

Lewes & Ouse Valley **eco**-nomics Group (L&OV**e**) update June 2012

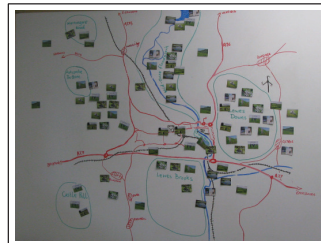
L&OV**e** – looking at the benefits to our community from our surrounding landscape

Since the last update, we've had a successful stall at TTL's 5th Birthday event (reported elsewhere in this Newsletter) which, despite rather limited time left for people to 'go exploring' around all the stalls after the talks, vox-pop and cake(!), attracted a stream of visitors to try out our "Big Benefits Game". This comprised



a map of Lewes and its surroundings on which people who wanted to play were asked to put pictures that symbolize different kinds of benefits we in Lewes receive from the environment, in the place on the map where they come from!

Quite a few people played and the result was a visual image of the benefits that we in Lewes receive from our surrounding environment – clusters of benefits like 'pollination', 'clean water', 'health through exercise', 'habitats for species' (... and a whole lot more!) started to appear on the landscape around Lewes as people identified where they got benefits from.



So, the game proved a success and brought us some new members! We'll definitely use it again at other events!

May has seen L&OV**e** become a constituted Group (with a standing committee of Sue Jappie, Diana Colvin and Colin Tingle), ready to bring forward ideas to help raise awareness in Lewes about just how our community and our local economy benefits from a healthy local environment.

We are now working on developing games and other awareness raising tools for future public events, with a key focus being the Lewes Railway Land Summer Festival on 2nd June (see below).

We've been finalizing our work programme for the South Downs 'Way Ahead' NIA project, which has taken lots of Colin's time (as prospective "Chalking up the Benefits" L&OV**e** NIA project leader - for more info see <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/funding/nia/projects/southdowns.aspx>), as mentioned in the April and May updates If anyone wants more detail please contact Colin and Watch this space!

Colin went to a Natural Capital Initiative workshop for Economists and Ecologists on 8th May aimed at encouraging greater interdisciplinary working and knowledge exchange between economists and ecologists, with the goal of informing public policy. The chosen case study theme was sustainable agriculture - see <http://www.naturalcapitalinitiative.org.uk/ecologists-economists>. If anyone's interested in hearing more, please eMail Colin (tc09@gn.apc.org).

Plans are well underway for our stand at the Lewes Railway Land Wildlife Trust's Summer Festival on 2nd June, where we'll try out our new and improved 'naturegain' game (see earlier), amongst other things. For example, there's going to be an opportunity to try your hand at writing a poem on the theme of *Love our living landscape* Susan T has written this 'haiku' to inspire you to have ago:

sheep dappled meadow

may tree blossom still in bloom

chalk spring silent flow

... a lovely poetic representation of naturegain - the way that sheep-grazed chalk downland is so important

in helping capture and filter our water for us but, of course, the haiku's soooooo much more than that too!
Do Come and visit our stall on the day ... play the game write your poem ... see what's going on and join in!

Please contact Colin (tc09@gn.apc.org or 01273 474077) for more info.

Next Full meeting – will be towards the end of June – date and venue to be decided – see webpage.