

The Route

Establishing an attractive route is the most crucial aspect of the event. For the route we use please see 'Events'. Sustrans or local cycling groups may be able to help. We would suggest that:

- a) Length – routes of different length should be offered, ideally interconnecting for ease of management, signage and marshalling. Suggested lengths would be 5 miles for youngest riders, 10 miles for the older primary age, 20 miles for the more experienced and those with greatest stamina.
- b) Hills – ideally route should avoid hills where the children would have to dismount and push their bikes.
- c) Traffic – choose roads where there is the least amount of traffic and where there are the least number of major roads to cross. By cycling the route in an anti-clockwise direction, riders will not need to come into the centre of the road to make a right turn.
- d) Draw up a clear map of all routes. Note that permission needs to be sought to re-print OS maps, though local authorities often have a license to do so. Reduce the size of the map to a manageable A5 format so that it can be copied and laminated for the riders.
- e) It is also possible to upload the map onto the website but the element of surprise adds to the marketing of the ride.
- f) Cycle the route a few times with different groups to establish whether the road surface is suitable, noting potholes and other hazards which could be a problem for the riders.
- g) Notify the County highways department about the ride as well as the local police and ask their advice on the chosen route. Where possible, take in the Sustrans route network.
- h) Decide where route signage is required to make absolutely clear to the riders where they should go. Include this on the master map, together with the marshal points.
- i) The route should start and finish at the same point, ideally school. Ideally an inflatable archway should denote the start and finish point, though balloons can work as well.

Signage

Well positioned route directional signage is vital. It should be simple, clear, weatherproof, hard wearing and well displayed. A3 size is normally sufficient on fluorescent correx board with black writing and arrows. Note where the fixing positions are and the amount of equipment needed to fix the signs (eg: cable ties, nails etc). Other materials could be laminated card if you need to make this yourself.

Signage is also needed to warn oncoming traffic of the ride ("WARNING CYCLE RIDE" is sufficient). These signs should be on the approach roads to the ride and in areas where traffic is likely to be fastest/heaviest.

Agree a team of 2-3 people to put up all the signs on the morning of the ride and ensure they have all the equipment to do so and the master map. They should have cycled the route with the route designer so they are in no doubt as to where the signs should be.

The half way point should be clearly signed so riders know where to put their bikes if they stop as this can otherwise provide a road hazard.

The signage needs to be collected as soon as possible after the ride, but no later than the following morning. All signs should then be stored for the next event.

Note: it is worth checking what other rides are planned in the area on the same day so that signage is different and riders do not become confused. Show the riders what the signage looks like at the start of the ride so they know what they should be following.