

BRITISH TRIATHLON GUIDE TO CYCLE COURSE DESIGN

FOR EVENTS TAKING PLACE ON THE
PUBLIC HIGHWAY

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Introduction

The cycle section of a triathlon or duathlon taking place on the public highway has a greater potential impact than both the swim and run sections, particularly where it may interfere with the normal passage of traffic or pedestrians. The vast majority of events take place on open road i.e. where the course remains open to other users during the course of the event.

Therefore the cycle course is normally subject to greater scrutiny than any other element of a triathlon or duathlon.

This guide describes the things that should be considered when planning the cycle course for a triathlon or duathlon. As well as providing background understanding it highlights:

- Legal requirements and responsibilities
- Good practice
- Where additional information/support can be found

Scope

This guidance covers cycle courses that are based either in part or in full on the public highway and that form part of an event organised and having undergone the event permitting process of British Triathlon and its constituent Home Nations. It applies to both open road and closed road (i.e. where the course is closed to other users other than event-related or emergency vehicles) courses.

It does NOT cover cycle courses for standalone cycling activities such as road racing, time-trialling or sportives which are not run under British Triathlon Competition Rules.

There is also ongoing support available from British Triathlon throughout this process, including but not limited to:

- **Regional Manager - course design and risk assessment**
- **Events Team - risk assessment review, contacts and guidance**

Background

As relatively young sports triathlon and duathlon are not directly covered by the Road Traffic Act, unlike cycle road racing and time trials which are covered by the Cycling Racing on Highways Regulations 1960 (and subsequent amendments). This can create a somewhat inconsistent and confused picture, with authorities across the country interpreting things differently.

Events held on a public highway may require traffic management which could involve road closures or certain restrictions. Under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the appropriate highways authority has a duty to coordinate all activities which may disrupt traffic flow.

Duty of Care

The responsibility for public safety is primarily the responsibility of the organiser, with a secondary duty of care on the land owner. Included within this the organiser must:

- Determine all foreseeable risks associated with the event and take appropriate action to minimise those risks
- Plan and manage the event in such a way as to minimise disruption as far as reasonably practical
- Obtain relevant permission/licenses and authority required to lawfully hold the event
- Act on the advice given by the relevant authorities

It is also important to understand the responsibilities of the traffic/highways authorities which include:

- Duty to maintain roads to ensure minimal disruption
- Duty to coordinate all highway activities
- Power to authorise signs on the road
- Provide advice to event organisers regarding highway matters
- Power to authorise temporary traffic regulation orders and road closures using the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

Police Role

Contrary to public perception police permission is not required to hold triathlon and duathlon events on the public highway. The police do not have authority to approve or ban events or impose a condition on the running of a race that the roads be closed by the Highways Authority. They only have the power to impose conditions covered by the law. Their core responsibilities are:

- Protection of life and property
- Prevention and detection of crime
- Preventing or stopping breaches of the peace
- Traffic regulation (within legal powers provided by statute)
- Activation of a contingency plan when there is an immediate threat to life and coordination of resulting emergency service activities

Police input into event planning is typically via Safety Advisory Groups (see below) and is normally restricted to the core areas of responsibility.

Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs)

It is very likely that the organiser of an event taking place on the public highway will be required to liaise with the highways authority, the emergency services and various other organisations to ensure that all legal obligations are met, as well as for advice and support.

Most local authorities have established Safety Advisory Groups. They may be given different names e.g. Event Planning Group, Joint Planning Agency but they all share the same function which is to provide advice and guidance to organisers through one central body. It is recommended that the initial approach to the SAG is made 6 to 9 months prior to the event.

SAGs are normally chaired by the local authority and typically include representatives from:

- Highways authority
- Emergency services i.e. police, fire, ambulance
- Local authority e.g. emergency planning, environmental health, licensing
- Other experts as necessary

Terms of reference include:

- Ensure that the organiser has taken such measures as may be necessary or expedient to ensure reasonable safety of public. NOTE: This can include following governing body guidance - some SAGs may insist that an event is registered/permitted by British Triathlon (through the appropriate Home Nation)
- Offer advice e.g. regarding risk assessments, safety measures and highlight relevant legislation
- Ensure appropriate steps are taken to minimize disruption to local communities
- Ensure major incident contingency plans exist
- Ensure that the organiser is appropriately insured
- Keep record (audit trail) of all formal meetings & note actions arising from meeting.

Details about the SAG and the local arrangements for event organisers can normally be found on the appropriate District/County Council website (typically in the Environmental Health section) - where application forms and event planning guides can also often be downloaded.

Following SAG guidance will normally be sufficient to ensure that organisers are doing enough to comply with any applicable legislation. It is not compulsory to follow SAG guidance BUT Organisers could be held responsible for incidents arising from deficiencies in their planning process and which are subject to enforcement by the local authority, police, fire & rescue or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). They could also be subject to private litigation.

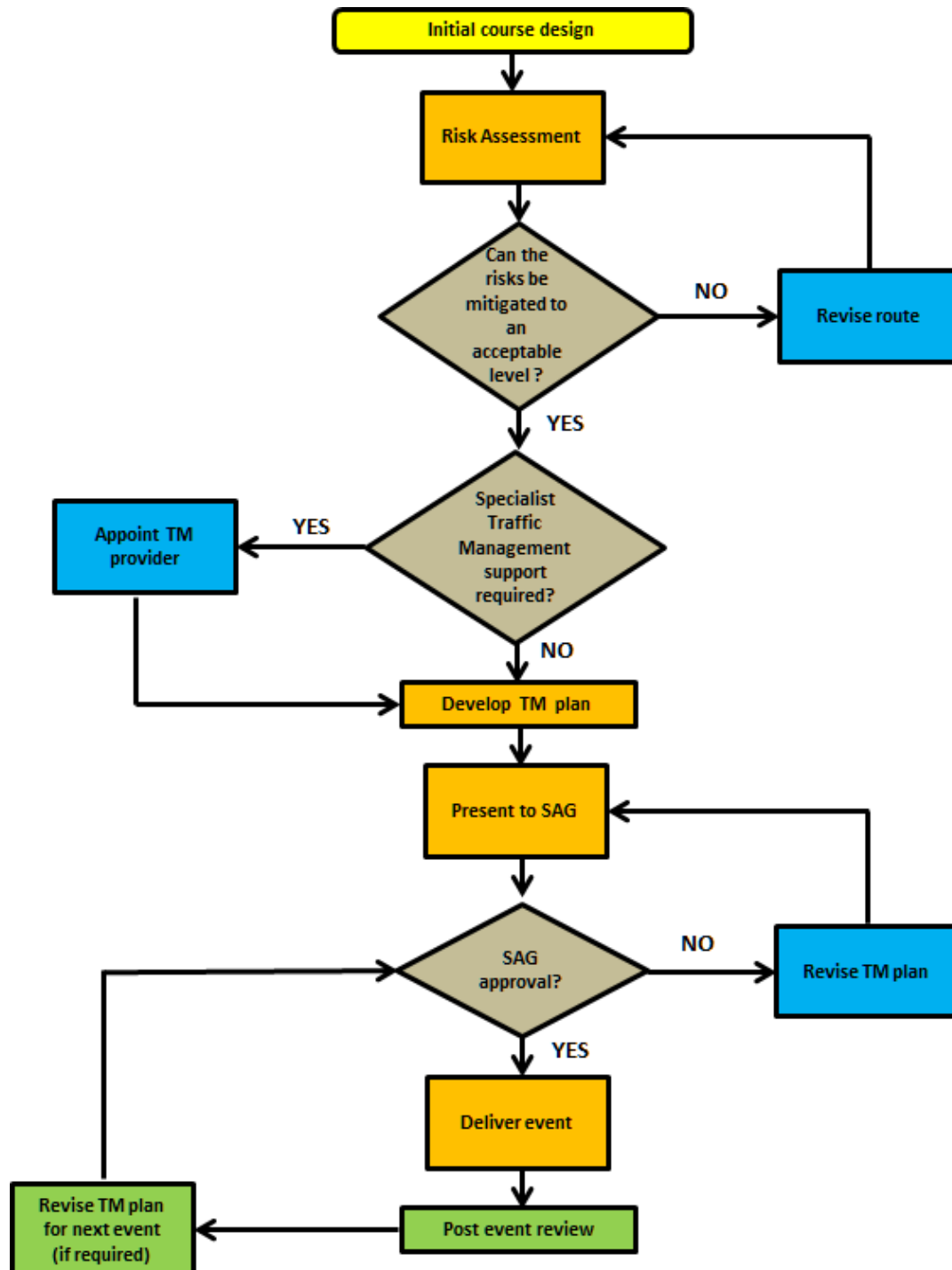
It is in the interest of every event organiser to build a strong working relationship with their SAG, and consider any advice given carefully.

Traffic Management Plan

At the SAG meeting the organiser (or their representative e.g. traffic management provider) will be required to brief the attendees about the proposed traffic management arrangements. Therefore it is recommended that organisers include a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) as part of the overall Event Management Plan. The TMP is covered in greater detail below.

Summary of Planning Process

The flowchart below summarises the cycle course planning process. The various steps are covered in more detail below.



Course Design

The majority of adult events take place on the open road, requiring robust planning to make the event as safe as possible for everyone affected by it. The course design itself is an essential element, supported by additional safety measures identified through a risk assessment and advice/guidance from the SAG.

Closed road courses eliminate or minimise some of the hazards on the bike section and allow greater flexibility in the design process by, for example, incorporating right hand turns, allowing both carriageways to be used in either direction and disregarding traffic lights. However, the majority of design features that should be considered for an open road course still apply.

The main things to bear in mind when designing a bike course include:

Course Direction

Avoid right hand turns as far as possible. If they cannot be avoided additional measures will need to be introduced to facilitate safe passage for the competitors (e.g. policing the junction, road closure order)

Crossing Points

On busy sections of the course where there is the likelihood of spectators and/or passer-by needing to cross the route design specific crossing points which should be signed and, ideally marshalled. This is particularly important for sections of the course where cyclists are travelling in both directions or at high profile areas (e.g. on approach to/from Transition Area, at high profile spectator points)

Road Widths

The road width needs to be able to accommodate the anticipated loading of cyclists on the road at any one time, road traffic and the ability for competitors to safely undertake passing manoeuvres without having to cross into the opposite carriageway (unless on a closed road)

On road/street parking can be a common problem, particularly in urban environments and can be especially hazardous when the width of available road is significantly reduced.

Road Condition

The condition of the road surface strongly influences how cyclists behave. For example, broken surfaces, pot holes and drain covers that have subsided can all cause to cyclists to take evasive action and suddenly change their cycle line causing a hazard to cyclists and/or other vehicles approaching from behind. Poorly surfaced roads should be avoided as far as possible.

Similarly, speed bumps can encourage poor riding practice and should also be avoided if possible or, at the very least, signed and covered within the competitor race information pack and/or briefing.

Road Surface

Changes to the road surface e.g. drain covers, tram lines can create a slipping hazard, particularly when located on turns.

Major Roads

High speed, major trunk roads should be avoided as far as possible. Emergency relief routes (roads which are routinely used as diversion routes in the event of a major incident/closure on a major road) should also be avoided.

The SAG will have detailed information on the local road network and be able to advise on which roads are unsuitable.

Blind Bends

Blind bends, particularly on narrow roads, should be avoided.

Traffic Lights, Pedestrian Crossings, Railway Crossings

Features that require road users to stop/give way should be avoided. They can create the potential for some competitors to ignore the requirement in the heat of competition to avoid losing time.

If they cannot be avoided strong measures will need to be put in place to ensure that competitors adhere to the Highway Code and also that the race time for anyone required to stop is adjusted appropriately.

Course Length

Given the length of the cycle section of some events there are clear advantages to utilising a multi-lap format including reduced impact on wider road network, reduced resourcing and spectator-friendly.

However, multi-lap courses have a significant impact on competitor loading on the course. If too many competitors are on the course at any one time it will increase the likelihood of packs of cyclists forming which has potential implications for both safety and adhering to the no drafting rule that applies to the vast majority of events.

Multi-lap courses may necessitate a reduced entry number (and/or larger gaps between waves) which could ultimately affect the viability of the event.

Other Activities

Consider venues along the route which may host other activities or are likely to be busy at the time of the event increasing the volume of traffic on the roads, queues forming and/or parked vehicles on the route. For example, other cycling/running events, churches, sports grounds, car boots, retail parks, nurseries.

Medical Cover

The course design should consider suitable/appropriate locations to position medical support and, in the event of an incident, consider and identify access routes

Feed Station

For all but the longest events it is unlikely that feed stations are required on the cycle section. However, when required the course design should factor in suitable locations where there is a suitable road width e.g. at a lay-by, where there is good visibility and where competitors are not travelling at high speeds. It is also important to make contingencies for the dropping of litter e.g. a designated litter zone.

Note: Similarly if manual lap counting is required on a multi-lap course it should take place at a suitable location where competitors are travelling slowly, enabling race numbers to be recorded more easily.

Spectators & Media

Long bike sections where cyclists disappear for a significant period are not spectator friendly. Give consideration to a multi-lap course that passes back through or close to the event venue but bear in mind competitor loading (described above).

If possible, identify points of interest on the course where it is safe and there is sufficient space to create a designated spectator zone. In congested areas it might be necessary to restrict spectator access using additional barriers and designated crossing points

Technical Challenges

The most interesting bike courses include hills and technical features like sharp bends and dead-turns that test bike-handling skills. Not only do they make the course more challenging but they can also reduce the potential for packs of cyclists to form on the highway contributing to the overall safety of the event.

Modifications For Paratriathlon

Avoid steep hill climbs (20%+) and descents. Additional guidance can be found in the British Triathlon Guidance to Making Your Event More Inclusive, available on the [Event Organisers System](#).

Modifications For Children's Events

TriStar and Youth events must not take place on the open highway unless the roads are completely closed to other users.

Competitors should be in sight of marshals at all times on the bike course.

Course Measuring

Accurate course measurement is necessary for a number of reasons including:

Competitor Safety

Competitors need to know the exact distance of the course so they can train appropriately. If the course is longer than advertised the increased exertion could lead to medical issues.

Pacing

Competitors will use distance to pace themselves. If they plan their pacing on incorrect distance information it could lead to underperformance which may cause frustration and conflict.

Safety Planning

Accurate distance information is necessary for risk assessment and the wider safety planning process, including the positioning of resources.

British Triathlon does not currently have a course certification system in place, and cannot officially ratify course distances at any event. It also does not have any rules relating to course measurement. However, there are rules relating to the distance races should be held over and the maximum distances for children's events.

When publishing course distances, you should state them in kilometres or metres (or miles), and you should state the exact distances, not rounded up distances i.e. 39.4km instead of 40km. You could also state how the distances were measured and, if you wish, state them as approximate.

How To Measure

There are a number of ways to measure distance including satellite mapping tools, car odometers and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices. However, there is a degree of error with each system so it is recommended that course measuring is undertaken several times to gain the most accurate reading possible.

When To Measure

For developing an initial course design, satellite mapping tools can be useful to get a rough course measurement without having to go out on the roads. During the risk assessment of the proposed course you can use the car odometer and/or a GPS to get a more accurate reading.

Once the course has been finalised it should be measured ideally on bike (or foot if possible) following the racing line - for open road courses the racing line should be measured close to the kerb but closed road courses the racing line will be taking the shortest route possible e.g. cutting corners.

Things To Bear In Mind

- The course distance should be measured from the Mount Line at the start of the cycle course to the Dismount Line at the end of the cycle course. The distance to/from the Transition Area does NOT contribute to the overall cycle course distance.
- GPS devices are not 100% reliable. If they lose the signal for even a short period of time the reading will be inaccurate so you should take several measurements to ensure an accurate distance.
- If the cycle course is multi-lap any inaccuracy in the course measurement will be multiplied.
- If you have any turn points, or want to use course distance markers these should be marked on the road using spray paint, and referenced using nearby landmarks or distinctive objects so they can be located easily. These marks should be done only once you are confident your course is accurate.
- GPS devices are routinely used by many competitors so that they know how far they have left to race and can adjust their pace/effort accordingly. This means that they will be very quickly aware of inaccuracies in published race distances which can lead to upset athletes and awkward situations, particularly if the inaccuracy is perceived to have influenced the final results.

Risk Assessment

In terms of an event, a risk assessment requires the organiser to undertake a careful examination of what hazards exist, the likelihood (or risk) of them causing harm and to what extent, followed by the identification of control measures that can be implemented to either eliminate or manage the risk to an acceptable level.

Where a risk cannot be managed to an acceptable level, the course (or particular section of the course) or the activity should either be adapted or avoided altogether - even if it means that an event cannot take place.

When risk assessing the bike course the main hazards to take into account, described in greater detail above, include:

- Turns and junctions - right turns should be avoided as far as possible unless the road is closed to other traffic
- Blind bends, particularly on narrow roads where there is the potential for cyclists to stray onto the opposite carriageway should be avoided as far as possible
- All junctions, sharp bends, hill crests, bridges, traffic calming measures, roundabouts/mini-roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, traffic signals
- Hazards created by the position or movement of other road users
 - parked cars and residential areas
 - horses and non-event cyclists
 - pedestrians
 - increased traffic due to a retail park, garden centre or church
- Hazards caused by changes to the road surface or variations in the road surface e.g. raised manhole cover, potholes
- Hazards caused by changes to road width

Undertaking The Risk Assessment

The easiest way to risk assess a cycle course is in a car. It will require a minimum of two people - one to drive (and call out distance measurements) and one to record the details. Once this has been done cycling the course will provide the “cyclist’s perspective” which could identify additional hazards not picked up in the car. It can also help identify any key points to highlight in the event information and/or race briefing.

Risk Mitigation

The main safety measures to mitigate the risks posed by cycle courses are:

- Traffic Management measures
- Signage
- Marshals (possibly with whistle and/or red flag to highlight particular hazards) and/or Stewards
- Competitor pre-race information and briefing

Risk Assessment Good Practice

There are a number of considerations to take into account when risk assessing:

- Don't over-complicate the process.
- Risk assessments are course and/or activity specific and therefore should not be undertaken purely as a desk top exercise. Risk assessing the course(s) should if possible include a visit on the same day of the week and at the same time as the proposed event as this will reflect more accurately the typical hazards that will need to be managed e.g. traffic flow at a particular junction.
- Be properly prepared. Have appropriate maps, plans and equipment available. Typical equipment might include digital camera/smart phone, measuring wheel, GPS.
- It can be useful to consider courses in both directions so that you take into account the potential hazards faced by or caused by road users and passers-by who may be unaware that the event is taking place.
- Regularly review the risk assessment.
- If the event has taken place before look back at the accident/near miss reports to identify potential hazards that may have previously been missed and that may need to be addressed for the future.

The British Triathlon Risk Assessment Guidance document available on the [Event Organisers System](#) has much more detail and information about risk assessment across the whole event.

British Triathlon has produced an Event Risk Assessment template for recording the details of the overall event, and specific course risk assessment for swim (open water and pool-based), cycle, run and transition segments. The template can be downloaded from the [Event Organisers System](#), as well as the Guide to Completing the British Triathlon Event Risk Assessment Template.

Traffic Management Plan

At the SAG meeting the organiser (or their representative e.g. traffic management provider) will be required to brief the attendees about the proposed traffic management arrangements. Therefore it is recommended that there is a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), included as part of the overall Event Management Plan. It is possible that approval for event licensing, road closures or use of traffic signs may be conditional on the organiser having a TMP.

The complexity of the plan will be influenced by various factors including the size/scale of the event and the nature of the roads affected. Any event planned to take place on, or affect any road with a speed limit of 50mph or higher, or that is classified as an A or B road is likely to have a higher impact on traffic and will therefore require more detailed planning.

A typical TMP will include the following information where applicable:

Contact details

- contact details of the person responsible for traffic management
- contact details for other relevant organisations involved in traffic management

Sign schedule, road closures, traffic lights, plans

- plans of race routes, roads to be closed and signed diversion routes
- a sign schedule
- any temporary traffic regulation orders (TTRO) made for example temporary speed limits, lifting of parking restrictions, temporary one-way systems
- any arrangements made regarding the control of permanent traffic lights.
- qualifications of those placing signs or directing traffic.

Estimated size of event

- The expected number of people and vehicles coming to the event
- the anticipated arrival times and peak event traffic times

Emergency procedures and bad weather contingency

- emergency access routes agreed with fire, police and ambulance services, with details of how this route will be kept open
- contingency arrangements for bad weather
- Lines of communication

Parking and public transport

- Number of parking spaces
- Details of how parking and illegal parking, will be managed.
- Details of drop off points and access for public transport
- Details of arrangements with public transport operators

Impact on the local traffic network

- details and agreements made in order to prevent congestion on the local and wider traffic network, including arrangements made as a result of other known events or road works in the area

- details of problems from previous events and what has been done to resolve those issues for this event

Summary of consultation and planning

Details and outcomes of consultations with all appropriate organisations and local groups for example:

- residents, businesses, religious groups & community associations
- local district councils, the police or the Highway Agency
- local disability groups
- local public transport operators

Road Closures and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

Road Closures

Closing a public road, footway, footpath or verge without a lawful closure order is illegal. The traffic/highway authority has the power to authorise road closures. As road closures cause disruption to drivers, pedestrians, residents and businesses, they should only be considered if absolutely necessary on safety grounds e.g. where participants need to, or are likely to ignore give way signs at junctions.

There are two pieces of legislation that can be used to authorise a road closure: The Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984. Sporting and leisure events on the highway, including triathlon and duathlon, will require the use the Road Traffic Regulation Act as the Town Police Clauses Act is generally used for processions, rejoicing, illuminations or “thronging”.

If an event cannot be run without a road closure, then event organisers are advised to consider potential diversion routes that could be implemented although it is the traffic/highway authority that will ultimately decide on the most appropriate diversion route. The traffic/highway authority will make every effort to keep the diversion route clear of other incidents, works or events. However, it is possible that an unplanned incident or emergency works has to be carried out on the diversion route. Accordingly, a backup diversion route may need to be considered. This is usually only necessary for large or events lasting more than one day.

The legal procedure for processing road closures takes time, so there is usually a minimum notice period required for any road closure request. This will depend on the road being closed, the legislation being used, the type of event and the organisation processing it. Notice periods range from six weeks to six months.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs)

Some events may benefit from the implementation of temporary traffic regulation orders such as temporary speed limits to slow traffic down, or restrictions on parking in order to keep routes clear and free of 'pinch points'. The traffic/highway authority will be able to advise on such matters and process the necessary application forms.

IMPORTANT: Check the timescale for submitting the required TTRO application and apply early to avoid last minute panics.

Costs

There is usually a charge made for processing a legal order to close a road. This charge covers the legally required advertising of the intent to close a road, and the administrative costs incurred preparing the order. The cost is likely to run to several hundred pounds.

Public Liability insurance is required for all road closure orders made using the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 by the traffic/highway authority, which will almost always require £10 million in cover.

For all closures, diversion routes and other temporary traffic regulation orders the event organiser will have to supply their own cones, signs and barriers and the appropriate staff to set them up (or via an approved traffic management company).

The police can authorise the use of 'Police no waiting' cones as an alternative to a temporary parking restriction order. The police may be able to supply the correct cones for this task but this should not be relied on.

Roadworks

Roadworks can often pose a challenge to the effective running of your event. It is strongly advised that organisers use www.roadworks.org, a free tool which the majority of local and highways authorities across the country use and supply information to.

This website indicates planned roadworks, closures and other activities which could have an impact on your event. The date filters can also be amended to show what is planned in the future, so can indicate what is happening on the day of your event.

Organisers are encouraged to check this throughout the planning process, as the website is continually updated. This will also enable contingency routes to be looked at, if planned works overrun.

This website should not be used in isolation, and remember that highways authorities and SAGs are on hand to offer further information and guidance. Also, unplanned roadwork may not appear - particularly as a response to emergency situations.

Traffic Safety Manual - Chapter 8

The official detailed guidance applicable to Traffic Safety Measures and Signs for Road Works and Temporary Situations (including events) is contained within Chapter 8 of the Department of Transport/Highways Agency Traffic Safety Manual. This is the guidance that members of the SAG may refer to. The SAG will be able to provide further information.

There are two parts to the guidance:

Part 1: Design is for those responsible for the design of temporary traffic management arrangements needed to facilitate maintenance activities or in response to temporary situations

Part 2: Operations is for those responsible for planning, managing and participating in operations to implement, maintain and remove temporary traffic management arrangements.

One of the underlying principles is that anyone engaged in the installation, removal and maintenance of traffic management equipment should be competent in the particular activity in which they are involved and should have a full understanding of the signing requirements for the activity and the correct operation of the equipment they are using. Only adequately trained and competent operatives and foremen/supervisors should be engaged in temporary traffic management operations.

Most, if not all, events requiring temporary traffic management arrangements will need to appoint a traffic management company with appropriate experience*, resources and trained staff to develop and deliver the traffic management elements. The SAG will probably be able to advise on traffic management companies that are able to provide appropriate support and who have a knowledge and understanding of the local road network.

It is recommended that organisers engage traffic management support from companies that have experience of sporting events on the highway rather than companies that normally only provide traffic management arrangements for roadworks. Whilst the principles are the same, the speed of installation and removal differ greatly. A company that regularly works on sports events is more likely to understand the level of resourcing that will be required.

Signage

Principle: No road user should approach the cycle course from any direction without understanding exactly what is happening, and what is expected of them.

Advisory Signs

Traffic signs must conform to the most current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD).

The approved signs are:



The size of the signs and the type/size of the font is determined by the speed limit of the road concerned.

Permission is required from the relevant traffic/highway authority to place signs on the public highway.

Signs can only be put in place by trained operatives.

The Department of Transport's "Safety at Street Works and Road Works: A Code of Practice" (Oct 2013) is a useful reference document that includes guidance on the setting out of signage.

Key points to bear in mind include:

- Only use prescribed signs as agreed with the relevant authority and site them correctly.
- The use of any traffic sign not prescribed by the current TSRGD is unlawful unless it has received special signs authorisation. Non-authorised signs could be removed.

- Signs should be placed where they will be clearly seen and cause minimum inconvenience to drivers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users alike, and where there is minimum risk of their being hit or knocked over by traffic.
 - Where there is a grass verge the signs should normally be placed there.
 - If no verge is present, the placing of signs on the footway is permitted but in no circumstances must the width of the footway be reduced to less than 1m, preferably not less than 1.5m.
- The risk assessment plan must take into account the safety implications for road users and set out the road signs required in a traffic management plan.
- Temporary signs must not obscure existing permanent signs which still apply.
- All officials engaged on an event on a road must be briefed and wear high visibility clothing.
- Safety measures should be taken to ensure that officials, when placing signs (cones and barriers) on a road, are afforded maximum protection. Flashing beacons to warn motorists, together with a substantial vehicle to prevent collision, are minimum requirements, unless the risk is established as low.
- Signs must be secure so that they cannot be blown over or dislodged by passing traffic. Heavy weights must not be used to secure signs to the ground due to the danger to moving traffic possibly hitting and moving the weights. The signs should be ballasted with sacks containing fine granular material.
- Check the signs regularly in case they are displaced, tampered with or removed.
- Side road traffic must be considered, and signs as illustrated below placed where necessary to warn motorists of the event, and to reduce congestion or obstructions.
- All signs must be removed at the conclusion of the event, or as soon as possible after the event has passed a particular point.

Given that events often affect roads over a long distance it is unwise to rely on one sign to offer protection.

Where a pedestrian or cycle crossing will become unusable it must be taken out of service and any beacons covered with an opaque bag. The signals must be switched off and a traffic sign “Light signals not in use” must be displayed and barriers placed in position.

Marshals & Stewards

For the purposes of this document a marshal is someone who has a responsibility for the safety and care of the competitors. This includes both static/on foot marshals and mobile motorcycle marshals.

A steward is someone who has a responsibility for the safety and care of the public.

Whatever the event stewards or marshals working on the public highway should be:

- aged 18+ and physically fit to carry out their duties and assist the public and competitors in the event of an emergency
- competent
- approachable
- able to exercise common sense
- clear and concise and able to communicate effectively
- aware of the road conditions

It is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that both marshals and stewards do not exceed their lawful powers and that they are aware that if they do so they could be liable to prosecution.

Open Road Events (i.e. the roads are open to normal traffic)

Marshals and stewards do not have any powers to stop or direct traffic UNLESS it is a matter of safety. For example, if a casualty is lying in the road and is in danger of being hit by traffic it is acceptable for marshal/steward, or indeed a member of public, to stop traffic and politely explain why. They should place themselves in a safe position when stopping traffic to avoid becoming a casualty themselves. In the majority of cases the vehicle driver will stop and wait BUT it is their right to continue along the road if they so wish.

On the other hand, anyone caught stopping or asking cars to stop purely to facilitate the movement of participants through a junction may be liable to legal action as holding up the traffic is so as not to obstruct cyclists is less easy to justify.

Closed Road Events

On a closed road event, marshals and stewards are allowed to stop any vehicles that have strayed onto the route. They should of course must bear in mind that the car driver may not stop for them because they don't agree with the event or the closure.

Stewards

Stewards should be readily identifiable by the use of high visibility jackets, tabards and/or armbands. Their duties include:

- To understand their general responsibilities towards the health and safety of all categories of spectator.

- To carry out pre event safety checks.
- To control or direct spectators who are entering or leaving the event, or a viewing area.
- To assist in the safe operation of the event, and not to view the activity taking place.
- To recognise crowd conditions so as to ensure the safe dispersal of spectators and the prevention of over-crowding.
- To assist the emergency services as required.
- To respond to emergencies.
- To undertake specific duties in an emergency or as directed by the safety officer or appropriate emergency service officer.

Marshals

Marshals should also be readily identifiable and be:

- Briefed so that they are fully conversant with the organisers' intentions and directions. This should be by way of prepared handout and a detailed briefing prior to the start of any event.
- Conversant with any contingency plans for the event and in particular their roles in such plans.
- Familiar with the event's route, and know all the elements of the event.
- Remain in the allocated position for the duration of the event, unless directed to move by an event supervisor. It is important that they remain in the allocated position in order that the person in overall command knows exactly where their staff are if needed in the case of an emergency or redeployment.

Marshals can be issued with whistles to warn spectators and the public of the approach of competitors. They can also be issued with red flags to warn competitors when they are approaching a significant hazard and may need to reduce their speed.

Training & Briefing

The adequate training and briefing of stewards and marshals is central to effective event safety. It is recommended that verbal briefings are supplemented with written instructions appropriate to the role/duties.

The sort of things to include:

- Location of event services e.g. medical support
- Emergency contacts
- Roles and responsibilities
- Safety requirements
- Communication methods
- Incident management - action to take e.g. evacuation, bomb threat, injured or lost persons

Motorcycle Officials

Motorcycle Officials that have gone through the British Triathlon Motorcycle Official Education Programme can be a valuable resource for event organisers if used appropriately.

As event Technical Officials they can enforce rules concerning drafting and improper cycle conduct however their primary role is to manage route safety and it is in this role that they can be the organiser's "eyes and ears" on the ground.

Typical duties that a well-trained, briefed and equipped Motorcycle Official can undertake beyond identifying and reporting rule infringements can include:

- Minimising the risk of injury to the public, competitors and other personnel e.g. highlighting hazards that appear on the course such as parked cars
- Providing initial medical and welfare assistance - given that they may be the first to arrive on the scene. This assistance can include calling in an incident and requesting the appropriate assistance, holding the fort until the assistance arrives or escorting medical support vehicles safely to the scene
 - **IMPORTANT:** Motorcycle marshals should NOT be considered as the First Aid provision on the cycle course. Organisers should always have dedicated First Aid provision.
- Dealing with any incidents arising as a result of the event.
- Indicating the route of the event
- Acting as a lead vehicle, guiding the competitors and/or warning others of their imminent approach
- Maintaining the security of road closures
- Checking that route marshals are correctly positioned
- Checking that route signage and traffic management resources are correctly positioned
- Providing assistance for mechanical issues e.g. by carrying a basic tool kit and spares.

Motorcycle Officials should have a clear remit to stand down from monitoring rule infringements as soon as any safety concern becomes apparent.

For larger events and/or events where drafting is of a particular concern consideration should be given to engaging a larger team of Motorcycle Officials and splitting their duties so that some of them focus on course safety leaving the others to focus on rule infringements as far as possible.

For organisers to get the best service from the Motorcycle Officials they should not simply consider them as being "draftbusters" who are there to identify, warn and report competitors who break the rules. The following good practice will help ensure that route safety requirements are managed in an effective, efficient and professional manner.

Engage motorcycle officials at the earliest opportunity

Motorcycle Officials are requested at the point of event registration, and are allocated by Regional Motorcycle Coordinators (RMCs). Contact details for the RMCs can be found on the [Event Organisers System](#). As a minimum RMCs should be contacted no later than one month prior to the event. If the RMC has difficulty in identifying Motorcycle Officials event organisers should contact the [Events Team](#) for further support.

For mass or wave start events British Triathlon recommends a ratio of one Motorcycle Official for every 50 cyclists on the road at any one time where resources allow. As a minimum two Motorcycle Officials should be engaged.

Provide the Motorcycle Officials with event details, particularly course details in advance of the event

Include a brief detailing the duties that you would like them to perform, contact details for event team and highlight what equipment/consumables you will be providing them with. This might include an event radio, event accreditation, course map including location of e.g. medical support, basic tool kit including spare inner tubes, space blankets. The Motorcycle Officials should have their own high viz tabard, whistle and warning flag (to warn competitors of hazards on the route), pen and pad, mobile phone.

Ensure that the Motorcycle Officials are met and briefed by the appropriate person e.g. bike course director

This is the opportunity to highlight/reiterate the main points, introduce key personnel and distribute equipment etc

Have a hot debrief with the Motorcycle Officials at the conclusion of the event and/or contact them following the event for feedback.

If a Motorcycle Official does not report anyone for rule infringements it does not mean that they have not been busy. They may well have feedback that will be helpful for future improvements.

Whilst Motorcycle Officials arguably provide the most effective method for identifying competitors who are drafting, event organisers should not solely rely on this particularly given that the Motorcycle Officials may be required to focus on safety issues. Static marshals positioned around the course can assist in the identification of offenders.

Good course design, within the limitations of the available road network, and careful consideration of wave dynamics* for mass start events is often a far more effective way of minimising the potential for the formation of packs of drafting cyclists.

***wave size, time gap between waves, age groupings within & between waves**

British Triathlon would like to thank M-MEC Solutions Ltd for their support in the development of the Motorcycle Officials guidance within this document.

Competitors

Competitors must comply with the Highway Code, safety measures identified through the event risk assessment and instructions/directions from Technical Officials (relating to the British Triathlon Competition Rules e.g. drafting rules), marshals and the police.

They participate at their own risk and should do so with due regard for both their own safety and the safety of all others.

It is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that the competitors are aware of their responsibilities, relevant rules that will be applied and any control measures that will be in place to mitigate the risks posed by significant hazards on the course. This could include:

- Competitor responsibility statement at the point of entry
- Written instructions/advice in the pre-event information pack
- Notices on the information board at the event registration
- Verbal briefing prior to the start of the event

Further Reading

[British Triathlon Competition Rules](#)

[British Triathlon Guide to Risk Assessment for Events](#)

[Bike Director role description](#)

Additional role descriptions are also available on the Event Organisers System



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