

## ROUTE 1 ASSESSMENT – Tonbridge to Tunbridge Wells via the A26

**Route Start Point:** A26 at the junction of Brook Street, Tonbridge

**Route Distance:** 3.8 miles (6.1km)

**Route End Point:** A26 at the junction of Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells.

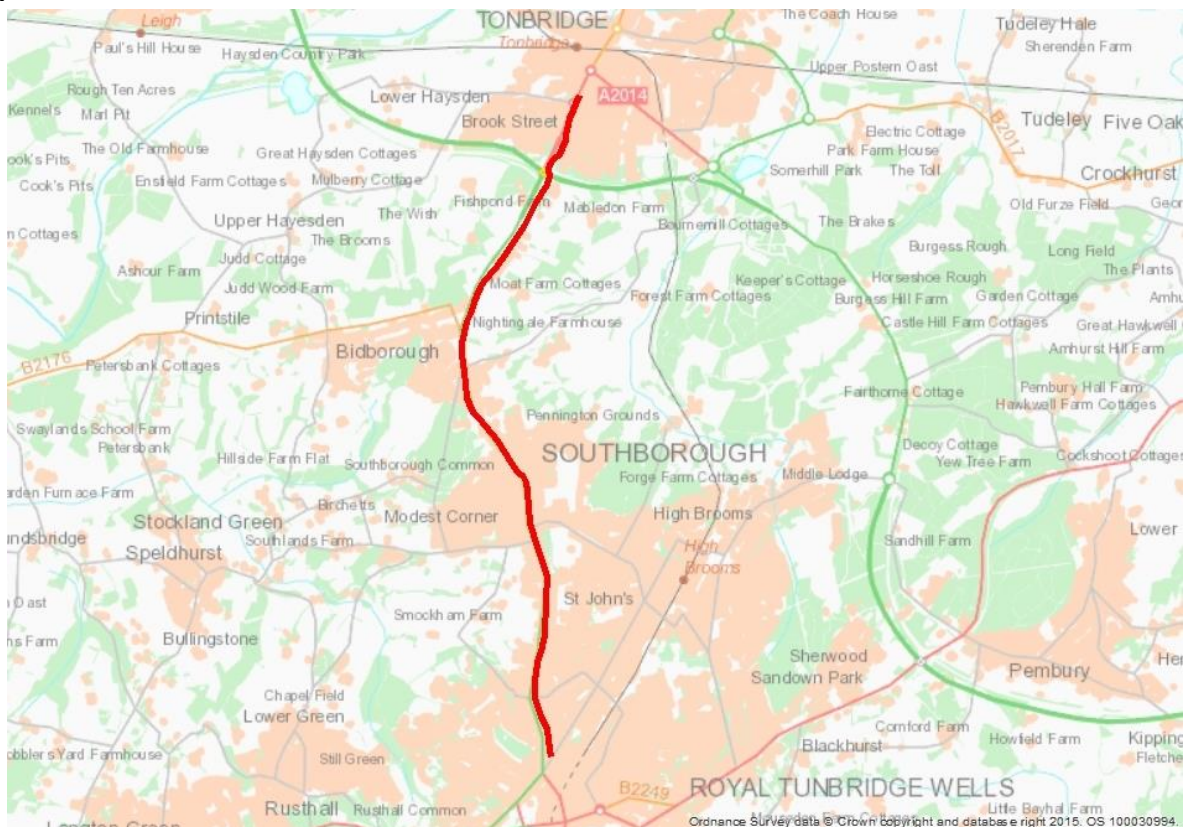
**Description:** The route follows the alignment of the A26 and benefits from segregated cycle infrastructure in some places including mandatory and advisory cycle lanes. The route is broadly flat between Tunbridge Wells and Southborough at which point it includes inclined sections at Southborough Common and Quarry Hill which is steep. The route is aligned to the A26 Air Quality Management Area between Southborough (junction of Pennington Road) to Tunbridge Wells (junction of Grosvenor Road).






**Benefits:** The route is considered to be essential for inter-urban cyclists and would improve accessibility to Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge for residents in Bidborough, Southborough and High Brooms. With the benefit of improved infrastructure (i.e. segregated lanes/paths and other priority measures), the route could encourage more people to cycle, especially to the numerous schools along the route. The route would support a reduction in local vehicular trips and improvement in local air quality. It should link to Tonbridge station via Waterloo Road from junction of Brook Street (not included in assessment).



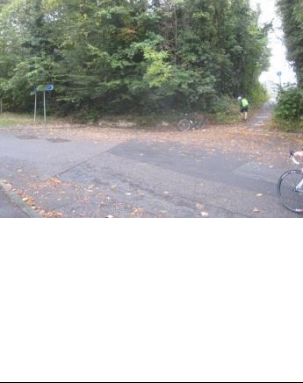

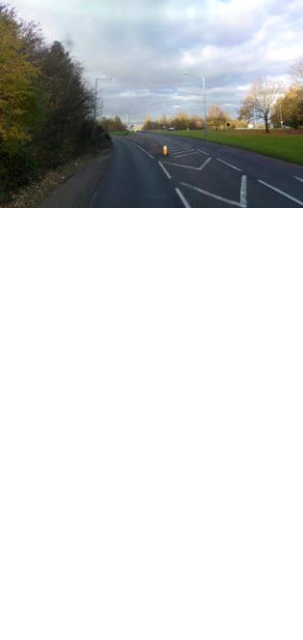
**Constraints:** The route is incomplete and utilises a range of different highway / hard infrastructure measures along its length, with varying degrees of success. Quarry Hill, Tonbridge is a significant barrier to less confident / fit cyclists due to its steep gradient. The A26 is a busy and heavily trafficked route.







**Delivery Status:** Cycling infrastructure partially implemented. Improvements to cycle lanes between Culverden Park Road and Queens Road are funded and awaiting implementation. Further improvements are required to provide a continuous and safe route.






### Route Map










Route Log			
Location	Picture	Issues	Ideas for Improvement
A26 junction with Brook Street		The roundabout is busy, especially at peak times. Advisory cycle lane on Quarry Hill approach and shared path on Brook Street.	There is very limited provision for cyclists at this junction, the advisory cycle lane and shared path on Brook Street have limited benefit. Need to provide a shared use crossing to link with Waterloo Road and an improved pedestrian/cycle path to the eastern side of Quarry Hill.
A26 view southbound up Quarry Hill		Whilst there is an advisory cycle lane on the downhill side of the road, there is no provision up hill where cyclists will be travelling slower than the traffic.	Need to provide a segregated up hill pedestrian / cycle route. This could be achieved through widening the existing footway and utilising the generous pedestrian route which runs adjacent to the road. This could provide a shared use route, removing the existing conflict between cyclists and motorised traffic. This could however, introduce conflict between cyclists and pedestrians due to down hill speeds.
A26 junction with Springwell Road		If segregated provision were to be implemented, there is no priority for cyclists across the side junction.	If a segregated route is implemented, priority would need to be provided here, and at other side turnings. This could include set back give way lines and speed tables to provide a flush and continuous surface for cyclists.
A26 Quarry Hill junctions with Woodside Road		No priority over the side turning. Street furniture is inappropriately positioned.	Need to give priority to cyclists at this and other side junctions. Reposition street furniture.
Segregated path at Quarry Hill		A separate and generous public right of way which runs adjacent to Quarry Hill is inaccessible to cyclists, due to prohibitive signage and guard railings.	The path is sufficiently wide to be used for shared pedestrian / cycle. Remove guard railings and consider alternative access controls (if necessary). Continued access for residential dwellings is required.

<p>Bus shelter position adjacent to junction with Baltic Road</p>		<p>Existing bus shelter is positioned in the middle of the path and causes obstruction.</p>	<p>The shelter requires repositioning. Ideally the profile of the bus stop lay-by should be reviewed to identify if any additional width can be provided for the shared pedestrian / cycle route.</p>
<p>A26 Quarry Hill junction with Baltic Road</p>		<p>Guard railings are positioned inappropriately and restrict the available width of the path. No priority for cyclists over the side junction.</p>	<p>Railings should be removed or repositioned to the kerb line. Provide priority for cyclists to include a flush and continuous surface.</p>
<p>Quarry Hill Road</p>		<p>At this point cyclists are signed into Quarry Hill Road, away from faster moving traffic. This is suitable however, directional signage is poorly maintained and vegetation on the path linking to the flyover is encroaching on path.</p>	<p>Clean signage and undertake regular vegetation clearance. A regular maintenance regime needs to be introduced.</p>
<p>View southbound on A21 flyover</p>		<p>Path at this point is insufficiently wide to be suitable for shared use, however, is not heavily used by pedestrians. Signage suggests that cyclists dismount.</p>	<p>The potential to widen the path should be explored. Shared use paths should be a minimum of 2.5m wide.</p>
<p>View northbound at flyover</p>		<p>Provision for cyclists is confusing. Refuge and crossover is provided to the left hand side of the carriageway. This however, is poorly signed and markings are worn. Most confident cyclists proceed in the right hand lane at this point, directly to the junction, at which point there is an advisory cycle lane descending into Tonbridge. This however, becomes narrow towards the junction of Brook Street.</p>	<p>Review the layout and/or signing of the crossover which is rarely if ever used.</p>

View southbound between A21 gyratory and Mabledon		Dismount signage part way along shared path at flyover, is ignored by cyclists. Wayfinding signage for the route is also poor.	If possible remove dismount signage (it is acknowledged that this may be required for the path to be compliant with current regulations). Wayfinding signage needs to be improved along the whole route.
A26 side turning at Mabledon		No priority for the segregated path over the side turning.	Revise layout of the junction to provide a continuous level surface and priority for the shared route over the side turning.
A26 crossover at Mabledon		The crossover utilises the existing footpath in a southbound direction. It provides a wide and comfortable crossing, suitable for less confident cyclists who are traveling southbound, to access the shared path. Surfacing is poorly maintained.	Maintenance is required. Due to its limited use by cyclists, signalised priority is not considered necessary here.
A26 southbound at Mabledon, junction with unnamed road		End of segregated route. From this point cyclists are required to re-join the A26 from a lightly trafficked side road, returning to the busy main road.	Shared path could be extended over the side junction through an area of informal parking / layby, to provide an extension to the segregated provision southbound. This area is however, used informally for on-street parking at present.
View northbound between Mabledon and Bidborough Ridge junction.		No provision for cyclists at this point.	If southbound segregated path were extended, it could re-join the carriageway at this point, opposite the northbound shared path access.
A26 Mabledon to Hand and Sceptre		No provision for cyclists. Lack of cycle lanes / paths along this section of the route. Section of road currently subject to street lighting switch off trial and 40mph speed limit.	The full width of highway ownership needs to be identified, to explore if segregated lanes could be introduced. Protected trees, highway ownerships and gradient may be constraints. Residential entrances are a safety risk. Operation of street lighting needs to be reviewed. Speed limit reduction could be considered.

<p>A26 at Southborough Common</p>		<p>A shared cycle / bus lane is provided southbound. This has sufficient width however; motorists crossing the lane do not always see / look out for oncoming cyclists. There have been collisions here. No cycle lane on opposite side.</p>	<p>Better signage may help to reduce the risk from left turning, crossing traffic accessing Meadows School. An up hill northbound lane is required to remove cyclists from the carriageway. A segregated lane could be provided on the edge of Southborough common. A sensitive design would be required.</p>
<p>A26 Southborough Common towards junction with Pennington Road</p>		<p>Potential for conflict between cyclists and buses parked on the bus stand at end of shared lane.</p>	<p>Sufficient width is available to consider a bus-stop boarder here. This may however, not be necessary due to the low frequency of waiting buses.</p>
<p>A26 Junction with Pennington Road to Yew Tree Road</p>		<p>Carriageway geometry narrows from junction with Pennington Road. There is currently no dedicated provision for cyclists. No signage or route markings. 30mph speed limit.</p>	<p>There are limited opportunities to introduce provision for cyclists due to narrow footways. KCC to check extent of highway ownership. Opportunity to introduce a short length of segregated cycle lane between Garlinge Road and Pinewood Gardens. No opportunity to further reduce traffic speed at this point, as this is an A road. Partial alternative route via Pennington Road / Park Road would not be direct.</p>
<p>A26 junction with Western Road, view northbound</p>		<p>No provision for cycling.</p>	<p>Borough Local Plan includes a proposal for cycle crossing and link here, crossing the A26 from Western Road as part of the Southborough to North Farm cycle route. This has yet to be delivered; the stretch across Yew Tree Road playing fields is to be provided as part of the Southborough Hub project.</p>
<p>A26 junctions with Speldhurst Road and Yew Tree Road</p>		<p>These are busy junctions. At the present time there is no dedicated provision for cyclists.</p>	<p>Junctions are to be improved as a consequence of LEP funding award. Design options to incorporate provision for cyclist and pedestrians.</p>

<p>A26 adjacent to Tunbridge Wells Boys Grammar School</p>		<p>Existing toucan crossing integrates with both mandatory on-road lanes and shared use paths. Layout is comprehensive if confusing, with conflicting signage and markings.</p>	<p>Review crossing to identify if legibility can be improved. Remove unnecessary safety barriers.</p>
<p>A26 St Johns Road - Shared cycle and bus lanes / cycle lanes</p>		<p>Shared bus lanes operate 7am-7pm Monday to Friday. Priority for cyclists is therefore, not always maintained. Mandatory lanes are not enforced motorists encroach into lanes.</p>	<p>Revise traffic regulation order and signage to provide full time mandatory lanes. Consider options to introduce physical segregation (e.g. armadillos) along the mandatory cycle lanes, this could help prevent traffic encroachment.</p>
<p>A26 between Southfield Road and Beltring Road</p>		<p>At this point the cycle lane northbound is advisory, and is interrupted by a section of informal vehicular parking. This forces cyclists to move out into the flow of traffic.</p>	<p>Revise traffic regulation order and attempt to remove on-street parking. However, residents may have no alternative off-street parking options. Upgrade lane to mandatory if sufficient width is available.</p>
<p>A26 between Southfield Road and Somerset Road</p>		<p>Priority for cyclists is lost at this point as vehicles are given advance junction priority over cyclists and buses. No northbound cycle lane at this point. Cycle lanes resume adjacent to Skinners School.</p>	<p>Review layout of the highway and identify if these deficiencies can be resolved. Available highway lane and geometry are likely to be constraints.</p>
<p>A26 between Culverden Down and Queens Road</p>		<p>Adjacent to retail units the cycle lanes are advisory and narrow. There is no segregation to prevent encroachment from traffic. Goods vehicles and pull-in traffic also block the route. Road markings are poor.</p>	<p>Review highway layout to identify if the width of the lanes can be increased to 1.5m with mandatory designation through revised traffic regulation order. Replace carriageway lines and consider introducing segregation (armadillos). Pull-in deliveries are unlikely to be resolvable.</p>
<p>A26 between Queens Road and Culverden Park Road</p>		<p>Cycle lanes are narrow and advisory. Carriageway lines are worn due to traffic encroachment especially at bend in the road.</p>	<p>KCC has funding to deliver improvements to this stretch of the A26. To include the removal of verges, partial realignment of the carriageway and provision of 1.5m wide cycle lanes in both directions. Physical segregation options are being discussed as part of the project, these could deter traffic encroachment.</p>

<p>A26 between Culverden Park Road and junction with Grosvenor Road</p>		<p>Shared bus / cycle lane extends southbound at this point from Woodbury Park Road. There is however, no corresponding northbound lane towards Culverden Park Road. There is no cycling provision into the town centre from this point. The mini roundabout is also difficult for cyclists to navigate from Grosvenor Road, due to the gradient.</p>	<p>Review geometry of the carriageway to identify if a cycle lane can be implemented northbound from the junction. No connecting dedicated cycle links into the town centre can be achieved from this point, due to narrow road geometry / built environment constraints. Explore the potential to decrease the speed of Grosvenor Road and Meadow Road to 20mph.</p>
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