

# Iceni Group Riding Recommendations



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Icen Chapter HOG Safe Group Riding Recommendations.

Riding as a group is one of the greatest experiences you can share with fellow chapter members, is almost guaranteed to put a smile on your face and of course is one of the corner stones of belonging to a H.O.G. Chapter.

As with most things in life it takes time, effort and practice to truly master a technique for something, the same thing applies to Group Riding. Learning and following a few recommended guidelines will make it both safe and enjoyable for you and your riding friends.

Please have a read through these recommendation notes, it will also help if you make time to attend our 'new members' ride outs where you will learn more about group riding and applying the 'second man drop' techniques.

One primary rule is to remember you should **'always ride within your own capabilities'**, and never feel pressurised into riding outside your own comfort zone and stay within the rules of the road, all as laid down within the 'Highway code'. There is no enjoyment or benefit in unsafe riding, crazy overtaking or speeding, it is dangerous for you and other road users.

## Before the ride

Depending on the time of year, weather conditions and length of the ride make sure you have the appropriate clothing and gear for the ride, nothing worse than feeling uncomfortable.

When you arrive at the meeting point always have a full tank of fuel, depending on the ride duration you will be advised if there are going to be any planned fuel stops, they are normally at around 80/100 miles apart and will allow for bikes with limited fuel capacity.

## At the meeting point

It is always best to arrive at the meeting point at least 15 minutes before the ride and ideally 30 minutes before. This way you can meet up with other members prior to the ride out and hear the pre-ride briefing.

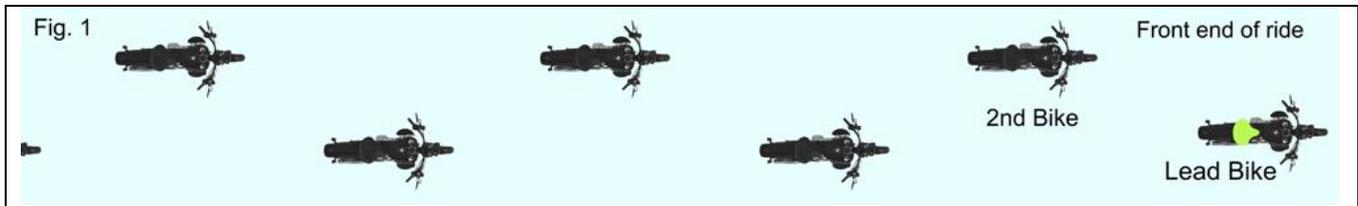
## The ride out

At the pre-ride briefing you will be introduced to the Road Crew and who the lead and tail riders are, they will normally wear GREEN reflective hi-vis vests. On some rides there can also be a break down support rider who rides behind the 'Last Man'

After the pre-ride briefing and everyone is mounted up and ready to ride, the lead rider will pull their bike forward and the other riders can form up behind, once the tail end rider is satisfied that the group are ready they will signal the lead rider that everyone is ready and the ride out can start.

## Staggered formation

Once the pack has formed up in a right / left staggered formation, the second bike should be on the kerb side or left and the third on the right and so on. By riding in a staggered formation if the bike diagonally in front of you has to change lane due to an incident on the road they can do so safely. Note the lead bike is not part of the formation and may run right or centre depending on the road. See Fig 1



- Allow one bike length for every 10 mph or 2 seconds to the bike in front (not the diagonal bike).
- In poor weather conditions allow two bike lengths for every 10 mph.
- Hold your position, do not swap sides as bikes drop out during second man drops.
- On narrow roads move to single file.
- Keep a check on your mirrors for other bikes, that may be overtaking the pack.
- Do not overtake other bikes in the group unless invited to do so.
- Try not to allow large gaps in the formation as cars will try to pull into the gap
- At traffic lights and roundabouts cars may well split the pack, do not feel pressurised to overtake and the vehicle may well turn off.

## Second man drop

This is a safe method for ensuring the whole group get to the destination without getting lost. The second man is the rider behind the lead bike. On a ride when the group needs to make a turn, the lead rider (Road Captain) will indicate to the rider behind where they would like the rider to stop his bike to mark the route.

If you are the second bike and the lead rider is indicating a turn, be prepared to stop where indicated, if you are the third bike be prepared to overtake the stopping bike in front of you and you are now the second man.

When you are invited to stop by the lead rider at a point they believe is a safe point to stop, you must make a judgement call and stop where **you** believe it is safe to stop. It is important to remember that you need to be seen by bikes further back in the pack who may have become split up by traffic so they know where to turn. Once you have stopped your bike cancel the indicator and use your arm to point in the direction of the ride.

Now look out for the last man, who is wearing a GREEN reflective hi-vis vest.... Be sure it is the person who was introduced in the briefing. The last man will give you a signal for you to move off in front of him and for you to re-join at the back of the group. See Fig 2



## Overtaking on Single Carriageway Roads

While on group rides of any size and scale, overtaking on single carriageway roads is only instigated by the Lead bike / Road Captain.

As the overtaking starts to take place each successive bike then takes up a proper position ready to overtake i.e. comes out of the staggered formation and executes the manoeuvre.

Before pulling out, check your mirror, signal and always do a 'life-saver'.

If you decide there is time for more than one bike to overtake together, then do so in single file.

- **Do Not** overtake as a group as this practice is extremely dangerous and puts other riders and road users at risk, overtake with great care.
- **Do Not** assume the rider(s) overtaking in front of you will know you are following or will be able to leave room for you to pull in front of the overtaken vehicle.

Once passed, maintain a good pace or overtaking speed for a while to get well past and gain a lead on the overtaken vehicle, do not cut-in and slow down.

This will provide room behind you for following bikes to pull in without cutting up the overtaken vehicle. Remember, there are likely to be more bikes still to overtake, behind you, the larger the number of bikes behind you, the more space you must provide. Once passed and well clear, pull back in and reform staggered formation or single file as appropriate.

- **Do Not** take unnecessary risks because you are worried about losing contact with the group.
- **Do Not** rely on signals from any rider who has already overtaken, that the road is clear for you to overtake.
- **Do Not** ride faster or in a way which is outside your own comfort zone.

## Overtaking Multi-Lane (Motorway or Dual Carriageway)

Normal overtaking on motorway or dual carriageway road is similar to the procedure above.

Overtaking is only instigated by the Lead bike / Road Captain, all following bikes then overtake as individuals.

As you prepare to start the overtaking manoeuvre make sure that there is no traffic coming up on your offside, always check your mirror, signal, and do a 'life-saver' before moving into the over-taking lane.

Steering from the rear where a back marker blocks the overtaking lane is not a safe manoeuvre and is actively discouraged by Iceni Chapter and HOG.

Remember your Lead bike / Road Captain will not attempt an overtaking manoeuvre within three to four miles of a planned turn, so as to give every bike in the pack plenty of time to overtake and re-join the pack.

- **Do Not** take unnecessary risks because you are worried about losing contact with the group.
- **Do Not** rely on signals from any rider who has already overtaken, that the road is clear for you to overtake.
- **Do Not** be tempted to overtake as part of a mass group as this practice is extremely dangerous and puts riders and other road users at risk.
- **Do Not** be tempted to act as a lane blocker during overtaking manoeuvres it's dangerous and puts all road users at risk.
- **Do Not** ride faster or in a way which is outside your own comfort zone.

If you have any doubts about how these overtaking guidelines work, please ask either the Safety Officer or Head Road Captain to clarify your questions.

### **Trike & Three-Wheeler Group Riding Guidelines**

Safe group riding is paramount for all participants on Iceni Chapter ride outs, one of the keys objectives for our groups events is for them to be totally inclusive. Part of this relates to the inclusion of three wheeled motorcycles, either Trikes or Harley-Davidsons with a side car, riding within the group.

In order to provide some guidelines for a safe inclusive ride, Iceni ride out events will treat three wheeled motorcycles as a normal two wheeled bike within the pack and make no calls for Trikes to be positioned at the back of the pack, unless this is preferred by the rider, or they are part of the road crew riding as back marker / break down support.

There are a number of safety factors which the lead rider, group and trike riders should adopt.

On group ride outs, trikes tend to run in a 'centre track position' i.e. The trike rider runs in a position nearer to the middle of the respective carriage way, while bikes are adopting a staggered formation. This is the same as a car driving in a centre lane position.

Due to the positioning and additional larger size of trikes, riders should allow a slightly longer gap than the normal two second gap which applies to bikes.

When it comes to the second man drop, trikes should be prepared to be dropped either in a safe location along a straight piece of road, in another safe location or, when the lead rider considers it safe, in the normal second man drop position/junction requiring marking.

Road Captains leading a ride should operate the second man drop for trikes in a way within which they are comfortable themselves. It is obvious that three wheeled motorcycles are wider than bikes, lead riders ideally need to see the pack as best they can, therefore dropping a three-wheeler off may be necessary to provide improved visibility of the following group.

If there are any questions of points for clarification, please speak to the Lead Riding Road Captain or Safety Officer.

## **Other Issues and Considerations: -**

### **Guest Rider & Pillion Policy & Guidelines**

Safe group riding is paramount for all participants on Iceni Chapter ride outs, one of the keys objectives for our groups events is for them to be totally inclusive. Part of this object relates to the **inclusion of guests, either riders or passenger / pillions.**

This policy is designed to provide opportunities for non-members to experience a Chapter group ride, whilst maintaining a legal position under the HOG indemnity insurance, which permits guests to participate in two Chapter events per year.

It must be remembered that Chapter members are covered within the HOG insurance cover. Guests are only covered for two Chapter events per year.

Part of the guest inclusion involves the completion of a guest release form. This form must be completed by guests in every case. It is the responsibility of the Lead Road Captain on any Ride Out event to provide the guest form and get it completed. Following the ride, any completed guest forms must be handed into the Head Road Captain or Safety Officer.

In order to be clear whether participants are fully signed up members a visual check register will be required to be completed by the Lead Road Captain for every Ride Out event.

If in there are any questions or points for clarification, please speak to the Lead Riding Road Captain or Safety Officer.

### **Group Split Up**

If the group has been split up due to traffic for example and you have been second man dropped at a junction it is possible that you may be waiting for several minutes for the tail rider or last man to reach you. **Do Not** Leave the marker point until the Last man rider indicates you should move on.

### **Unclear Marker Point**

If you see the bike in front of you drop into a marker point which is not clear for the following group and you feel the group may not see the turn, you can drop yourself into a 'clearer' marker position. If you choose to do this, make sure you give a clear signal to the bikes behind that you are stopping, wave them past and wait for the last man to acknowledge you before you move off.

### **Default Direction**

The default direction at junctions is 'straight ahead'. Therefore, we do not necessarily drop at a junction where the ride goes straight on. If you come to a junction, or roundabout, and there is no rider marking the direction, follow the road straight on. On long stretches of road and if the lead rider thinks the group may be split, they may sometimes drop a rider at the side of the road to give people confidence that they are on the right route.

## **None Group Bike Rider**

It is possible that another Harley rider out for a ride may happen to get into the pack, and half the group could end up following their route. If this happens and the rider takes a turn off from the route, then the ride behind should drop themselves and point towards the correct direction of the ride.

## **Break Down**

If you break down or want to stop because you have a problem, indicate to the group behind you that you wish to pull over.... once at the side of the road in a safe position, put your arm straight in the air, the last man will signal to the break down man to stop and offer any assistance they can.

## **Leaving the Group during the ride**

If you decide you want to drop out of the ride, indicate and pull over, as the last man comes into view indicate to him with a hand waved under your chin followed by a 'thumbs up'. When all the bikes have passed you can move off.

## **At the destination**

If it was not advised during the pre-ride briefing ask if there is a 'Group Ride Back', if so what time and where is the gathering point. Please be ready to leave at the appointed time.

## **Alcohol & Recreational Drugs Policy & Guidelines**

Safe, enjoyable and responsible motorcycling activities are the major H.O.G.® objectives, in all respects.

In support of the HOG policy and in order to respect each other on ride outs alcohol or recreational drugs are totally banned from all Icen Chapter riding events.

The consumption and use of alcohol or recreational drugs are a serious personal responsibility involving the safety and welfare of family, riding friends, members of the general public and the individual riding H.O.G.® member. Alcohol or drugs consumption before or during any motorcycling activity is not safe responsible behaviour.

## **NOTICE: No alcohol or recreational drugs are to be consumed before or during rides that Icen Chapter H.O.G.® organises.**

If you become aware or are concerned about somebody ignoring this policy, please make one of the road crew members aware, do not escalate the situation or get involved yourself.

If the Road Captain in charge of any ride is concerned that any individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol and that person is not prepared to stand down and leave the group then the Road Captain is empowered to cancel or terminate the ride.

## **The Legal Bit**

**You are deemed to be in control of and responsible for, your vehicle and your riding at all times irrespective of any guidance or instruction from any member of the road crew. You must at all times ride within the law and obey road traffic regulations.**

## **Summary and contact details**

Thank you for making time to read through these recommendations, if there is anything you are unsure about or would like clarifying further, please make contact and we look forward to helping you enjoy riding time with your riding friends in the safest way possible.

## **Make It Fun - Make It Safe!**

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