



The Safer C7 Project

PROJECT UPDATE – October 2022

You may have been wondering what is happening with the Safer C7 Project, following the survey of the 785 households who live along the C7 in June 2021.

Work has been going on behind the scenes. The Safer C7 Project is now a fully constituted body. It is being led by a Project Delivery Team formed of 5 volunteers who live along the C7, plus a representative from Northease Manor School. As the project goes forward, parishes will be consulted via a Parish Advisory Panel consisting of the chairs of all the parishes along the C7.

Our local county and district councillors (including Newhaven), Lewes Town Council, representatives of the South Downs National Park and Northease Manor School, have all agreed to act as 'affiliates' to the project, providing advice and support as needed. To help ensure that the plan will be suitable for implementation, ESCC Highways have agreed to provide comments at key stages.

The aim of the project is to improve safety on the C7 for all its users, while conserving its rural character.

We don't believe that changing the speed limit alone would necessarily improve safety, unless the way people drive along this narrow, winding road also changes. We aim to use road design to bring about driver behaviour appropriate for the road, thereby allowing other road users to enjoy this beautiful landscape safely.

Did you know that there are currently at least 136 traffic signs along this relatively short road? We think that using a consistent approach along the whole length of the C7 will have more effect on speed and driver behaviour, than piecemeal improvements.

To obtain improvements to the C7, we first need to commission a road safety survey and the production of a costed road design plan by a specialist traffic engineer. Obtaining such a plan, endorsed by the community and other 'stakeholders', will enable us to apply for Community Infrastructure Levy funds to put the strategy in to practice.

We are in now in the process of raising the funds needed to commission the road safety survey and the production of a costed design plan. We are busy submitting applications to various charitable bodies for grant funding. If successful, these funds will be added to the contributions already made by Lewes Town Council, and the Kingston Rd and Cranedown Residents' Association. Pledges to contribute funds have been made by Rodmell, Iford, and Southease parishes and it is hoped that Piddinghoe and Kingston parish councils will also wish to contribute. If necessary, we will seek to raise any outstanding balance by crowd funding.

Without such a design plan there is no prospect of obtaining improvements. The criteria used by ESCC to prioritise roads for expenditure on safety improvements are not favourable for country roads. Although there



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have been 18 accidents in 3 years on its 6.5 miles, the C7 is not included in the top 52 'identified crash sites' in East Sussex (LSS data crash sites in East Sussex 2021/2.) The ESCC criterion for ranking accident sites is the number of events occurring within a 50 metre radius, rather than along a length of road.

The second criterion is the number of Killed and Seriously Injured. No account is taken of other incidents, and their impact on the local community. 13 personal injury accidents (4 serious) were reported to the police on the 6.5 mile length of the C7 from 01/7/19-30/06/21 (Sussex Safer Roads). However, this figure is acknowledged to be incomplete.

A more complete log of accidents and incidents is maintained by the Safer C7 Project on its website. You can contribute to this log by going to www.thec7road.co.uk

Once we have obtained the costed design plan, change IS possible....