

National Cycle Network: Route 2

Extending the Seafront Cycle Route west from George V Avenue, Worthing

The Proposal

The proposal is to extend the shared use cycle route on Worthing Promenade from George V Avenue by approximately 200m to Sea Place, Goring. The existing path on the beach would be widened from 2.5m to 4m. Sea Place would provide a safe entry / exit point to the seafront cycle route, enabling further development of National Cycle Network route 2 on quiet roads towards Littlehampton. It should alleviate the problem of cyclists on the Prom going beyond the end of the designated shared use space.

Background

When complete National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2 will run from Kent to Cornwall. A route that meets NCN standards has not yet been developed between Worthing and Littlehampton. This is a significant gap in the National Cycle Network.

From the east a very successful shared use path has been in place on Worthing Promenade for 3 years. This path (and the signed NCN route 2) ends at George V Avenue Goring. At this point there is no suitable entry or exit point for cyclists.

West Sussex County Council made a bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) for money to extend the off-road seafront route by 1.5km to Sea Lane, Goring. This bid was only partially successful and WSCC decided not to allocate any LSTF funds to Worthing. The rationale for this decision was that Worthing had significant amounts of unallocated section 106 money: money that could be used to meet the LSTF objectives "to enable the delivery of local sustainable transport solutions that support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions".

Supporting Evidence

1. George V Avenue is not a suitable point to provide a safe access point. The volume of traffic and 'pinch points' created by pedestrian refuges on Eirene Road present hazards to inexperienced and less confident cyclists. Using Sea Place as the access point significantly improves safe access to the sea-front path to hundreds of households west of George V Avenue.
2. The seafront cycle route provides a sustainable and healthy mode of transport to access Worthing Town Centre and a significant number of attractions, including the new swimming pool, Waterwise Play Area, Splash Point, Brooklands Park and Widewater Lagoon. It is a safe, healthy and affordable transport option for families with young children.
3. Arun District Council's Draft Leisure Strategy (Sept 2012) proposes to commit resources "to create high quality long distance cycle routes along the coast". We need a joined-up approach from Worthing, Arun, WSCC and Sustrans to develop cycling infrastructure of a standard that will encourage new cyclists, bridge the gap in the NCN, and thereby meet the objectives of the WS Local Transport Plan 3 and the LSTF.
4. The top infrastructure priority for local cycling and community transport groups is an extension of the off-road seafront cycle path towards Sea Lane, Goring. This was put forward to WSCC for inclusion in the Worthing infrastructure plan by local representatives of Sustrans, the CtC, the Worthing Revolutions Cycle Campaign, and Transition Town Worthing.
5. According to Department of Transport statistics, 20% of Worthing residents cycle at least once a week. This puts Worthing 11th out of the 377 towns/cities/regions listed. There is a strong case for nurturing this demand for sustainable, healthy transport by investing in schemes that will improve access to safe cycling.