

Corridor Manchester Monthly Cycle Events

To build on the on-going successes of the Monthly Cycle Events, a survey was undertaken in Spring 2012. A key finding was the requirement to more clearly outline the intention of the events and role of volunteer Route Guides.

The below outlines the aims of the events and what Corridor Manchester can offer Route Guides, as well as providing guidance on the roles of the various parties involved.

We will ask, each year, every Route Guide to review these Aims and the Route Guidance and to sign they have understood the contents.

Aims

The aims of the Corridor Manchester (CM) Monthly Cycle Events are

- To promote cycling as a sustainable form of transport, for commuting to work and for work journeys;
- To provide an environment where potential cyclists are encouraged to give cycling a go;
- To give an indication to stakeholders (CM partners & Local Authorities) of the popularity of cycling and to provide quantitative information regarding numbers travelling and commuting by bike;
- To provide a voice for all CM cyclists and to build a community/support network of cyclists.

The Monthly Cycle Events compromise a variety of elements in support of these aims:

- Guided Routes from various advertized starting points to a central location, with a focus on safety and support.
- Breakfast gatherings are held at the central location, with news and information shared between cyclists.

Corridor Manchester supports the Monthly Cycle Events by organising the breakfast gathering and co-ordinating the Guided Routes, which are run by volunteers - known as the Route Guides.

Corridor Manchester is committed to supporting Route Guides in an equitable partnership. CM offers

- Route Guide training (or refresher training)
- A branded hi-viz jacket
- Information on choosing routes and a info sheet for new cyclists

In return we request Route Guides

- Lead a ride on a regular basis, in a safe and friendly manner
- Liaise with other Route Guides on a given route and highlights to CM when there are less than 2 Guides available
- Keep, with other Guides, the web page up to date to reflect any changes in the route or timings

To help with choosing appropriate routes, CM has issued the guidance (web site) regarding routes and pick-up points

Routes Guidance

Choosing the Route

Several routes have been established over the years but it is worth pausing to consider

- If you are on holiday one month, do the other Route Guides know the way?
- Are there optional routes to take depending upon who turns up? There's no reason a route has to follow exactly the same street each time "but" it is important that every pick-up point is covered at right times
- Do all Route Guides know the busiest junction? What is the general procedure for dealing with it?

- Is your web page up to date with the route (and Guides) actually taken?

The main principle for the routes is safety. We aim to encourage new cyclists, some of whom may never have cycled before. Please ask about experience before setting off from a pick-up point

Route Options

It's important that sufficient time is given for people joining the ride at each pick-up point. Corridor Manchester requires at least 2 Route Guides at the start point and ask they are there for 5 minutes before the set off.

Corridor Manchester endeavours to find Guides for each pick-up point en route. Where this is possible we suggest they arrive 5 minutes before the published departure time. Where there are no additional guides, we suggest all cyclists wait at the pick-up point for 5 minutes to ensure any new people joining are not left behind. (The reasons for waiting may need to be explained to those present but the time can be used to ensure people's bikes are still fine, or to clarify the next stage of the route, for example.)

Corridor Manchester recognises there are a variety of cyclists with varying abilities and levels of confidence. Whilst it is necessary to start at, and visit the pick-up points, at the published times and places, there is some scope for varying the routes depending who turns up.

First Impressions

- Explain the aims (safety first), give the choice of route for given day in this context (tweaked for those present), explain why wait at pick-up points, explain there may be faster (or more off-road) routes; outline what happens at the destination
- Offer advice about cycling safely and point out the free training (for all levels of competency) available - either see <http://cycling.tfgm.com/training.htm> or ask at the breakfast
- Information/advice: outline the route and the reasons for the choice of route, ask people to check their brakes & lights before setting off, and explain what happens upon arrival. It's also worth pointing out how how people can get more info at the breakfast or online

Setting Off

Safety and obeying the Highway Code have to be of paramount importance (no short-cuts the wrong way down one way streets or riding on pavements for example!)

Other guidelines

- Go at the pace of the slowest cyclist, with one Route Guide at each end of the pack
- Try to keep the group in a fairly tight pack so they can all pass through lights or a junction together. If the pack does get separated, those that do get through should wait for the others at a safe place on the far side, before everybody sets off together again.

Please bear in mind that some people at an intermediate point may also be new to cycling to work so please check and repeat the advice given when you first set off.

Upon Arrival

Ensure new people have securely locked their bikes, explain how to get access to bike shelters & showers, explain the "free breakfast" voucher system for the given venue and remind people to sign in. Please encourage everybody to ask the people in charge of registration if they have any questions on facilities, routes or schemes

Misc

It's not expected for Route Guides to mend people's bikes but sometimes it's useful to have a puncture repair kit to hand and to point out any obvious things that need fixing for a safe ride.