

Don't focus on one main road

I have been following the debate about the A27 and the suggested improvements with interest.

Among the discussions I have seen little mention of the fact that the problem is the movement of people and goods and not the accommodation of more and more cars.

Obviously businesses need to transport their goods, and people need to travel for work and leisure, but we should really question whether all these journeys need to be by road, and in private cars.

We should have realised by now, given the examples from Los Angeles where they have expanded highways to 12 lanes and yet there are still traffic jams, that more road building is not the solution.

We have to think of the reasons why all these people are in in their private cars and not on some form of public transport, and one reason is surely that it is unattractive, both in terms of cost and of comfort and reliability.

We could also consider why people are not cycling, often quite short distances, into the city.

People working in Chichester often use cars to get to work because public transport is expensive and from many rural areas is non-existent.

Older people, with free bus passes, often use the bus, as is evident from the numbers getting off the bus in Chichester town centre.

Many college students use the train into Chichester, again using passes which entitle them to reduced fares.

As for cyclists, there is a bike lane from Bognor and a bridge, but other places are poorly provided with safe routes into the city.

Has no one thought of using some of the transport budget to subsidise fares for everyone, for improving the rather slow rail service along the coast, for upgrading the trains which are using old carriages, some of which do not even have toilets between Brighton and Portsmouth, and for providing



A view from Nymans looking across the Ouse Valley by David Clark

safe and pleasant to use cycle routes?

Speed and efficiency of bus journeys could be improved by creating bus lanes and giving priority to buses over private cars as happens in most cities, and cyclists could be given segregated lanes.

Why is the only proposed solution one which will spoil large areas of countryside, impact negatively on air quality, and wildlife and on people living near the route which is being "upgraded"?

The few people that will benefit from so-called improvements are the large civil engineering corporations which will gain lucrative contracts for covering even more of our local landscape in concrete.

There will be no gains for those wishing to use sustainable transport, and only temporary gains for those in private cars.

The present A27 is really an

urban ring road and should be treated as such. The estates being built at Shopwyke and Westhampnett and the shopping centres at Barnfield Drive, will produce even more traffic needing to cross this busy road.

The speed limit could be lowered to 40mph, as in Worthing and Arundel, and traffic lights used on the roundabouts in order to allow residents of Bognor, Selsey and the Manhood Peninsula better access to the city.

Regulating the traffic speed between roundabouts would avoid the present position when people can drive at off peak times, at 70mph on short sections, only to be obliged to slow down for the next roundabout.

The problem times of day see the A27 blocked for short sections.

It is rarely blocked between every roundabout. At many times of day there is hardly

any traffic. The problems we are seeking to solve occur at rush hours only. We all have to realise that when we are stuck in traffic, we are part of the problem.

We have chosen to make our journey by car. Maybe we could use our energies to press for a variety of solutions and not just focus on one main road.

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Doctors need more time off

This has bugged me for a long time. How is it that we are all up in arms over student doctors' strikes? But they do not get the amount of days off that school teachers do. They get two weeks at Christmas, then February, Easter, June and six weeks