

Update for November 2013

From 'Thought for the Day' from BBC Radio 4, to
Question for the Month from L&OVe

*"I am giving you a choice, 2 options set out before you:
Life & wellbeing or death & destruction. I urge you to
choose life."*

Attributed to God
from *The Book of Deuteronomy*
Vicky Beeching
Thought for the day, 24/10/13



Is this the fracking question?

Remember, Remember the 7th of November: Lewes & Ouse Valley eco-nomics AGM, 7 pm, Lewes Arms (upstairs small meeting room)

.... If you're not banded out after the 5th, please bring your intellectual fireworks to L&OVe's (belated!) AGM and help make the discussions go with a flare! It's an important meeting – lots of progress to report, but we really need to decide on the future of the Group and what direction to take things in to engage more people in actions to sustainably benefit the community of Lewes and its environs – there's some exciting possibilities.

We also need to find and appoint a new Secretary and Treasurer for the Group

Up-coming things to **get involved** with:

Citizen Science and Eco-nomics

Natural England have provided some maps of the potential for Food production, climate regulation, timber provision, wild species diversity, water quality, etc. for the L&OVe focal area (i.e. the 10 km around Lewes). This gives us the opportunity to be the first really local area to test out how accurate, relevant and appropriate the maps may be – another first for Lewes!! The maps are based on national data sets, so Natural England are keen to find out how good they are at providing a sensible assessment of *naturegain* at a very local level. What we need is people who'd like to 'ground truth' these maps. You don't need to be knowledgeable about *naturegain*

(ecosystem services), we just need people to look at the local areas that are rated high, medium or low for the particular ecosystem service and report back on what the habitat (vegetation, structure – flat, sloping, etc, area (ha covered), homogeneity (is it all similar or very varied), etc.). If you can use local knowledge of the area and the habitats they contain to see whether the ranking given for the different ecosystem services looks sensible or not, that's great – otherwise just report the habitat type and landscape features back to us and we'll do the *naturegain* bit.

If there's anyone out there with social media skills and interest, we'd be delighted if you would get in touch and help promote this bit of 'citizen science' locally [eMail Colin on tc09@gn.apc.org] and/or other things that are going on in relation to L&OVe.

July/Aug/Sept/Oct activities:

CC2150 Ecosystem Services, Climate Change & Community Adaptation planning workshop

Back in July, L&OVe designed planned, organised and ran a day long workshop for the Environment Agency's Coastal Communities 2150 (CC2150) project. This brought together reps from business, local councils, community groups and residents from Seaford, Newhaven, Lewes and the rural parishes in between to explore local *naturegain*, the likely effects of long-term climate change locally, plus mechanisms and possibilities for community adaptation planning for these effects and how *naturegain* may be part of the opportunities for adaptation.



Professionals from Sussex wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency, South Downs National Park, Natural England, New Economics foundation and Local Authorities were there to provide technical information and guidance to support the community reps. The workshop was very well received and a great success, resulting in community reps identifying clear next steps and a range of ‘take home’ messages for their communities. The Rodmell Parish council rep, for example, requested a similar workshop or a ‘drop-in’ session on the issues to be organised in Rodmell to allow for local awareness raising and exploration of the issues.

Natural England CoP visit

Also in July, L&OVe received a visit from a range of national level policy-makers/advisors from Natural England – the Natural England “Community of Practice”. They came to experience what L&OVe was doing at a local level in trying to raise awareness of Ecosystem Services locally to learn about the challenges we face, see how we were trying to interpret National Level policy issues at local level and to offer expert advice and suggestions.

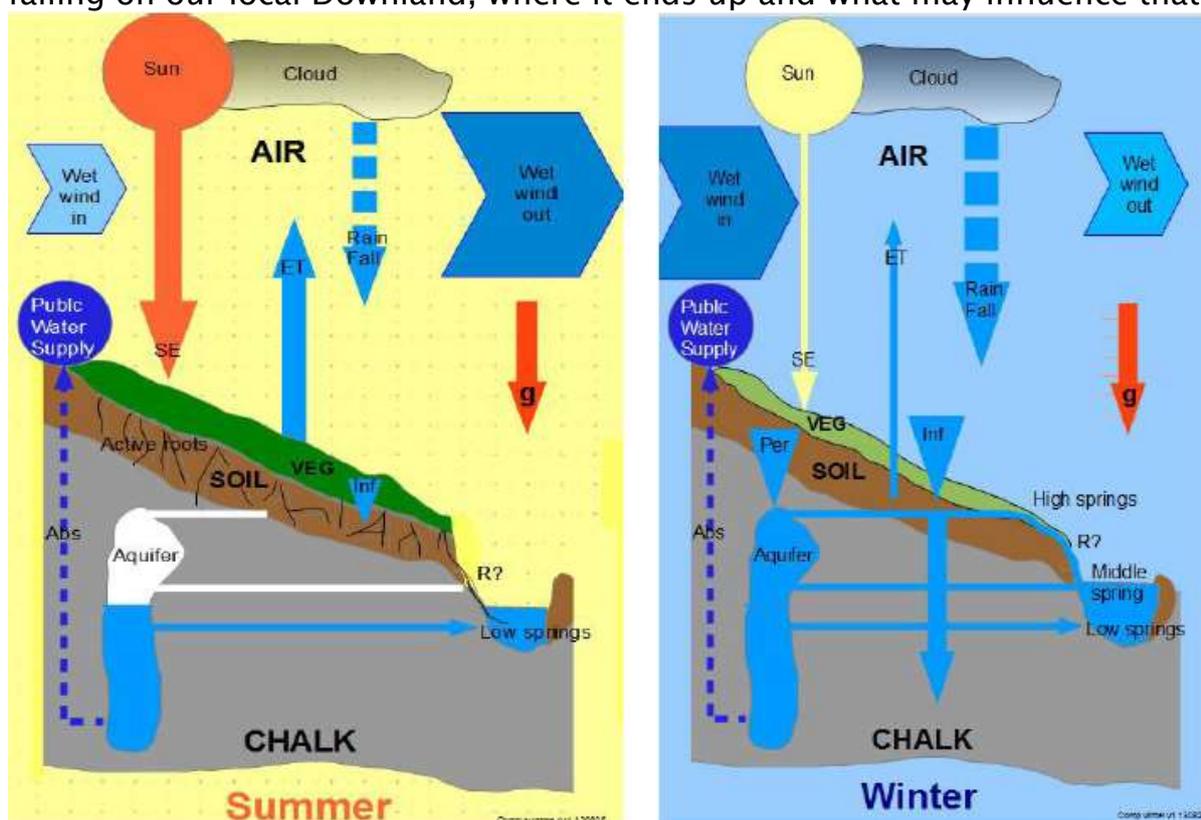


Ecosystem Service Maps

Maps of 9 types of *naturegain* (Ecosystem Services) for L&OVe focal area have been prepared and supplied by Natural England for the *Chalking up the Benefits* project. The Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre team has matched these maps with other maps they have already prepared for the area – Habitats, settlements, etc. and Colin & Henri (from SBRC) have had a look at these to see how well the ES maps fit with locally mapped features on the ground. We now want to actively ‘ground-truth’ the maps – see above for a Citizen Science local opportunity!!

Downland Water Model

Tom Crossett has designed and built a model of the Downland water system in the undercroft at the Linklater Pavilion. In early September Tom ran introductory workshop to the model and demonstrated how it works and what it represents. Its a great tool to experiment with what happens to water falling on our local Downland, where it ends up and what may influence that.



Bracknell Council & L&OVe’s Big Benefits Game

The Biodiversity Officer from Bracknell Council visited Lewes to hear about and see some of the ‘tools’ that L&OVe have been developing to raise awareness of *naturegain* locally. He wishes to try some with his local

Biodiversity Forum to see how they work in terms of people starting to think about local *naturegain*. He decided to select and trial the 'Big Benefits Game'. He found that it did help Forum members to think slightly differently and see new perspectives on Biodiversity and its relationship to ecosystem services. He plans to trial *Naturegain* Walks in the New Year as well.

Think piece

What the frack are the future benefits?

Local interest in fracking as a source of energy production is growing as a result of the preliminary 'test' drilling at Balcome and increasing interest from companies in test drilling to explore the shale gas resources in our immediate locality.

Of course, this issues is highly relevant to L&OVe and the approach we're trying to pioneer locally could make a valuable contribution to the evidence base and discussion over the issue. It could (possibly) also reduce arguments and conflict, if such an approach is taken.

What benefits do the areas/habitats overlying the shale-beds already provide for us? Are these benefits recognised? Or are they currently invisible (due their value being unrecognised and unmeasured)? Are there any associated dis-benefits/disadvantages/costs? Who gains, who loses?

What benefits will fracking those areas produce? Are there any associated dis-benefits/disadvantages/costs? Who gains, who loses? Who should have a say in what happens (i.e. whether fracking goes ahead or not)? How do we get local voices heard and taken into account?

If anyone out there would like to explore this for and with L&OVe, please get in touch.

Diary dates:

L&OVe AGM, Thurs 7 November 7.30