

## **SDNP Transport Study Phase 2**

### **Bus policy and vision: a basis for discussion with interested parties**

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013

#### ***Overview of potential markets***

##### *Residents' daily travel*

1. Local trips to work, shop, school, healthcare, personal business, friends and relatives, culture, leisure etc.

##### *Linking to rail network*

2. Onward travel from rail gateways into SDNP
  - Day visits for all purposes to SDNP via radial rail routes from London, and coast lines, using onward bus
3. Outward travel
  - Access to railhead stations for commuters and business travellers to London and south coast towns
  - Access to railheads for SDNP residents visiting London and south coast towns

##### *Linking to leisure activities in the Park*

4. Outward or return leg of ***linear*** leisure walks and cycle routes
  - Day visits by residents of South Coast and Wealden towns, mostly by direct bus on north-south routes (rail also plays a role)
  - Day visits by residents of Weald and SDNP town
  - Local trips by overnight visitors as part of a longer stay
5. Link to start-finish point of ***circular*** leisure walks or cycle rides (including use of cycle hire) as above.

#### ***Service aspiration or “charter” that could form the basis of a quality partnership or contract.***

The SDNP should have distinctive bus provision with the following features:

1. A coherent and legible network of “trunk” routes with the following attributes:
  - Seven day service
  - A guaranteed minimum service period (7 days). Suggested is 8am to 10pm, but earlier start needed Mon-Fri if London commuters to be served
  - A minimum hourly service throughout the defined trunk network. This might be limited to 8am-6pm, with two further journeys in the evening at 8pm and 10pm.
  - Services integrated with each other and with trains.

- Serve all significant settlements and attractions, and linking to rail gateways and centres of population
  - A get-you-home guarantee scheme. Suggestion: If you present yourself at any (identified route) bus stop by 10pm, a bus will be running that will take you to a rail gateway and/or major centre of population. This would be backed by a taxi or shared-taxi service.
  - Modern low-emission fully-accessible vehicles throughout
  - Buses designed to allow bicycles (say up to 4), with a possibility for cycle trailers to be used on busy summer weekends (as in Brecon Beacons National Park – Cardiff-Brecon bus).
2. Other bus services, including nearby urban routes, long distance coaches, local rural routes, specific purpose routes and community transport and demand responsive routes to be coordinated as far as possible with each other and with the trunk bus and rail network. This includes use of common stops and information media, and integrated times.
  3. Tickets to be interchangeable between routes, or tour tickets available to return by any reasonable alternative route (rail or bus), and integrated with rail. (To allow walking or cycling itineraries to be catered for without financial penalty.)
  4. Distinctive bus stops and shelters that identify presence in the Park, and that are prominent while being sympathetic to the surroundings. This would create a South Downs Network bus quality mark. (Stops are the calling card of the bus industry and must convey the seriousness and quality of the operation).
  5. Each stop to be provided with times of buses, a spider map showing routes from that specific location and direction.
  6. A web marketing and information strategy including mobile and web link based information on realtime service information for the network down to the level of specific stops.
  7. Services forming part of the SDNP network could have vehicles as well as stops with the appropriate branding, e.g. “Downs Network” logo.
  8. The aim of all endeavours should be to achieve as nearly as possible commercial operation for routes overall, not merely to avoid the payment of subsidies (though this is important), but because a commercial service is one that is used. If services rely on subsidy, then they are unlikely to be making a sufficiently important contribution to sustainable travel objectives. This is the core principle, but there will be exceptions where subsidies contribute to wider social objectives.
  9. There are also circumstances in which routes are only modestly profitable, or break even, where a bus company would not consider them profitable enough to run them. This is an important area for local authority participation, for example through quality partnerships or contracts. These arrangements may also allow for subsidies to marginal services in the interests of maintaining the quality and comprehensiveness of the public transport offer.

### ***Proposed SDNP routes***

1. **Three crosses concept.** North-South and East West services cross at an interchange location. Buses timed to rendezvous at crossing point within the SDNP. The rendezvous of all buses would occur each hour at the same time (e.g. on the hour, every hour), with buses arriving together 3 minutes before, and leaving together 3 minutes after. This enables the different routes to function as a network.

WEST cross:

North-South service from Alton station/town to Fareham (or alternative south coast location).

East West service between Winchester and Petersfield

Crossing rendezvous: West Meon (location to be investigated)

MID cross:

North-South between Haslemere town/station and Chichester town/station

East-West service between Petersfield and Pulborough

Crossing rendezvous: Midhurst (existing bus station)

EAST cross:

North-South service between Horsham town/station and Worthing

East-West service between Pulborough and Shoreham (or extended to Brighton)

Crossing rendezvous: London Road. Washington (use existing stops?)

The three crosses arrangement will at the same time create bus connections between stations on the London radial rail network, namely:

- Winchester (London-Southampton-Bournemouth)

- Petersfield (London-Portsmouth)

- Pulborough (London-Chichester-Littlehampton)

This allows longer east-west walk and cycle itineraries to be supported, giving flexibility as to how far one travels in a day.

It is consistent with the vision for cycling which has several North-South parallel routes.

## 2. **East Downs Integrated network concept**

The eastern chalk Downs area is very different in character from the area served by the three crosses. The SDNP is generally narrower (north-south), has a major city as its focus (Brighton & Hove), has significant settlements on the other side of the Downs, and has a denser rail network (nowhere is more than 5 kms from a station).

These characteristics are accompanied by a bus network that is more highly developed and successful than in most other parts of the SDNP. The improvements needed to meet the SDNP "bus charter" are therefore less radical and can more easily be achieved.

The network mainly comprises the overlapping of two radial networks: namely the rail lines radiating from Haywards Heath to Brighton, Seaford and Eastbourne, and the bus routes radiating from Brighton to the Downs, Lewes, and Eastbourne.

In addition, this area is served by a bus operation that is rated one of the best outside London, Brighton & Hove Buses, with high frequencies, clockface timetables and realtime bus information from every stop online.

The other distinguishing feature of this area is the provision of bus services targeted specifically at the South Downs leisure and recreation market, namely

- three “Breeze up to the Downs” services
- a weekend service to Seven Sisters and Beachy Head, and
- marketing of certain regular services for links to walking opportunities on the Downs marketed as “Take the Bus for a Walk”.

The approach for the east integrated network should therefore be to build upon and refine existing provision, rather than the creation of a new base network. Examples of action to be taken include:

- Stopping all trains at Southease, in the light of the new YHA facility nearby that will include cycle hire (at present half the trains stop there, adding 3 minutes to the journey time for the 4 stations beyond).
- Ensure consistency across the Breeze up to the Downs services (at present the days of operation vary, creating problems for walkers’ itineraries).
- Extend services to the north side of the Downs (e.g. to Ditchling)
- Rationalise and improve bus stops and integrate with South Downs Way and other walking routes (e.g. Pyecombe).
- Integrate the rail and bus networks so that the two function as an integrated whole (involving timetable, fares and physical integration).

### **3. Feeder and complementary services**

The trunk routes comprising the “three crosses” and “East Downs” networks will provide the basis for selective development in accessible locations as well as for existing settlements and attractions. The more isolated settlements and less-visited attractions will be supported by further local services, probably with less demanding service schedules but nevertheless with timetables that are credible to non-regular users.

There are some examples already in the National Park of such services, notably the 99 demand responsive service (Chichester-Petworth) which has recently started a Sunday service, and the Cuckmere Buses network.

These and other services (existing and potential) need to be reviewed

in the light of the new trunk network and the opportunities for integration that this opens up.

Particular attention should be paid to opportunities to achieve mode switch from car for visits to congested “hotspots” and popular attractions. Examples are Alfriston village and Drusillas Zoo in East Sussex; Goodwood, Uppark and Petworth in West Sussex, and Selborne and Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Hampshire.

#### **4. Rail gateway and bus integration recommendations**

The potential gateway stations have been assessed in relation to the existing or future potential for providing high quality onward travel by bus into the National Park.

A total of 20 stations have been classified as “rail-bus gateways”. High priority actions to develop interchange infrastructure and/or bus services have been identified at 10 of the 20 stations. The measures recommended are outlined in the assessment spreadsheet.

The bodies involved in delivering the necessary improvements will include:

Stagecoach  
Compass Travel  
Cuckmere Buses  
Brighton & Hove Buses  
Metrobus  
Network Rail  
Southern  
South West Trains (Stagecoach)  
The County Councils

#### **5. Development of bus access points to key attractions and walking routes**

The priorities are seen as follows:

1. Bus stop location and rationalisation
2. Bus stop information and labelling, including branding of stops as “South Downs Way”
3. Timetable information and stop labelling, including branding of stops as “South Downs Way”
4. Marketing of bus services for National Park access
5. Development of SDNP bus shelter design

The South Downs Way provides a starting point for such development. The bus routes intersecting with and serving the South Downs Way are as follows from West to East:

**Table: Bus routes serving the South Downs Way**

<b>Locations (West to East)</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Bus Stop</b>	<b>Action (infrastructure)</b>
(Exton on A232)	17 Bishops Waltham-Petersfield. Service not credible for leisure: only 2 journeys daily, Wed and Sat only	Well placed bus stops with flags next to SDW; no shelters	Provide shelters. Service needs to be provided – north-south link of the “western cross” trunk network. The A32 is currently the only north-south A road corridor without credible public transport, which results in at least a 30 miles length of the SDW without access by public transport (Winchester to QECP). A one-day linear walk on SDW is therefore not possible on this section.
QE Country Park on A3	37 Petersfield-Havant. Hourly Mon-Sat only	On A3, only southbound served (?) No clear footpath to bus stop	Consider diversion of 37 to QECP, or creation of northbound bus stop. Build clear footpath to existing southbound stop. QECP marketing needs to be geared to bus access (HCC)
Between South Harting and Uppark on B2146	54 Petersfield-Chichester. Only 5 journeys daily Mon-Sat only	No stop where South Downs Way crosses the B2146	Provide stops and shelters
Cocking Hill A286	60 Midhurst-Chichester. Half hourly service; hourly on Sundays.	Two marked stops plus car park near SDW. Southbound stop has no footpath connecting to SDW and is therefore dangerous	Relocate bus stop and/or build path to join SDW. Speed reduction measures and crossing facility required at this location
Littleton Farm A285	99 DR Chichester-Petworth. 2-hourly, demand responsive. No Sunday service.	Marked stops also labelled SDW well placed (but no shelters)	Add shelters. Nearby Duncton Down would also benefit from stops at the viewpoint car park (footpath links to SDW via West Sussex Literary Trail)
(South of Bury, A29)	69, 71 to Pulborough No credible service	(irrelevant)	Access to this part of SDW is well served by rail at Amberley
South of Washington A24	1 Worthing-Midhurst: Hourly service Mon-Sat; 2-hourly Sundays to Pulborough only 23 Worthing-Horsham: Hourly Mon-Sat, no Sun service	Poorly located and no shelters. Northbound stop is unmarked.	Provide properly designed stops and shelters, within clear sight of SDW and each other.
Upper Beeding (Steyning bypass) A283	2A/2B hourly 7 days plus 20 Limited service 69 Not credible (Tue and Thur only)	Stops reasonably well located. No shelters. No paved access to northbound stop.	Improve northbound stop. Provide shelters. Brand stops as SDW

	106 Only 3 journeys Mon-Sat 108 Not credible (one journey Wed only)		
Devils Dyke	77 Sat-Sun only except July-Aug 7 days. Better than hourly but irregular	Well located stop but no shelter	Consider provision of shelter
Pyecombe	17 Sun only 5 journeys 33 irregular last bus 3.40pm 40 Hourly Mon-Sat only 40x Hourly Mon-Sat til late. Sun only 4 journeys 270 Hourly Mon-Sat 271-273 Hourly Mon-Sat. Sun 5 journeys (Plus Hurst and Hassocks community bus Tue Thur only)	15 bus stops labelled Pyecombe (11 in main village). Most unmarked and no shelters. Timetables do not always list Pyecombe stop (e.g. 40).	Requires a detailed review and rationalisation of stops to make it possible for occasional users and for recreation trips.
Ditchling Beacon	79 Hourly Sat-Sun in summer, but only Sun in Winter	Stop is convenient but not prominent	Service improvement needed, and stop to be enhanced
Falmer Housedean Farm	28-29-29B-29X 10 min service Mon-Fri, 30 min Sun	No paved access to stops, danger from A27 traffic	Stops need safe paved access to them. Stops could be relocated to relate better to SDW footbridge. (Clearer footpath route to Falmer station nearby would also be helpful)
Southeast	123 Hourly Mon-Fri, 5 journeys Sun	Well placed stops with a shelter	No action needed. Consider design of shelter as model for SDNP?
A26 near Southeast	No bus service	-	-
Alfriston	126 Roughly hourly (irregular), 4 journeys Sat, 5 journeys Sun	Stop in main square convenient but unmarked and no service info	Consider bus stop provision and shelter (but conservation constraints)
Litlington	40 (no credible service) 47 Sat and Sun only, hourly, one direction only (circular Berwick)	Bus stop well placed no shelter	Consider shelter (consider 7 day service, at least in summer)
SDW northern route Jevington	43 No credible service	Stop well located and marked	Not relevant unless service upgraded

SDW northern route A259 Eastdean Road	12, 12A, 12x 6 per hour Mon-Sat 4 per hour Sun 13X Hourly Mon-Sat	Stops poorly located, dangerous road crossing, no shelter, eastbound stop no paved access	Comprehensive bus stop treatment needed, integrating bus stops with SDW, including speed reduction measure and crossing facility, and shelters
SDW southern route Exceat	12, 12A, 12x 6 per hour Mon-Sat 4 per hour Sun 13X Hourly Mon-Sat	Stops separated and not visible from each other. No shelters. Dangerous road crossing	SDW safe road crossing needed with bus stops incorporated. May involve private land to achieve good solution
SDW southern route Birling Gap	13X Hourly Mon-Sat	Stops separate and no shelters or paved access	
SDW southern route Beachy Head	13X Hourly Mon-Sat	Stop marked one side only. No paved access, no shelter	Improvements would need careful consideration in view of landscape constraints
SDW southern route Beachy Head Road	13X Hourly Mon-Sat	No marked stop	Potential stop to serve SDW where it joins Beachy Head Road
Eastbourne	Walk to centre	-	-

*\* For the complexities of Pyecombe bus services see for example [http://www.southdownsway.co.uk/sdw\\_pyecombe\\_lewes.html](http://www.southdownsway.co.uk/sdw_pyecombe_lewes.html) which even so contains inaccurate information.*

## 6. Marketing strategy

It is important that marketing follows the achievement of quality services. Marketing that contains inaccurate or misleading information can destroy confidence in the service which can be extremely difficult or even impossible to rebuild. All marketing materials should be designed from the point of view of a sceptical user who has the car as an alternative at his/her disposal.

Bus (and rail) marketing should be coordinated with leisure itineraries for walking and cycling.

Leisure travel fares and tariff structures should be devised that do not penalise family travel. Family explorer tickets are an essential feature of developing leisure travel. Innovative offers should be devised to encourage mode switch from car, such as bus fares incorporated within car park charges at leisure hotspots. Existing leisure fare offers should be reviewed for their appeal and practicality (e.g. the Downlander ticket should be available on day of travel).

Marketing should use a wide range of media, both on and offline, and should incorporate mechanisms for feedback and problem reporting. Realtime next-bus information is important and should be developed

for mobile apps and at key stops. Information on how to access the SDNP must be of standard design and be prominent at all gateway and hub locations.

Marketing materials should tie in with physical realities on the ground. For example, the bus stop labelling should coincide with the main feature being marketed. At present stops serving South Downs Way do not feature in bus timetables.

Bus stops should each have bespoke spider maps plus information on how to access nearby attractions.

## **7. Marketing and the web**

With this strategy in place, use should be made of new intelligent information systems in relation to the bus network. Given the timetabled nature of the likely network in most of the Park, real time information at stops is not a priority if it is needed at all.

Use of mobile phone apps to give information on services and timings will be essential for visitors en route, and a comprehensive and interactive website for the new services should serve visitors before they leave home or workplace.

## **8. Phasing of improvements**

Not all the service improvements outlined above can be achieved at the same time. There will be a need for considerable discussion and negotiation between the responsible parties, but a target date could be set for the achievement of coherent packages of improvements. The advantage of coherence is that standards of service can be branded and marketed; this is less cost-effective for individual improvements.

It is important that the charter minimum standards are achieved from the start. The aim is to demonstrate the potential from the start. If there is a choice between speed of implementation and meeting the required standards, the latter should take priority. It is important that potential passengers are not given false expectations.

As a starting point for discussion, three phases are suggested:

### **Phase 1 Quick wins** [Target Spring 2014]

1. Bringing the eastern integrated network trunk [bus](#) services up to specified standard
  - Bus stop improvements, in terms of location, shelters, labelling and information to promote leisure use of services
  - Regularising Downs services days of operation
2. Implement initial stage of Mid Cross network
  - Reconfiguration of route 70 Haslemere-Midhurst to ensure reliability
  - Re-introduce Sunday services to Midhurst from Haslemere and Petersfield

- Bring all four Midhurst routes up to hourly daytime service

**Phase 2** [Target Spring 2015]

1. Completion of the “Mid(hurst) Cross” network

- Increasing frequency and hours of existing routes to meet the proposed “SDNP charter” standard
- Timetabling to achieve hourly rendezvous at Midhurst bus station
- Improved bus-rail interchange at Haslemere, Chichester, Petersfield, and Pulborough
- Marketing and branding of the Mid Cross

2. Complete eastern integrated network

- Improving the frequency, hours and integration of Cuckmere Buses
- Implementing integration with the rail network

3. Develop plan for local service networks in West Sussex and Hants

4. Bus stop improvements where routes cross South Downs Way and other important paths

**Phase 3** [Target Spring 2017]

1. Implement west and east cross networks

- Introduce new north-south route Alton to Fareham to complete the west cross

- Improve frequencies, hours and timetabling to meet “SDNP charter” standards

- Timetabling to achieve rendezvous at route crossing locations (West Meon and Washington)

2. Further improvements to bus-rail interchanges, including connecting the “cross” services directly at Winchester, Alton, Fareham, Petersfield, Horsham, Worthing and Shoreham stations. Infrastructure and traffic management works as required to achieve station portal interchange.

3. Implement feeder local services to meet minimum standards, and integrate timetables with the trunk services

4. Marketing and branding of complete SDNP network

MTRU 3rd June 2013

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## Annex

Further improvements suggested by Pete Currell of SDNPA (in addition to those detailed in the main paper above)

### 1. Brighton and the Heritage Coast

- Tweaks to enhance visitor opportunities on services 12 and 13 between Brighton & Eastbourne
- Sunday Services from Brighton to Crawley and East Grinstead (270 / 271) to include serving Ditchling Village
- Bus walks promoted from Brighton buses (take the bus for a walk)

### 2. West Sussex (Worthing to Petersfield)

The key to enhancements in this area are in making more Sunday and Evening services available on routes running only 6 days per week. Also some route adjustments and extensions could make a significant difference to the overall sustainable transport network.

The main enhancement opportunities for bus services are enhanced core routes from which to create the itineraries and discounts:

- Chichester to Midhurst (Route 60) + evenings
- Worthing to Midhurst (Route 1) – extend to Midhurst (Suns) + evenings
- Haslemere to Midhurst (71 / 72 / 73)
- Chichester to Petworth (99) extend to Sundays (now achieved)
- Petersfield to Midhurst – Add weekend services and link to more attractions
- Pulborough to Henfield (Route 100) extend to Sundays (This route could also join the Washington rendezvous for the proposed East cross network.

### 3. Hampshire (Winchester to Petersfield)

Public transport provision is much less available and there are no services on a Sunday.

- Community bus opportunities (contract already let) linking to attractions
- Better promotion of the London coach services from Portsmouth that stop at Petersfield (currently limited service)
- Bespoke bus (not public transport) services to attractions (eg Marwell Zoo)
- Other Sunday extensions to services
- Better services to Queen Elizabeth County Park