



Community Street Audit Report

Hassocks

16th January 2016

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. We want to create a walking nation where people of all generations enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings, on streets fit for walking.



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Executive summary

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. We are working with HKD Transition to increase walking rates in Hassocks.

On Saturday 16th January 2016 we conducted a community street audit (CSA) by walking around the area identifying, discussing and recording issues that encouraged or discouraged everyday walking. The issues identified were then discussed before agreement was reached on key short and longer term priorities that would improve the walking environment.

Hassocks is a town of a mixed population of around 7,000 people sitting in the middle of the South Downs and on the train line to London. A large number of people travel to London and larger towns in the area for work and for shopping. There are 3 schools and an active community as well as a thriving shopping centre which forms the heart of the town. Local traffic within the town reaches its peak at school times and is heavy and constant. There are major roads around Hassocks which connect major towns and the heavy traffic from these roads has a huge impact on the local people accessing local facilities. New housing developments have taken place and are being built with very little allowances being made to prioritise pedestrian and cycling journeys.

The key issues affecting Hassocks are as follows:

- The amount of local traffic in the town centre especially at peak times
- The impact of the traffic on the roads surrounding the town
- Footpaths and crossing points need to be upgraded and looked into during the planning stages of new housing developments so that pedestrian journeys are prioritised

Recommendations discussed at the CSA included:

Short Term

- Raise awareness of the benefits of walking among the local community – schools and community groups – to decrease the local traffic at peak times and bring about a cultural change regarding the benefit of the pedestrian.
- Work within the planning regulations to ensure that new developments are contributing to upgrading footpaths and crossing points



Long Term

- Stonepound Crossroads – look at the possibility of a pedestrian crossing with a method of decreasing traffic pollution while cars are waiting at the lights
- Installation of traffic calming measures to raise awareness among car drivers using the busy roads surrounding the town to make it safer for local people to walk



Living Streets

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking.

We want to create a walking nation, free from congested roads and pollution, reducing the risk of preventable illness and social isolation and making walking the natural choice. We believe that a walking nation means progress for everyone.

Our ambition is to get people of all generations to enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings and to ensure all our streets are fit for walking.

For more than 85 years we've been a beacon for walking. In our early days our campaigning led to the UK's first zebra crossings and speed limits. Now, our campaigns and local projects deliver real change to overcome barriers to walking and our ground breaking initiatives such as the world's biggest Walk to School campaign encourage millions of people to walk.

Progress starts here: one street, one school, one step at a time.

The Local Sustainable Transport Fund

We are running walking promotion projects funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).

The LSTF is contributing to a total budget of £17,376 million across the UK to deliver a series of measures designed to grow strong local economies and address the urgent challenges of climate change. Aims include moderating traffic congestion, saving CO₂ emissions, reducing car journeys to and from school, improving health and air quality and ensuring a safer environment and reduced congestion.



Introduction

The aim of a community street audit (CSA) is to identify issues that encourage or discourage everyday walking. To increase walking rates it is important that the condition of the streets and paths in the area be of a standard that encourages people to walk within both the area and the wider local community. This report provides more detail of these barriers and suggests practical solutions to overcome them.

Community street audit process

The community street audit aims:

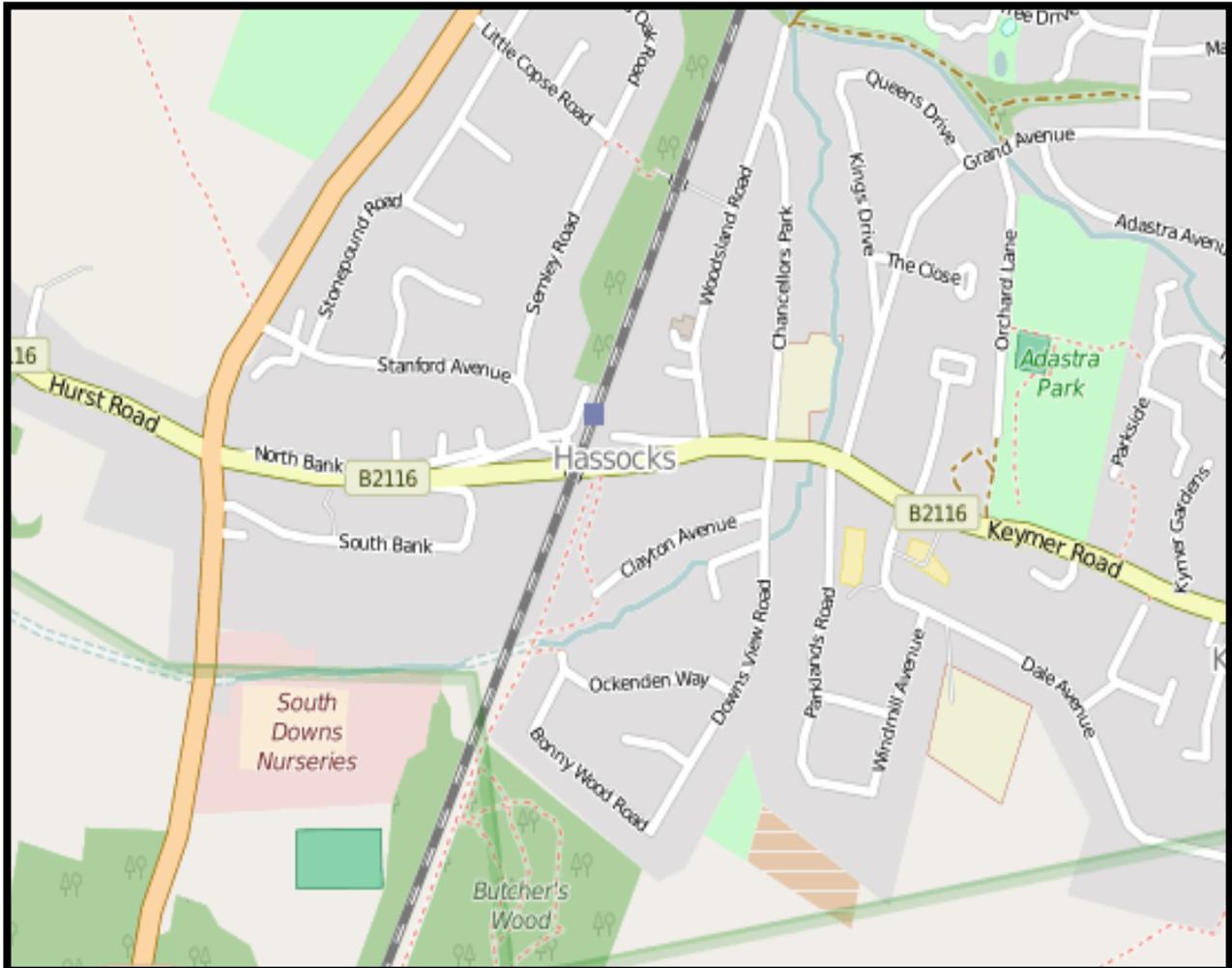
- to identify ways to reduce the effects of the busy roads on people who walk and cycle, without creating further delays for motorists,
- to find ways to reduce congestion and enforce and facilitate slower speeds and
- to identify barriers to walking and to enhance opportunities to improve connectivity, attractiveness, state of maintenance and identify improvement measures.

The CSA of the area allowed us to critically review the walking routes. We were able to identify issues and decide on priorities, create solutions and to take action to influence on-the-ground changes.

On the CSA we walked a route, identifying, discussing and recording issues that encouraged or discouraged everyday walking. Issues identified were then discussed before agreement was reached on key short and longer term priorities that would improve the walking environment.

In addition to the CSA, a pre-audit was carried out by Living Streets staff to observe the behaviour of drivers and ensure the route was safe to walk.

Map of area



© OpenStreetMap contributors

Area context

Hassocks is a town with a population of 7,000 in the Mid Sussex district of West Sussex. It is located approximately 7 miles North of Brighton and is linked to both Brighton and London by the railway.

Hassocks sits between the villages of Hurstpierpoint, Keymer and Ditchling and the market town of Burgess Hill lies to the north.

The town has a mixed population with a large number of retired and older people together with young families and London commuters.

There are three schools – infant school, primary school and a secondary school. There are also three churches and two community buildings that are very well used. There is a strong sense of community and a proactive Age Concern Centre and U3A group. The High Street lies at the centre of the town and provides a good mix of amenities and is well used mostly by local residents.

The CSA took place on Saturday 16th January 2016 at 10.30. With 6 attendees, the group was comprised of a Living Streets staff member, three members of HKD Transition, a resident with her baby and the County Councillor for Hassocks and Victoria ward. The group was made up of residents from all different age categories and stages in life. A number of other residents who were not able to make the walk sent in comments via e-mail.

The CSA took place along a series of roads leading from the school and Day Centre towards the main High Street and onto the railway station and one of the main roads leading into Hassocks from Brighton and Burgess Hill. The area that was explored is mostly urban with footpaths and pavements and some trees. Some crossing points have been put in place where there is a school or to provide access to the shops.

The crossing to the North of the Town - the Stonepound Crossroads - is currently being considered by West Sussex County Council Highways Team. This is due to very high levels of pollution twinned with a difficult place to cross for pedestrians and cyclists due to very limited visibility.

Area findings

Muddy path at Dale Avenue

Dale Avenue green area next to long term car park: pedestrians have created a diagonal path in the direction of the schools. This has never been surfaced and gets very muddy. The paved footpath in the direction of the village is in poor condition



A natural path has been created (left of the photo)

Crossing at Dale Avenue/Keymer Road

The crossing at junction of Dale Avenue and Keymer Rd: difficult crossing for pedestrians because of turning traffic and traffic exiting the slip road by Budgens supermarket. There is potential for enhanced signage and warnings here.



There is no signage here to alert that pedestrians are crossing

Station Road

Keymer Road and Station Approach West: difficult crossing for pedestrians because of wide junction needed for cars and buses to turn, some of which mount the pavement.



A difficult crossing for pedestrians because of wide junction

South side of Keymer Road

Keymer Rd: west of the railway bridge. There is no footpath on south side of road, forces pedestrians to cross to north side of the road



No footpath on the south side of Keymer Road

Stonepound Crossroads

Stonepound crossroads: There is no pedestrian crossing light on north-south crossings at the junction of Keymer Road and Brighton Road. Particularly hazardous for pedestrians because of turning traffic which is not visible from pavements.



A difficult crossing for pedestrians because of limited visibility

Speeding on Brighton Road

Brighton Rd (A27 south of Stonepound crossing): The participants reported cases of speeding traffic and these were witnessed during the Audit.



Speeding traffic on Brighton Road leading up to the Stonepound crossing

No pavement or place to cross on Brighton Road

Housing on the west side of Brighton Rd has no pavement on that side, forced to cross to east side but there is no crossing and fast-moving traffic. One of the participants reported that around 9 years ago an overturned car ended up in the garden of this house due to speeding



Housing on west side of Brighton Road has no pavement and no place to cross

No lighting under the railway tunnel

Little Copse Rd to Woodland Rd footpath under railway line ('horseshoe bridge'): no lighting in the tunnel; subject to flooding at times of heavy rain. This route is one of the few ways to cross the railway line and access the village schools and shops, so heavily used by children and families.



This tunnel has no lighting and is subject to flooding

No lighting on Woodland Road footpaths

Woodland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath and other footpaths have no lighting. These are important pedestrian route from Clayton Mills to schools, village centre and station.



Footpaths are well used and unlit

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Conflict between older people and scooters

Hassocks Infants School – Many students from the school use scooters on their journey to school. There can sometimes be a conflict with older residents who are also trying to use the pavements.



Children on scooters can be difficult for older people to navigate

Recommendations

Area/Issue	Recommended Action	Level of Action Quick Win/ Long Term	Responsibility/ Involvement	Recommended Deadline
Conflict between older pedestrians and young children on scooters	To engage with Hassocks Infants school to take up the Local Authority Scooter Training Scheme to make young scooter users more aware of other pedestrians	Quick Win	Living Streets and School Travel Team at WSCC. Bev Clayden, School Travel Advisor to get in touch with Hassocks Infant school regarding Scooter Training	June 2016
Raising awareness/visibility/value of pedestrians in the town	<p>Currently car users dominate the centre of the town and although, at peak school times especially, there is a huge influx of pedestrians from all 3 schools, they tend to have to work their way around the car traffic.</p> <p>As well as hard measures such as lighting, better footpaths and signage, a change in attitude and an understanding of the benefit of the pedestrian for the community is what is needed. Walks, such as the CSA walk in January 2016 with community representatives, is a great way to achieve this as well as talks to groups locally.</p>	HKD Transition working across community groups, school, shopkeepers and the parish council	Raising awareness/visibility/value of pedestrians in the town	Start once the CSA report is circulated and then on-going

Density and speed of local traffic around the schools at drop off and pick up times	<p>To promote walking to school in all 3 schools working with schools' contacts and using initiatives that have been developed by Living Streets with regular activities to raise the profile of the walking initiatives.</p> <p>To continue the good work of the School Crossing Patrol Officer who has built up good rapport with members of the local community. A new School Crossing Patrol Officer position has been approved outside Windmills Junior School and WSCC is currently recruiting for the post.</p>	Quick Win	Living Streets and School Travel Team at WSCC. Bev Clayden, School Travel Advisor will be contacting all 3 schools in Hassocks to speak to them about updating their School Travel Plans.	On-going
Crossing at junction of Dale Avenue/Keymer Road	<p>Crossing at junction of Dale Avenue and Keymer Rd is a difficult crossing for pedestrians because of turning traffic and traffic exiting the slip road by Budgens convenience store. Look into the potential for enhanced signage and warnings.</p> <p>Andy Petch (Councillor, West Sussex County Council) to ask WSCC - Highways Authority to advise on solutions.</p>	Long Term Win	Andy Petch (Councillor, West Sussex County Council) with support from HKD Transition	June 2016
Footpath between Dale Avenue and Long Term Car Park (next to the Age Concern/Pauline Thaw Centre)	<p>Dale Avenue green area next to long term car park: pedestrians have created a diagonal path in the direction of the schools. This has never been surfaced and gets very muddy. The paved footpath in the direction of the village is in poor condition.</p> <p>Andy Petch to enquire about potential for footpath paving.</p>	Long Term	Andy Petch (Councillor, West Sussex County Council) with support from HKD Transition and West Sussex County Council School Travel Team	June 2016
Brighton Road A273 (South of Stonepound Crossing) – speeding traffic	<p>Potential for residents to look at recommendations for reducing speed by documenting speed of traffic with speed guns and to get guidance and work on potential solutions with WSCC -</p>	Long Term	Local Residents, members of HKD transition	September 2016

	Highways Authority. Andy Petch to add this to the list of speed issue areas and liaise with the Highways Authority			
Stonepound Crossroads (A273/B2116) – No pedestrian crossing on north/south crossings (London Road/Keymer Road). Particularly hazardous for pedestrians as turning traffic is not visible from the pavements	Replacing traffic lights is on the Integrated Works Programme (IWP) for this year. A push-button pedestrian crossing would be ideal (but note potential to make air pollution worse)	Long Term	Andy Petch (Councillor, West Sussex County Council)	June 2016
Housing on the west side of Brighton Road has no pavement on that side. Pedestrians forced to cross to east side among fast moving traffic	Councillor Andy Petch to request a highways officer to advise on potential crossing options. WSCC may own the verge on the west side, making a pavement a possible option. Note new housing development on Sandy Lane and potential for Section 106 funding for a pavement on that side.	Long Term	Councillor Andy Petch	June 2016
No lighting and flooding in the tunnel at Little Copse Rd to Woodland Rd footpath under railway line ('horseshoe bridge'). This route is one of the few ways to cross the railway line and access the village schools and shops, so heavily used	Explore potential to improve lighting in the tunnel and measures to address flooding at times of heavy rain.	Long Term	HKD Transition with support from School Travel Team (West Sussex CC)	December 2016

by children and families.				
Woodsland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath	There is no lighting so it is not a viable route after dusk. This is an important pedestrian route from Clayton Mills to schools, village centre and station. Find out who owns this footpath and if an option for lighting it could be found	Quick Win/Long Term	HKD Transition with support from Hassocks Parish Council	May 2016 (ownership) September 2016 for a solution to the lighting
Keymer Rd west of railway bridge - No footpath on south side of road, forces pedestrians to cross to north side (and potentially to cross back again later to access bus stop and garden centre).	Explore possibility of installing a footpath.	Long Term	HKD Transition with support from Hassocks Parish Council	September 2016

Conclusion

Action as a result of Community Street Audit for Hassocks Town.

This report is being submitted to both members of staff at West Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Councillor – Andy Petch, so that recommendations can be taken on board and action can be undertaken.

A Community Street Audit was undertaken with the local community to identify any issues that may discourage people from walking.

The observations highlighted that there are a number of areas where changes to lighting, the quality of footpaths and signage could make a big difference to pedestrians in Hassocks.

There are also two major areas that would improve the lives of local people - an improved crossing at Stonepound where visibility is limited and measures to address the speed of cars as they pass the town of Hassocks along the London Road (speeding traffic here also impacts on noise pollution, the quality of the air and residents trying to cross the busy road).

The other important on-going issue is around raising awareness, through joint community action, of the presence and importance of pedestrians in the town for safety reasons, for economic growth and for physical and mental well being.

The community are also able to use this report as a testimonial to request improvement works alone or alongside any other developments. The community should also work to carry out action points and ensure their longevity, calling on people to help and support.

Appendices

Appendix 1- Notes from the CSA

Audit:	Hassocks Town		
Audit Date:	16.01.16	Start Time:	10.30
Audit Leader:	Eleanor Togut	Conditions	Dry and windy

Community Street Audit, Hassocks 16.1.16

Present: Eleanor Togut (Living Streets), Dan Hyndman (HKD Transition), Juliet Merrifield (HKD Transition), Eric Hewton, Jenny Doyle, Andy Petch (West Sussex County councillor).
Route: Dale Ave, Keymer Rd to Stonepound crossroads, Brighton Rd, London Rd, Little Copse Rd, footpath to Woodsland Rd, footpath to Clayton Mills, Chancellors Park to Keymer Rd.

Potential improvements noted:

1. Dale Avenue green area next to long term car park: pedestrians have created a diagonal path in the direction of the schools. This has never been surfaced and gets very muddy. The paved footpath in the direction of the village is in poor condition. **Action: Andy Petch** to enquire about potential for footpath paving.
2. Crossing at junction of Dale Avenue and Keymer Rd: difficult crossing for pedestrians because of turning traffic and traffic exiting the slip road by Budgens. Potential for enhanced signage and warnings here? **Action: Andy Petch** to ask a highways officer to advise on solutions.
3. Keymer Rd west of railway bridge: no footpath on south side of road, forces pedestrians to cross to north side (and potentially to cross back again later to access bus stop and garden centre).
4. Keymer Road and Station Approach West: difficult crossing for pedestrians because of wide junction needed for cars and buses to turn, some of which mount the pavement. There have been discussions but no good solution yet apparent. Ideal to slow traffic along Keymer Rd at this point.
5. Stonepound crossroads: no pedestrian crossing light on north-south crossings, particularly hazardous for pedestrians because of turning traffic which is not visible from pavements. Replacing traffic lights is on the Integrated Works Programme (IWP) for this year. A push-button pedestrian crossing would be ideal (but note potential to make air pollution worse).
6. Brighton Rd (south of Stonepound crossing): speeding traffic. Potential for residents to document actual speed of traffic with speed guns. **Action: Andy Petch** to add to list of

speed issue areas and liaise with Highways. Potential actions to reduce speed include signage/lights, speed cushions etc. Need advice from highways officer on potential solutions.

7. Housing on the west side of Brighton Rd has no pavement on that side, forced to cross to east side but no crossing and fast-moving traffic. **Action: Andy Petch** to request a highways officer to advise on potential crossing options. WSCC may own the verge on the west side, making a pavement a possible option. Note new housing development on Sandy Lane and potential for Section 106 funding for a pavement on that side.
8. Little Copse Rd to Woodland Rd footpath under railway line ('horseshoe bridge'): no lighting in the tunnel; subject to flooding at times of heavy rain. This route is one of the few ways to cross the railway line and access the village schools and shops, so heavily used by children and families.
9. Woodland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath: no lighting so not a viable route after dusk. This is an important pedestrian route from Clayton Mills to schools, village centre and station. We don't know who owns it.

Among the information points from Andy Petch:

- Hassocks and Keymer were selected for traffic and parking management in 2013, for delivery this year – but potential delays because of council funding cuts. Balfour Beatty is the contractor for WSCC works and have a long list of projects on a multi-year basis.
- Small schemes (under £5k) can potentially be done locally through the Hassocks Parish Council, with WSCC funds. HPC would need to get 3 quotes from contractors and get permission from WSCC to go ahead.
- North Bank is a private road and WSCC has no obligations.
- Burgess Hill Green Circle network is a potential model for Hassocks. Note the WSCC Transport Plan prioritises cycle and pedestrian routes on the BH Green Circle (p 64).

*The Green Circle **Network** is a series of footpaths, cycle tracks and bridleways linking the green sites to one another and to the town centre. These make it possible to travel without using cars or following roads. They also provide "green corridors" so that non-flying wildlife can move between the green sites instead of being stranded on one site and dying out completely. About half of this Green Circle is still in the planning stage.*

<http://bh-green-circle.org.uk/>

- Section 106 funding for Hassocks – a lot in the fund unspent at the moment. So potential to get some projects done.
- WSCC Community Initiative Funds are not being claimed.

The Community Initiative Fund provides small grants to assist local community projects in:

- *reaching new people*
- *developing services and supporting the local economy*
- *encouraging community growth and self-reliance.*

Preference is given to groups or organisations that:

- *have secured additional funding sources*
 - *are able to demonstrate strong community support and leadership in their project.*
- <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/grants-and-funding/funding-for-voluntary-and-community-organisations/community-initiative-fund/>



Andy would come on further walks and is interested in looking at footpaths, could bring Jon Perks, WSCC head of public rights of way. We should involve HAA (and Fred Maillardet in particular) in this walk.

Appendices

Appendix 2 – Feasibility & Study Costing

This will be sent to the relevant Officer at WSCC to be completed once the report has been approved and circulated. (Eleanor Togut – 21/03/16)

The priority recommendations for the route are set out in the table below by review category. Where applicable, the appropriate council officer/facilities manager will be asked to add the feasibility, cost and potential timescales. These are indicated as short, medium or longer term, but this will obviously be dependent on the availability of resources.

Area/Theme	Recommendation	Initial Cost Estimate	Timescale Short/ Med/ Long
<p>Housing on the west side of Brighton Road has no pavement on that side. Pedestrians forced to cross to east side among fast moving traffic</p> <p>Road layout/Space allocation</p> <p>Keymer Rd west of railway bridge - No footpath on south side of road, forces pedestrians to cross to north side (and potentially to cross back again later to access bus stop and garden centre).</p>	<p>Install a pavement on the west side of Brighton Rd</p> <p>Install pavement on south side of road.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>
Clutter & Obstructions		X	X

Maintenance & Enforcement Issues		X	X
<p>Facilities & Signage</p> <p>Crossing at junction of Dale Avenue and Keymer Rd is a difficult crossing for pedestrians because of turning traffic and traffic exiting the slip road by Budgens convenience store</p> <p>Lighting – There is no lighting at either Little Copse Rd to Woodland Rd footpath under railway line ('horseshoe bridge') or Woodland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath</p>	<p>Look into the potential for enhanced signage and warnings.</p> <p>Install lighting at either Little Copse Rd to Woodland Rd footpath under railway line ('horseshoe bridge') or Woodland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath</p>	X	X
<p>Footway Surfaces</p> <p>Dale Avenue green area next to long term car park: pedestrians have created a diagonal path in the direction of the schools. This has never been surfaced and gets very muddy. The paved footpath in the direction of the village is in poor condition.</p>	<p>Carry out maintenance to paved footpath and install improved surface to the diagonal path used by pedestrians.</p>	X	X
Aesthetics		X	X

Appendices

Appendix 3 – Suggested Action Plan

Living Streets we have conducted a Community Street Audit to identify the barriers to walking in your area. Living Streets has produced a report with all of the comments and recommendations for future actions for all stakeholders. The report will help inform decisions made in partnership with your local authority about physical improvements on the walking routes.

Living Streets has produced this Action Plan for stakeholders based on the outcomes of the Community Street Audit process.

Specific barriers identified are outlined in the table below alongside possible actions to overcome them and encourage more walking.

Findings at location	Suggested Action	Who can help?	Timeframe
Raising awareness/visibility/value of pedestrians in the town	Currently car users dominate the centre of the town and although, at peak school times especially, there is a huge influx of pedestrians from all 3 schools, they tend to have to work their way around the car traffic. As well as hard measures such as lighting, better footpaths and signage, a change in attitude and an understanding of the benefit of the pedestrian for the community is what is needed. Walks, such as the Community Street Audit in January 2016 with community representatives, is a great way to achieve this as well as talks to groups	HKD Transition working across community groups, school, shopkeepers and the parish council	On-going

	locally.		
Brighton Road A273 (South of Stonepound Crossing) – speeding traffic	Potential for residents to look at recommendations for reducing speed by documenting speed of traffic with speed guns and to get guidance and work on potential solutions with the WSCC - Highways Authority. Andy Petch to add this to the list of speed issue areas and liaise with the Highways Authority	Local Residents, members of HKD transition	June 2016
Woodsland Rd to Clayton Mills footpath	There is no lighting so it is not a viable route after dusk. This is an important pedestrian route from Clayton Mills to schools, village centre and station. Find out who owns this footpath and if an option for lighting it could be found	HKD Transition with support from Hassocks Parish Council	May 2016 (ownership) September 2016 for a solution to the lighting
Keymer Rd west of railway bridge	No footpath on south side of road, forces pedestrians to cross to north side (and potentially to cross back again later to access bus stop and garden centre). Explore possibility of installing footpath here.	HKD Transition with support from Hassocks Parish Council	September 2016