



**Chairman: Councillor Paul Seeley**

**Parish Clerk: Fiona Chalk**

## **Draft Response from East Dean & Friston Parish Council to the Draft Transport Strategy for the South-East**

**To: Transport for South-East - [tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk)**

**Subject: Response to the Draft Transport Strategy for the South-East**

Dear Transport for South-East,

East Dean & Friston Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Transport Strategy for the South-East. Our response focuses solely on matters that may affect our Parish, drawing on the policies and aspirations set out in the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Plan (2024-2040).

### **General Comments**

The Parish of East Dean & Friston, located within the South Downs National Park, is a predominantly rural area with significant environmental sensitivities. Our community is strongly committed to sustainability, the protection of the landscape, and enhancing connectivity while recognising the importance of well-managed transport infrastructure. We note that the Strategy aims to improve connectivity, resilience, inclusion, decarbonisation, and sustainable growth. While we broadly support these goals, we have specific concerns and recommendations as they relate to our area.

### **Key Considerations for East Dean & Friston**

#### **1. Strategic Connectivity and Public Transport Improvements**

- The Parish is served by limited public transport, with bus services along the A259 being the primary link to nearby towns such as Eastbourne and Seaford. The Neighbourhood Plan supports enhanced rural bus services, which are essential for reducing car dependency, particularly for elderly residents who make up a significant portion of the local population.
- We urge TfSE to prioritise investment in sustainable public transport options for rural communities, including increased frequency and reliability of bus services along the A259 and better integration with rail services at Eastbourne and Seaford stations.
- Support for demand-responsive transport (DRT) initiatives should be considered to ensure connectivity for those without access to a car, particularly given the high levels of car dependency in the Parish.

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**-All correspondence to be sent to the Parish Council Office:**

**East Dean & Friston Parish Council, Village Hall, Village Green Lane**

**East Dean East Sussex BN20 0DR**

Phone: 07767405562; Email: [clerk@edfparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@edfparishcouncil.org.uk); Website: <http://www.edfparishcouncil.org.uk/>

VAT Number: 191 4302 81

## 2. Road Infrastructure and Traffic Management

- The A259 through East Dean & Friston is a key transport corridor but experiences significant congestion and safety concerns, particularly at peak tourist times. The strategy's emphasis on resilient transport networks should recognise the seasonal impact of tourism on rural roads.
- The Parish Council supports measures that would enhance road safety and reduce excessive speeding along the A259. We welcome further discussions on how traffic calming measures and enforcement could be incorporated into regional transport plans.

## 3. Active Travel and Sustainable Transport

- The Parish is located within a highly sensitive landscape, forming part of the South Downs National Park and the Seven Sisters Heritage Coast. Sustainable transport improvements should align with our policies on protecting the natural environment and maintaining the tranquillity of the area.
- We support the Strategy's focus on active travel and request that funding be allocated to improving walking and cycling links within the Parish and connecting to the wider South Downs network.
- Specific improvements include better pedestrian access across the A259, and enhanced cycling infrastructure to support safe travel to and from Eastbourne and Seaford.

## 4. Parking and Visitor Management at Birling Gap and Surrounding Areas

- The Parish experiences significant visitor pressure at Birling Gap and the Seven Sisters cliffs, leading to congestion, inappropriate parking, and safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Strategy should address sustainable visitor transport solutions, including improved parking management, park-and-ride schemes, and enhanced public transport links from Eastbourne and Seaford to reduce private vehicle dependency.
- Consideration should also be given to alternative transport modes, such as shuttle bus services, to alleviate pressure on small rural roads during peak tourist seasons.

## 5. Decarbonisation and Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure

- The Parish Council supports the Strategy's aim to decarbonise transport and enhance EV charging infrastructure.
- There is a need for additional EV charging points, particularly in public car parks within the Parish. We request collaboration with TfSE and East Sussex County Council to ensure that any future roll-out of EV charging aligns with local needs.

## Conclusion

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East Dean & Friston Parish Council supports the broad objectives of the Draft Transport Strategy but urges greater focus on the challenges facing rural communities. We request that Transport for South-East engage with local Parish Councils to ensure that transport improvements benefit all communities, not just urban centres.

We welcome further discussions on how East Dean & Friston can be incorporated into strategic transport planning and look forward to working with TfSE to achieve a balanced and sustainable transport future.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Chalk  
Clerk to the Parish Council

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