

# Market Towns support and regeneration

## Focus on Hassocks Cycle Hire and Promotions initiative

Over the last four years Market Towns in both West and East Sussex have been able to access project funding from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) Small Rural Towns programme. Led by local community partnerships, many have developed innovative projects that have helped to add to the vitality of the local economy. Hassocks is the most recent successful recipient of funding in West Sussex.



Colin Wilsdon, HCP Chairman (pictured left), said: "HCP does not have the commercial nor technical expertise to market and run a commercial venture currently. Therefore HCP has partnered with a successful local bike hire company, increasing the likelihood of commercial success. As well as a new facility for local people it will benefit the local economy through increased visitor numbers, creating a new job at the cycle hire facility plus income which can be ploughed back into projects to benefit the community."

Hassocks Community Partnership (HCP), as part of its Action Plan development work, identified a niche in the market for a local cycle hire facility at Hassocks. The town is well connected by train to London, Brighton and other large towns and the service aims to enable practical and easy access to the South Downs for a day's cycling. There is no other fixed cycle hire or maintenance shop nearby, although cycling and walking are popular activities in the area. The approved project will create a new cycle hire facility in the station car park. The Hassocks Hotel has agreed that its land can be used to house the facility, which will be constructed by a local company specialising in timber buildings. HCP will buy and equip the building with the utilities and fittings, plus 20 bicycles and associated tools and spares.

In addition to supporting this facility and furthering the aim of improving Hassocks as a visitor destination, other visitor related activities are planned as part of this project:

- five cycle routes and five walking routes linking Hassocks to the surrounding countryside and villages will be described and distributed in printed and web-based formats. They will encourage local people and visitors to use local businesses as well as helping them to understand and appreciate the environment and heritage of the local area
- improved information and map boards will be provided at key points through the Town. These

will both better direct visitors from the Station to the Town, walking and cycling routes and shops, and inform them about local history, flora and fauna

- a new on road cycle route between Hassocks Station and the South Downs will be created

- a new, simple, Hassocks' visitor website providing downloads of all the routes developed and clear links to other sites with details about cycle hire and local information will be built.

For more information, contact Les Ampstead on 01798 875402

### Other projects funded in the two Counties by SEEDA:

#### East Sussex

<b>Heathfield High Street</b> – improvements and refurbishment	SERTP £85,000, matched funding 100,000	<b>Total: £185,000</b>
<b>Wadhurst Institute &amp; Hall</b> – refurbishment for new library	SERTP £61,369, matched funding £81,283	<b>Total: £142,652</b>
<b>Rye – Animate Youth Centre</b>	SERTP £65,000, matched funding £70,000	<b>Total: £135,000</b>

#### West Sussex

<b>Billingshurst – Pre School and Centre for Children</b>	SEEDA £120,000, matched funding £630,000	<b>Total: £750,000</b>
<b>Henfield – Community mini bus</b>	SEEDA £40,000, matched funding £125,000	<b>Total: £165,000</b>
<b>Pulborough Town</b> – Regeneration & retail support	SEEDA £50,000, matched funding £124,000	<b>Total: £174,000</b>
<b>Steyning Town</b> – Centre improvements	SEEDA £40,000, matched funding £59,250	<b>Total: £99,250</b>
<b>Arundel</b> – Pontoons on the river	SEEDA £43,500, matched funding £48,250	<b>Total: £91,750</b>
<b>Midhurst</b> – Retail image enhancement	SEEDA £40,000, matched funding £40,000	<b>Total: £80,000</b>
<b>Selsey</b> – Retail image enhancement	SEEDA £40,000, matched funding £40,000	<b>Total: £80,000</b>
<b>Hassocks</b> – Strengthening the Town economy through environmentally friendly visitor programme, cycle hire and way finding,	SEEDA £32,000, matched funding £32,861	<b>Total: £64,861</b>