

Stirling Bike Club

Offroad Group Riding Risk Assessment

V1 August 2024 by A Denny CMIOSH,RSP



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| Associated Documents | <i>This Risk Assessment must be read with reference to the following documents</i> |
| Documents - Internal | Group Road Ride Handbook |
| Documents - External | UK Highway Code |

| Prior to Ride | | | | |
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| Hazard (pre-ride) | Description | At Risk | Controls | Expected Behaviours |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offroad riding (gravel / moderate MTB) | <p>Offroad riding presents many different hazards from road riding, mainly due to the terrain, type of track, level of exposure to weather, distance from civilisation, lack of communications etc.</p> | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser’s planned route should be fully scoped out before posting • Ideally, they should have ridden the route to establish the fixed hazards – the known difficulties such as extreme climbs / descents, track conditions etc. as well as the variable hazards – weather conditions, forestry work, other planned events on route | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group ability is more likely to be variable on offroad riding. The ride organiser must assess individual abilities and compensate where required. • Where the group has a mix of E-bikes and acoustic bikes, their differing abilities must be taken into account • The ride organiser should assess potential ‘escape routes’ and communication abilities in the event of an incident |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsafe bike • Unsuitable clothing • Lack of experience • Lack of fitness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual’s ability or lack of knowledge of equipment & riding ability may cause an issue during the ride • Offroad riding can result in more complex technical breakdowns and increased number of punctures | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-posted route on Spond • Ride organiser briefing • Guidance from other riders • Pre-ride communications • Individual ability & learning • Cycling Helmet Mandatory (EN 1078 minimum standard) • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual must communicate with the ride organiser & clarify any lack of experience / ability before the ride begins • The individual must ensure their bike is in safe working order (working front & rear brakes; bar end-plugs fitted; bolts & fixings secure) • Individuals must always bring suitable hydration (e.g. a water bottle) on rides • The ride leader may assign a ‘buddy’ for the ride • Ride organiser should check that each rider has suitable clothing / equipment / helmet for safety |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chosen route • Size of group • Group rules / etiquette • Expected weather • Known hazards | <p>The posted route may change due to the formation of the group, weather conditions, route conditions or incidents.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route pre-posted on Spond • Rider names / numbers on Spond • Club established road etiquette • Pre ride Road organiser briefing • SBC speed guidelines for groups must not be exceeded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ride organiser should assess the route for known hazards, expected weather & brief the group accordingly • The ride organiser must brief on etiquette & may split the group if too large (recommended max. 8) or rider abilities are too varied • All riders are expected to follow club etiquette and ride leader instructions • The ride organiser may decide to amend the ride due to conditions or rider behaviours |
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| During Ride | | | | |
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| Hazard (ride) | Description | At Risk | Controls | Expected Behaviours |
| Fixed off-road hazards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climbing • Descending • Surface • Obstacles • Forestry work | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser should survey trails for suitability before ride • Rider briefing should cover all known hazards – long / steep climbs and descents, surface types, any unusual objects etc. • Rider briefing should also emphasise that individuals should ride at their own pace / ability and the group re-gather at the end of a climb / descent / technical section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riders should allow adequate spacing within the group to compensate for sudden changes in speed / direction by other riders • Climbing / descending / technical abilities will vary across the group and may lead to large gaps. Frequent regrouping stops may be required • If the route is too steep / technical, riders may choose to walk – the ride organiser should advise individuals to assess their capabilities and not exert undue pressure to ride beyond their capabilities • E-bikers within a group can exaggerate group spread, particularly on climbs. The ride organiser must control overall pace |
| Variable off-road hazards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rider ability, mixed acoustic / e-bike groups • Unexpected closures (tree fall, forestry works) • Extreme conditions (weather / track conditions) | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser must continually assess individual rider status and control group speed & rest periods • There should be potential 'escape routes' planned if weather or route conditions, mechanicals or rider abilities require the ride to be cut short | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All riders must be prepared for the unexpected during off-road rides as many factors may change • Riders should carry sufficient clothing and spares as mechanicals / crashes are more likely to occur and the group held up in inclement conditions • The Ride organiser may decide to split the group as the result of mixed abilities / mechanicals etc. |
| Variable road hazards (country) | Trails & paths Mud etc. on road | All riders, pedestrians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser should survey trails for suitability before ride • Avoid peak times / public holidays on popular walking trails • Ride organiser should advise on general condition of trails and highlight fixed hazard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed should be reduced on trails • Be aware of debris, loose surfaces, roots etc |
| | Horses, dogs etc. on road / path | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When approaching other users, reduce speed and give a warning • Slow down around loose dogs • Reduce speed and communicate with rider / handler to minimise animal fright | |

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| | Farm machinery | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, ride in single file and allow more space between riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure driver has sight of riders, visibility may be restricted in farm vehicles |
| Variable weather conditions | Heavy rain | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser to check weather forecast day prior to ride & cancel ride on Spond if required • Ride organiser to check weather prior to ride and amend route / delay start / cancel ride dependant on conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudguards compulsory for wet weather riding (full length preferred) • Ride organiser to check that all riders have suitable adverse weather gear (waterproof jacket, gloves hat etc. • Ride organiser should check that all riders have suitable lights / hi-viz equipment for riding in conditions of poor visibility |
| | Snow / ice | | | |
| | Fog / poor visibility | | | |
| Collision | Individual fall | All riders, pedestrians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser may be first aid trained, recommended to carry space blanket • Mobile phones available • Increased risk of falls during off-road riding should be assessed by the ride organiser – some riders may opt to walk technical sections | <p>Dynamic assessment of situation, take into account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severity of issue / injury • Ability to ride on / complete route • Local environment, weather etc. • Emergency services access • Riders not left alone if rescue required |
| | Bike/bike collision | | | |
| | Bike/car collision | | | |
| | Bike/other collision | | | |
| Mechanical breakdown | Bike unfit to continue ride / speed or safety impaired | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser encourages individual bike check pre-ride • The increased risk of mechanicals / damage on off-road riding must be taken into account with regard to tools / spares carried | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals encouraged to carry basic repair equipment & maintain their bike • Normally expertise within group for basic repairs • Riders not left alone if rescue required |
| Rider health issue | Rider unable to continue ride / ability impaired | All riders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride organiser may be first aid trained, recommended to carry space blanket • Mobile phones available • Seek local assistance if required • If serious, ambulance should be called | <p>Dynamic assessment of situation, take into account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severity of issue • Ability to ride on / complete route • Local environment, weather etc. • Riders not left alone if rescue required • Emergency services access • Seek shelter / assistance from locals |



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Version History

| Version | Date | Reason for Issue |
|---------|----------|---------------------------------|
| 1.0 | Sep 2024 | Initial version adopted by Club |