



6.5 Marshal organisation

6.5.1 Lead marshal

The lead marshal takes a prominent position at the front of the Cycle Bus, and cycles alongside the youngest or most inexperienced cyclist, who dictates the pace. It is the responsibility of all the marshals to keep the Cycle Bus convoy together to ensure no gaps between cyclists form. However the lead marshal has a greater responsibility in this area, in slowing down or speeding up the pace.

Approaching side roads, junctions and roundabouts, the lead marshal must ensure that the route is clear of traffic, and draw the attention of approaching traffic to the Cycle Bus. Working with the junction marshal, the lead marshal decides the appropriate time to proceed through the junction, and leads the convoy through, always conscious of other traffic on the road. The main consideration is whether the group is all together and all are ready to continue. The lead marshal needs to give an agreed signal to the marshals.

Where the Cycle Bus approaches a pinch point in the road, it is essential for the safety of the children that no vehicles attempt to squeeze through on the outside. We have found that a simple hand signal from the front marshal to the rear marshal is sufficient for the rear marshal to understand that they must take the primary position. The other marshals then follow. We take the same approach when nearing a roundabout or a major junction.

6.5.2 Junction marshals

The junctions are where there is the greatest chance of conflict with other traffic. As the Cycle Bus is passing, other traffic may try to turn through the junction, enter the junction, or come from behind and turn left across the group.

The objective of the junction marshalling procedure is to get the children through the junction as a single group in one movement. If something happens to split the group in the junction, it potentially leaves a small child leading their section of the bus and making decisions for those behind them.

The junction marshals' aim is to avoid this by keeping the children together in a protected gap in traffic while crossing the junction. The marshals may not direct traffic but may request other road users to allow the group to pass. This is done by standing somewhere that allows a negotiation to take place. Experience so far is that making eye contact and actively pointing out the passing Cycle Bus gets a helpful reaction from most other drivers.



The junction marshals also identify the volume of traffic approaching the junctions/roundabouts, communicating with the lead marshal when a safe gap arises. It is the lead marshal who ultimately decides on whether to proceed.

Marshals should signal their thanks to the other party when the bus has passed. If the other party declines and insists on proceeding, the marshals must first stop the Cycle Bus and make sure the children are safe.

Further details on the role of the junction marshals, along with the other marshals at roundabouts along the route are given in Appendix I.

6.5.3 Rear marshals

The rear marshals need to anticipate what the group needs to do. An obstacle is anything that the Cycle Bus may need to negotiate around. A pinch point is any location where there is not room for a motor vehicle to safely pass. In both situations, the rear marshal should aim to adopt a prominent road position (primary position) to deter overtaking by following traffic. This should happen before the front of the group meets the problem location.

In overtaking a halted vehicle, the marshal at the back needs to be out in the primary position before the front of the group starts pulling out. The marshal at the back should try to make eye contact with the following drivers and get their help in protecting the Cycle Bus. The lead marshal should communicate with the rear marshal to confirm there is a safe gap. When the problem point is passed the marshals should signal their thanks to the other road users for waiting.

Rear marshals also facilitate the entry of children joining the at intermediate stops on the route.

6.5.4 Support marshals

The support marshals role is to cycle double abreast alongside the children between the front and rear marshal. Their role is to support the actions of both marshals, in particular, around pinch points and the approach to junctions. Where required, they should take the primary position once the rear marshal has taken this position.

The support marshals, being closest to the majority of children, should communicate with the children to be aware of approaching hazards and actions to be taken. They also assume a pastoral support role to the children, through constant communication and encouragement. They also facilitate communication between the front and rear marshals, should the need arise.



There are cycle lanes (cycle tracks) on sections of the Western Distributor Road, but they are narrow (1.5m) so marshals may not safely travel beside the children and also stay in the cycle lane.