

We need help to fight road threat

Derek Waller mentions me in his latest tirade against Kay Wagland (Gazette letters, April 16).

The Arundel Bypass Neighbourhood Committee (of which I am secretary) has been fighting bypass routes through Binsted since the 1980s, and was delighted when Kay's group (Arundel SCATE) started in Arundel with the aim of questioning the pro-bypass line being pushed by all councils, councillors and our MP, and asking for alternatives to the bypass to be properly considered.

This had never happened before in the history of the bypass, except for Julia Robson and her small group SCAR in the 90s. Kay and I are local people who care about our lovely area and need all the help we can get in the face of the pro-bypass lobby.

Campaign for Better Transport is very welcome, particularly as it provides news of other communities facing similar battles. For the first time in the history of the bypass, the 'alternatives to the bypass' camp has a lot of research in its favour, growing respectability, and a national organisation.

Labour's latest announcement, at the launch of the party's manifesto, that it would delay the Arundel bypass to look again at the environmental problems, shows that the party understands the importance of what is at stake.

Everyone wants traffic to be 'somewhere else'. But at Arundel, the options are limited to places that are beautiful and should not be sacrificed – Binsted and Binsted Woods (option B) or Tortington Common (option A) for the western part of the bypass, Tortington village and the watermeadows for the eastern part.

There is no convenient 'somewhere else'. The bluebells are nearly out in Spinningwheel Copse, Binsted, mentioned in the latest A27 Study reports (report 3, paras 5.2.11-16) as the site of one of option B's 'overbridges'.

Another overbridge would be just south of that, over Binsted Lane East, next to the Madonna Pond, another goal for walkers from far and wide.

There are actually two new option Bs mixed together in that verbal description – one mainly through the South Downs National Park, one through Binsted village.

The DfT is hedging its bets for as long as possible to deter more campaigning against option B.



Mary Hite, from Felpham, took this beautiful shot of mist rolling across the South Downs, above Arundel. "In the early morning, mist hovers over the valley, giving it a splendid atmospheric landscape," she writes

Local people who want traffic to be 'somewhere else' – i.e. a bypass, anywhere – are being used by the Government in its programme to turn A roads (including the A27) into mini-motorways. For more on this, and the A27 Study, see www.arundelbypass.co.uk

Emma Tristram
Stable Cottage
Binsted

Ridiculous plan

How narrow-minded of Derek Waller (Gazette letters, April 16) to say that Arundel SCATE and those of us who oppose the Arundel bypass plan are puppets on a string manipulated by some London-based organisation.

Hasn't he got any better arguments than that? My local business colleagues, my family, my neighbours and my friends all oppose ripping up ancient woodlands, driving concrete into water-meadows and ruining huge chunks of our remaining precious countryside, so we can get from a traffic jam in Worthing to a traffic jam in Chichester five minutes quicker.

The whole thing is a ridiculous plan by short-sighted people to put more money into the pockets of already-rich road-builders. We don't need anyone from outside to tell us to oppose the pointless destruction of our Sussex countryside!

Peter Slowe
Beech View
Angmering

Carry on, Kay

Derek Waller's unpleasant allegations against Kay Wagland (Gazette, March 16) are unfounded and unfair. I wonder about his motives.

Ms Wagland is simply a designated spokesperson for a large and growing group of people – which connect through Arundel SCATE – who are vehemently opposed to the wrong solution to Arundel traffic congestion.

She speaks for many locals, including me, who want a proper study of alternatives and only the implementation of proposals properly considered and consulted on that pay due weight to the uniquely wonderful environment of Arundel. The fait accompli monstrosity proposed for political and short-term financial gain must be opposed at all costs.

For this single matter alone, on May 7, I will, for the first time in my life (and I am approaching retirement age), vote against my natural political sympathies – and at the risk of potential substantial personal costs, eg, in taxes – to oppose the lame, sitting Conservative MP who is ignoring the catastrophic impact of the ill-informed and wholly inappropriate proposed Arundel bypass.

Our local environment is far more important than narrow personal gain.

Carry on Kay, for all your worth!

Nick Butt

Ford Road
Arundel

Long way to go

Conservative posturing on the A27 improvements (Gazette, April 16) was very misleading. After decades of failure to put a plan in place, local Conservative councils have not yet even begun the process of getting a plan approved, let alone submitting one for planning permission.

There are also the processes of compulsory purchase and road building in a national park to be worked through, plus consultation which will take two to three years to be resolved.

It appears the Conservative politicians raising the issue of this much-needed Arundel bypass are either unaware or are ignoring the work that has yet to be carried out, presenting the improvements as a done deal which is not the case. Labour has said that during the two to three-year period it will take to establish a plan, the money could be used to help rail commuters for a year with lower rail fares.

Unfortunately, like many Conservative election promises, under examination they lack substance. With a plan agreed, it will be possible to get on with the bypass and in the meantime the other A27 improvements will proceed, as will constructing the Lyminster bypass.

It is vital, especially for working people, that a solution