

Better Biking: linking Ditchling Hassocks & Hurst

Project Brief

“For too long, some have seen cycling as a niche activity, rather than a normal activity for all. If we can increase levels of walking and cycling, the benefits are substantial. For people, it means cheaper travel and better health. For businesses, it means increased productivity and increased footfall in shops. And for society as a whole it means lower congestion, better air quality, and vibrant, attractive places and communities. Those benefits explain the Government’s ambition for walking and cycling in England. We aim to double cycling activity by 2025 and each year reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on English roads.”

(Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP Secretary of State for Transport and Andrew Jones MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for cycling and walking, Forward, Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, 2017)

Executive Summary

This paper sets out work led by HKD Transition towards improving safety for cyclists in Hassocks. It reports the results of public consultation on this matter conducted in the summer of 2017 and recommends a feasibility study be conducted in regard to the preferred of three options for improvement.

Background and Project Sponsors

Early in 2017 the HKD Transition Committee¹ decided to investigate whether there was any appetite locally for improving roads for use by cyclists. Preliminary enquiries suggested there was and a small informal committee was established to promote ‘Better Biking for Hassocks’. The committee consisted of:

Chris Thomson	HKD Transition
Dan Hyndman	HKD Transition
Ross McCracken	Proper Cycling and Coffee
Michelle Binks	Hassocks District Councillor
Colin Wilsdon	Hassocks Community Cycle Hire
Matthew Bird	Mid Sussex District Council
Philip Cole	Environmental Officer, Downlands Community School

We are by no means the first to have campaigned to make our local roads safer for cyclists and a summary of previous work on this is given at Appendix A.

¹ For further information on HKD Transition see <https://hkdtransition.org.uk/>

Reasons for change

The committee identified three drivers for improved conditions for cyclists deriving from concern to promote:

- a healthier environment for all
- the safety of cyclists
- the economic welfare of the local community

More specifically:

- (i) the volume and speed of traffic makes diffident cyclists reluctant to cycle to the shops or to school. Staff at Downlands School believe that if traffic were calmed many more pupils would cycle from Ditchling and Hurstpierpoint than currently do.
- (ii) Hassocks provides the most frequent and quickest train service to the South Downs for cyclists who live in London. The establishment of Hassocks Cycle Hire at the local station was an innovative response to this reality but on arrival at Hassocks rail station, cyclists – particularly families with young children – are met with quite busy traffic and a route to the Downs which makes no concessions whatever to their safety. Safer roads for cyclists would be less off-putting and might well contribute to boosting the local economy as well as to the prevention of accidents.

Community Consultation on options for improvement

During June and July 2017 HKD Transition organised a local consultation to ascertain views in the wider community. This consisted of:

- A stall at 'Celebrate Hassocks' 3 June 2017
- The creation of a website setting out possible development options and soliciting views on them
- Advertising the consultation and permitting responses to be made at two central locations in Hassocks
- Eliciting the support of the local infant, junior and secondary school to advertise the consultation to parents

The consultation sought views on three possible routes to improve for cycling and offered the opportunity to recommend other routes. The three routes are shown on the map in Appendix B. The routes for consultation were:

- Route 1 (shown in red on the map) from the roundabout in Hurstpierpoint to the roundabout in Ditchling.
- Route 2 (shown in blue on the map) from Hassocks rail station to the Downs by way of the footpath adjacent to the railway line.
- Route 3 (shown in green on the map) from Hassocks rail station to the Downs by road.

The total number of responses to the consultation was 296 and the breakdown of opinion was as follows:

Route	No. in favour	% of total responses
1	216	73
2	42	14
3	38	13
total	296	100

All the comments from those who responded to the consultation are presented at Appendix B. Perhaps unsurprisingly by far the most important concern arising from the comments is the safety of cyclists, particularly that of children.

Evaluation of the three routes

Measuring the three routes against the three 'drivers for change' under Reasons for Change above and taking into account the consultation responses:

Route 1 (shown in red on the map in Appendix B) from the roundabout in Hurstpierpoint to the roundabout in Ditchling.

For:

- Potentially the greatest impact on reducing exhaust fume pollution
- Better protection for pupils cycling to Downlands School from Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks and Ditchling.

- Some assistance for cyclists between Hassocks rail station and the Downs.
- 73% of consultation respondents were in favour of this option.

Against:

- The longest and perhaps therefore the most expensive route to develop
- Potentially the most obstructive to motorised transport
- Potentially the most threatening to the economic well-being of shops on Hassocks high street.
- Would require collaboration between East and West Sussex Councils for full implementation.

Route 2 (shown in blue on the map in Appendix B from Hassocks rail station to the Downs by way of the footpath adjacent to the railway line.

For:

- Would eliminate any risk to cyclists from traffic.
- Would assist cyclists between Hassocks rail station and the Downs.
- Likely only to have beneficial impact (if any at all) on local traders.

Against:

- Might replicate for pedestrians the very difficulties it would remove for cyclists.
- Significant work would be entailed in creating a cycle path.
- Would require permission from private land-owners that might well not be forthcoming.
- Preferred by only 14% of consultation respondents.

Route 3 (shown in green on the map in Appendix C) from Hassocks rail station to the Downs by road.

For:

- Would assist pupils accessing Downlands School (though not as well as Route 1)
- Would assist cyclists accessing the South Downs (though not as well as Route 2)

Against:

- Might require financing from two or more funding agencies.
- Preferred by only 13% of consultation respondents.

Recommended option

The recommendation of HKD Transition is that Route 1 should be the focus for seeking improved amenity for cyclists in Hassocks. It offers the optimal solution for a probable majority of current and potential cyclists and probably for this reason emerges very clearly as the most popular option from the consultation.

Further action

HKD Transition urges [insert appropriate authority/ies] to commission a feasibility study of Route 1 which would:

- (i) identify appropriate constituent elements within Route 1 so that implementation could, if necessary, be phased.
- (ii) present costed options for making each of the elements more cycle-friendly whilst having regard to the need not to impact deleteriously on the economic well-being of businesses located along the route.

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Appendix A: Previous initiatives to improve provision for cyclists locally

1. Council and Government Reports

- **November 2004:** *'Ditchling: The Roads Are The Same But The Traffic Has Changed: A Report by Ditchling Parish Council on Core Traffic Issues'*

Noted or recommended that:

- an ESCC plan for traffic calming in Ditchling had only been partially implemented.
- 56.4% of households had responded to a Parish Council survey in 2003 of whom 79% said speeding was a serious problem on the B2116.
- the B2116 could be improved by stipulating a 30mph speed limit and installing a shared pedestrian/cyclist footpath.

- **January 2005:** Ditchling Parish Council: *'A Report by Ditchling Parish Council on Core Traffic Issues'*

Noted:

- excessive traffic volume on the narrow historic streets in the centre of the village.
- traffic speed and its impact on the safety of vulnerable road users.
- HGV movements through the village.

- **March 2007:** Transport Strategy Section, ESCC: *'A Report Summarising the Findings of a Traffic Data Collection Exercise for Ditchling Village'*

Noted:

- patterns of traffic in the village

- **June 2009:** Transport Strategy Team, ESCC: *'Ditchling Local Area Transport Strategy'*

Noted:

- various *'measures to address issues caused by the speed of traffic in the will (sic) be investigated for possible introduction'*² including *'investigating the feasibility of a shared footway / cycleway facility between Keymer and Ditchling along Keymer Road.'*

- **April 2017:** Department for Transport: *'Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy'*: Objectives by 2020:

- increase cycling activity (estimated total number of cycle stages)
- increase walking activity (total number of walking stages per person)

² The quotation is from the draft Report. I have not seen the final version.

- reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads (number of fatalities & serious injuries per billion miles cycled)
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school
- work towards developing the evidence base for walking & cycling (by 2019)

Objectives by 2025:

- double cycling from 0.8 bn stages in 2013 to 1.6 bn stages in 2025 (estimated total number of cycle stages made each year)
- increase walking to 300 stages per person per year in 2025 (total number of walking stages per person per year)
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 49% in 2014 to 55% in 2025

2. Local Initiatives

- **'Spoke Ditchling' and 'Kalma Keymer'**

- Active 2001-10
- Inter alia campaigned for safer walking and cycling on the B2116 between Ditchling and Keymer.
- 1050 people signed a petition calling for '*our local councillors, local representatives and local authorities to make the SAFETY OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS (children and adults) an IMMEDIATE TOP PRIORITY in ALL planning and highway issues. In particular, routing to schools and to Hassocks Station.*'
- Commissioned a report from Sustrans (February 2004) entitled 'Safe Routes to Schools Project: Ditchling, Keymer, Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint' which identified actions to improve, inter alia, the B2116 for cyclists and pedestrians, noting that '*The B2116 is a real barrier to improving the levels of cycling and walking to the schools and from the motorists' viewpoint is well-defined and relatively easy to drive.*'

- **Hassocks Bike'n'Fun**

- Has been running since 2009.
- An annual event aimed at getting Hassocks residents on their bikes by offering a safer environment to do so especially for children.
- Originally set up to support Hassocks Community Cycle Hire but has taken on a life of its own.

- **Downlands Community School School Travel Plan 2017**

States its aims to be:

- To help address the congestion and pollution problems in the locality of the school.
 - To provide a framework for changing travel habits to provide an environment which encourages more sustainable travel patterns.
 - To encourage sustainable commuting by staff and pupils.
 - To set targets to reduce car mileage, encourage sustainable travel, and promote safe routes.
 - To promote healthier lifestyles by encouraging and facilitating travel options such as walking and cycling targets from last travel plan
 - To Identify any barriers to sustainable travel on the journey to and from school and work with other stakeholders and partners to improve the journey to school
- **2007-08 WSCC-sponsored working party to investigate off-road access from Hassocks railway station to the South Downs**
 - Representatives from County, District and Parish Councils; South Downs National Park and Hassocks Community Partnership.
 - Favoured route: through Weald Tennis Club to follow the railway on west side, crossing over at Misty Bridge and thence east side of the railway to the South Downs.
 - Hassocks Parish Council had been investigating development of the cinder path for use by cyclists from at least as early as 2004.
 - **Hassocks Community Partnership Visitor & Tourism Group**
 - commissioned from David Finney (Highway and Traffic Engineering Consultant) a Road Safety Audit Stage F (Concept Feasibility) of a route from Hassocks Railway Station to the South Downs, January 2009.
 - The route is via Dale Avenue and Lodge Lane to the 'tank traps' bostal. The Audit made recommendations that would improve the route for cyclists.
 - **1998-2000 Colin Wilsdon investigated the possibility of an improved route for cyclists from Hurstpierpoint to Hassocks**
 - including the commissioning of a report from Tim Meredith, Traffic and Safety Consultant, (December 2000).
 - This concluded that 'The B2116 does not present many opportunities for improvement to provide a safe cycle route'; and although it did examine other routes it did not find an unproblematic alternative.

Appendix B: The three routes consulted on



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Appendix C: Responses to the public consultation on Better Biking routes for Hassocks

This document presents all the comments which were given in response to the consultation. The consultation itself asked which of three routes in Hassocks it would be best to choose to develop for cyclists.

The comments made by respondents have been arranged thematically below but are colour-coded. All comments in red were made by people who voted for Route 1 (see Appendix B), those in blue were made by people who preferred Route 2 and green indicates comments made by those in favour of Route 3.

The Responses

Superiority of the red route

- Red would have much bigger volumes of people using it. The other two are already largely ok (ie blue just needs footpath to be converted into bridleway and much of green - Underhill lane - is already fine for bikes).
- The red route is the main east west route connecting our villages. The traffic gets worse every year and if a cycle route could allow safe passage this would be of very great benefit to all residents.
- The red route would encourage the use of bikes as a mode of transport rather than leisure activity. It therefore could help alleviate congestion on Hassocks High St. The others are more leisure/tourist focused.
- any improvement to the red route which would encourage pupils and folk in general to get on their bikes to get to and from Hassocks would be fantastic. I am sure this would have huge support in the local community and have many benefits - less traffic, increased fitness and well being etc. My son would definitely cycle more if the road was made more safe and cycle friendly as would I.
- I find it very difficult to make any comment in the absence of any detail on how it is proposed to develop the potential cycle routes. In my opinion, the most beneficial option would be the red route but with an addition to include Dale Avenue with access up to Downlands School. If a safe route can be provided then this would surely have the greatest potential of the three options for encouraging additional cycling on a daily basis and relieving traffic congestion. The blue and green routes are already cyclable, relatively safe and less in demand than the red route with Dale Road spur. It would be excellent to see the main road connection route from HPP to Ditchling made safe for cyclists, but it is essential that Dale Avenue is also made safe during school drop off and pick up times when there is very heavy vehicular use of Dale Avenue, for the benefit and safety of Downlands School children.
- This will allow children to cycle safely between the villages.
- The red route makes cycling an alternative to the bus or car, whereas the other routes just help with leisure activities. Having had too many near misses on the red route i hesitate to use it myself, let alone let my children. Having 'commuter' routes such as this send a message to car drivers that they have to share roads
- Cyclists come to Hassocks to access the Downs anyway..... however our kids need to be able to get to school safely so I think the red route is best.im sure that commuters would appreciate it too.
- As a mum of 3 and a cyclist, the biggest barrier to cycling in this area is the traffic on the main road (Hurst to Ditchling) so if this were addressed then it would open up cycling for lots of people and children.
- The busiest route of all 3 so makes sense
- The red route would help many pupils who cycle from Hurst to Hassocks & vice versa and I think is the most useful route. The blue route is already a footpath which children do use for cycling. The green route crosses a very fast & dangerous road so is not ideal as a cycling route.
- This will help people living in the local villages

- A cycle route for kids cycling to Downlands from Hurst would be fantastic
- All three would be great, but I think this would benefit the most students.
- It would make a busy road easier for students at Downlands to cycle down
- Great for children going to school safely.
- This is a well used route that is busy both with car and bike traffic. It is a particularly dangerous route and yet heavily used by young and inexperienced riders so should be a priority.
- There are so many children in Hurstpierpoint who go to Downlands school. Some already cycle along the main road but it is not safe for the kids. I'm sure many children would love to cycle but parents are worried for their safety. Cycling to school would give children the daily exercise they need to stay fit and keep healthy, in the long run reducing illness in our young people including weight-related illness. Daily exercise is also good for reducing mental health issues, which is a growing concern. Finally if more children cycled to school and more adults cycled to the station or to Hassocks, it would reduce the amount of traffic on that very busy road and ease congestion on the High Street. I think serving our local community is more important than visitors.
- We currently have 2 children attending Downlands school who take the bus. Not only would the red route encourage them to cycle but would be safe too.
- Children who cycle to school would benefit greatly....as would the wider community.
- Get kids cycling to and from school and they'd be more interested and capable of cycling other routes..
- Great for students to be safe and have exercise too.
- The red route would be the best for the following reasons; / it would help children in Hurstpierpoint, Albourne, Keymer and Ditchling cycle safely to Downlands school which would reduce the number of cars on the roads and be great for the environment / it would also help reduce the considerable cost of transport that parents now have to pay following the withdrawal of the 3 in 1 buss pass and the bus companies decision to increase fares above the rate of inflation / it would also be forward planning as the number of pupils in Hurstpierpoint and Albourne school's is on the increase and there are a number of new housing developments on the way
- The bus service between Hurst and Hassocks is poor and my teenage children would love to cycle to avoid the problems but the road is currently too dangerous and they do not feel secure doing so at peak times
- Would be great but we feel it is unrealistic
- Ideally all three routes! But the red route would enable more Downlands students to cycle to school, which currently is very dangerous. For those commuting to London/ Brighton this route would also make cycling less dangerous, and hence encourage some to leave the car at home.
- Safe cycling route to Downlands school would help reduce much school run traffic from Hurstpierpoint.
- The volume of children cycling to Hassocks from Hurstpierpoint is greater than the other two routes. Also there is no alternative along busy road.
- While the blue and red routes would be useful for Mountain Bikers the red route could make a significant difference to the way people get to school and work on a daily basis.
- I would love to see them all but Hurst to Ditchling would have the biggest positive impact
- It is important that children are able to cycle safely to school and this route would be the best for achieving this.
- For the children to be able to cycle to school
- Many unsafe drivers in Hurstpierpoint.
- Most used and perhaps most dangerous at the moment because of traffic and width of road. I think they need to be larger, and go in a full circle so there is nobody being held up by others. As well as being good for school children.
- Beneficial for children from Hurst & Ditchling who school in Hassocks
- Vital for children getting to/from Downlands
- Red route would be fantastic for children cycling to school. It's not safe at the moment.

- Very useful for a dangerous stretch of Road
- Definitely the red route. It's dangerous for kids to cycle along the road/footpath between Hassocks and Ditchling as it is currently.
- It would help children in Ditchling cycle to school!
- Ditchling Hassocks, Hurst have lots of young people without access to cars - a proper cycle route would help families and local businesses
- Red route would be fantastic for children travelling to and from Ditchling for school
- I think this route would be beneficial to locals, especially school children, rather than leisure cyclists (heading for the downs) who tend to like to go in their own direction. I have experience of both within the family.
- Particularly important to get kids cycling safely to school so I would love to see the red route up and running
- A safe cycle route for the children to get to downlands would be a huge relief for parents and children alike. The roads are currently too fast and congested to be safe at all on the red route.
- This route would enable school children to get to primary and senior schools safely as well as getting to friends homes.
- So many locals use this route a lot and use their cars on this route so if there was a good cycle path here it would become a real alternative to using the car on short journeys. Also it would give pupils at the schools in Hassocks the chance to be safe and independent in their commute to school.
- This would encourage School children to travel on bikes to Downlands from Ditchling.
- I live in Ditchling, I regularly drive my daughter to Downlands secondary school. If we had a safe cycle route to Hassocks and the school it would reduce congestion if traffic and my kids would cycle to school. I have many friends who feel the same we would all love to have this cycle route.
- Best one for the schools
- Great for the children cycling to school / & to their friends' homes in Hassocks, Ditchling & Hurstpierpoint...means less cars on the road as parents not having to drive them to & fro. Fingers crossed!
- As a local resident I very much welcome the red route proposed. I cycle as do my 2 young children and my husband. Our wider family also cycle. The red route would be widely used by ourselves and would especially be welcome to encourage children & adults to safely cycle between Hassocks and Ditchling, Hurstpierpoint to Ditchling especially when there can be fast road users (cars) and large vehicles on these roads.
- This [red] route would carry the most cycle traffic and would certainly encourage more young people to ride more safely to and from school.
- Both my children cycle to school from Burgess Hill. They have to cycle on the road through Hassocks which is incredibly dangerous and busy. Most of the rest of their route is on a cycle path or they go off road through the woods.
- The needs of the local community should be prioritised especially the children and I believe the red route provides the best protection and promotion of healthy cycling between the local schools and communities.

Superiority of the blue route

- Both Blue and Red routes need to be introduced to facilitate safer cycling in this local area, enabling both commuting (work and school) and leisure cycling to flourish, reducing pollution and congestion at the same time.
- We need a safe off road cycle link to the Downs. This track already exists and just needs widening and signage to allow dual use. Pedestrians taking priority. Sustrans and Railtrack could be involved.
- Whilst supportive of any route that would encourage schoolchildren to cycle I feel that the line of the Red route is already adequate and that the Green route would have limited use. The blue route would provide a safe Hassocks to Clayton route avoiding the A273.

- The blue route is the only new route, so don't understand what the options are as the other 2 are just roads that already exist.
- The blue route would really help us get out into the beautiful countryside and access the downs by bike.
- As someone who rides regularly on the downs, it would be great to cycle on the blue route, as the main road back to stonepound can be pretty scary, as the traffic squeezes past you at 50+ mph
- This route would massively add to cycling options in the area.
- The blue route links to a bridleway up onto the downs for mountain bikers and two quiet country lanes for those not wanting to go up the hill
- Perfect route between Hassocks and the south downs.
- Safer route for children cycling to school is very important especially during the winter months

Superiority of the green route

- It is the only proposed route that addresses both access to the Downs and access to a school.
- My husband cycles this daily on his commute to Brighton.
- There has previously been an application to turn the blue route into a bridleway, which I believe got stuck in west sussex county planning red tape. Green route in particular lodge lane section from keymer to b2112 would be useful to walkers/ joggers as well.. currently a lot of people use this to make a circular walk/run/bike route but it's pretty dangerous. Fields adjacent to road so presumably it's possible to fit a trail separated from road.
- There is currently no safe route into the Downs, which is utterly ridiculous considering Hassocks is in the SDNP. The roads you need to navigate currently are horrendous - new road and Clayton Hill in particular so a route that challenges this is way over due.
- It would be good to encourage pupils to cycle to Downlands in a safe way. 2nd choice would be the red route, again to encourage pupils to cycle and to link Hassocks to surrounding villages.
- i think this is a great idea as i have kids and get them currently to cycle on the pavements as the roads are so busy. i also like the red route
- It would join our communities together.

The safety of children, particularly school pupils

- Would help to make it safer for Downlands pupils to cycle to school. Obviously, all routes could do with improvement, but I feel the red route is currently the most used, and most dangerous in terms of traffic, especially for children riding to school, so this one should be improved first.
- My wife and i would use it daily along with my son who could travel to school on his bike rather than be driven. Cycle path around and through Hassocks village would certainly help promote more cycling especially for children going to / from school. At the moment it is too congested and too intimidating for some children to cycle especially at peak times, hence having dedicated cycle lanes would encourage this. Any designated cycling routes would be an advantage.
- Yes Please. I have been hoping that this would happen for years. I cycle a lot but i am afraid for my 3 children on this road and do not encourage them to cycle to school for safety reasons. As many safe routes for cyclists as possible please!
- My children cycle to Downlands, but the route is so dangerous that an adult must be with them, we feel. Which means we can't do it every day. It is essential that there should be a route to make cycling to school an option, and ludicrous that children can't do it for fear of the ridiculous volume of cars that goes past them, making it a really dangerous road. We just did a cycling trip to Amsterdam, and everywhere in Holland has cycle paths. Why are we so useless in England, that almost no one can cycle to school unless they are willing to take their life in their hands, which are not very capable of doing so, aged 11 or 12? The red route would be essential, and the

blue and green would also be highly desirable. Please keep me informed, and I am happy to come and talk about the need for more bicycle routes if required.

- As a regular car driver dropping my son at Downlands School, I see children cycling from Hurst to Hassocks & each day I see accidents waiting to happen to these kids. The road is so fast & loaded with drivers in a hurry. It is so dangerous. I will not allow my son to cycle and I know there are many other parents like me. A safe cycle route from Hurst to Hassocks would be well used by all, both for school runs and recreational which would be beneficial for both villages and in my opinion is much more needed than routes to the foot of the downs which are totally recreational focused. Lets put the safety and health of our children first and the needs of two villages first. Thank You
- I regularly cycle with my children between Hassocks and Hurst, and although I am fine, and extra provision or care that could be incorporated to keep my children safe would be a massive benefit
- Vital for school children to encourage cycling to school
- Far more important to keep our children safe at stonepound lights especially with the extra traffic which will be brought in by the new housing development
- My eldest son has cycled from Sayers Common to Downlands for the last 5 years, but I have always asked him to leave home by 8am to avoid the traffic. My younger son finds the prospect of cycling this route too daunting, but a cycle route would do a lot to reassure him and me, and make it safer.
- Lots of children cycle to school and more would if we had these routes. This would then mean car reduced around the school.
- I do not feel happy letting my children cycle to school at peak time in the morning with the traffic along this route at the moment. After school events do not have school buses provided so parents have to drive to collect children. Finally a number of clubs, social get together in the evenings and weekends mean our young people could be more independent and cycle into Hassocks and to get the train to Brighton- all this would save parents driving in their cars and numerous car journeys to and fro.
- Having a safe route to cycle between Ditchling and Hurst would be a huge advantage given the current state of the roads and traffic. We live in Hassocks. The red route would certainly make me use the car considerably less frequently, if I felt more comfortable about allowing my son to cycle to visit friends in both the other villages.
- I don't let my daughter cycle from Hurst to Downlands as my experience shows it to be too dangerous. This is sad as it would keep her fit, reduce congestion and pollution and save us £2.10 a day in bus fees.
- If there was a cycle route I would let my son cycle to Downlands school but at the moment I feel it is too dangerous.
- Very keen for my children to be able to cycle to school
- Good to encourage young people to cycle safely and not far from Burgess Hill green circle.
- We live in Keymer and were unable to get a school place in Hassocks so the boys go to Ditchling. I'd love them to cycle and scoot but don't feel it is safe enough. I refuse to let the children (aged 3 and 6) cycle or walk along that road.

Accessing school and station in Hassocks

- I think there is value in all of them, but with the increase in traffic I think creating a safer cycle route for pupils and commuters to the station should take priority and would, hopefully contribute to reduced traffic and improved air quality. / I live near Ockley Lane and have always been frustrated by the lack of a safe pedestrian or cycle route to Burgess Hill from Keymer.
- this will make it much safer for children to get to school and to the station
- The Red Route allows for more cyclists to have a defined route, which goes past the station and will encourage commuters to use. Cycling through Ditchling, Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint has become quite a risky procedure due to cars parked without thought, not to mention car drivers not respecting other road users!
- It would encourage more commuters to leave the car at home if it was more pleasant for them to cycle between the villages to the station. I have often wanted to cycle to

both places but haven't because of the roads. To be honest any safe cycle route would be brilliant

- I think that all three routes should be considered but have chosen the red route above the others as I feel that this would be the most used by children at Downlands and commuters getting to the station to commute to work.
- The red route would assist members of the local community commute between the three villages for work including using Hassocks station for London and Brighton, shopping, leisure and for pupils travelling to Downlands as the local secondary school that serves the area.
- With the recent increases in bus fares (3 in 1 card scheme scrapped) and the bus companies annual fare rise, it would be excellent if a cheaper, safer and healthy alternative form of transportation was available for children in Hurstpierpoint to get to their catchment Secondary school in Hassocks. It could also reduce traffic - as it would serve the station (commuters), reduce parents driving to Hassocks - having a positive environmental impact. I'm all for this excellent idea.
- Many many children and adults cycle along this road to get to the train station, Downlands school and the facilities of Hassocks. The road is an extremely busy road and Stonepound crossroads is a particularly busy crossing. Both Hassocks high street and Hurstpierpoint high streets are dangerous with cars stopping and parking and giving way to each other. Both places would benefit hugely from a cycle path. 1: for safety of cyclists and 2: it may even lessen the traffic.
- Living in Hurstpierpoint we travel to Hassocks several times a day almost every day for school, shopping and the train station. A safe cycle link between the villages would mean that our son could cycle safely to school even at rush hour and we could use the car less.
- The red route would be a hugely important development that would have many benefits for commuters to the station and kids cycling to school.
- Lots of people cycle to the station from Hurstpierpoint. The Hassocks road is very busy in the mornings and it would keep children safe when cycling to school.
- Beneficial for people of Hurst & Ditchling who commute via Hassocks station.
- As well as encouraging children to cycle to Downlands many commuters use this route to get to Hassocks station, the red route would benefit the whole community
- I believe the Red route would provide the highest safety benefit, especially for children cycling to and from school (particularly Downlands) in Hassocks as well as commuters using Hassocks station.

The need to calm (or reduce the volume of) traffic

- It would reduce traffic congestion HUGELY if students could safely cycle to school and not need to be driven. This route would surely have the biggest impact on reducing traffic congestion at Stonepound crossroads and in Hassocks.
- think there is a reasonable route in theory from Keymer to underhill lane save crossing a busy road and unfortunately the real problem with any narrow lane is the aggression of cars with no patience who disregard cyclists and think they have a right to speed along at national speed limit. Unless there are dedicated routes for cyclists no routes are safer than busy main roads. I would suggest that the signs on Underhill Lane are more explicit in limiting cars to access only as this is just a Ditchling bypass route for rat runs!
- I live near Lodge Lane, and find cycling along the road very hazardous with cars not respecting space for a cyclist. Unless you are a confident cyclist, the majority of Hassocks does not feel particularly safe / pleasurable to cycle around. For a village, more pupils should be able to cycle to schools and help reduce the increasing traffic problems.
- My children and I use this route to get from Ditchling to Hassocks to go to library, barber etc. But it is pretty terrifying and I can't do it with my youngest as her cycling is too erratic. If there were a proper cycle path it would make a big difference and I think a lot more people would do the journey by bike.

- My son and husband cycle this route regularly it would be a huge relief to know that this route will potentially be made safer. Cars tend to use the "Ditchling to Hassocks straight" as a speeding opportunity having left a congested Ditchling village.
- I would like to cycle more in Hassocks but am far too nervous to cycle in the busy traffic. Anything that would help this would be great. I go by car to a weekly class at Ditchling village hall and would much prefer to cycle there from Hassocks rather than use the car but the traffic puts me off.
- Better traffic measures are needed as cars frequently drive too fast through Hassocks. We live on Dale Avenue and with all the parked cars and speeding drivers this is not safe for cycling.
- As a keen cyclist myself, having cycled all routes many times, I know how unnerving it can be with fast cars coming up behind you sometimes leaving very little space for adequate overtaking.
- I have cycled from Hurst to the station for 10 years and had many very close calls with cars, vans and buses. One of the worst was a passenger opening a car door at the stone pound traffic lights which broke several bones in my little finger a few years ago. I had several operations on it but they have never managed to get it to go straight again. The driver drove off. I have been beeped and driven at between the traffic lights and the station as cars try to pass even though there is queuing traffic on the other side. I have watched the same happen to school kids. Sadly I could go on, I would estimate I've had 1 scary incident a week.
- So many more people would cycle if it were less scary.
- I regularly cycle through Hassocks and the cars at Sainsburys make it very dangerous. I am an adult and I don't think it is very safe for any youngsters to cycle through. Drivers care little for cyclists. I was knocked off my bike by a very old driver who was on the wrong side of the road and turned across me, when I showed the police the video they couldn't care less.

Why do we have to choose just one route?

- Why not all 3?
- All of them should be developed!
- Would be good to develop all 3 routes
- Why do you have to choose one / The red route is a no brainer / The green or blue would be terrific also do the lot
- All of them would be good!
- Personally, I think all 3 routes should be made more cycle friendly.
- All three routes should be introduced
- All of the above!
- If the council is really looking to increase cycle options they need to do all three options.
- All three would be nice but one at a time is better than nothing.

Other routes worthy of consideration

- What about Ockley lane as well (Keymer to B Hill station).
- Can I also suggest that the cycle/pedestrian shared route from Hassocks to Burgess Hill is improved - overgrown, too narrow, poor surface.
- There needs to be an improved bike route from the north end of Burgess Hill to Hassocks. Whilst there is a good bike route from the south of Burgess Hill to the north of Hassocks, getting through both the town and village is dangerous for students.

Detailed suggestions

- I am a regular leisure and commuting cyclist. I used to commute daily by bike between Hurst to Hassocks station and my son commutes by bike from Hurst to Downlands school. The respect for cyclists along this road is good and I can't think what kind of improvement may be of benefit along here considering that people still need to park outside their houses and the roads are narrow so a cycle lane is not an option. Possible improvements I can think of are: remove/move the deep manhole

cover on the east-bound narrow bend near the end of New Way Lane in Hurst, fix the potholes, an advanced stop line at the traffic lights, secure cycle parking in Hassocks, Hurst and Ditchling, improved guidance about how best to negotiate Hurst High Street when on or encountering a bike to avoid the bikes being squeezed off the road when cars ignore the priorities in operation.

- If you do go down the red route, please make it separate from the highway. A dab of paint will not be sufficient incentive for would-be cyclists as it is a rather busy and scary road to cycle on.
- One question - would the cycle route just be a dotted line on the existing road or a new route away from the road? If it will be on existing roads, are they wide enough?
- Ideally the red route would connect with the national cycle route at Albourne.
- Also make better bike spaces at stone pound traffic lights to make bikes have clear bike priority in front of traffic
- The footpath on Keymer Road is only wide enough for one pedestrian. The grass is full of nettles which make it unusable at points because it hasn't been cut for so long and the speed with which cars pass leaves me feeling so vulnerable when I'm on foot or bicycle. A proper cycle path and some speed limiting mechanisms to make this route safer would enable us to start cycling to school instead of relying on the car.
- The Blue route needs to make it as far as Clayton Rec.
- It would also help to have more space for pedestrians along Lodge Lane to access the caravan park and the Downs.
- Do you propose to put in cycling only lanes?
- Put in a 20mph zone through Hassocks High Street as well and get a car park for Sainsbury's instead of roadside parking.

Other considerations

- the more cycling in general can be encouraged and made safer the better. / if there are any roadworks within a few miles of Hassocks the village grinds to a halt, less cars and more cycles might help when this happens.
- Lodge Lane could be better though.
- Cycling offers children and adults a fantastic way to get/keep fit and using our natural environment to do so is a no-brainer.
- Whilst the introduction of these routes are commendable. I wonder if they will be used by the cyclists? I know of existing routes in the area that are not used by some cyclists and so, personally, feel that any money invested in creating them is wasted.
- Although the red route may be best for Downlands' pupils, the road system along that route is not sufficient for cars, let alone adding a cycle route. The Green route presents less of a problem, but still concerns, as the school traffic on Dale Avenue has little respect for other users, and crossing over New Road is extremely hazardous unless a 40mph restriction could be put in place. The Blue route, whilst scenic and provides a nice ride to the pub does not enhance the bikeability for people wanting to use cycle paths as a useful method of transport to get to needed destinations.
- I am impressed that the students of Downlands have embarked on this important consultation process for more cycling routes. Many people have tried in the past (the Council have it in their plans that involved the bike shop as part of improving access to the South Downs) and failed. All three of your routes, though important and valuable, involve considerable funding and insurmountable problems I'm afraid. As an elderly cyclist I support your campaign from a leisure point of view but fully appreciate the need to make cycling safe for all, especially those commuting to work or school. The red route is the main one in the last respect but I fear that the Highways Dept at County Hall, Chichester, would regard the road as too narrow to include a dedicated cycle path or even a separate lane with a white line. The blue route (known locally as the Cinder Path) is also too narrow to meet modern requirements regarding cycle paths. The green route is more feasible but likely to help fewer people. / Have you consulted Hassocks Parish Council, Mid Sussex District Council, West Sussex County Council with your proposals and asked them what plans they already have for Hassocks? Have you consulted the bike shop,

Sustrans and local bike clubs for their comments and advice? Have you included an article and requests for comments in Talk About. How about leaflets in the library, Adastra Hall, doctors' surgeries and other places where people congregate? Hope these comments and suggestions help.

- I would not favour the red route as Hurstpier Point high street is already difficult at times to drive through. Adding a cycle route could make it even harder & more congested.
- The other routes are already cycsabel and will always have traffic issues even if a cycle route is added.
- This route would be better with the ability for cyclists and walkers to co-exist.
- What happened to the proposed footpath/cycle route from Hassocks to Burgess Hill from Ockley Lane to Folders Lane?

But please don't:....

- Please don't put more lighting in though - it would cause light pollution and make the area feel urban rather than rural. Thanks!
- the blue route is a terrible idea, it appears to be along the cinder path which is a common dog walking route and will just cause havoc. PLEASE DO NOT DO THIS. Walkers will get injured.
- The blue route is a tranquil narrow footpath, totally unsuitable for cycles

Support for developing Better Biking in Hassocks

- Thank you! Great initiative!
- I'd be happy to help or get involved if you need it.
- Thanks.. good luck with this.
- I think this is a REALLY important initiative that I would love to see implemented and will lend my support to in any way that could be useful.
- The South Downs has some excellent cycling opportunities and I will campaign relentlessly to see a safe route into this glorious setting.