



Our Trike Policy and its reasons

Hogsback Chapter Trike Policy

What is it and how does it work?

There are several operational differences between two- and three-wheeled Harley-Davidson™ vehicles. These differences have implications for the safety and enjoyment of both trike and bike riders and they are explained at the end of this document.

In view of these differences, and following a number of experimental trials, current Hogsback Chapter policy for trike participation in Chapter rides is as follows:

- Trikes are always welcome and encouraged to join official Chapter rides.
- Trikes will be positioned behind the two back-marking bikes. Wherever possible – especially if there is a large ride-out – and if there are enough Road Crew, the Ride Leader may direct a third member of the Road Crew to be positioned behind the trikes. Alternatively, the last trike rider may be asked to wear a hi-viz vest to mark the back.
- Trike riders will be briefed by the duty Road Crew about the location of all stops in case they get separated from the main body of the ride.
- The back-marking Road Crew bike riders immediately in front of the trikes will do their best to use the Buddy System to assist them throughout the ride.

See next page for an explanation of the Buddy System.

- The back-marking Road Crew bikes will continue to use the Buddy System for the riders behind them unless conditions stop its use. For example, the bikes might be able to filter past dense traffic, but not the trikes. In this case, the back-marking Road Crew bikes are free to follow the bikes in front of them, in the knowledge that the trikes left behind know where the next scheduled stop is and will continue using the Buddy System to get there. If there is a Road Crew bike behind the trikes, they will assist in recovering the trikes to the next stop.
- While the Highway Code permits 'motorcycles' to filter, it is not completely clear what the status of 500+kg Harley trikes is with respect to this rule. It is a condition of all official Hogsback Chapter rides that riders are deemed to be in control of, and responsible for, their vehicles and their riding at all times – irrespective of any guidance or instruction from any member of the Road Crew, and that they must at all times ride within the law and obey road traffic regulations.

This Trike Policy is reviewed from time to time and Hogsback Chapter is always open to suggestions that are considered safe, practical and which lead to an improved riding experience for its members.



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[?] What is the Buddy System?

The Buddy System is great for enabling smaller groups of bikes and/or trikes to stay together. In the Buddy System, your “buddy” is the rider immediately behind you. It is your job to make sure they see where you are going. There are two simple rules to follow:

1. Keep your buddy in sight at all times. If you can't see them, slow, or pull over somewhere safe until you regain sight of them – then move off ahead of them
2. When you turn, use your mirrors and if appropriate your indicators, to ensure the rider behind sees where you are going

The Buddy System only works if **everyone** in the group keeps the bike/trike immediately behind them in sight.

For Hogsback's Trike Policy, this means that the Buddy System group includes **both** the back-marking Road Crew behind all the other bikes, and **all** the trike riders behind them, with the last trike buddying with the final Road Crew bike (if there is one).

In front of the two back-marking Road Crew bikes, all the bikes will be using the standard drop-off system. The leading back-marker will collect the bikes as normal, as long as he can see his fellow back-marking bike behind him. If he can't (eg because they have slowed to stay buddy with the lead trike), he will wave on the dropped bike and stop to take their place. Any bike drops further on will naturally stay in position until the back-marking bikes catch them up and wave them on as normal.



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Hogsback Chapter Trike Policy

Why do we have one?

Hogsback Chapter operates a Trike Policy that is designed to be inclusive of all Harley-Davidsons on Chapter rides while assuring the safety and enjoyment of their riders as far as the operational differences between trikes and bikes will allow.

The safety principles that we use as part of our Chapter Road Crew Standard are based on evidenced best practice and include the following:

- **Ride procedures need to be as simple and consistent as possible** - since this leads to better predictability for group riders.
- **Rider behaviour needs to be as predictable as possible** - since this reduces the risk of individual riders making sudden or unusual manoeuvres, or dealing with unnecessarily ambiguous situations.
- **Road Crew workload needs to be as minimal as possible** - since motorcycle riding is already highly demanding and any additional workload produced by thinking for the group increases risk – both to themselves and other riders.

The safety challenges posed by the Chapter's desire to accommodate trikes arise from the fact that trikes' size, steering, braking, acceleration and positional needs are very different to bikes.

Specifically:

- Trikes are 50% wider than most Chapter bikes. This reduces visibility for adjacent riders – potentially creating loss of marshalling information for duty Road Crew, and loss of riding information for other ride participants.
- Trikes approach, take and exit corners differently – creating unpredictability, and potentially disrupting progress and the joy of the ride for following motorcyclists.
- Trikes cannot counter-steer and so are prone to brake sharply just before corners, and to slide under hard acceleration out of corners – the more so if two-up due to less weight on the front tyre. Trikes also get up to 70% of their braking from their rear wheels – the exact opposite of bikes. This means that trike riders need to control and position their vehicles differently than motorcyclists for many manoeuvres, which can disrupt or surprise following bike riders.
- Trikes are not able to adopt a staggered formation on many roads and junctions where bikes can – potentially reducing safety margins and increasing collision risk with adjacent vehicles.
- Trikes may find it difficult to filter or overtake in traffic when bikes may not only do so legally, but whose riders expect to do so to take advantage of two wheels in such situations – potentially creating frustration for following motorcyclists.
- Trikes may not be able to be “dropped off” as navigational markers in situations that present no problems for bikes – potentially causing complication, confusion and obstruction at the point of the drop.