

Virtual Club Runs

We offer the opportunity to take part in virtual club runs using the Zwift virtual cycling app, and we have a Zwift Club 'North Bucks Road Club'. Zwift has the best developed system for setting up social group rides.

Rouvy offers 'Teams' and [group rides](#).

The free virtual cycling app MyWhoosh! appears to allow group events, but there is an application process. Generally, activities on MyWhoosh! seem to be competitive events.

Zwift

You'll need an indoor trainer to take part. Ideally a Smart trainer that adjusts resistance according to gradient and which measures power. You can use a 'dumb' trainer with a power meter on your bike, but gear selection will be a bit odd.

If you are not already subscribed to Zwift, you'll need to subscribe – This costs £17.99 per month or £179.99 per year. I think that on the monthly plan, you can suspend your membership for the summer months without losing your profile data.

Install the Zwift Companion app on your phoned (iOS or Android).

Now you can locate and join the North Bucks Road Club on Zwift. In the Zwift Companion drop down menu, select 'Clubs' then the 'All Club' tab. Search for North Bucks Road Club. Tap the club name, then 'Apply'. It's best to drop me a note because the system doesn't alert me to new applications.

In the club you can see recent activities and any upcoming Club Events.

If you register for an event, you should see it listed in the Zwift home screen.

Discord

Discord is an app originally developed for gamers to talk and send messages during their games – Zwift is after all a computer game. Discord operates independently of Zwift, so it could be used in rides on other platforms such as Rouvy and MyWhoosh!. I've seen other clubs on Zwift use Google Meet for this purpose.

I found setting up the Discord app to be a bit confusing in places, partly due to the user interface and partly due to the terminology they use. I'm going to assume you're using Discord on a phone, and in my case this is Android. The app should be similar for an iPhone, but the interface will be a little different.

You'll probably also need earbuds or headset with a microphone. I use a pair of bluetooth earbuds which have built-in microphones.

Step 1 – Install Discord on your phone from your phone's app store

Step 2 - Set up an account – "Register".

Step 3 – Join the North Bucks Road Club server, [NBRC-Zwift](#), by one of the following:

- (a) In the Zwift Companion app, select the Group ride, where there's Discord link.
- (b) In Discord, tap the green '+' on the left of the screen. The next screen is 'Create Your Server'. At the very bottom is 'Already have an invite?'. Tap the 'Join a Server' button. The invite link is <https://discord.gg/XNkHXA4>

For use in Zwift you may want to configure Push-To-Talk (PTT). This is similar to using a 2-way radio – you can only talk when you are holding down a button. This means that your huffing and puffing and your fan and trainer noise are not transmitted to the rest of your group! If your Discord conversation suffer from lots of background noise, this would help.

In the General Voice screen, tap the 'General >' menu at the top, then tap 'Voice Settings'. Tap 'Input Mode' to choose between Voice Activity (where your microphone is active whenever you speak) and Push-to-talk (which required to to tap and hold a button to speak).

If you are using Discord on a smart phone then it will NOT coexist with either Zwift or Zwift Companion if you want push-to-talk to work – for this it has to be running in the foreground.

I had no problems connecting my ear buds – they were already paired with my phone through bluetooth. Also, they have built-in microphones and are noise cancelling. I found I didn't need to use push-to-talk in a small group of three in which only two were using Discord.