the helmet off the head either backwards or forwards, then you need to tighten the straps – always get the rider to take the helmet off before adjusting the straps.

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<sup>i</sup> The guidance provided here should be read in conjunction with the Supervision Requirements for Children and Young People.