

# A Royal Military Canal Cycling Route

## Cliff End to Rye -10kms

Greenways and Cyclerroutes October 2023

2.0kms path to Float Lane used by the 1066 route. It has far-ranging views over the Levels and deserves to be reconstructed to a high standard as a resource for Rye.

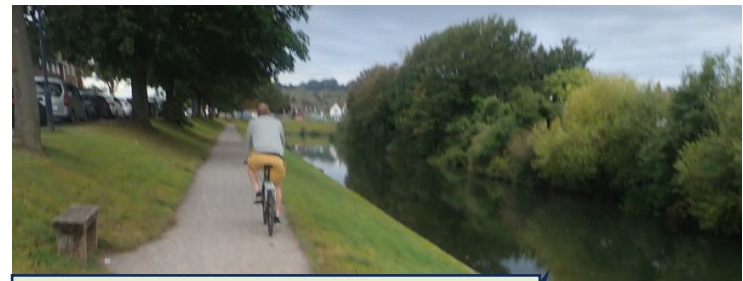
Generally quiet road link, crucially passing through Winchelsea

3.4kms of new path following the course of the Military Canal

Pett Level Road

In September 2023 John Grimshaw of the charity Greenways and Cycle Routes was invited by local environmental groups to look at a proposed route from Cliff End to Rye. Compared with the eastern end of the Military Canal where Kent Council and Hythe have made excellent and popular paths along the course of the canal, this western end is benignly neglected and scarcely used by comparison.

These notes sketch out how a route might be created to take in parts of the canal, Winchelsea and the Levels. This would create a way suitable for all. And one far removed from the hazard of traffic along the Pett Level Road.



Paths alongside the Royal Military around Hythe



The Saxon Shore way below Winchelsea



# A Royal Military Canal Cycling Route Cadborough Cliff 1066 path linking Rye to Winchelsea

Greenways and Cycleroutes October 2023



Sections of the 1066 path are in very poor condition

The roads to the centre of Rye need to be limited to 20mph and made cycle friendly

The course of the existing bridlepath leading through to Float Lane

The 1066 Country Walk is also the course of National Cycle Route 2. More than this it could be a wonderful local walk for residents of Rye, a level and traffic free path where families could learn to cycle again, and for everyone a route from Rye to Winchelsea avoiding the main A259 which forms the direct New Military Road. This link has so much potential that any sustainable transport policy would have delivered it as a matter of priority. It also links to Winchelsea Station via Station Road.

Attractive minor road which runs level to Winchelsea

How best to reach the centre of Winchelsea is not easy. Options are discussed on the next page



The 1066 path enjoys extensive views over the Levels as well as being most attractive in its own right



# A Royal Military Canal Cycling Route

## In and out of Winchelsea

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Advisory cycle lanes on this short section of the main road would allow cyclists to reach the Town via Pipewell Gate, whilst cycling down towards Rye would hardly conflict with traffic

The existing path is a very attractive way of climbing the hill to Winchelsea. A narrow stone surface would allow cyclists to walk up the hill.

Wickham Rock Lane is a most attractive road with a relatively gentle gradient. It makes for much the best entrance to the Town from the west,

Join the canal by this path

A route along this section of the Military Canal path would bypass Winchelsea and is best left as it is

Winchelsea once stood on a narrow peninsular surrounded by sea and Marsh. The only land entrance was from the west and defended by New Gate. This historic Town must be the focus and the central point of any route between Rye and Cliff End. We cannot bypass it just because it stands so high on its cliff top. The map shows the most practical options including advisory cycling lanes on a short length of the main road.

As well as taking in the Town, its pub and other attractions, this attractive route bypasses a long length of the Military Canal. This would continue to be the course of the Saxon Shore Way, which at this particular location below Friars Cliff is an accurate description of the medieval shoreline.

Looking down the path from near the fire beacon



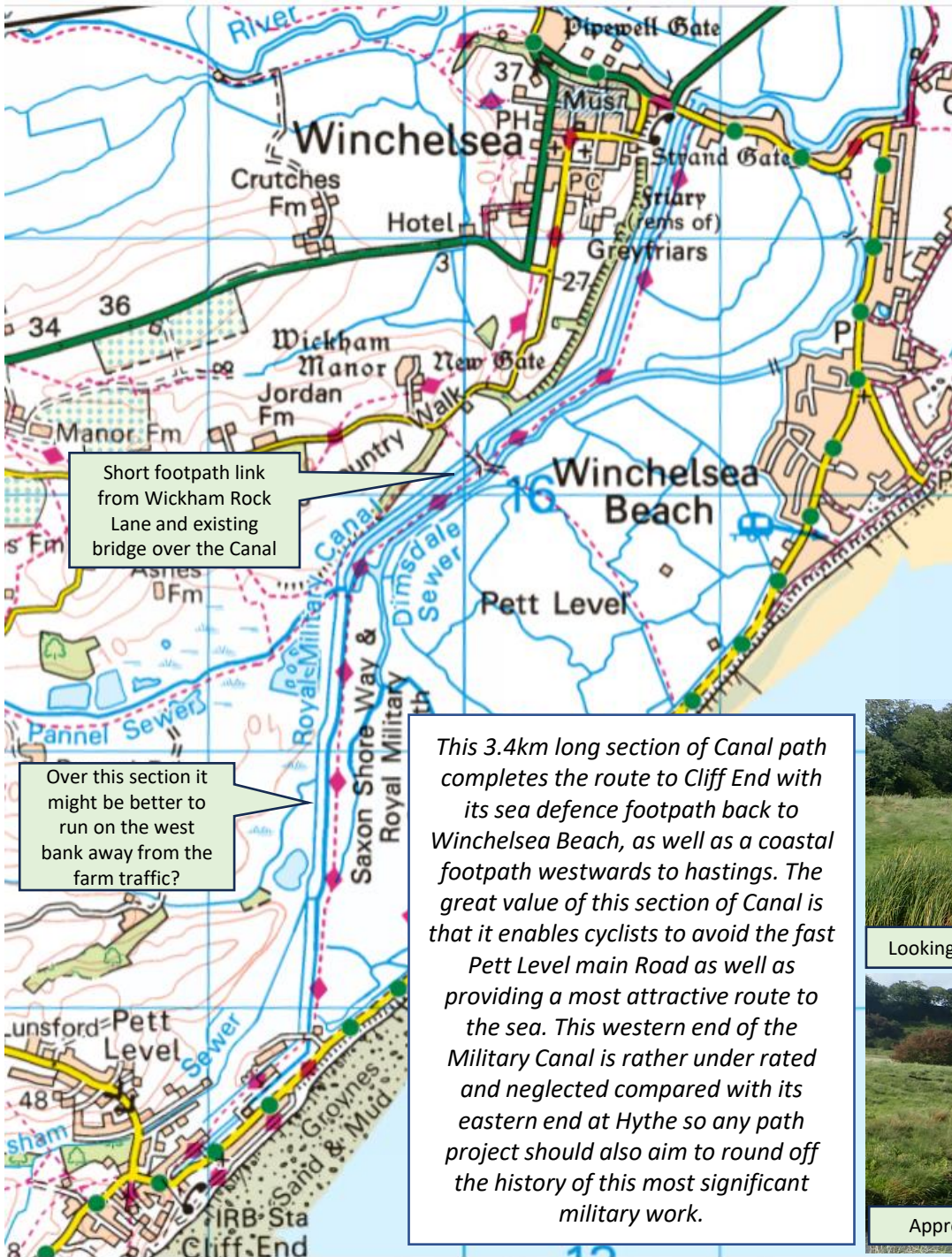
New Gate leading up to Winchelsea





# A Royal Military Canal Cycling Route Winchelsea to Cliff End

Greenways and Cycleroutes October 2023



Short footpath link from Wickham Rock Lane and existing bridge over the Canal

Over this section it might be better to run on the west bank away from the farm traffic?

*This 3.4km long section of Canal path completes the route to Cliff End with its sea defence footpath back to Winchelsea Beach, as well as a coastal footpath westwards to Hastings. The great value of this section of Canal is that it enables cyclists to avoid the fast Pett Level main Road as well as providing a most attractive route to the sea. This western end of the Military Canal is rather under rated and neglected compared with its eastern end at Hythe so any path project should also aim to round off the history of this most significant military work.*



Looking across the Canal to Wickham Rock Lane in the distance



Looking along the Canal towards the Wickham Rock bridge in the distance

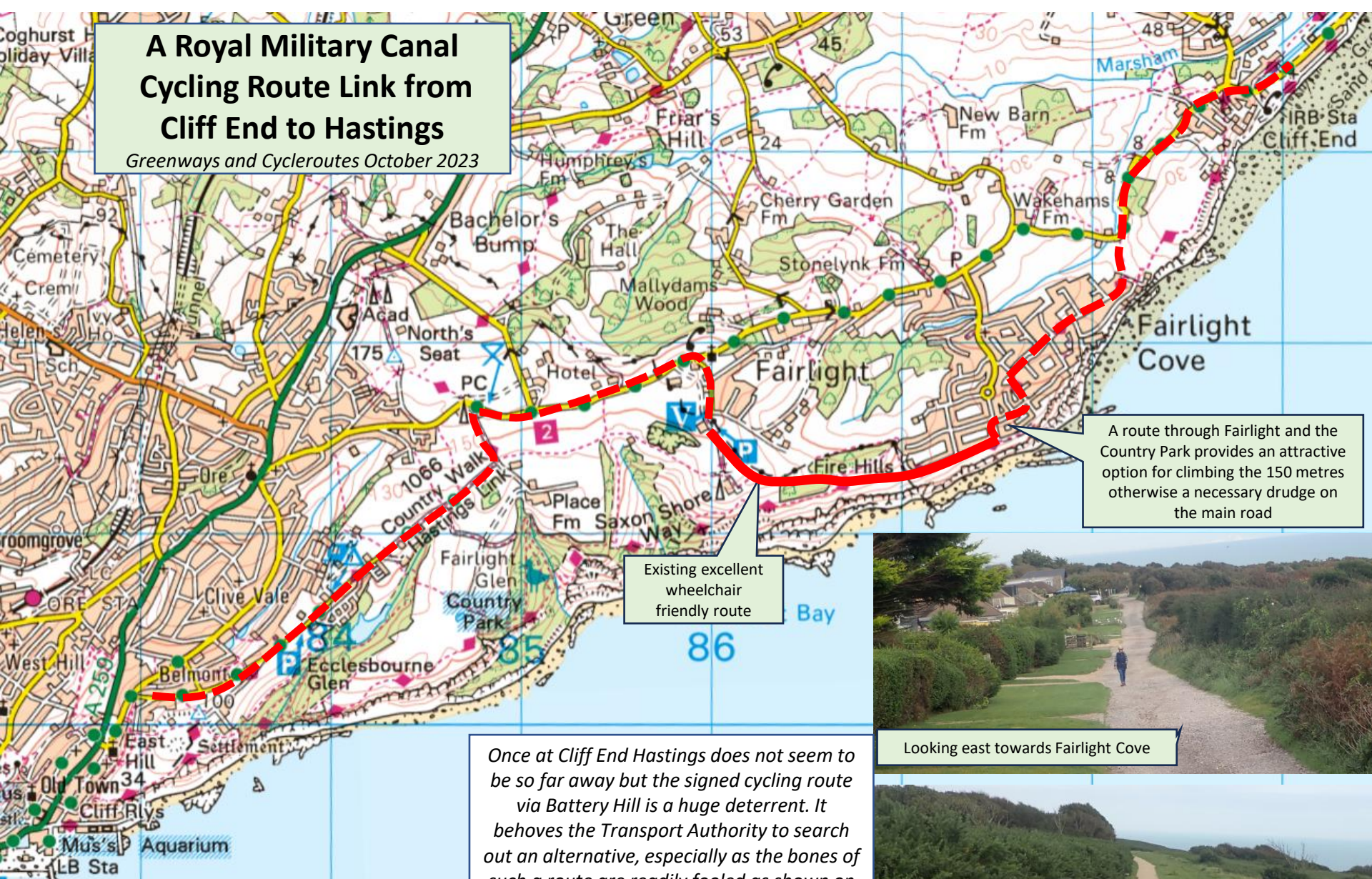


Approaching Cliff End where the path is also used as a field access track



# A Royal Military Canal Cycling Route Link from Cliff End to Hastings

Greenways and Cycleroutes October 2023



A route through Fairlight and the Country Park provides an attractive option for climbing the 150 metres otherwise a necessary drudge on the main road

Existing excellent wheelchair friendly route



Looking east towards Fairlight Cove



The accessible path to Fire Hills

Once at Cliff End Hastings does not seem to be so far away but the signed cycling route via Battery Hill is a huge deterrent. It behoves the Transport Authority to search out an alternative, especially as the bones of such a route are readily fooled as shown on this map. It may be possible to avoid more of the main road, or nearly all of it and resolving this should be an integral part of the Military Canal route.