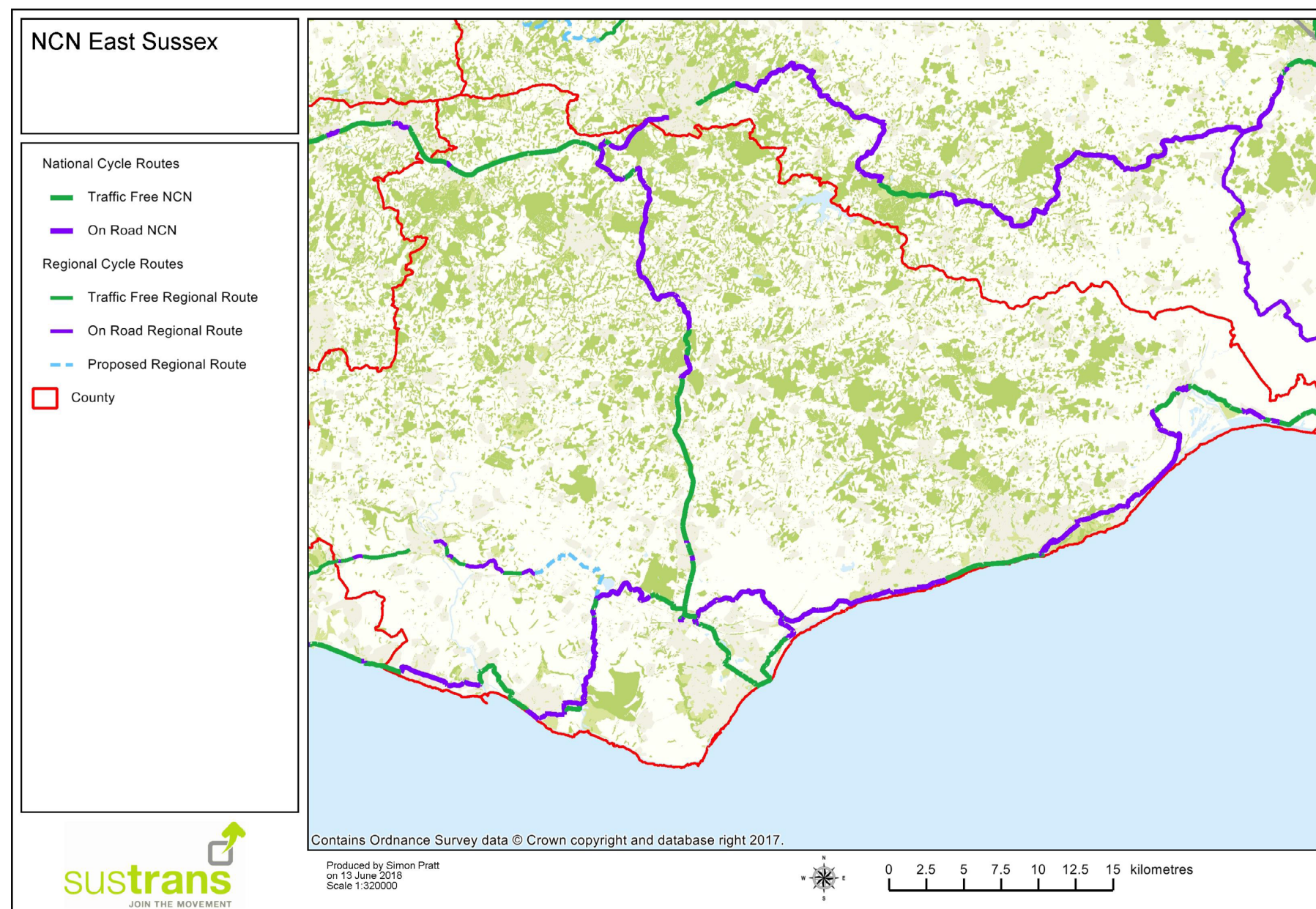


East Sussex Cycling and Walking Strategy

Long Distance Routes

June 2018



About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We are engineers and educators, experts and advocates. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Sustrans works in partnership, bringing people together to find the right solutions. We make the case for walking and cycling by using robust evidence and showing what can be done.

We are grounded in communities and believe that grassroots support combined with political leadership drives real change, fast.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

Head Office
Sustrans
2 Cathedral Square
College Green
Bristol
BS1 5DD

© Sustrans June 2018
Registered Charity No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)
VAT Registration No. 416740656

Contents

Introduction	1
National Cycle Network Audit	2
National Route 2	3
National Route 21	6
Regional Route 90	9
Coastal Cultural Trail	12
Exceat – Eastbourne	13
Lewes – Uckfield	14
Royal Military Canal	15

Revision	Description	Author	Check	Date
-	Version 1	SP	DY	22/03/18
1	Version 2	SP	DY	13/06/18

Introduction

Sustrans was commissioned by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in March 2017 to support the development of a countywide Cycling and Walking Strategy. Our role is to lead on identifying new and improved walking and cycling routes and infrastructure that align with key County Council policies and programmes that support local economic growth, improvements to health and well-being and the environment, together with the engagement of key local stakeholders, who have a vested interest in the development of the strategy.

We have surveyed and reported on eleven of the largest settlements in the County as listed below:

- Lewes
- Heathfield
- Uckfield
- Battle
- Bexhill
- Hastings
- Peacehaven, Newhaven & Seaford
- Eastbourne
- Hailsham
- Rye & Camber
- Crowborough

The scope of the work within the urban areas was limited to utility trips to work, education and shopping of up to 5km. This report considers leisure trips outside the urban areas.

Most of the existing long distance routes in East Sussex form part of the National Cycle Network and these had already been audited by Sustrans. Additional routes have been included, but these have not been surveyed for this report, although the author is familiar with many of them.

Designing for busy roads

Recently published guidance from Highways England (Interim Advice Note 195/16) is a useful starting point when considering whether the busier roads are likely to be suitable for cycling and walking.

This guidance suggests that the key threshold at all traffic speeds is an average annual daily traffic flow of 5,000 vehicles per day (vpd). At higher traffic flows, physical separation from motor vehicles is recommended.

Reducing traffic speed from 30mph to 20mph is clearly desirable, but if traffic flows cannot be reduced below 5,000 vpd, then physical separation will still be required. In these situations it is tempting to accommodate cyclists on existing footways, but this is not acceptable if it means a reduced level of service for pedestrians.

Speed Limit	Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	Minimum Provision
40+	All flows	Cycle Tracks
30	0-5,000	Cycle Lanes
	>5,000	Cycle Tracks
	<2,500	Quiet Streets
20	2,500-5,000	Cycle Lanes
	>5,000	Cycle Tracks

From Interim Advice Note 195/16

Sustrans recommends a minimum shared path width of 3.0 metres in an urban setting, with reduced widths acceptable in certain circumstances. The table below is taken from the Sustrans Design Manual, a handbook for cycle-friendly design.

On some roads it may not be possible to accommodate cycle lanes, cycle tracks or a shared path and the designer must consider other alternatives, such as closing the road to through traffic or finding a different route alignment.

Type of route	Minimum path width
Urban traffic free	3.0m on all main cycle routes, secondary cycle routes, major access paths and school links; wider on curves and steep gradients. 2.5m possible on access routes and links with low use
Urban fringe traffic free	3.0m on all main cycle routes, major access paths and school links 2.5m possible on lesser secondary cycle routes and access links
Rural traffic free	2.5m on all main routes, major access paths and school links 2.0m possible on lesser routes and links

From Sustrans Design Manual

Traffic restrictions

Experience from towns and cities across the UK and in Europe suggests that in addition to providing good quality infrastructure for walking and cycling, it is necessary to restrict motor vehicles so that active travel is the natural and obvious choice for short trips. This does not mean any lack of accessibility for motor vehicles, just that they may need to make longer trips than the equivalent journey on foot or by bike.

There are various ways that traffic can be restricted and the designer will need to consider the appropriate solution for each location. A number of suggested measures are listed below:

- Vehicle Restricted Areas (pedestrian zones)
- Traffic calming and 20mph zones to reduce vehicle speeds
- Reduced availability of on-street and off-street parking
- Workplace Parking Levy
- Congestion charging
- Clean Air Zones
- Filtered permeability

Walking and cycling in rural areas

In some rural areas, the car is likely to remain the main mode of transport for the foreseeable future as many villages have limited bus services and distances are too large for walking and cycling. However, if we consider five miles as a reasonable distance for cycling and we draw a circle of this radius around the nine largest urban areas, there is a strong argument for a comprehensive network of inter-urban routes linking the main towns in the southern half of the County with each other.

Walking is an important mode of transport for people within villages to travel between local trip generators, such as local services and as a means for recreation. Even where traffic volume and speed are relatively low, it is important to have basic infrastructure such as footways, dropped kerbs and appropriate crossings.

We expect walking and cycling routes to be physically separated from motor traffic, with the core network alongside main roads as the most direct routes. Alternative routes away from main roads using Public Rights of Way can provide an attractive option. There is also an extensive network of quieter roads for leisure cycling, but these are generally not suitable for less confident cyclists for everyday journeys to school, work, shops and personal trips.

Reducing speed and volume of traffic in rural areas is challenging, but must be addressed for the comfort and safety of people travelling on foot and by bike. Similar design principles can be used in rural areas as in urban areas, in particular consideration of point closures to prevent through traffic.

National Cycle Network Audit

All 16,000 miles of the National Cycle Network (NCN) were surveyed and all key characteristics recorded during 2015 and 2016. The data was captured in the field on hand-held devices, then uploaded to our online GIS mapping for analysis.

In order to compare different sections of route we have developed a Level of Service Measure for four different characteristics:

- Surface quality
- Wayfinding and signage
- Flow
- Traffic related safety

Surface quality

Can a normal bike (not a road bike, not a mountain bike) be used here?

All on-road sections are scored relatively high as they generally have a smooth surface. Traffic-free sections do have poor surfaces in some locations and this is reflected in the score for this measure.

Wayfinding and signage

Can this route be followed without a map?

The score reflects whether a section is signed in both directions, one direction or not at all.

Flow

Can a relaxed 8mph be continually and safely maintained here?

Path width and restrictive barriers are the main constraints under this measure.

Scoring

Each Level of Service Measure has a four level scoring system. Each measure is scored as either Yes, Perhaps, Probably Not or No, with a score of 3, 2, 1 or 0 assigned.

Level	Score
Yes	3
Perhaps	2

Probably Not	1
No	0

Traffic related safety

The question our surveyors had to answer was: "Would most people allow an unaccompanied 12 year old to cycle here?"

This is the most subjective measure as it is based on the surveyor's assessment of whether a section of road is suitable. Due to inconsistencies between surveyors, Sustrans has acquired INRIX traffic data which gives an objective measure of traffic volume and speed, based on information from commercial fleets, GPS, cell towers, mobile devices and cameras. This means that we can set threshold criteria for on-road sections and define what we mean by a "lightly trafficked" road. The INRIX data was validated using actual traffic count data for all roads in Cornwall, with thanks to Cornwall Council. Weighting is applied to the safety measure in order to recognise that a traffic-free route should have a higher traffic related safety score than an on-road route.

- Traffic-free route +6
- Lightly trafficked road +4
- Other roads -4

A lightly trafficked road is defined as having an INRIX volume of 9 or less (AADT 1000) and median speed of 25 mph or less in rural areas and volume of 11 or less (AADT 2500) and median speed of 15 mph or less in urban areas.

Classifications

The highest possible score for a high quality traffic-free section is 15 points and this is considered to meet the "Very Good Standard". Lower scores are classified as Good, Poor or Very Poor as below.

Classification	Score
Very Good	15
Good	10-14
Poor	7-9
Very Poor	0-6



National Route 2

Route 2 runs for 68 miles across the County, from Peacehaven in the West to Camber in the East. It links all the major coastal towns, including Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill, Hastings and Rye.

The main traffic-free sections are:

- Newhaven-Seaford
- Wilimington Wood
- Bexhill-Hastings
- Winchelsea-Rye-Camber

The NCN Audit has identified a number of poor and very poor sections of this route, which will be considered as part of the Strategic Improvement Plan for England South.

The main issues are the on-road sections of the route, where there are very few roads that are suitable for an unaccompanied 12-year old. The highest priority sections are the two short lengths on the A259 at Seaford and Winchelsea, where alternative routes have been identified. There is one dangerous road crossing identified at Pevensey.

Many of the rural lanes are the most difficult to improve as their relatively remote locations mean that cycle traffic is light, but traffic speeds can be high with much of the rural network having the national speed limit of 60mph.

Some of the traffic-free sections have poor surfaces or insufficient width for shared use, meaning that they have been categorised as “poor”.

Substantial sections of the route are discussed in the Sustrans LCWIP reports for Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill, Hastings and Rye and these are referenced in the table below.

Section	Score	Issue	LCWIP ref	Proposed measure
Arundel Road, Peacehaven	4	Moderately busy urban street	202	Improve traffic calming
The Highway, Peacehaven	10	Poor surface	205	Improve surface
Gibson Road, Newhaven	5	Moderately busy urban street	211	20mph zone
Chyngton Road, Seaford	5	Moderately busy urban street	231	Traffic calming
Chyngton Lane, Seaford	11	Poor surface	231	Improve surface
Chyngton Farm, Seaford	10	Unsurfaced footpath	231	Improve surface
Eastbourne Road, Seaford	4	Very busy rural road (A259)	220	New shared footway
Litlington Road	3	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Alfriston Road	5	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	New shared footway
Station Road, Berwick	5	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	New shared footway
Berwick-Wilmington Wood	3	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Pevensey Roundabout	#	Dangerous crossing of A27	n/a	Improve crossing
Pevensey-Cooden Beach	5	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Cooden Drive-South Cliff, Bexhill	5	Moderately busy urban street	100	Mandatory cycle lanes
West Parade-Marina, Bexhill	4	Busy urban road (B2192)	100	Alternative route (promenade)
De La Warr Parade, Bexhill	4	Moderately busy urban street	100	Alternative route (promenade)
Glyne Gap, Bexhill	10	Narrow path	100	Widen path
Old Town-Shearbarn, Hastings	2	Moderately busy urban street	202	Traffic calming
Fairlight	4	Moderately busy rural road	202	Alternative route
Fairlight-Winchelsea Beach	4	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Sea Road, Winchelsea	4	Moderately busy rural road	210	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Tanyard Lane, Winchelsea	5	Very busy urban road (A259)	210	Alternative route
Bridleway, Winchelsea	9	Narrow path with poor surface	210	Widen path and improve surface
Rye Town Centre	4	Busy urban streets	210	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
New Lydd Road, Camber	5	Moderately busy urban road	200	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route

NCN Review: Top Level Reporting

Datasheet criteria

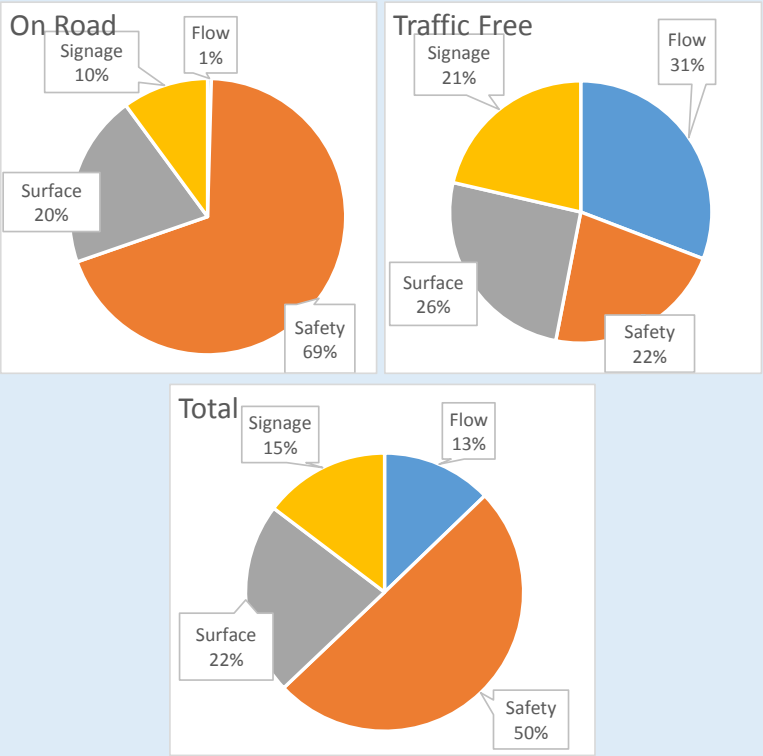
Earthlight data: **NCN2 East Sussex INRIX.xls**

Current Status

- Data taken from Sustrans' route datasets

Category	On Road (mi)	Traffic Free (mi)	Total (mi)	On Road (%)	Traffic Free (%)	Total (%)
Very Good	0.0	0.0	0.0	0%	0%	0%
Good	8.2	23.6	31.8	12%	35%	47%
Poor	0.0	1.5	1.5	0%	2%	2%
Very Poor	34.5	0.0	34.5	51%	0%	51%
Total	42.7	25.1	67.8	63%	37%	100%

Issues on the selected NCN by category



Issue Pie Charts

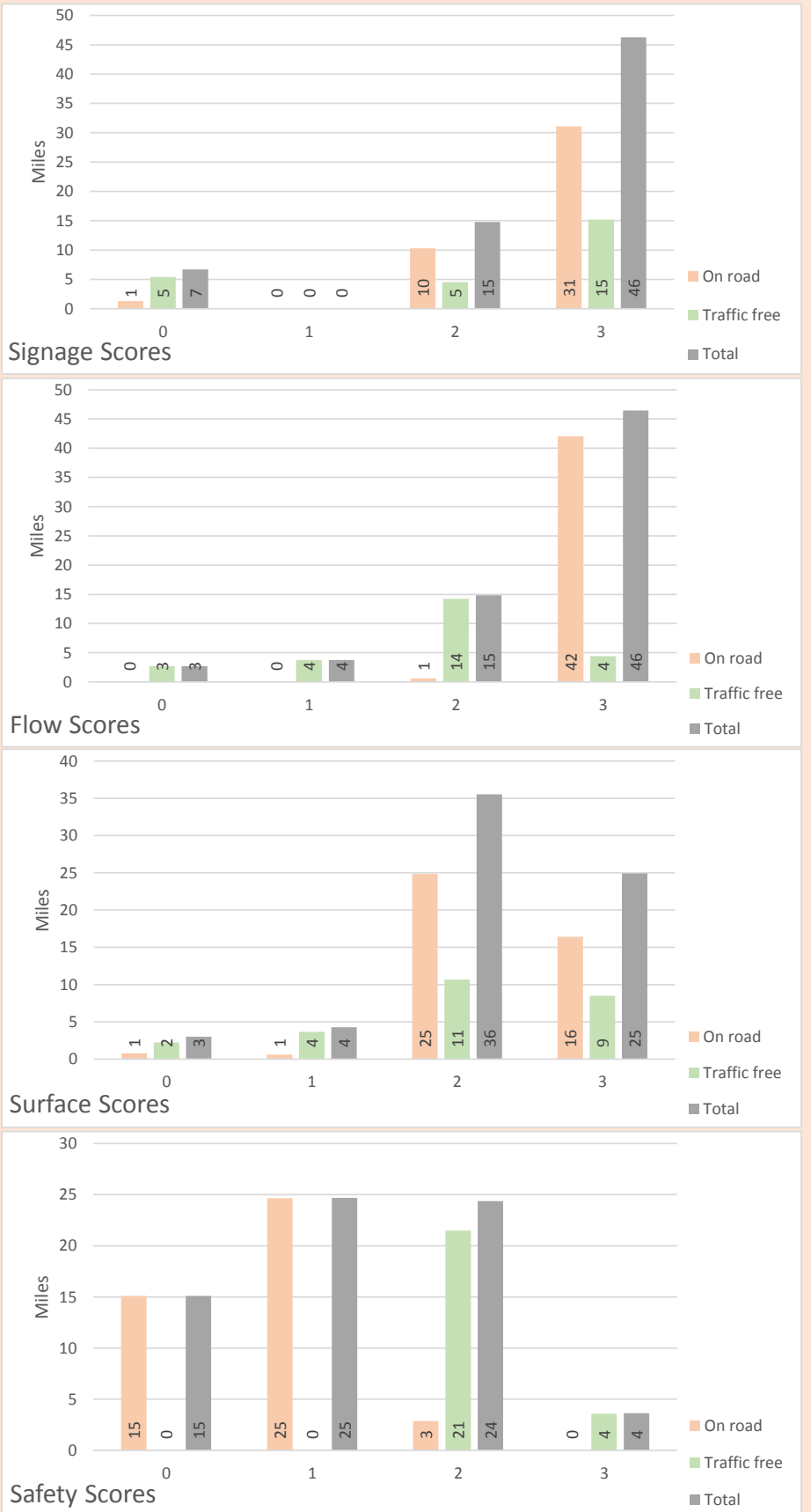
The pie charts above show the relative scale of the main issues (surface, safety, flow and signage) - the higher the percentage the more that issue impacts negatively on the score for the selected route/area.

The three charts show the breakdown of by on-road, traffic free and the combined total.

Issue Bar Charts

The bar charts to the right show the length of NCN by score (0 to 3 where 3 is best) for each service level measure.

This is broken down by on-road, traffic free and combined total.

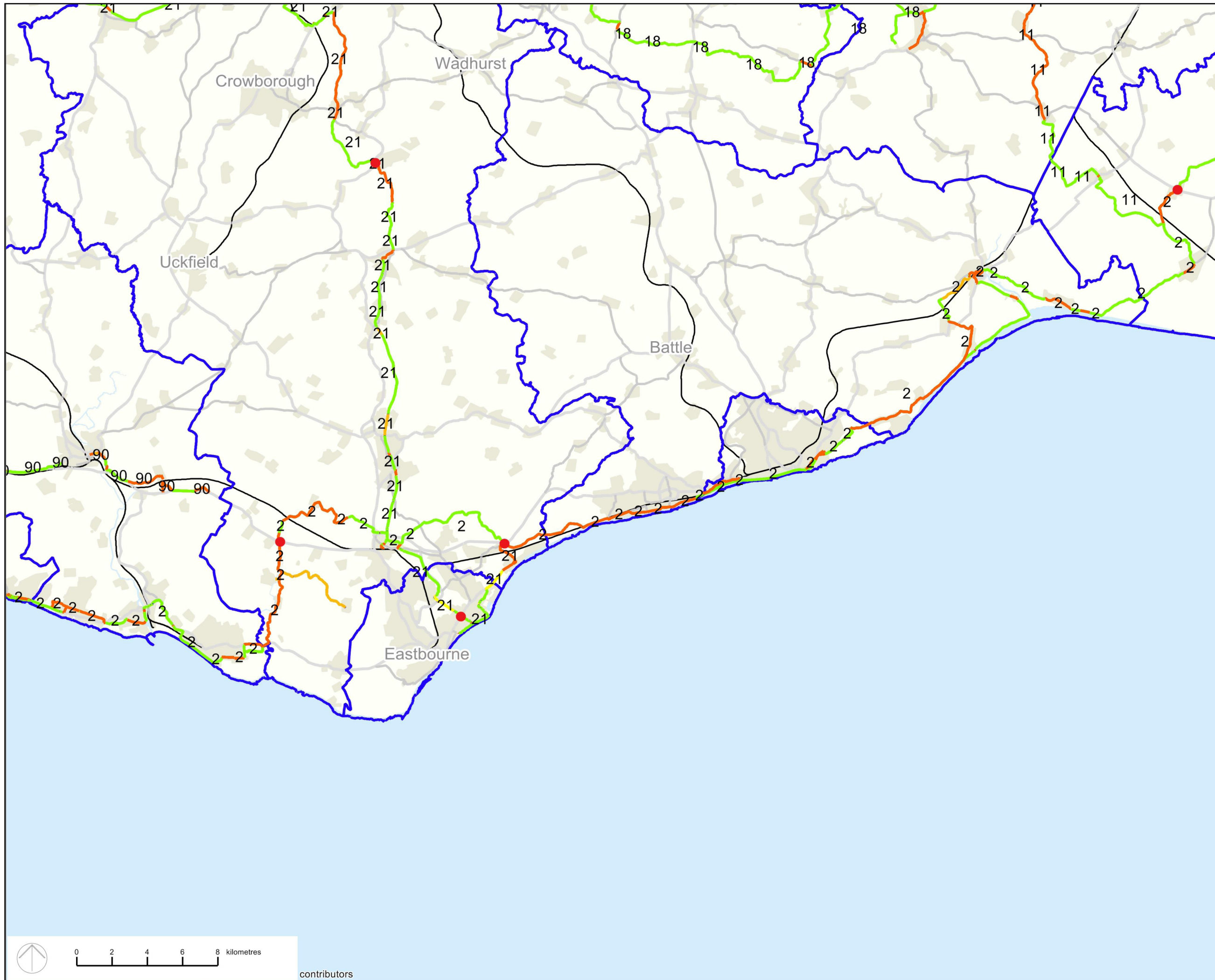


13 June 2018

Dashboard Ring Charts

The ring charts above show the percentage of the NCN that falls into each category - Very Poor, Poor, Good, Very Good - based on scores allocated to each section by the NCN audit.

The three charts show the breakdown of categories for on-road, traffic free and the combined total for the selected area/route.



Key

NCN Review Results

Section Scores INRIX

- Very Good
- Good
- Poor
- Very Poor

District

Dangerous Crossings Overview



2 College Green, Cathedral Square, Bristol, BS1 5DD
Tel: 0117 926 8893 www.sustrans.org.uk

PROJECT

NCN Review

TITLE

NCN2 East Sussex

Drawn	Checked	Date	Scale at A3
SP	SP	13 June 2018	1:200000

STATUS

Sketch

DRAWING NUMBER

REVISION

contributors

National Route 21

Route 21 runs for 42 miles through the County, from East Grinstead in West Sussex to Pevensey, where it joins Route 2. The section between East Grinstead and Polegate forms part of the long distance Avenue Verte London-Paris route, which uses the ferry crossing between Newhaven and Dieppe.

The main traffic-free sections are:

- East Grinstead-Groombridge (Forest Way)
- Heathfield-Hampden Park (Cuckoo Trail)
- Hampden Park-Pevensey Bay

The NCN Audit has identified a number of poor and very poor sections of this route, which will be considered as part of the Strategic Improvement Plan for England South.

The main issues are the on-road sections of the route, where there are very few roads that are suitable for an unaccompanied 12-year old. The highest priority sections are the A259 at Pevensey Bay and Pevensey, where alternative routes have been identified. There are two dangerous road crossings identified at Mayfield and Eastbourne.

The minor roads linking the two railway paths are surprisingly hilly through the High Weald and while some are quiet lanes, other roads are moderately busy with traffic at the national speed limit of 60mph.

The traffic-free section north of Heathfield has a poor surface and insufficient width for shared use, meaning that it has been categorised as “poor”. Some sections of the Cuckoo Trail are also rated poor due to insufficient width and poor signing.

Some sections of the route are discussed in the Sustrans LCWIP reports for Heathfield, Hailsham and Eastbourne and these are referenced in the table below.

Section	Score	Issue	LCWIP ref	Proposed measure
Withyham Road	#	Dangerous crossing of B2110	n/a	Traffic calming
Groombridge	#	Dangerous crossing of B2188	n/a	Traffic calming
Eridge Green-Rotherfield	4	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
South Street, Rotherfield	5	Moderately busy urban street	n/a	Traffic calming
Mayfield Bypass	#	Dangerous crossing of A267	n/a	Improve crossing
Mayfield-Old Mill	5	Moderately busy rural road	n/a	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Bridleway, Heathfield	10	Narrow path with poor surface	n/a	Improve surface
Tower Street, Heathfield	5	Busy urban street (B2203)	300	New shared footway
Downsview, Heathfield	5	Moderately busy urban street	300	Traffic calming
Cuckoo Trail	9	Narrow path with poor signing	n/a	Widen path and improve signing
The Cedars, Hailsham	4	Moderately busy urban street	311	Traffic calming
Station Road, Hailsham	5	Moderately busy urban street	311	Reduce traffic volume and speed or alternative route
Levett Road, Polegate	4	Moderately busy urban street	225	Traffic calming
Seaside, Eastbourne	#	Dangerous crossing of A259	320	Improve crossing
Eastbourne Road, Pevensey Bay	2	Very busy urban road (A259)	210	Traffic calming or alternative route
Wallsend Road, Pevensey	4	Very busy rural road (A259)	343	Alternative route

NCN Review: Top Level Reporting

Datasheet criteria

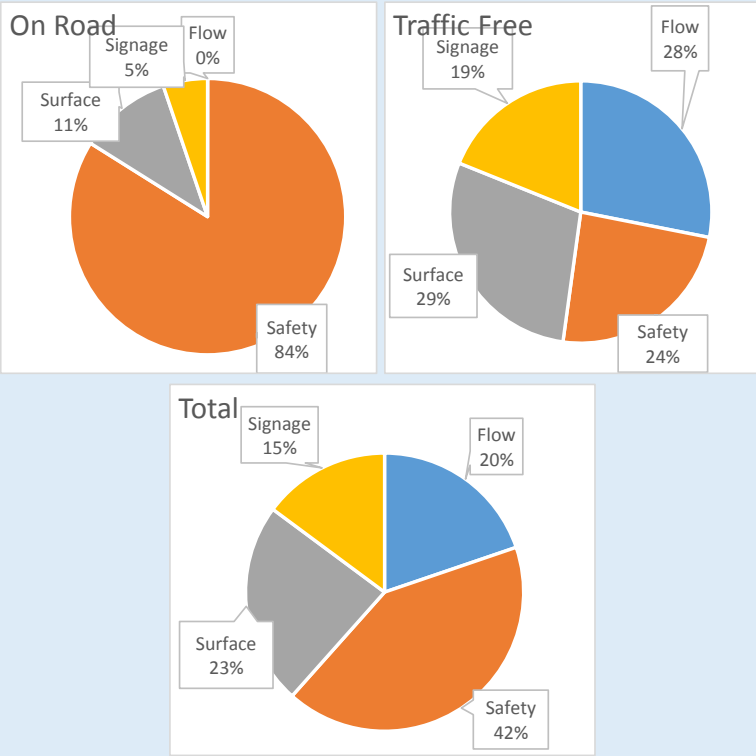
Earthlight data: NCN21 East Sussex INRIX.xls

Current Status

- Data taken from Sustrans' route datasets

Category	On Road (mi)	Traffic Free (mi)	Total (mi)	On Road (%)	Traffic Free (%)	Total (%)
Very Good	0.0	1.9	1.9	0%	4%	4%
Good	6.0	24.5	30.5	14%	57%	72%
Poor	0.0	1.0	1.0	0%	2%	2%
Very Poor	9.1	0.0	9.1	21%	0%	21%
Total	15.1	27.4	42.6	36%	64%	100%

Issues on the selected NCN by category



Issue Pie Charts

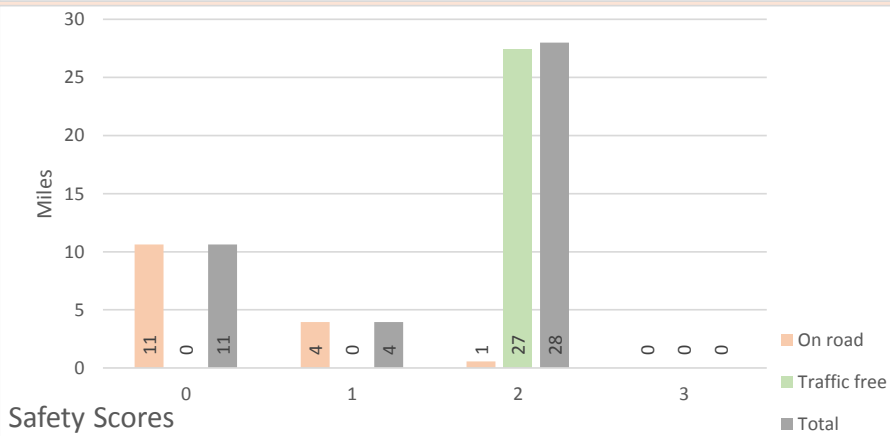
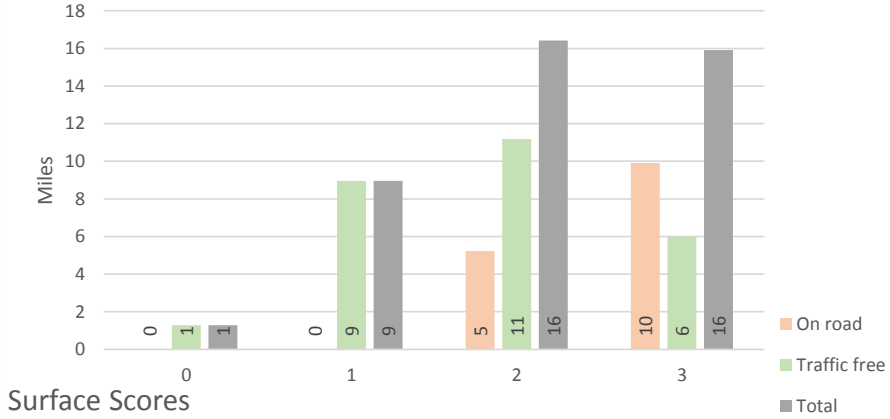
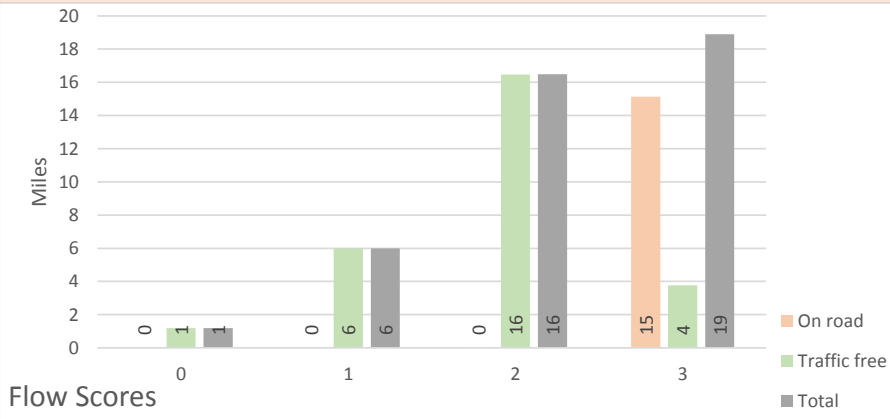
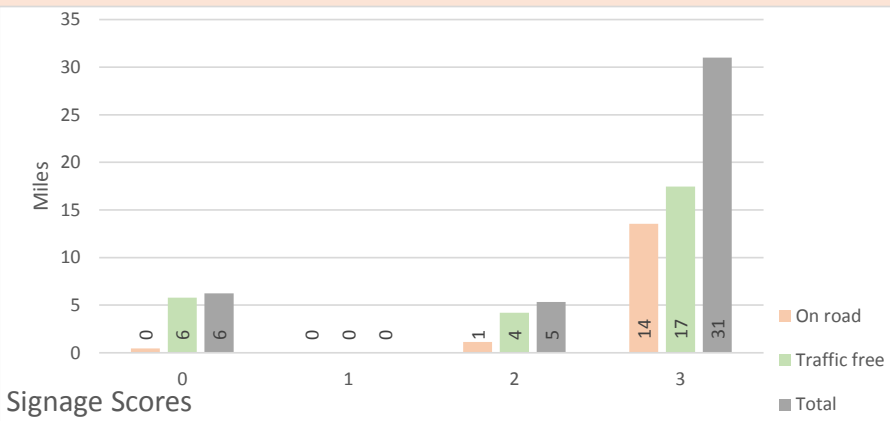
The pie charts above show the relative scale of the main issues (surface, safety, flow and signage) - the higher the percentage the more that issue impacts negatively on the score for the selected route/area.

The three charts show the breakdown of by on-road, traffic free and the combined total.

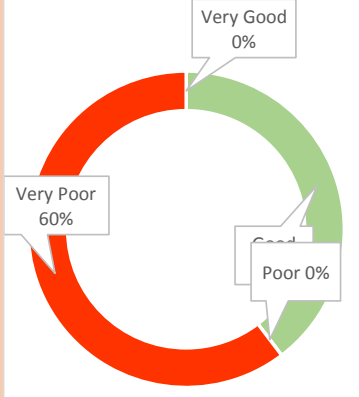
Issue Bar Charts

The bar charts to the right show the length of NCN by score (0 to 3 where 3 is best) for each service level measure.

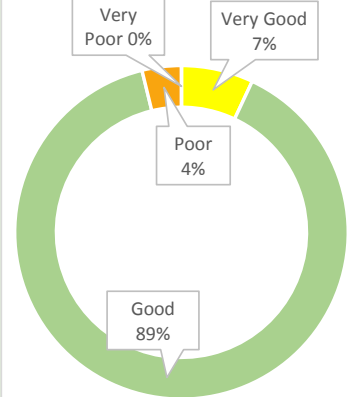
This is broken down by on-road, traffic free and combined total.



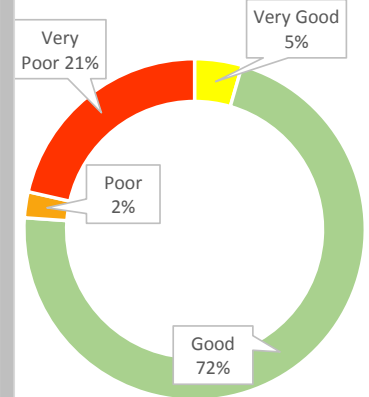
On Road %



Traffic Free %



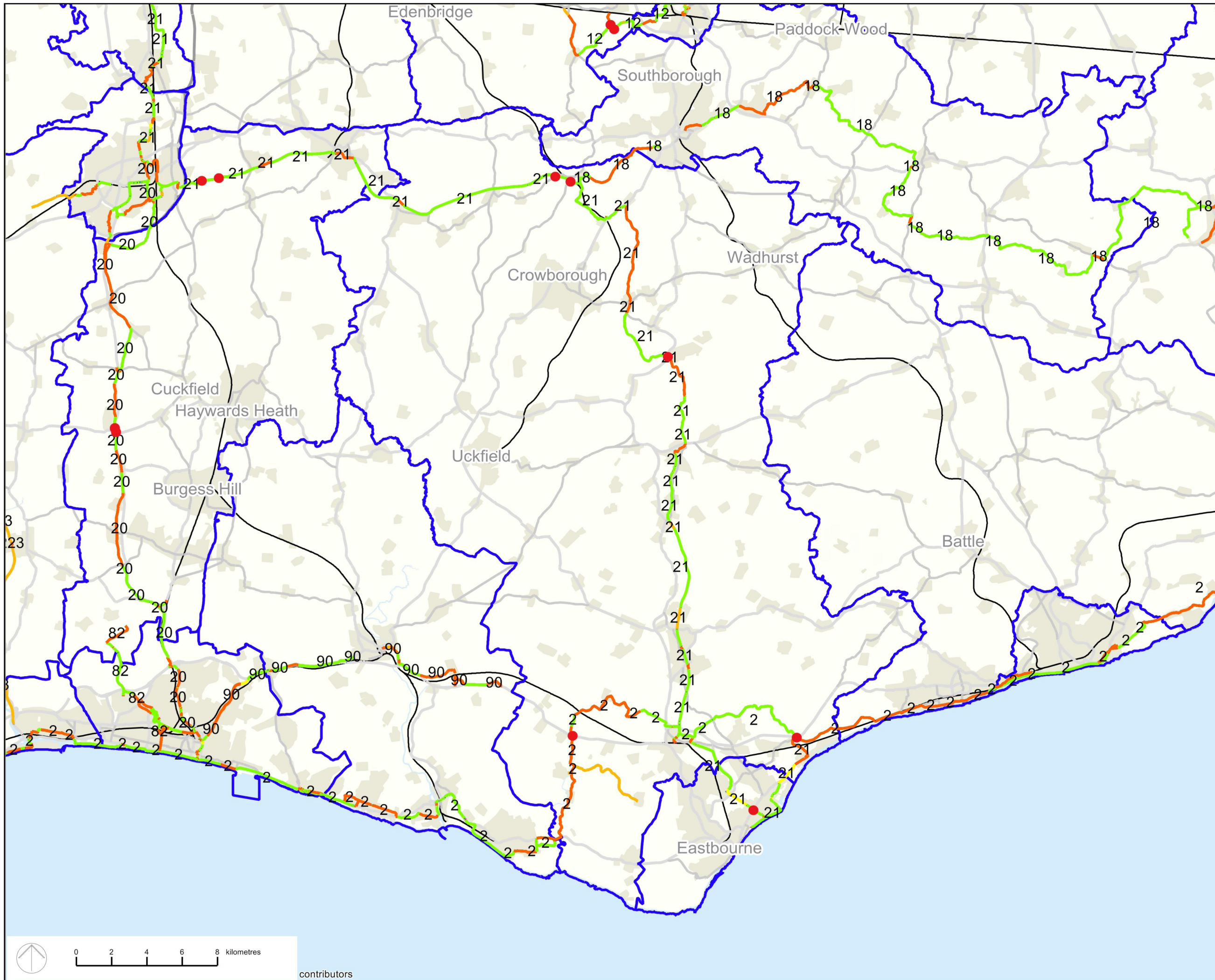
Total %



Dashboard Ring Charts

The ring charts above show the percentage of the NCN that falls into each category - Very Poor, Poor, Good, Very Good - based on scores allocated to each section by the NCN audit.

The three charts show the breakdown of categories for on-road, traffic free and the combined total for the selected area/route.



Key
NCN Review Results
Section Scores INRIX
Very Good
Good
Poor
Very Poor
District
Dangerous Crossings Overview

JOIN THE MOVEMENT
2 College Green, Cathedral Square, Bristol, BS1 5DD
Tel: 0117 926 8893 www.sustrans.org.uk

PROJECT	NCN Review		
TITLE	NCN21 East Sussex		
Drawn SP	Checked SP	Date 13 June 2018	Scale at A3 1:200000
STATUS	Sketch		
DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION		

Regional Route 90

This route runs for 14 miles and links the centre of Brighton with Falmer, Lewes and Firle, following the A270 and A27.

The main traffic-free sections are:

- Mouslecoomb-Lewes
- Southerham-Glynde (beside A27)

The NCN Audit has identified a number of poor and very poor sections of this route, which will be considered as part of the Strategic Improvement Plan for England South.

In Brighton, there has been significant investment in the Lewes Road corridor with a number of innovations such as bus stop bypasses. However, there are a number of places where the route does not meet current standards as listed in the table. In particular, physical separation from traffic on the A270 Lewes Road is needed, where there are merely painted cycle lanes.

The whole route in East Sussex is described in the Lewes LCWIP report, with a missing gap to be resolved within the Lewes urban area. There are also ambitions to extend the route to the east, to link with National Route 2 at Berwick. Current discussions on the future of the A27 road between Lewes and Polegate include consideration of cycle routes in the same corridor.

Section	Score	Issue	LCWIP ref	Proposed measure
Lewes Road, Brighton	4	Very busy urban road (A270)	n/a	Physical separation from traffic
Lewes Road, Mouslecoomb	2	Very busy urban road (A270)	n/a	Physical separation from traffic
Lewes Road, North Mouslecoomb	4	Very busy urban road (A270)	n/a	Physical separation from traffic
Brighton Road-Town Centre, Lewes	-	Missing section	210, 203	Agree route and implement
Cliffe High Street	8	Poor surface	210	Improve surface
South Street, Cliffe	1	Moderately busy urban street	210	Traffic calming
Southerham Lane	4	Moderately busy urban street	210	Traffic calming
Southerham-Glynde	5	Moderately busy rural road	210	Alternative route (A27 footway)

NCN Review: Top Level Reporting

Datasheet criteria

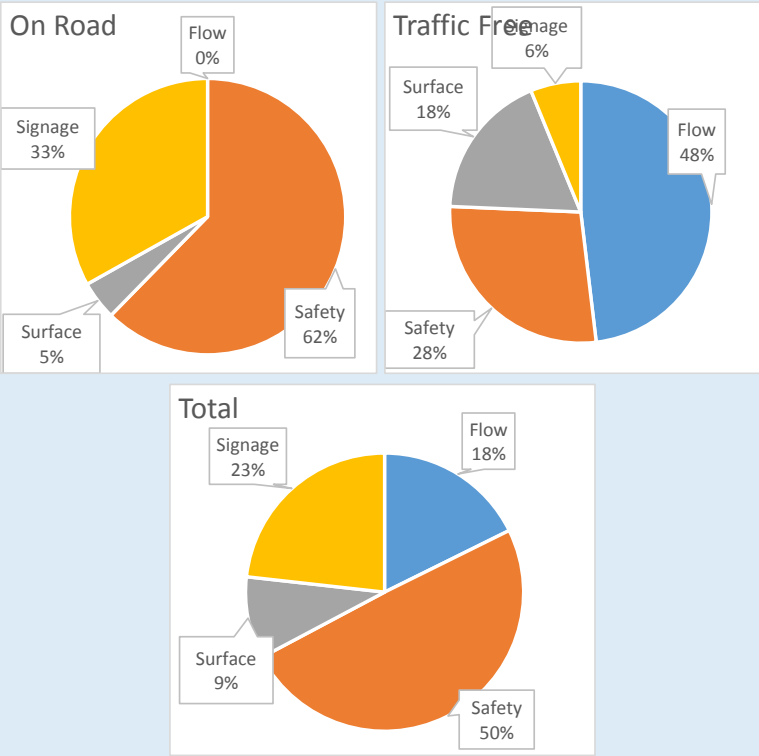
Earthlight data: RR90 Brighton & East Sussex INRIX.xls

Current Status

- Data taken from Sustrans' route datasets

Category	On Road (mi)	Traffic Free (mi)	Total (mi)	On Road (%)	Traffic Free (%)	Total (%)
Very Good	0.0	0.3	0.3	0%	2%	2%
Good	0.2	5.5	5.8	2%	39%	40%
Poor	0.1	0.0	0.2	1%	0%	1%
Very Poor	8.1	0.0	8.1	56%	0%	56%
Total	8.4	5.9	14.3	59%	41%	100%

Issues on the selected NCN by category



Issue Pie Charts

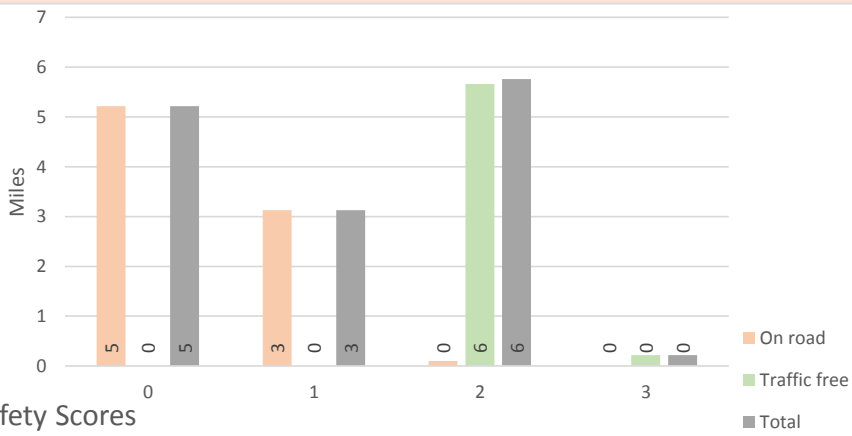
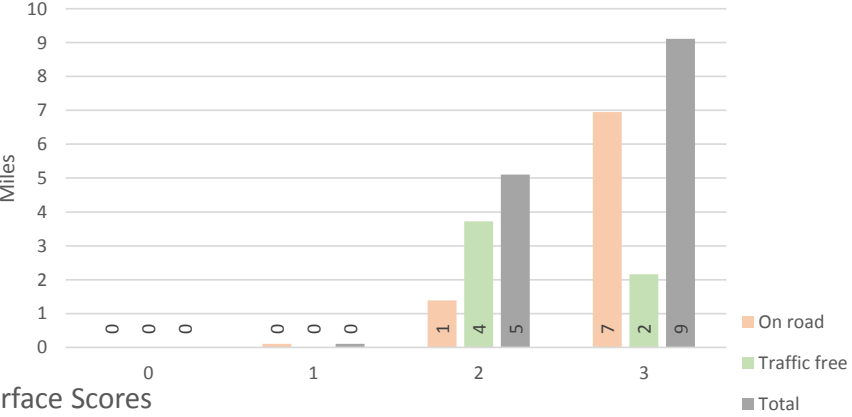
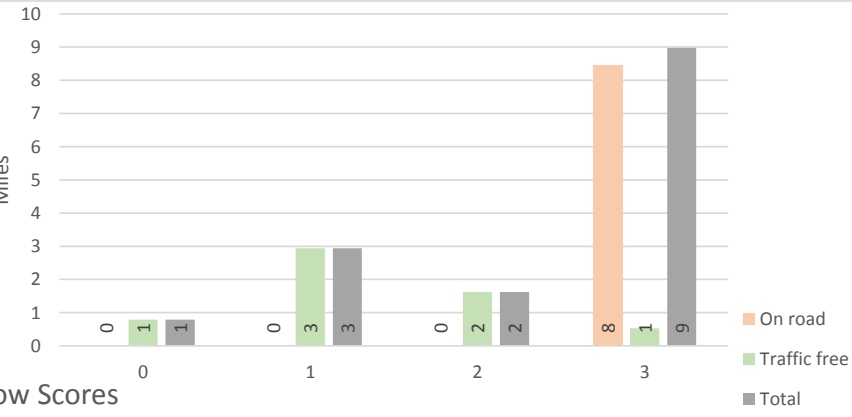
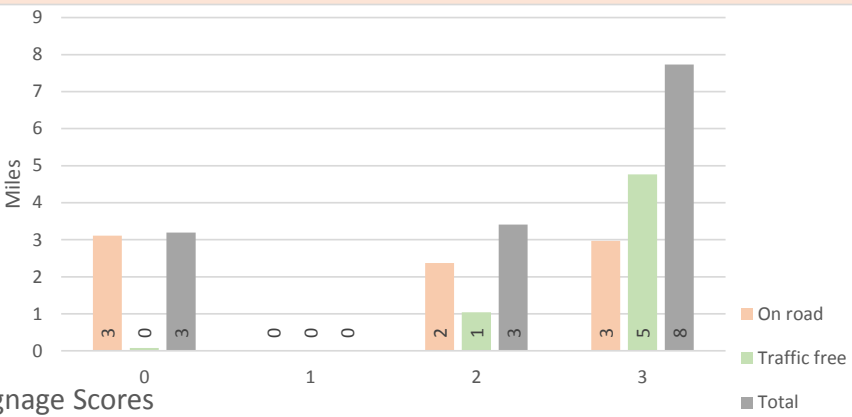
The pie charts above show the relative scale of the main issues (surface, safety, flow and signage) - the higher the percentage the more that issue impacts negatively on the score for the selected route/area.

The three charts show the breakdown of by on-road, traffic free and the combined total.

Issue Bar Charts

The bar charts to the right show the length of NCN by score (0 to 3 where 3 is best) for each service level measure.

This is broken down by on-road, traffic free and combined total.

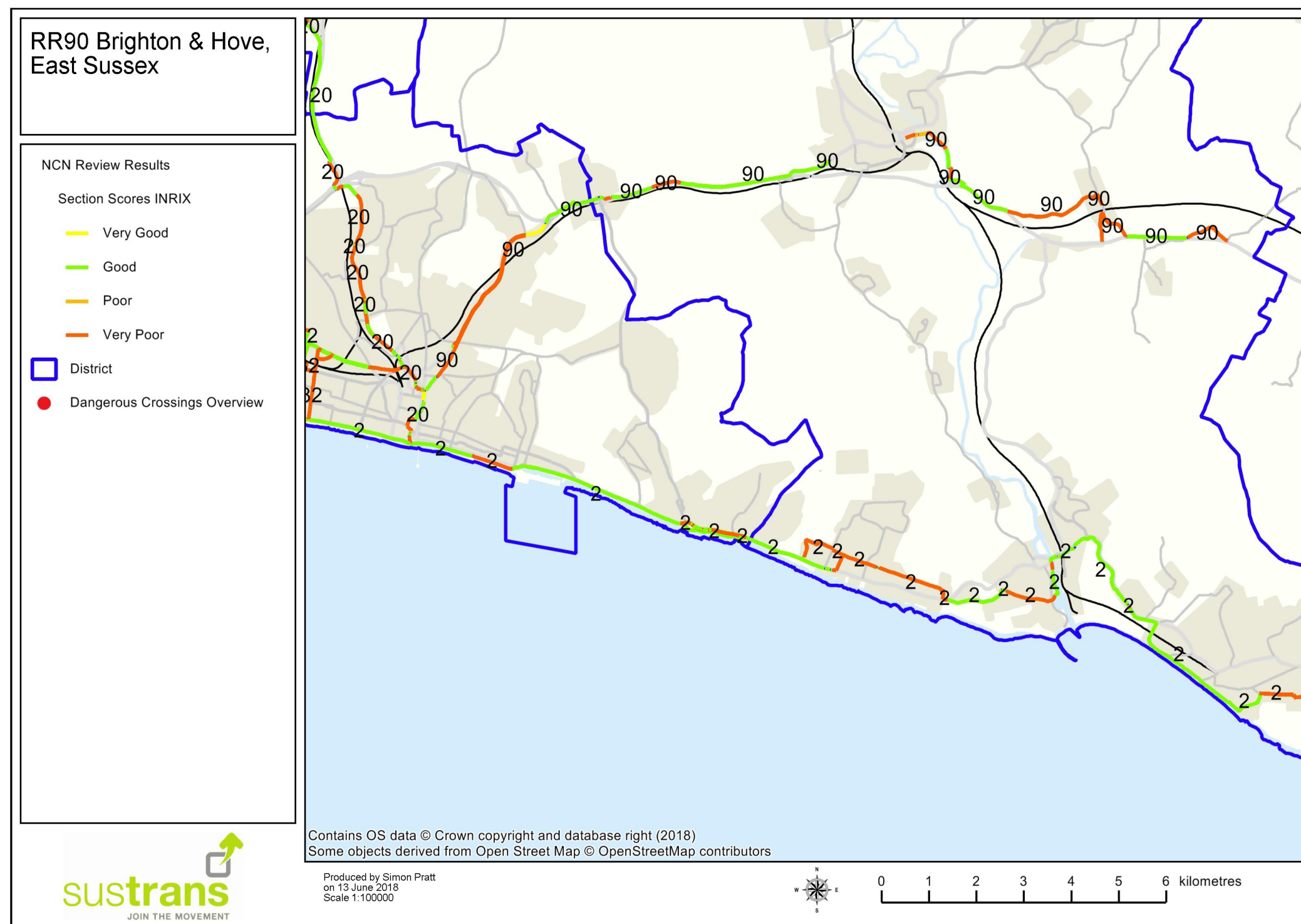


13 June 2018

Dashboard Ring Charts

The ring charts above show the percentage of the NCN that falls into each category - Very Poor, Poor, Good, Very Good - based on scores allocated to each section by the NCN audit.

The three charts show the breakdown of categories for on-road, traffic free and the combined total for the selected area/route.



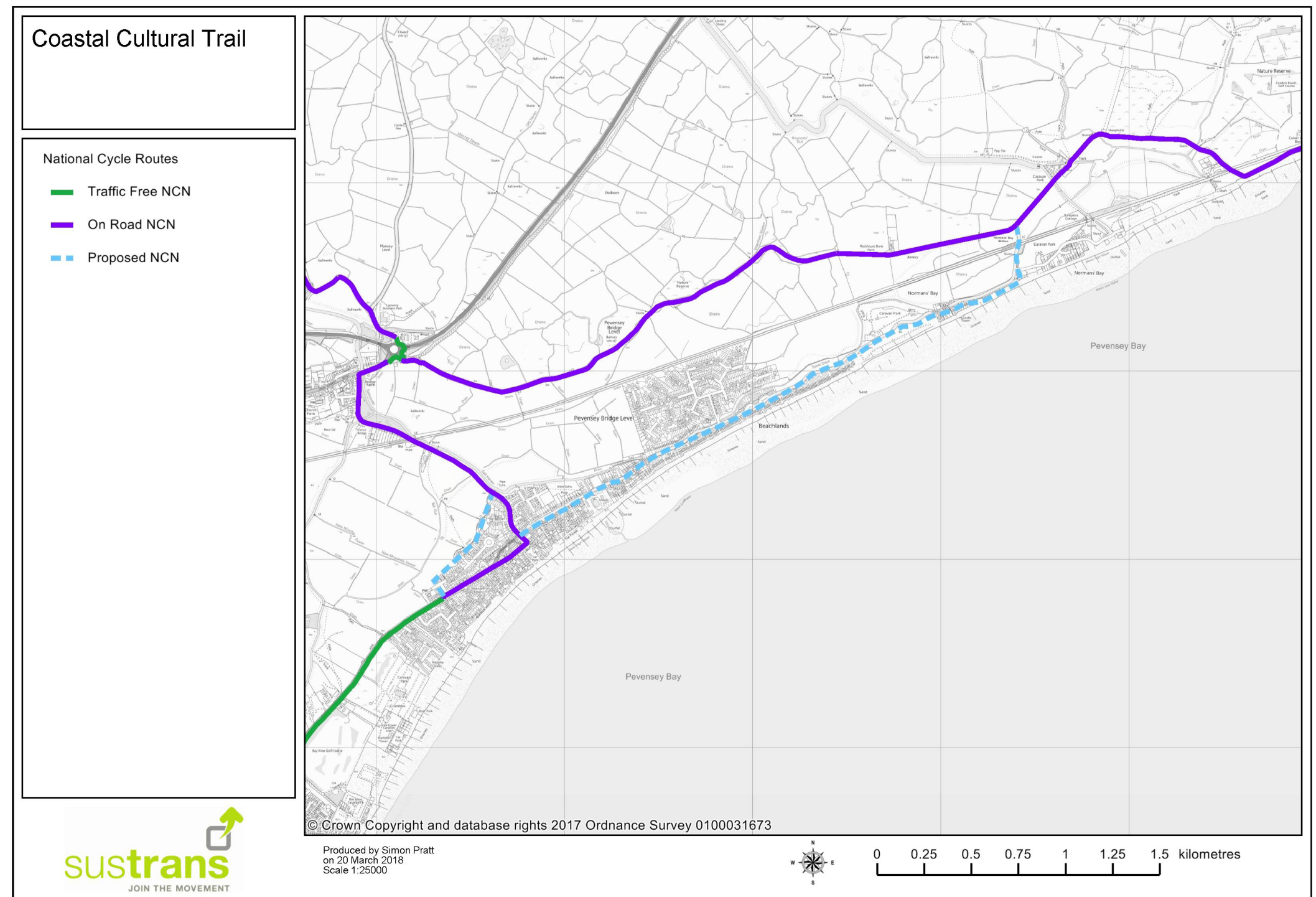
Coastal Cultural Trail

This is a proposed long distance route connecting cultural centres in the three main coastal towns in East Sussex – Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings. National Routes 21 and 2 already connect the three towns but as shown elsewhere in this report, they are in need of improvement. The main area of concern is the busy A259 between Pevensey Bay and Pevensey and the minor road Sluice Lane between Pevensey and Cooden Beach.

There is a convenient and direct alternative route on Coast Road which includes some private roads via Normans Bay. This is already used informally on foot and by bike and this simply needs to be agreed with the private landowners and signed. The level crossing at Normans Bay station leads back to Sluice Lane, avoiding the worst sections of this road.

A further improvement would be to negotiate a new route beside the railway line as far as Herbrand Walk, a tarmac road adjacent to the beach. This would not be easy as there is a Site of Special Scientific Interest along the way.

Improvements to the existing coastal route within the urban areas are described in the LCWIP reports on the three towns.

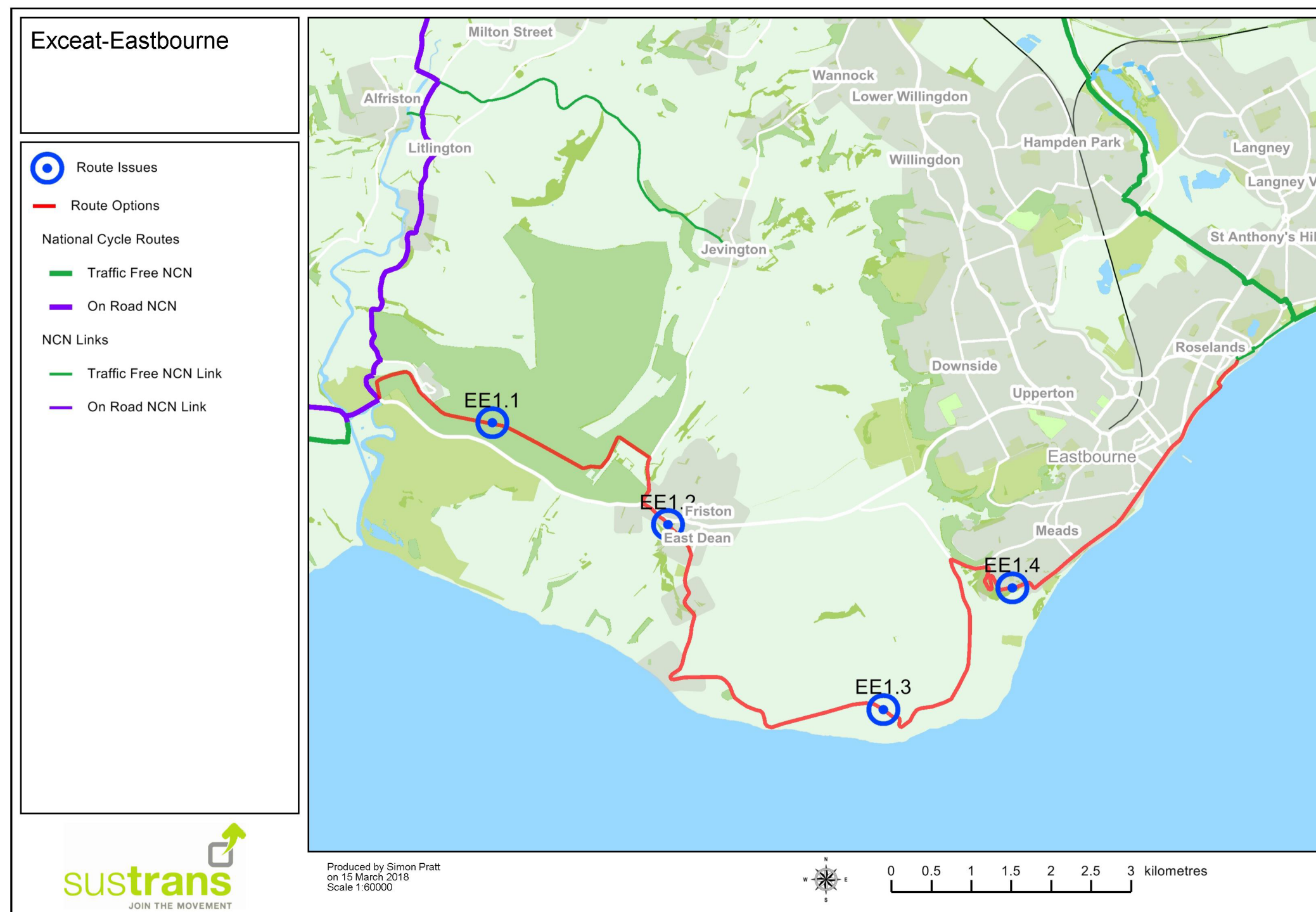


Exceat – Eastbourne

National Route 2 links Seaford and Eastbourne, but it takes a long diversion to the north to avoid the South Downs around Beachy Head. This route offers a more direct alternative, albeit with some steep climbs on the Downs.

Improvements to the coastal route within the Eastbourne urban area are described in the LCWIP report (Route 200).

- EE1.1 Forest tracks in Friston Forest provide a good surface for mountain bikes and a reasonable surface for normal bikes. There is a steep climb approaching Friston village and surface improvements are recommended.
- EE1.2 Widen existing footway and public footpath across fields to provide alternative to the A259 Friston Hill.
- EE1.3 Consider closing Beachy Head Road to through traffic, at least on a trial basis.
- EE1.4 Consider closing Upper Duke's Drive to through traffic, perhaps at selected weekends to promote walking and cycling.



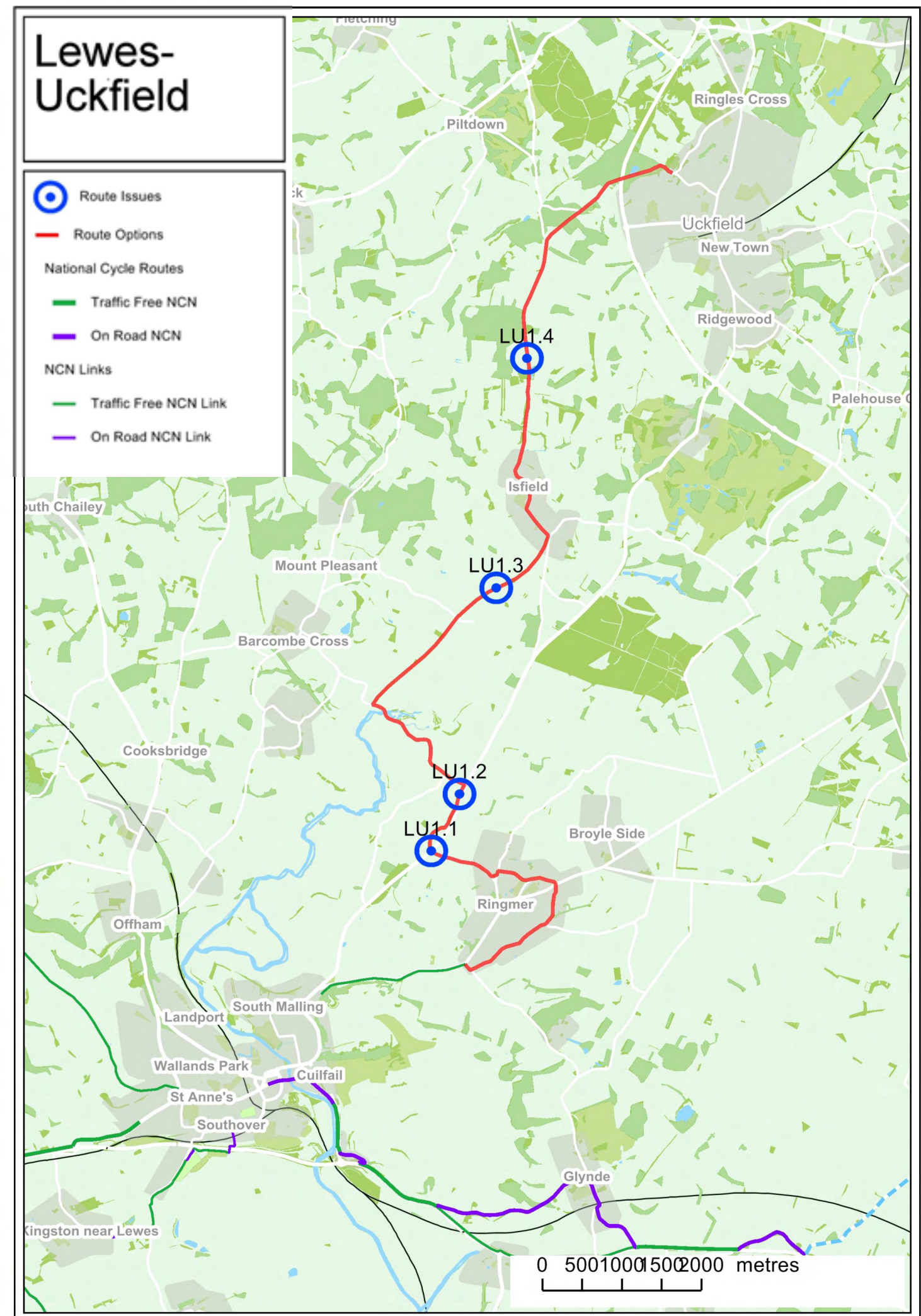
Lewes – Uckfield

Ever since the railway line closed between the two towns in 1969 there have been local ambitions to use the old line as a walking and cycling route. A short section is available for public use at Barcombe and there is one mile of heritage railway at Isfield, known as the Lavender Line. There are now debates about re-opening the railway, not least because it would provide an alternative to the busy Brighton Main Line.

It would be a significant engineering challenge to re-open the line for trains or for people as there are missing bridges, not least over the River Ouse at Hamsey as described in the Lewes LCWIP report. It may be possible to piece together a route using fragments of the old line and minor roads, but this would be a stop-gap measure until the long term future of the line is resolved.

One option is to link the existing route between Lewes and Ringmer with the quiet lanes to the north of the A26, given that the main road is not suitable for cycling. This would link LCWIP Route 310 in Ringmer with Route 242 in Uckfield.

- LU1.1 Improved crossing of the A26 to link with Old Uckfield Road.
- LU1.2 New shared footway beside the A26 for 350 metres.
- LU1.3 Extend permitted bridleway on old railway to Isfield.
- LU1.4 Consider traffic calming and speed limit reduction on lanes between Isfield and Uckfield.



Royal Military Canal

The canal was built in 1806 as a defence against Napoleonic invasion, but was never used for this purpose. It links the River Rother at Iden Lock in East Sussex with Hythe and Folkestone in Kent. Most of the towpath can be walked and there is cycle access at the eastern end as far as Aldergate Bridge. Sustrans completed a feasibility report for Ashford Borough Council in 2017, which concluded that the canal would make an excellent long distance walking and cycling route.

There are a number of issues with connecting Iden Lock to the centre of Rye, which are described in the Sustrans report referred to above and also in the Rye & Camber LCWIP report. It would provide an excellent traffic-free level route along the northern edge of Romney Marshes, linking the Cinque Ports of Rye and Hythe.

Between 2005 and 2010 Shepway District Council created a six-mile shared path along the route of the Royal Military Canal from Seabrook to West Hythe. In 2013 Kent County Council (KCC) and Shepway commissioned a study by Sustrans into the possibility of extending the route to Rye via Appledore along the existing Public Right of Way beside the canal. In February 2016, Ashford Borough Council made a successful bid to the Marsh Million Fund for feasibility funding to take the project forward to create a shared path along a ten-mile stretch between West Hythe and Iden Lock. Sustrans were commissioned to undertake further engineering assessments and produce revised recommendations and costings (based on the 2013 report).

The proposed Greenway provides many opportunities:

- Increased visitor numbers and economic opportunities for local villages along the way, particularly Warehorne, Hamstreet and Appledore
- Increasing canal side recreation and amenities for local communities and visitors
- Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Memorable experience
- Raising the profile of the Royal Military Canal as an international tourism destination linking the

Cinque Ports of Hythe and Rye

- Increasing the understanding of the canal's historical significance and providing opportunities for creative learning
- Supporting economic development and tourism offer for Ashford villages on the Romney Marsh
- Development of sizeable new habitats and improvements to the ecology of a valuable green corridor
- Provide traffic free and quiet lane commuting route for walkers and cyclists
- Linking Greenway opportunities to amenities such as food and drink establishments, B&B, shops and local businesses
- Improved access for all including mobility vehicles, pushchairs, bicycles and joggers

