



House of Commons

## **Re: Beachy Head Safety Concerns**

To whom this may concern,

I am writing to express my grave concerns regarding the increasing safety concerns on the Beachy Head Road. In recent years, there has been a significant rise in reckless anti-social driving, including speeding and racing, particularly between Z Bends and Belle Tout.

Tragically, this reckless behaviour resulted in three fatalities and three amputations out of a total of seven road-traffic collisions. While I commend Sussex Police for their efforts in responding to incidents, the ongoing congregation of large groups of vehicles at Shooters and Z Bends laybys presents a severe threat to public safety.

### **Critical Safety Concerns at Z Bends Layby:**

- The collisions at this location last year, resulted in the loss of four bollards.
- On 5th August, two vehicles were found parked in Z Bends layby—just a two-minute walk from the cliff edge. Chaplains discovered a note on the windscreen of one vehicle, leading to a search that discovered a jacket at the cliff edge. The RNLI later recovered a body at 03:26.
- The initial closure of high-risk laybys in October 2022 was intended to increase the walk time from parking areas to the cliff edge—from just 45 seconds at Belle Tout Layby to a minimum of nine minutes. Since then, deaths decreased by 32% between 2022 and 2023 and again by 14% in between 2023 and 2024. On top of this, Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team (BHCT) interventions decreased by 24% between 2023 and 2024.

This data underscores the effectiveness of the closures and the critical need to maintain these restrictions.

### **Immediate Actions Required:**

- **Temporary Barriers** – Install ropes or other barriers to prevent vehicle access through the damaged bollards at Z Bends layby until a permanent solution is in place.
- **Clear Signage** – Ensure that all ticket machines in closed laybys clearly indicate that these areas are closed and accessible only to emergency vehicles.
- **Ticket Machine Coverage** – Cover ticket machines in closed laybys to deter public use. Long-Term Measures:
- **Replace damaged bollards and install chain fencing** to further discourage inappropriate use of laybys.

Given that National Trust Birling Gap receives almost three million visitors each year — making it the most visited National Trust site in the UK— and with visitor numbers expected to rise in the coming years. I urge immediate action and funding to prevent further accidents and fatalities

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Yours faithfully,

**Josh Babarinde OBE MP**  
**Member of Parliament for Eastbourne**