

D-day on seaside cycling

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CYCLISTS in Bexhill face crunch time this Monday when by-laws governing the pedestrian promenade are reviewed.

A working party of Rother District Council (RDC), headed by 2008 town mayor Cllr Patrick Douart, will meet to discuss all seaside by-laws, including the current law governing cycling, which states: "No person shall without reasonable excuse ride a cycle on the promenade except in any part where there is a designated route for cycling indicated by notices conspicuously displayed on the promenade."

Ian Hollidge has been campaigning with local cycling group the Bexhill Wheelers for more than 10 years to change this law, which he says endangers cyclists forced to jostle with parking cars and busy traffic.

Mr Hollidge, who recently delivered a petition of more than 300 signatures to Cllr Douart proposing responsible cycling on the prom from Galley Hill to Richmond Road, said: "The problem we have is we feel they may say East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is



The Bexhill Wheelers dressed for one of their Edwardian jaunts, outside Bexhill railway station

responsible for providing a cycle track, not Rother.

"But East Sussex hasn't got the money, and is not committed to spending in Bexhill."

A pledge of £380,000 from government quango Sustrans means Connect2, a 2km coastal cycle route connecting Hastings and Bexhill, will be com-

pleted by 2012. But the Bexhill Wheelers would like to see this progress extended with a section along Bexhill's seafront.

This would provide walkers and cyclists with a path from South Cliff through to St Mary-in-the-Castle, Hastings.

The working group will recommend a decision to RDC,

which will confirm it at a council meeting later this year.

And, perhaps mindful of repeated rows between Conservative and Lib-Dem councillors over the Next Wave seafront development, Mr Hollidge appealed for a non-partisan approach. He said: "Please do not let this be about politics. Just

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Best foot forward in tower campaign

The annual Bexhill Time Walk was joined by a group of campaigners seeking listed building status for the Edwardian seafront clock tower.

Striding out on December 28 were members of the Sussex Edwardian Society, who through member David Jones, of Pevensey, have applied to English Heritage.

Cllr Paul Lendon, who lead the walk for the third year, said: "The latest clock to be seen from the highway was the new one at King Offa School, erected in July. No excuse now for the children to be late."

English Heritage has carried out two visits to the clock tower, also known as the King Edward VII memorial, and submitted a preliminary report to the Secretary of State. The Sussex Edwardian Society is now waiting for an official decision.

The three-stage tower was built in 1904 by Gastin and Ransome, of Bexhill.