

# NON COMPETITIVE ON-ROAD EVENT GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICE

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# 1. Introduction

This document has been prepared in consultation with major Sportive event organisers to provide a set of guidelines based on best practice. Importantly, this provides a minimum level for safety not only for the participants, but also other road users and members of the public.

British Cycling aims to maintain that Cycle Sportive events continue to run to a consistent and high standard. This will build confidence amongst local authorities, highways and Police and other key agencies.

The following guidelines should therefore be used as an indication of the minimum operating standards as recommended by British Cycling. Failure to comply with these recommendations may invalidate this or other event insurances.

Only British Cycling registered events will carry the British Cycling Event Insurance, which provides public (third party) liability insurance cover for the organiser, the participants\* and the event officials and volunteers for the duration of the event. Refer to *Insurance Advice for Event Organisers* for full details.

\*individual cover will only be provided to participants who are either Race Gold, Race Silver or Ride Members of British Cycling.

#### Non Competitive Events: Definitions and Terminology

**Sportives** are non-competitive, mass participation challenge events, typically timed on a publicised, signposted route, varying in distance of approximately 40-100 miles. The events are designed to be a physical, personal challenge using a combination of distance and severity of the course to test the typical 200 - to 5000 participants. Generally there may be a choice of two or three routes providing opportunities for varying levels of ability. It is expected that there will be regular feed stations and/or check points positioned appropriate to the course, conditions and topography. Timing points and marshals will be appointed as defined by the Risk Assessment.

**Reliability Rides** are similar to Sportives, however are organised on a small scale, club basis for club riders. These events can usually expect between 40-80 participants. The number of riders are far less than Sportives, but they can be organised into reasonable sized groups, dependent on the roads, which will allow other traffic to safely pass. It is effectively a formal club run open to all comers and can provide an excellent introduction to local clubs. A nominal fee (or donation to club funds) may be payable. Facilities may extend to feed stations but seldom include marshals, timing or route marking. Generally a Reliability Ride is not advertised outside of the specific clubs catchment area.

**Audax** are similar to Reliability Rides, however are usually longer (circa 125+ km) and less expensive since they use existing cafes or village halls as checkpoints and require more self sufficiency on the part of the participant in terms of route finding.

**On Road Leisure Rides** are aimed more at the family and leisure market, often either for charity or as a special one-off event with routes usually up to about 30 miles. There are exceptions, which may also be of longer distances.

Any of these rides can be promoted to raise money for charity. The organiser could make it a condition of entry that the participant raises a minimum level of sponsorship, an optional add-on or designate a proportion of the entry fee for charity.

Organisers should be clear on their target audience when categorising and planning the event and if in doubt should contact British Cycling for clarification. The marketing, entry fees and event day structure should therefore reflect the categorisation, which will help participants understand exactly what to expect, thus contributing to participant satisfaction and event success. N.B. Organisers must ensure that their events are categorised according to the event types outlined above. Failure to comply may invalidate the event insurance.

# 2. Guidelines for Non-Competitive Sportives

#### 2.1 General

Sportives **are not races** and shall be organised simply to require that each participant ride over a specified route within a reasonable time, providing riders with a personal challenge during an enjoyable days cycling.

When choosing a route, consider any other events that are scheduled to be using the designated roads on that day. Examples include running, triathlon, village, or town based events, parades, etc as well as any other cycle events. It is therefore recommended that the local authorities, highways and the Police are notified of any proposed events in the early planning stages, as they may also offer information of other planned events, which may not have been noticed, or are yet to be publicised. If route clashes are apparent it is the organiser's responsibility to take the necessary measures to ensure their event can run safely and not unreasonably impact on local communities.

A list of most cycle events can be found at British Cycling's online events calendar and should be checked regularly across all disciplines for events on and around the proposed event day. This may be accessed from <u>www.britishcycling.org.uk/events</u> British Cycling encourages organisers to work together and agree alternative event days or a change of route being considered to avoid event conflict.

#### 2.2 Risk Assessment

**Definition:** A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking. *The English Oxford Dictionary* (2012), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Risk management is a key and an essential element in the event planning process and therefore the detailed planning and practice of thorough risk management measures should form a major part of every Sportive event preparation and delivery process.

A comprehensive Risk Assessment is to be completed in the early event planning stages and reviewed again prior to event day. Please refer to the **British Cycling's Risk Assessment Form Template** and **Risk Assessment Guide and FAQ's** documents.

The following process is recommended in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive guide to completing a risk assessment:

**Stage 1:** Identify a route, event HQ and feed stations.

**Stage 2:** Conduct the Risk Assessment on the route and event HQ, following up with a second team member independent and objective review. Notify authorities of the proposed event (See <u>Police</u> <u>Notification Letter Template</u> as an example).

**Stage 3:** Reassess the Risk Assessment; confirm appointment of marshals and feed stations. Confirm insurance within 2 weeks prior to the event.

Stage 4: Review Risk Assessment within 24 hours prior to the event. Update as necessary.

N.B. The course must be checked in its entirety within 24 hours of the event start to ensure that there are no additional hazards present on the route since it was finalised. This is especially important in the case of adverse weather which may have caused, for example, flooding or fallen trees. All danger

points must be clearly marked on the ground and notified in advance to the participants. It is also advisable to re-check the route within 6 hours of the start to ensure no further hazards are present, and to ensure all original signs are still well placed and directing the route as intended. Considerations should be made for event cancelations, abandonment and evacuation should it be necessary. Participant and event team health and safety are of paramount importance and organisers need to be prepared for all possibilities should they arise.

# 2.2.1 Requirements

The completed Risk Assessment should be available on the day of the event and it shall include any additional specific risks as identified on the day. This is a requirement of British Cycling event insurance. Copies of the course map; rider information packs; rider registration forms and sign on details may also be requested by the local authorities and the Police, so it is therefore advised that they are readily available and up to date.

# 2.2.2 Terms and conditions

By submitting the event registration process you agree to complete all of the necessary documentation as outlined and shall adhere to all guidelines provided. Failure to comply with the necessary requirements and fully assess the routes may invalidate the event insurance provided by British Cycling.

# 2.2.3 Communications

It is the organiser's responsibility to ensure that reliable methods of communications are available to event staff across the entirety of the course. Additional methods for communication, such as radio communication, should be used where mobile telephone technology is unreliable or insufficient.

# 2.3 Conduct of Groups

Participants of non-competitive cycling events must ride in an orderly manner in accordance with the Highway Code. The Highway Code states that riders should not ride more than two abreast, and extend all reasonable courtesy to other road users. The use of earphones (e.g. MP3, iPod) by participants is strongly discouraged on the grounds of safety.

Group riding by event participants should depend on the traffic condition and the severity of the course as indicated in the Risk Assessment. This may be assisted by starting riders in groups of 20 starting at one to two minute intervals, traffic volume permitting, as an example.

It is considered best practice to brief all groups of riders before the event with reference to a number of details as specified in the <u>Rider Briefing Considerations</u> document. The recommendations include reference to the Highway Code, rider conduct, the compulsory wearing of helmets, the role of marshal's, etcetera. Rider briefings are considered to be a reasonable way to ensure participants are aware of basic safety measures and guidance within your event.

# 2.4 Condition of Cycles and Equipment

Participants are responsible for their own bike and associated equipment. The bike must be fully roadworthy. If the event is to be held in poor or little light, or if there is a possibility of the ride finishing in darkness, then front and rear lights must be used and must have adequate battery life for the duration of the event.

The use of triathlon handlebars or other time trial bar extensions is not permitted in British Cycling registered Sportive events for safety reasons. Participants who do have them fitted should be asked to remove the parts, or be withdrawn from the event.

# 2.5 Helmets

The wearing of hard shell helmets conforming to CE standards EN1078 is mandatory for all riders participating in British Cycling registered events. It is the organisers' responsibility to notify all participants, prior to event day, that the wearing of helmets is a requirement of the event. Participants who start without a helmet, or choose to discard their helmet at any other point of the ride should be withdrawn from the event, as this may invalidate the event insurance as provided by British Cycling.

#### 2.6 Accompanying Vehicles

The provision of support or roaming vehicles appropriate to the number of participants taking part in the event is important to carry basic spares, relay messages to the organising team or to summon help. Riders are not permitted to have their own 'personal' support car and it should be made clear that any participant failing to observe this will be withdrawn from the event.

# 2.7 Children and Under 18's

All participants under the age of 18 must submit a consent form completed by their parent/guardian. Parental consent forms are available for download from the British Cycling website <u>here</u>. Riders under the age of 16 must also be accompanied by a parent or guardian. It is at the organiser discretion to set the minimum age of the riders permitted to take part.

# 2.8 Event Timing and Publication of Times

British Cycling supports the concept that events are timed in order to provide individual rider feedback for the completion of an event, or specific route. It has proven popular to include a breakdown of the overall time, by publicising split or stage times, which may be used specifically to offer feedback over sections of particularly challenging terrain. The stage times, or overall event time must not however propose, market, or encourage the participants in any way or form to compete against one rider or another. Events or stages which encourage inter-participant competition may invalidate the insurance provided by British Cycling.

**Timed stages** – all events proposing to time specific sections, which offer feedback for completing a specific stage of a particularly challenging nature, must be referred to British Cycling before insurance can be approved. Failure to submit this information may invalidate the insurance provided by British Cycling.

**Publication of times** - event times should be presented as a list of riders who have completed the route and should be displayed as 'Event Times', rather than 'Event Results'. These can be uploaded onto the event page on the British Cycling calendar via your Organiser Dashboard. The following requirements discourage the nature of competition in non-competitive events:

- Organisers must not publish a list of riders ranked by finishing times, nor in any way indicate the order in which riders finished
- Alphabetical name order is the only appropriate format to display event times
- The awarding of prizes cannot be given on event placings. The use of a podium indicates the event was of a competitive nature, so should not be used.

Failure to comply with the above guidelines may invalidate the event insurance provided by British Cycling.

#### 2.8.1 Terminology and phrases for non-competitive events

Permitted: Event time(s), timing, non-competitive, ride, and event.

**Not Permitted:** Result(s), competitive, competition, position(s), prize(s), placing(s), race(s), and race number.

# 2.9 Event Incidents

All event staff should be formally briefed on the relevant documentation and procedure should an incident happen in relation to or during any aspect of an event. It is critical that all details are recorded and submitted to the event organiser as soon as possible. Events which are insured by British Cycling must adhere to the guidance as set out in the *Insurance Advice for Event Organisers* document.

A comprehensive list of frequently asked questions may also be referenced <u>here</u>. If there are any questions surrounding insurance please do not hesitate to contact a member of the legal team on: 0161 274 2015

# 2.10 Compliance with the Guidelines

By registering the event, the organiser agrees to comply with the guidelines within this document and by entering the event, the participant also agrees to abide by the above guidelines. It is therefore the organisers' responsibility to inform the participants of the guidelines in place. Any complaints by participants concerning the event must be made to the organiser within 48 hours of the event close.

To register an event, the organiser must create and submit the event online through their Event Organiser dashboard. The log in to the British Cycling dashboard may be found <u>here</u>.

# 3. Best Practice in Non-Competitive Sportives

# 3.1 Event Planning

#### 3.1.1 Calendar coordination & event registration

With an increase in Sportives and other cycle events in recent years, it is good practice to consider the date and region in which events are planned and the impact they may have on the surrounding area. It is recognised that mass participation events can have both a positive and negative impact upon local areas. Therefore well planned events, which are consistently delivered, should offer sustainability in terms of opportunities for participation, but also the long term local and regional support. It is recommended that the British Cycling Regional Event Officers, local authorities, highways and the Police are notified of any proposed events in the early planning stages. These parties may offer information, guidance and experience of other planned events, which have, or are yet to be staged in the area on the same day.

Registering your event with British Cycling should be one of the first organisational priorities following the risk assessment and confirmation of the event date. Early event registration maximises the opportunities to fulfil rider fields and assists all organisers in planning events across the Britain. It is recommended that events are registered a minimum of six months in advance of the event date. Events registered prior to 1<sup>st</sup> November will also be submitted for the first British Cycling events calendar as issued at the beginning of January in the following year.

If event clashes (dates/location) are apparent it is the organiser's responsibility to take the necessary measures to ensure their event can run safely. We encourage organisers to work together with decisions around alternative event days, or a change of route being considered to avoid participant collisions.

A list of most cycle events can be found at British Cycling's online events calendar and should be checked regularly across all event disciplines for and up to the proposed event day. This may be accessed from <u>www.britishcycling.org.uk/events</u>. It is encouraged to check other events calendars as well for additional events that may be taking place.

# 3.1.2 Event route(s)

**Route:** The event route should be planned to accommodate the riding ability of all participants. The roads selected and quality of surfaces should be based on a comprehensive risk assessment and be suitable for group riding purposes, which will cause minimum inconvenience to all other road users. This in turn makes the ride more pleasant for participants, but also limits the impact of the event in the surrounding area. The organiser should, wherever possible, select a route that is low in traffic volumes and away from major towns.

The organiser should ensure participants have access to feed stations that are appropriately positioned and safely located on the event route/s. These do not have to be based purely on distance, but considerations should be made for conditions and the topography of the event routes. First aid facilities and mechanical support services should also be considered at these points.

It is common practice to supply a backup route map and/or list of directions to each participant at sign-on. The availability of GPX or downloadable maps is also useful to participants.

# 3.1.3 Signage/route markers

Distinctive route markers should be used to identify the event route/s to be followed. These should be fixed on a temporary basis, as securely as reasonably practicable in order to deter casual vandalism or tampering. It is important to check the signs and route markings on the day of the event to ensure they are all intact as they were originally and correctly placed.

The placing of signs should be consistent, such that signed junctions, bends, descents, and hazards have a uniform position and appearance. Consistency in design, colour, size and placement of signs will enable participants to have a clear understanding of what to expect at each signed point on the event route. Based on the risk assessment, it is expected that hazardous descents and other sections are backed up with additional signage and marshals where appropriate.

It is important that participants are aware of the specific signs they are set to follow during the event. It is therefore recommended that organisers present these clearly in the pre-event communications and during the rider briefing to ensure familiarity. However, it does remain the responsibility of each participant to take the correct course.

Route signs must be removed as soon as possible after the event. It is illegal to use permanent markings such as spray paint on the roads.

# 3.1.4 Event provision

The chosen venue for the event HQ should accommodate space for rider registrations, bike storage, baggage storage, parking, adequate catering and toilet facilities. Showers should be available where possible.

Organisers should as a minimum consider providing the following facilities, amenities and support for event day in order to meet the basic expectations of most sportive participants:

- Indoor/sheltered event HQ
- Toilets
- Drinking water
- Well stocked feed stations and catering at the Event HQ
- Clear and consistent route signage
- Roving event management team
- Roving mechanics
- Broom wagon/tail end support
- First aid

N.B. The welfare of all event staff should be incorporated in to the event planning. Appropriate event clothing should be supplied where necessary, but food, drinks and any specialist equipment should be provided as part of the working day.

#### 3.1.5 Event sign-on

British Cycling encourages all organisers to adopt a signing on process on the event day. A signing on process importantly confirms which riders intend to start and participate in the event on the day.

Benefits may include:

- Only known/entered riders will be tracked, timed (if present) and covered for insurance
- Opportunity to provide additional safety or other information for the event
- Opportunity to engage with the riders (your customers) and build a relationship

It helps if the process runs smoothly and avoids excess queuing. Ensure the sign on team are well briefed to handle a range of enquiries. Consider providing an information point where participants may be referred for more generic event information, including pre-event safety information.

# 3.1.6 Use of private roads

If the event uses private roads the organiser must obtain written permission from the landowner(s) concerned to use that road. The landowner has the right to request a copy of the event insurance certificate.

#### 3.2 Risk Assessment

It is recommended that the completed Risk Assessment is forwarded to all the relevant local authorities and Police forces as outlined in the guidelines. If required, the Risk Assessment should also be made available to the landowners of private roads that the event uses.

The course must be re-checked in its entirety within 24 hours of the start of the event to ensure that all signs are still placed as intended and there are no additional hazards (e.g. road works) present since the route was chosen. All hazardous points must be clearly marked and notified to the participants prior to the event start.

Download **British Cycling's Risk Assessment Guide and FAQ's** document here.

# 3.3 Rider Safety

All riders participating within an event should be in receipt of any relevant pre-event information and guidance, which should set out and explain all recognised hazards as recorded on the Risk Assessment. Photographs of particularly challenging or technical hazards may be a useful way to communicate this detail.

It is advised that batches of approximately 20 riders receive a final event briefing on the event start line where they should be reminded that the event is run on public roads with all riders being expected to obey the Highway Code. Details that may be included in the rider briefing:

- Non-competitive i.e. not a race and should not be treated as such
- ALL riders must obey the Highway Code
- Single out on narrow roads
- Marshal points and their role e.g. there are some flagging marshals before some of the descents, so proceed with caution
- Signage what to look for and what to follow
- Split locations
- Feed stations
- Courtesy and etiquette on the road (avoiding incidents) communicate with others around you and only pass riders on the right.
- Awareness and respect for other road users
- A DNF; leaving the designated course; missing a check point; split;
- Procedure if an incident is to occur
- Emergency contact numbers of event team and HQ
- Weather conditions.

This provides a safe environment in which to start an event and allows batches of riders onto the event route at reasonable two minute intervals. This avoids congestion, but also provides the opportunity to clearly state the organiser's event guidance and expectations within the event. The riders represent your event and inconsiderate or illegal riding may have implications for running events in the future.

Please refer to British Cycling's *Rider Briefing Considerations* document for more details.

# 3.3.1 Pre-event communications

It is recommended that all participants are in receipt of the full-event details, including route, hazards and emergency contacts, prior to starting the event day to ensure riders are aware and adequately prepared to participate in the event. A pre-event rider pack may be an efficient way to communicate a range of event details and provides an opportunity to inform and educate the event participant. Details may include:

- Nature of the event non competitive
- Event HQ location, parking and facilities available
- Route maps, including location of feed stations
- Specific hazards
- Signage what to look for and what to follow. Responsibility lies with the riders.
- What to bring, including a form of ID in case an incident is to occur, food, money, mobile phone, basic tool kit, spare clothing, working pump, and spare inner tubes
- Appropriate clothing
- Rider conduct and the highway code
- Condition of cycles and equipment
- Mandatory requirement to wear helmets
- Event support on the day
- In case of emergency procedures

These details may also form a part of the rider briefing, but organisers should also be regularly communicating these details with participants during the lead up to the event day.

Please refer to British Cycling's example for <u>Pre-event Rider Pack Template</u> for more details.

# 3.3.2 Event day safety measures

- First Aid an adequate number of first aiders should be provided, appropriate to the number of riders entered and the length and layout of the course. These can be stationed at strategic points as determined by the Risk Assessment or as mobile units. It is advisable to alert the local Accident and Emergency department/s that the event is taking place.
- Monitoring the event Accounting for riders starting, finishing and passing all official checkpoints or event splits.
- **Communication** consider multiple options for reliable communication across the event route, especially in remote locations (e.g. multiple mobile networks, landlines, road access).
- Rider briefing as outlined in Section 3.3 (p.8).
- Sweep/ Broom wagon It is advisable to offer riders who appear to struggle to complete the event distance within an allotted or reasonable time to withdraw from the event and take a lift within an official event vehicle. This should be based on safety of the rider concerned and the need to close the event on time as originally proposed and planned.

# 3.4 Event Registration

British Cycling event registrations are required **at least seven days** prior to the event start date. It is advised to register an event as early as possible in order to complete one of the most important aspects of your event, as well as enhance promotion, entry numbers, and inform other event organisers of the event date and location.

To register an event, log in to your online Organiser Dashboard on the British Cycling website and submit your application <u>here</u>.

It is the organisers' responsibility to notify British Cycling HQ of the final participant numbers taking part within their British Cycling registered event within seven days of the event finishing. Submission

of participation numbers is essential for completing the insurance documentation, as well as for reporting purposes to help secure future funding for cycling events. Failure to submit the correct information within the seven day period may invalidate the event insurance provided by British Cycling.

# 3.5 Event Entries

Entries are commonly taken via, online entry systems, post or on the day. British Cycling offer registered organisers' use of our online entry system for free. Some of the features and benefits are below:

- Register your event online Save time and avoid paperwork
- Free online entry for organisers: Riders pay £1 per entry
- Industry leading payment security
- Manage entries online Reduce the stress of postal entries
- Weekly payment of entry fees directly to your chosen bank account
- Free event promotion on Britain's biggest cycling events calendar
- Benefit from British Cycling's online traffic of over 1 million page views per month
- Customise your entry form, event and email confirmation pages
- Analyse event entries and rider data with the new custom reporting tool
- Instantly upload event times to your dedicated event page on the British Cycling site
- Upload your own social media, videos, photographs as required

For further information or to set up to use our online entry system contact **sportives@britishcycling.org.uk** 

# 3.6 Event Team Structure

The size, location and complexity of events may determine the number of event staff/volunteers required to safely and successfully run an event, but the following examples may assist in setting out the key roles. The list is not exhaustive and some roles may be undertaken by the same individuals should resource allow.

#### Event Organiser: Lead/principal contact & overall event responsibility

- Main point of contact for the event team
- Public liaison
- Overall planning of the event (venue, route, date, logistics, equipment etc)
- Risk assessment reviews with the Safety principle/ lead
- Manages the signage to be used, liaising with the Safety principle to decide where and how many signs are required
- Liaises with the timing provider where applicable
- Manages event entries
- Manages event budget
- Oversees the event team

#### Safety Lead: Key responsibility for participants, event team and general public

- Liaise with the Event Organiser on the event routes planned
- Risk Assessment forms and reviews
- Health and safety considerations for the overall event
- Liaises with Police and Local Authorities advising them of route plans and risk assessments completed
- Liaise with the appointed first aiders on their role, and the most appropriate location during the event

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- Considers weather conditions
- Advises local hospitals of the event

#### Marketing/promotion: Drive entries, manage promotion and ensure sustainability

- Press releases, event articles (pre and post)
- Creates and manages website and social media accounts
- Image and video promotion
- Communications to riders and events team (including route maps etc)

#### Volunteers/helpers: Key to the logistical running of the event

- Rider registrations, taking entry fees, handing out route maps, emergency numbers and rider numbers were applicable
- Manning feed stations, making sure adequate supplies are available for the participation numbers
- Broom wagon
- Greeting riders back at the HQ post ride
- Event Photographer

#### Marshals: Support participants

- Number and location according to the Risk Assessment requirements
- Marshalls: briefed by Event Organiser to clearly understand their position and role
- Warn riders of possible hazards and to provide an additional visual aid to event signage, or source of information to other road users
- Additional event marshals may be necessary to aid the participant's journey through particularly built up, or busier traffic areas.
- Each marshal should receive a risk awareness briefing for the designated area in which they are due to cover. This should be conducted by the individual who completed the final risk assessment.
- Clothing of a Hi Visibility (Hi viz/reflective) nature should be provided to all Marshals/operating Event officials
- Riders must be made aware that they are solely responsible for their safety and road craft while riding and the presence of a marshal is no excuse to ignore the Highway Code
- Marshals are encouraged to report illegal and inconsiderate riding to the event organiser, giving details of the circumstances of the offence. The organiser shall then take such action as is considered necessary.

#### **Qualified First Aider(s): Essential for support**

- To be available during the event to attend to any riders in need of first aid and to call for emergency medical support if required.
- Notify the event organiser of any incidents, liaising with the organiser to complete an incident report form

#### Mechanic(s): Enhance event experience and support

- Be available to riders who may need basic mechanical support during the event
- Offer a service to riders at the event HQ and feed stations where possible
- Must have a vehicle to return riders to event HQ if they are unable to complete the route

#### 3.7 Post Event

It is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that the route is clear of event signs and litter. Use of the broom wagon to take down signage and pick up litter after the last rider has completed a particular section of the route is one way of completing this task.

It may be useful for event organisers to take the time to talk to riders to obtain valuable event feedback. This may help shape future events and ensure riders return year on year. Communication

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post event with the riders is encouraged to communicate key messages, circulate timings (where applicable), and any post event articles/promotion.

A post event de-brief may be an effective way to gain understanding of the event day from volunteers and the events team:

- Obtaining feedback will help shape the development of the event in future years
- A de-brief is the perfect opportunity to note down any incidents that occurred
- Ask any questions
- Most importantly, thank the event team for their help.

A Cycle Sportive organisers resource pack with all documents, templates and guides to help plan, organise and deliver your event can be found at <u>www.britishcycling.org.uk/sportives</u>

Please note these guidelines are subject to change without prior notification.