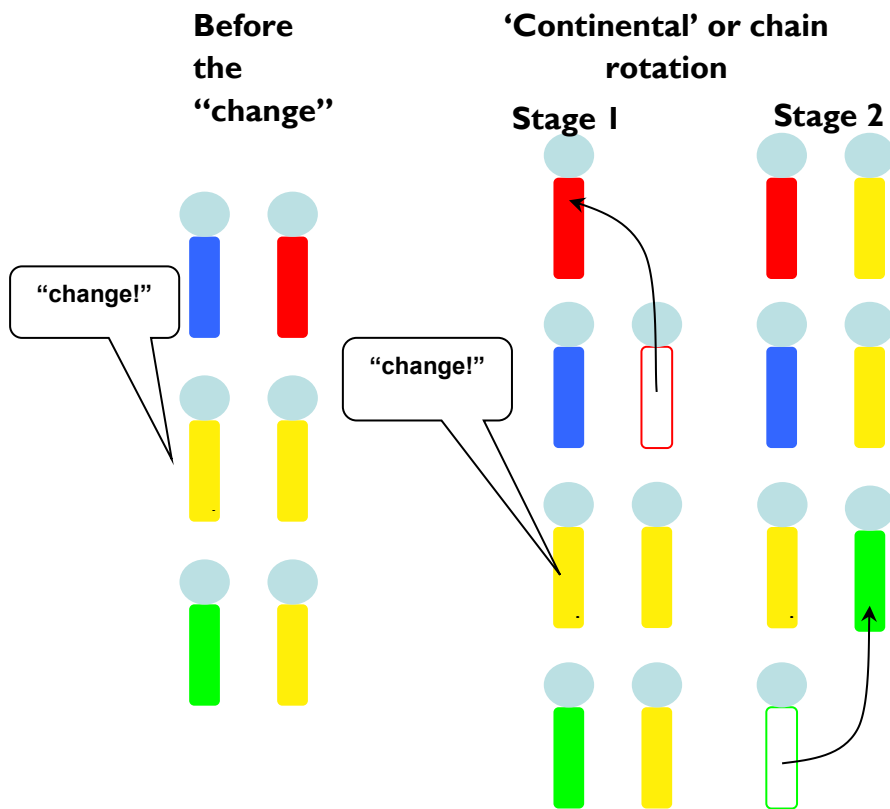


VCC GROUP RIDING

- **1. Group Riding with Rotation**
- **2. Bike Specification & Equipment**
- **3. Standards & Protocol**
- **4. Ride Groups**
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1. Group Riding with Rotation

(All groups except 'Socials' who do not rotate)



- a. The group may ride **singly** if circumstances or the Highway Code demands (e.g. narrow road). The “single” call is normally given by the Leader but may be given by other experienced riders when necessary. Typically the inside lead rider pulls ahead creating a gap and the outside riders drop in behind the rider they were next to. It should not be called where it might cause a hazard to the group such as when approaching a junction. If there is a need to call “change” whilst riding in a single line then the leader slows down and drops to the back as the second in line leads the rest of the group in an overtaking manoeuvre. Time trialling groups etc. may use differing “change” techniques.

2. Bike Specification & Equipment

- a. Cycles must be in a roadworthy condition.
- b. You must ride a standard, drop handlebar road bike on club runs. No straight handlebars, fixed wheels, MTB, e-bikes or tri-bars are permitted. Applications to vary these requirements will be considered by the Runs Secretary only in special circumstances e.g. medical, and will be guided by consideration of group safety and consistency of riding.
- c. Mudguards must be fitted in wet conditions. An extended mud flap is recommended as an added courtesy to fellow riders.
- d. Riders should carry spare tubes, tyre levers, pump etc. See VCC website: ‘In your saddlebag’.
- e. Helmets must be worn.
- f. No earphones are permitted.

3. Standards & Protocol

- a. Follow directly in line with the wheel in front, one wheel diameter behind. This keeps the group tight and allows safe passage for passing vehicles.
- b. Ride no more than two abreast. *Do not bunch at junctions* and single out when asked to by the Leader. *Front rider speeds up creating a gap for the outer rider to drop in.*
- c. Ride together as a group, and follow the rotation practice (the Leader or front rider may call “change”).
- d. Follow the Highway Code at all times; remember we share the road with others.
- e. Avoid braking sharply.

- f. Do not weave. Keep parallel and reasonably close distance to the adjacent rider and do not get too close to the middle of the road.
- g. Follow and pass on calls from the group Leader.
- h. Call out and point to potholes or other hazards.
- i. Advise if a rider is off the back.
- j. Do not ride ahead of the group, except when the Leader has indicated this is acceptable (e.g. stiff up-hills).
- k. All groups will ride at the pace of the slowest rider except when the Leader has indicated otherwise (e.g. stiff up-hill.)
- l. If a rider has a puncture or mechanical problem, the group will wait off-road in a safe location, unless the Leader advises otherwise.
- m. Riders should notify the Leader if they wish to leave the group during a ride.
- n. Riders are encouraged to wear the club kit. Second Claim Riders should not wear the kit of their First Claim Club whilst riding with the VCC.
- o. A rider may be asked to move to another group if their pace is considered unsuitable for the group they are currently with. Similarly a rider may choose to change groups if their riding strength indicates this is appropriate e.g. they can easily hold a front of group position and are regularly amongst the first up stiff hills. The ability to hill climb is a significant difference between groups.
- p. Leaders may tell riders to leave the group if they persist with poor riding standards; if they repeatedly fail to follow their guidance; or if their behaviour or riding style is considered unsafe and/or could bring the club into disrepute.

4. Ride Groups

Ability: The speed a rider should be capable of when riding solo, in reasonable conditions.

Pace: Speed quoted is an approximate group average over several rides with good weather conditions; lower speed will apply on more hilly routes, in poor conditions and during winter months.

Distance: Maximum to be expected each week, but this may vary depending on the season and conditions.

SOCIALS

Ability: 24 miles in 2 hours.

Pace: Average 12 mph.

Distance: 50 miles

Note: This group will not normally practice rider rotation.

INTROS

Ability: 26 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 13 mph

Distance: 50 miles

INTERS

Ability: 28 miles in 2hrs

Pace: Average of 14 mph

Distance: 55 miles

INTERS+

Ability: 30 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 15 mph

Distance: 60 miles

MODS

Ability: 32 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 16 mph

Distance: 64 miles

MODS+

Ability: 34 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 17 mph

Distance: 68 miles

RAPIDES

Ability: 36 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 18 mph

Distance: 72 miles

FAST

Ability: 39 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 19 mph

Distance: 78 miles

FAST+

Ability: 39 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: No set pace

Distance: 78 miles

5. Sunday Club Rides

Leader's role:

- a. The Leader will plan and follow a suitable route to the destination published in the weekly comms, give directions and advice to riders, ensuring appropriate road safety behaviour and courtesy to other road users.
- b. At the start, the leader will brief the group on destination, any hazards en route, and any other special riding plans or tips. Will also welcome and support new riders.

- c. The leader calls out rotation changes, advises if a rider is too slow, too fast, or is unsafe, and ensures the pace is correct for the group and consistent. They will also keep an eye out for riders who are struggling.
- d. The leader may need to move up towards the front of the group in certain situations in order to ensure control is maintained e.g. if approaching a difficult set of junctions.
- e. The leader will plan to get riders back to St Albans by approximately 13:30.
- f. Group size is limited to 10 for safety reasons. If more than 10 wish to ride in a Group, and there is no designated second leader, any other rider who has trained as a leader may lead some of the Group (up to a maximum of 10 riders) either to the designated destination (running suitably distanced) or to an alternative destination of their choice. If there is no trained leader for the surplus riders, the Group should decide with the Runs Leader how to organise themselves, such that up to 10 ride the Club run and the remainder form an unofficial (non VCC) ride.

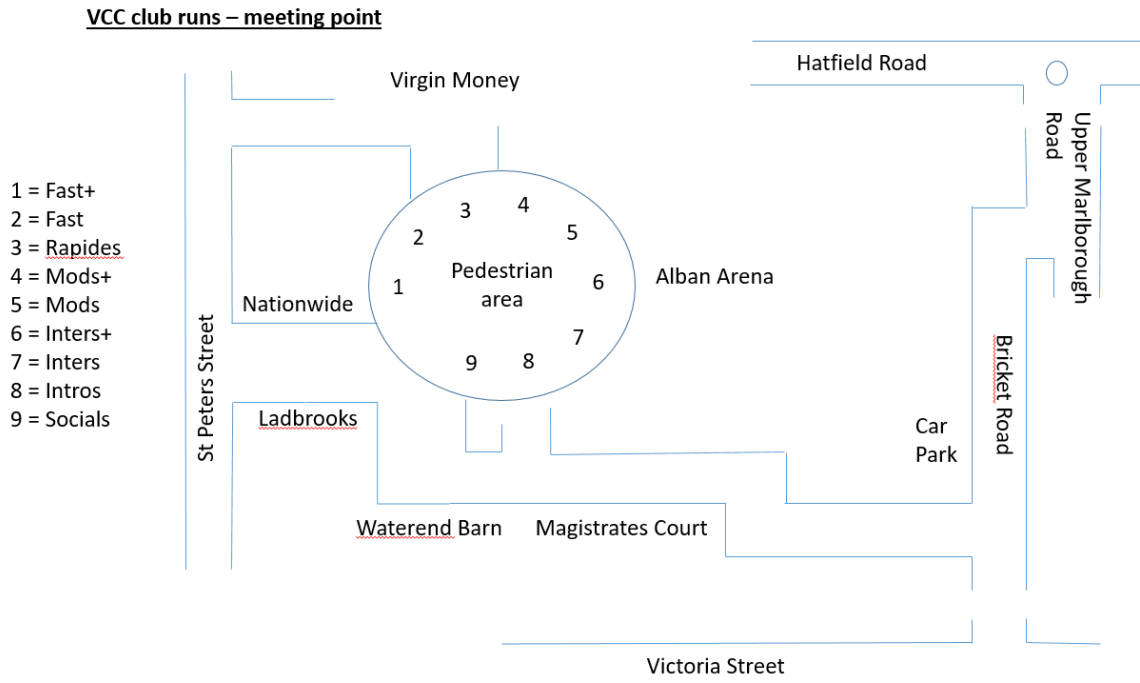
The Café Stop

- g. The destination and leader for the ride is published in the weekly comms and on the website. It is the target of the leader to get the group to the Café Stop at 11:00 give or take a few minutes. Riders are urged to familiarise themselves with the destination and a route prior to riding in case they need to ride home alone.
- h. The Café Stop is a vital safety feature, it is important for all riders to top up their carbohydrate stores after 2 hours (This is a British Cycling mandatory safety ruling see BC website) but must do so within 40 miles. This avoids loss of concentration (typically on hills) and is a courtesy to fellow riders. An alternate strategy is for riders to carry food with them if they intend not to stop or not to eat at the Café (but avoid consuming own food on the premises).

Departure arrangements

- i. To ensure an organised and informed departure on club runs, the following arrangements will apply:
 - i. Riders assemble on the pavement area in front of the Alban Arena from 08.45. Do not ride on the pavements or obstruct pedestrian access.
 - ii. Riders meet their group and Leader at 08.55 (see below).
 - iii. Groups depart, fastest first, from 09.00.

Runs meeting points:



If there is no leader for a given group, riders will be expected to ride with the next group down at that group’s speed.

In the case of inclement weather e.g. ice or heavy rain, groups may be without a Leader. Members should expect to combine into groups according to the number of people who have turned up and ride at the pace of the slower group and find their own way to the cafe venue.

6. Calls/Group Communication

Note: All calls must be relayed up and down the group

Call	What it means
“Change”	Rider(s) at the front of the group come off the front using the rotation system. Leader or front rider may call change.
“Easy”	A situation could be about to happen (junction coming up etc.). Be prepared to slow, divert or stop.
“Steady”	Slow the pace by 1 mph (called by leader).
“Single”	Move into single file. Front inner rider speeds up creating a gap for outer rider to drop in.
“Hole’ or ‘bump’	There’s a pothole, bump or bad road surface that you should avoid. Riders will point down and call “hole” or “bump” to the left, middle or right.
“Gravel”	There’s gravel or loose road surface, you should point down call ‘gravel’ and slow down.
“Car front”	A car is coming towards the group. Await instruction from your leader on whether to single out.
“Car back”	A car is behind the group and waiting to pass. Await instruction for your leader on whether to single out.
“Car through”	Car is coming up the line
‘Car left” or “Car right”	If an approaching vehicle might affect riders behind you (especially called at junctions).
‘On the Left’	Parked car, pedestrian or other obstruction on the left.
“Clear left” or “Clear right”	There’s no traffic coming from the left or right and it’s safe to proceed. Usually given after an “easy” instruction. But NEVER rely solely on the call of others – you must always check yourself whether it is clear to proceed. Never call “clear” unless certain
‘One off’, ‘Rider off’	A rider or riders have been dropped. Slow down to let them catch up and ride at a “steady” pace.



“Mechanical” or
“Puncture”

Group stops off the road at first safe place, whilst one or two go to help.

Left hand behind back

Parked car or obstruction on left, manoeuvre right.

Right hand behind Back

Keep to the left (e.g. vehicle approaching).

Shaky hand

Uneven surface or lots of potholes.