



Health, Safety & Environmental Management Plan

Contacts

Secretary: Kelvin Hieatt – 027 448 5942

Treasurer: Greg Simmons – 021 915 747

In case of fire or you need an ambulance or police call 111

For non-urgent police matters call 105

For park issues call Auckland Council on 09 301 0101

Please ensure that you read and understand your obligations under the TPMTBC Health, Safety and Environmental Management Plan as detailed below.

These TPMTBC Health, Safety and Environmental guidelines are designed to minimise our impact on the park, promote positive relationships with fellow park users and create a safe riding environment for us all. By following these guidelines, you help us maintain your safety, protect the parks environment and strengthen the club's ability to work with Council to maintain and grow the trail network. Below is specific advice and information regarding mountain biking in Totara Park. **Any questions, please message the club on Facebook or contact the above.**

Mountain Biking in Totara Park

Mountain biking is an inherently dangerous sport. Falls and crashes are common, and injuries are to be expected. The Totara Park trails can be technically difficult particularly for inexperienced riders. Most tracks are rated Grade 2 or 3 with some tree root sections and narrow bridges making trails a little more advanced. The terrain and ground conditions can change quickly especially when wet.

Beginner/Novice riders and families:

You are most welcome. However, we recommend that you try the wider Bridle Trails first before heading down into the track network. Give the easier trails – Fatmans, Connector, Pump, Kids Loop and Pony Express ago first before advancing onto other tracks.

Tracks:

Our Totara Park tracks are mainly surfaced with hard packed crushed aggregate with newer sections resurfaced in a Dirty Rock Material called MAP40/20. Note there are still a few clay and top soil-based sections, but these are slowly being repaired and resurfaced. There are also a number of tree roots sections. During wet weather they are significantly more difficult to ride than in the dry. In most cases an easier by-pass is provided. During prolonged wet weather and winter months some sections of the track network can become muddy and therefore more difficult to ride. Note all jumps in the park are small and have go-rounds. **At all times riders must ride to the conditions.**

Please remain on the track and don't cut corners. Self-building of new tracks in the park without the club's permission is strictly prohibited! The club's executive is working tirelessly with council and Local Board to gain permission for new tracks. Any illegal works causes Health and Safety issues and hinders this process.

Signs and Maps:

Green for track entry and Red for track Exit signs are provided at the start and end of each trail. They also identify the level of difficulty. Grade 2 being Easy and Grade 3 being Intermediate. The Red Exit signs denote a point of no entry for riders. Riders can also consult the Trail Map Signs situated just below the Redoubt Rd carpark and by the Hub. Maps can also be downloaded from our website. The terrain and trail layout can be confusing to new riders. Note the location of the carparks and/or your point of entry before riding into the park. Trail following Apps for Smartphones such as Strava and Trailforks also show the track layouts.

Other Park Users:

Walkers, casual runners, dog walkers, people training for events (ultra-marathon runners) and horse riders all use our tracks or sections of our trail network. As an open public space, our tracks are open to all people at all times. An event using part, or all of our track network could also be occurring. Please **Share with Care**. Be aware at any time other park users can appear on the tracks in front of you, often unexpectedly. Look out for people wearing ear pieces to listen to music. When passing someone from behind give them good warning and advise on which side you will pass.

Under the standard Mountain Bikers Code, you are asked to "Respect Others" and "Give way to walkers". However, the tracks in this northern (farm) part of the park are designated Mountain Biking Tracks. Walkers and Runners, as noted on the Trail Map Signs are asked to: Give way to bikes and step off the track to allow riders to pass. For their safety it is suggested that they walk or run in the opposite direction to riders where possible and/or take a by-pass track where provided.

There are some sections of track with blind corners – calling out or ringing a bell on approach is your best course of action. Avoid catching people unawares. A friendly greeting and/or a thank you works wonders. Please refrain from using the walking specific tracks in the southern part of the park. They have many stairs, and most are not suitable for riding. So DON'T use them!

Remember at all times to share the trails with care. The prevention of accidents between different park users is one of the club's main priorities.

Track Work:

From time to time much needed work is carried out on the trails to keep them flowing without restriction. This includes weed spraying, tree trimming, gorse clearing, filling muddy holes etc. This work is generally done outside of Working Bees and is carried out by individuals or a small group. Volunteers are required to wear Hi-vis and the track immediately preceding their work area will be coned off. Please slow to a walking pace and proceed with caution past the working party.

Dogs:

This is without exception the best off-leash park in the Auckland region. Dogs are welcome, but must be kept under control. Trail dogs become more experienced the more they run with their owner/riders. A well-trained dog not only stays out of his own rider's way, but also that of others. Beware of your and other dogs bothering stock and please pick up and remove your dog's waste.

Stock:

As a working farm, cattle are the main stay of the park, used specifically by the Council to control grass growth. Small herds of cattle can be found around the park and across our trail network. Often, they can be found standing on the tracks. Riders should avoid all contact with stock where possible. However, yelling HeeYah! at them on approach is the best way to get them to move so that you can pass safely. Do not approach or disturb the stock in any other way. Treat all cowpats as trail features and ride around them. If you find cattle injured or in a distressed way, please contact the Grazer (Pete the Farmer – 021 824 330). Please note all cautions on the signs before entering the park.

Horses:

Located high up on the eastern side of the park is the Totara Park Pony Club and Riding for the Disabled. Horse riders regularly come down into the park and ride around what is known as the Bridle Trails. These farm and access trails are also used by us mountain bikers. If you come across a rider on their horse, please give them lots of room. If approaching from behind slow right down, alert the rider and ride past very slowly and quietly so as not to scare the horse. If approaching from head on, stop and allow the horse and rider to pass. Communicate with the rider, follow their instructions if given, and ask if uncertain. Avoid frightening the horse at all costs.

Bridle Trails:

There are a number of metal (shingle) roads in and around the park. These Bridle Trails provide access for the community to move around the park. They are heavily used in the evenings, during daylight saving and over the weekends particularly by families, large groups and people keen to exercise and lose weight. With the steepness of some of the hills please keep your speed down and ride in control. The club is currently in the process of working with Council to build new single tracks to enable us to take riders off these Bridle Trails so that a safer environment can be provided for the many other park users. Be aware also that vehicle movements can occur on the main Bridle Trails at any time.

Farm Gates:

Our trail network is located in a Farm Park. You are asked to leave all gates as you find them. If they are open leave them open. If they are closed, please close them behind you. Climb gates only if required and only at the hinge end. Fences also should only be climbed next to a post or strainer. Some gates are locked to restrict vehicle access. If emergency vehicle access is required, then please contact the Grazier or Club committee members as noted above for the keys.

Amenities:

There is a toilet located on the Bridle Trail next to the top cattle yard. Other than in the carparks there is no rubbish bins in the park. Please remove all rubbish from the park. Remember the code "Leave only footprints (or in this case tyre tracks) and take only photos" And memories of a great ride!

Trees:

There are large numbers of old trees in the park. Avoid riding in the park during periods of high winds or storms. Several very large trees have fallen in the last few years, some across the trails resulting in them having to be cut out of the way. If you find a newly fallen tree across the track, please contact the club so that we can have it removed safely. If you come across minor tree debris on the trail e.g. pine cones or small branches, stop and remove them to prevent fellow riders from hitting them.

Night Riding:

Riding in the park at night is pretty cool. It's a great and safe track for it. When night riding we strongly recommend that you have two light set ups – one on your handle bars and another on your helmet. This provides better vision particularly when cornering and crossing some of the bridges. Remember to let someone know where you are going and what time to expect you back. It can get pretty cold and wet out there at night and the last thing you need is an accident when no further riders are coming through. Always good to ride with a mate or in a group at night.

Personal concerns while riding in the Park:

- All riders are required to wear a helmet. No helmet No ride! No Exceptions!
- Wear the appropriate safety gear for the riding conditions e.g. glasses, kneepads etc.
- We strongly advise telling someone where you are going and when you expect to return. While the area is not isolated you should not expect other people to be in the immediate vicinity or following you along the track at a later time.
- We recommend that you do not enter the park without a working cell phone. The park has good cell coverage.
- When cycling in the summer months (even in cloudy conditions) we advise riders to take appropriate precautions such as sun cream and sunglasses.
- There maybe bee and wasp nests in the Park. If you are allergic to stings, you should take the appropriate precautions.
- Ensure you do not de-hydrate. Take and drink the appropriate amount of fluid for your expected ride. There is no drinkable water source in the park.
- Avoid swimming or playing in the creeks. Aside from the risk of drowning, they can contain bio-hazards, dead carcasses, slippery rocks and drop off's with deep pools.
- Tomo's – there are a number of deep holes located in and around the park. Most are well away from the tracks, but be aware, some can be very deep and not easily visible.
- There are a number of baited Pest Traps in the park. Please refrain from touching them. Keep all children and dogs away as they can easily go off.

