

A27 Bypass Letters

More readers' letters

Dear Editor

The February issue of Sussex Local asked 'Could Arundel have its own Pont de Normandie?'. The answer of course is 'No'. With £350m allocated by government for road development along the A27, of which £75m is ring-fenced for work to the east of Lewes, leaving only £275m for both Worthing and Arundel bypass proposals, the prohibitive cost of the French bridge (£350m, 20 years ago) makes it impossible. If any bridge is built across the Arun Valley, it will undoubtedly be of the usual ugly concrete type that despoils so much of our countryside. The idea of a stylish, and equally unaffordable, Millau bridge for Arundel was previously raised by MP Nick Herbert in an attempt to dissipate increasing local opposition to the Arundel bypass - opposition that has clearly surprised him and other elected representatives in A27 Action. How could they have known that so many of us are unhappy about it when they haven't asked us if it's what we want?

It is widely acknowledged, even by those favouring a new bypass, that it will not benefit A27 traffic if measures do not address congestion in

Worthing and Chichester. The budget won't stretch to that, especially as roundabout works at Chichester are still only partly funded. The whole set of proposals for the A27 is, in any case, a mess based on outdated thinking. There is no evidence to back A27 Action claims that the new roads would provide local economic benefit, resolve congestion or cut pollution, wider evidence-based studies showing the the opposite is very likely to be true. Traffic in West Sussex is decreasing according to DfT figures and our climate can't take the emissions from increased traffic that we all now know new roads brings and, it seems, A27 Action wants. The limited money would be better spent on up-to-date solutions, shown elsewhere to be effective and far better value for money. These mean improving and integrating train and bus services to attract commuters from Worthing, Chichester and other local areas, which are a major source of local congestion. Local infrastructure improvements such as remodelling junctions, particularly at Crossbush, and separated safe walking and cycling bridges and underpasses will smooth flow around Arundel and make short walks more attractive for schoolchildren and shoppers. We need to be forward-thinking in how we access what we need and where we go, with new technology, flexible working and active travel, rather than going back to old landscape-trashing tarmac again, which we know doesn't work.

Sue White, Chair, Arundel SCATE

We thank Sue for pointing out the bridge funding numbers. The photo was included as an illustrative device, but good that it opened a debate thread.

Dear Editor At last you have published 'the other side' of this debate. I have thought your magazine one-sided and pro-bypass and you will have to go a long way to disabuse me of this view. It's a pity you don't reflect the views of local people more often, instead of MPs and others who are only interested in getting re-elected at the next election (name supplied). **Editor's note:** We categorically deny that we are biased on this or any other political/social issue. We print the letters we receive. We list, as we always have, those websites on both sides of the debate of which we are aware. Paul Dendle writes a monthly column for us which is a personal view. Other politicians are welcome to contribute if they wish. Nick Herbert MP recently paid for the eight page insert/ advertisement as was indicated at the time.

A27 by-pass further reading

www.scar-uk.co.uk/arundel.htm

www.a27action.co.uk <http://scate.org.uk/>

www.arundelneighbourhood.com

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