

# SUSSEX REVIEW

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**Countryside Trust**, the Sussex branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. We exist to promote the beauty, tranquility and diversity of our countryside by encouraging sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country. The opinions expressed in the Review are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Branch.

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## CPRE Sussex Countryside Awards 2013

Following highly successful competitions in 2009 and 2011 this prestigious Sussex event will be launched in January with formal nominations accepted in the New Year. Please keep your eyes and ears open for worthy nominees in the following categories:

#### – Field to Table

Food projects linking consumers with local producers and which inform and reinforce the importance of locally sourced, seasonal produce.

#### – New Sussex Landscapes

Innovative designs - buildings or structures - which enhance the environment.

#### – Sussex Rural Enterprise

Projects which bring employment or educational opportunities to rural areas.

This year, in memory of our past Vice-President, the judges will award one of the winners with the Dr. Peter Brandon Award. To read about past winners visit:

[bit.ly/cprejournalism](http://bit.ly/cprejournalism)

## CPRE Sussex Environmental Journalism Awards

These exciting new awards have been created to increase intelligent discussion around environmental issues affecting Sussex.

#### Young Journalist Award 2012.

This year standards were high and judging a challenge. After much discussion this year's overall winner was Damien Murphy with an excellent article on the Rampion Wind Farm. Catherine Roberts and Matthew Beech were worthy runners up.

The 2013 call for entries will go out to student journalists in the New Year and we plan to highlight the winning submissions in the Spring Review.

#### CPRE Sussex: Bursary

Alex Barbuti was awarded our first student journalist bursary in October and we are delighted that she will be associated with us until June 2013 when she completes her diploma. Alex has a BA in History and has worked with the Energy Saving Trust. She is currently studying on the NCJT Journalism Multimedia Course at City College Brighton & Hove and plans to use the bursary to explore sustainability and renewable energy issues and to get involved with informing and engaging young people in burning issues affecting the countryside.

## CPRE Sussex Members' Trips

Highlights included a visit to Charlotte Molesworth's magical topiary garden, tours of Brighton's Preston Manor, and an unexpectedly rain free visit to King John's nursery and gardens in Etchingham. An evening tour and beer tasting at Harvey's brewery in Lewes rounded off the year in style.

We do hope you will join us next year! We are planning, among other things, visits to the award winning High Weald Dairy, Newhaven Incinerator and a private view of the Brighton Down Farms Gardens. For full reports on all this year's trips visit: [www.cpresussex.org.uk/events/past-events](http://www.cpresussex.org.uk/events/past-events)

# UPDATE



How often has someone said to you, “What’s CPRE going to do about this?” As Chairman I hear this constantly and have to explain that we are a charity, led by members and volunteers, people passionately committed to the protection of their neighbourhood and county. Expert support and guidance are available within the Branch and we can rely on the professionalism and prestige of our National organisation. But ultimately we rely on you and your intimate knowledge of your area to challenge threats to the countryside. This is vitally important at present when we are facing a new planning system already being undermined by the Government’s fond belief that the country’s economic problems can be solved by concreting over green fields. Local plans are being formulated in every part of the county and each needs to be scrutinised and challenged throughout the consultation process. The key to doing this effectively is to strengthen District groups. Georgia our Director is now setting up meetings throughout the Branch to meet as many members as possible and to offer support.

As someone once nearly said, “Ask not what CPRE Sussex can do for you but what you can do for CPRE Sussex”. Please show your support by being active in your district and encouraging others to join.

**Rodney Chambers**  
**Chairman**



Since starting at CPRE Sussex in June I’ve been amazed at the dedication and commitment of our members and volunteers. I’m looking forward to meeting many more of you as I make my way around the Districts, and many more Sussex Parishes at our second Neighbourhood Planning event in November. We’re excited about exploring some fresh ideas for helping young people to experience the countryside, including children’s poetry competitions and photography competitions involving students. For all these exciting and new projects we need you, your energies and enthusiasm. Take a look at our recent work with Brighton College journalist students, you can see winning articles from our environmental journalism competition on our website. By the time you read this, we’ll be working with one of our Bursary students from the College to spread the word about our work.

**Georgia Wrighton**  
**Director**



# Getting used to the NPPF – how is it working in practice?

By Michael Brown

Photograph by Henry Law

*The NPPF could threaten green fields*

**It is an unusual bit of law which refers to a ‘golden thread.’ Unusual maybe, but we had better get used to it.**

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect last March and is now influencing all planning decisions.

The NPPF’s golden thread is the new presumption in favour of sustainable development allowing developments to go ahead wherever local or national rules do not contradict them.

The NPPF has three key effects. Firstly, along with development plan documents it provides the warp and weft and the decision making process for all individual planning applications.

Secondly, it will underpin local plans (formerly core strategies) that local councils up and down the country are developing. All local plans will have to conform to the NPPF.

Thirdly, after March 2013 policies in out-of-date plans that are inconsistent with the NPPF will be overridden by it. Most local planning authorities in Sussex are caught in this bind.

So the NPPF is an exceptionally powerful tool to direct future planning policy and decisions. That’s why CPRE put such huge effort into lobbying on its content. With the NPPF’s focus on delivering sustainable economic development there has been a widespread assumption that it could lead to a greater number of planning decisions going in favour of developers.

I have been working with CPRE National Office to monitor recent planning appeals in which the application of the NPPF has been a material factor. Our purpose is to

explore how the new planning regime will be applied in practice and with what degree of consistency.

Early signs are, on balance, surprisingly positive. So far I have seen little evidence that planning inspectors have been cowed into over-weighting economic arguments against other social and environmental factors.

The green belt is still receiving significant protection from unsustainable development. A council’s failure to meet its 5 year housing land supply target is not an inevitable open door for developers.

We will need to keep monitoring the application of the NPPF to individual planning decisions. It will also be important to watch how our local councils allow the NPPF to influence and embroider their developing district plans. Like the Bayeux tapestry the NPPF tells a long story that will prove difficult reliably to unravel.



# NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

## Alive and kicking in Sussex!

By Georgia Wrighton

**Neighbourhood planning is the new kid on the block in the complex and controversial world of planning.**

*The Barcombe neighbourhood planning workshop*



The Localism Act passed last year gives communities the power to develop a neighbourhood plan that allows them to decide where development will go.

CPRE Sussex's neighbourhood planning event this summer was attended by enthusiastic representatives from nine parishes from across the county. Delegates from the parish councils of Ashurst Wood, Chiddingly, Clymping, Felpham, Forest Row, Hamsey, Newick, Plaistow, Ifold and Westbourne gathered in the beautiful setting of Barcombe Village Hall to discuss local issues and learn how to launch their own neighbourhood plans.

Participants were keen to discover what kind of support is available for communities producing a neighbourhood plan. Questions were raised about the value of going through the process at all; will all the effort be worthwhile in the end? What influence could a community have against the might of corporate lawyers threatening unwelcome development, and will future governments remove neighbourhood planning?

Although the status of parishes and neighbourhoods in planning has been elevated, they can't be anti-growth; they have to accept the development laid out in the district local plan. They can, however, decide where local development goes and what sort of development they want to attract.

The new neighbourhood planning tier can also help build good relationships with district councils. This could give communities greater influence over district decisions on strategic sites and levels of development, as well as infrastructure wish-lists such as schools, community centres and transport.

This event was made possible by the government funded 'Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning Fund' run by CPRE and the National Association of Local Councils. We have a reserve list of parishes keen to participate in future events and by the time you read this we will have held a second event in Sussex. CPRE's national team continues to provide direct support for several parishes that have started their neighbourhood planning process. CPRE Sussex staff and trustees have already participated in workshops at Maresfield, Findon, Felpham and Newick.

It's been a real pleasure to meet everyone and we hope to work with many more of you in the future. Please let us know if you would like to be added to our list for future events and workshops at [info@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:info@cpresussex.org.uk)

**Parishes and neighbourhoods can decide where local development goes and what sort of development they want to attract.**



# Frackturing the Sussex landscape

By **Jessica Mayall**

## The new buzzword in energy is Fracking.

Could natural gas forced from the ground provide us with a cheap domestic energy source and cut our reliance on imports? Or it will wreck our rural landscape, pollute our drinking water and set off earthquakes? The answers to these questions are vitally important to Sussex where the fracking companies are already moving in.

Hydraulic fracturing – fracking – extracts shale gas by drilling up to 2,500 metres vertically and then up to 3,000 metres horizontally. More than two million gallons of water, sand and chemicals are pumped into the wellbore at high pressure to crack shale rock and release natural gas.

Fracking, used extensively in America, is a recent prospect for the UK. In 2011, a test bore by drilling company Cuadrilla in Lancashire led to controversy when it was claimed to have caused earth tremors.

To the horror of many residents, West Sussex County Council has given Cuadrilla planning permission to frack south of Balcombe village,

between Haywards Heath and Crawley.

CPRE Sussex was among those attending a Friends of the Earth event on fracking at the Liberal Democrat conference in Brighton. Tony Bosworth, FoE's climate and energy campaigner, told the meeting: "In an area like Sussex with water resource problems, it's a big issue. Fracking is a hugely

would put global temperatures on course to rise by 3.5°C."

Tina Rothery from Residents Action on Fylde Fracking in Lancashire spoke of the environmental and health concerns, declaring: "We have a right to be terrified." Andy Chyba of The Vale Says No told of how his community opposed a scheme in the Vale of Glamorgan, winning strict planning conditions it hopes will prevent fracking in Wales.

Councillor Sue McGuire from Sefton Borough Council said that if fracking cannot be prevented, tighter regulation needs to be put in place. "There needs to be full disclosure. Environmental impact assessment has to be a requirement. All commercial interests must be held liable for any adverse consequences, foreseeable or otherwise."

CPRE Sussex is insisting that the precautionary principle should be followed and is calling for fracking to be halted until all the risks have been fully explored.

**In 2011, a test bore by drilling company Cuadrilla in Lancashire led to controversy when it was claimed to have caused earth tremors.**

water intensive industry; is this the best way to use precious water resources?" He also warned that fracking will increase climate change: "the International Energy Agency has said that a rise in gas use

*The Fracking Fringe event organised by Friends of the Earth at the Liberal Democrat Conference in Brighton.*

*Panel members: FoE campaigner Tony Bosworth, Tina Rothery of Residents Action on Fylde Fracking, Cllr Louise Bloom, Eastleigh Borough Council, Andy Chyba, The Vale Says No., Councillor Sue McGuire, Sefton Borough Council, and Howard Johns, Southern Solar.*







# THE FIGHT FOR COMBE HAVEN VALLEY

By **Stephen Hardy**

This Bexhill to Hastings Link Road may sound like a minor road scheme between two East Sussex towns, but it is in reality the relic of a grandiose scheme to build a motorway-style road from Folkestone to Honiton in Devon.

Plans for this South Coast Trunk Road survived until Labour killed off the idea in 2002 – but parts of it still show signs of life, including the Bexhill-Hastings Link Road, despite valiant attempts by the Hastings Alliance to finish it off.

The Alliance is an umbrella group formed to fight the road scheme, bringing together CPRE, RSPB, Friends of the Earth, the Campaign for Better Transport and many local groups and individuals.

If the road is built, it will destroy Combe Haven Valley, an untouched

sanctuary for wildlife which includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest, ancient woodlands and a dormouse habitat. The absence of roads in this alluvial floodplain has meant that it is a tranquil wilderness, immediately accessible on foot or bicycle for 130,000 people. It is a wonderful recreational, educational and tourism asset, and must be preserved for future generations.

**The scheme will have a devastating impact on carbon emissions.**

East Sussex County Council argues that a road will reduce congestion on the A259, and will open up land for new housing and business developments. In the consultation in 2004, it offered five different road schemes, all crossing Combe Haven Valley. The council has not explored alternative solutions such

as improving the current road, bus and rail infrastructure.

The road scheme will have a devastating impact on carbon emissions, and is far and away the worst of all current government-backed road schemes for reducing carbon emissions. Half the cost of the road will have to be funded by ESCC taxpayers, diverting scarce funds from vital services.

The government earmarked a £56 million contribution to the £93.8 million cost of the road in the March 2012 budget. The Hastings Alliance has since redoubled its efforts, taking its case to the high court. That legal challenge was rejected by a judge on 5 October.

What can we do now? Campaigners intend to continue lobbying councillors against this expensive folly. Up-to-date information will be found on the websites of the Hastings Alliance ([hastingsalliance.com](http://hastingsalliance.com)) and CPRE Sussex.



# Gatwick – growth at any cost?

A personal view from **Justin French-Brooks**

Gatwick Airport is currently the world's busiest single-runway airport, with recently announced plans for a second runway.

It is already a significant source of development pressure and congestion for miles around and it doesn't take much to imagine the immense damage an airport twice its current size would cause to the Sussex countryside.

It can be difficult to keep up with shifting government aviation policy, but given its importance to our branch, it is a priority for us. The more so as we have just heard that Gatwick is planning for a second runway.

Followers of current affairs will have noticed the growing clamour for the coalition government to 'do something' to kick-start economic growth. There is huge pressure from airport operators and business interests for airport expansion in the South East, ostensibly to protect the UK's economic competitiveness. However, any imminent verdict has been put off by the government's recent decision to set up a so-called independent commission to analyse ways in which to expand airport capacity in the south east.

With the commission due to report in late 2015, the decision on whether to expand airport capacity around London, including the possibility of building a second runway at Gatwick, has been passed on to the next government. This allows the

coalition to keep to its commitment not to expand capacity during this government, a decision we warmly welcome.

Any future plans to expand Gatwick would clearly have massive impact on the Sussex countryside, including flight noise, air pollution, road traffic and development pressure. We have deep reservations about the predicted economic benefits.

The South East has, in general, not been nearly as affected by the recession as other regions. With unemployment levels significantly lower than the national average, the often-quoted economic argument that 'we need more jobs' remains open to question. The number and quality of employment opportunities provided by airport operations are also debatable, with seasonal jobs often a significant feature.

What are we doing to keep on top of this brief? There is an agreement preventing the development of a second runway at Gatwick before 2019 but just as we go to press, Gatwick's chief Stewart Wingate has announced that the airport has started work on planning for a second runway.

CPRE Sussex is joining forces with its sister organisation, CPRE Surrey, and is working with GACC, the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, to oppose any new runway. I hope you'll agree that we must work together to protect the remaining rural character of the area.

*Word frequency plot of Gatwick Masterplan 2012 via tagxedo.com*





# THE FRUSTRATION OF WATER

By **Stuart Derwent and Andy Boddington**

It's been raining for nearly two days now. This September morning is almost as dark as night. The local rivers are on flood alert. The newly dug garden has been pummelled into potter's clay. And the task for the day is to write about water shortages!

It's been a frustrating year. Most years, the summer rain rarely provides any recharge of water resources – though it has the great benefit of watering gardens and keeping hosepipes in the sheds where they belong. If a summer is particularly dry the landscape could end up with a soil moisture deficit of around six inches or so, needing at least six inches of autumn rainfall to re-saturate the surface. But despite earlier worries about a prolonged drought, there is little danger of moisture deficit this year.

For once, the summer rainfall has replenished some of our supplies. Weir Wood reservoir, which holds 5,600 million litres of water to supply north Sussex, was well below normal levels earlier in the year. With the dramatic end to the drought the reservoir is now fuller than usual. Reservoirs are but a small part of the picture. Around 70% of the water used in the south of England is drawn from boreholes, 23% from rivers and just 7% from reservoirs. It will take longer for the underground aquifers to replenish.

Our problem in Sussex is not so much shortage of water, but waste of water. People in the South East of England use 150 litres of water a day each, but houses

fitted with a water meter tend to use around 10% less. Water companies, under pressure from the Environment Agency and the regulator Ofwat, are slowly taking metering seriously. Houses in East Grinstead and Worth have just been fitted with meters by South East Water, though towns such as Lewes will not be metered until 2020. Southern Water is hoping to meter 95% of the homes it supplies by 2015.

**Our problem in Sussex is not so much shortage of water, but waste.**

Water shortages are not helped by leakage from mains pipes. Across England and Wales leaks have been reduced by a mere 5% over the past 13 years. Southern Water is even being allowed to increase the amount of water it loses through leaks by 6% by 2015!

So what about the future? We should do more to recycle wastewater. Two thirds of the highly treated wastewater in Southern Water's area is discharged to the sea. It is still in the water cycle but is lost to the saline environment. That is a waste of a valuable resource. So why do we not move it back inland to recharge our rivers after further treatment if river flows are low in late summer?

# DISTRICT HEADLINES



## HORSHAM & CRAWLEY

Dr Roger Smith

roger@rogerfinch.fsnet.co.uk

*Pictured – member Jean Locker*

- Horsham District Planning Framework – consultation on 'Preferred Strategy' early 2013.
- House numbers are likely to be greater than allocated in the South East Plan.
- Engaging with Horsham council over strategic sites.



## MID SUSSEX

Justin French-Brooks

01342 323908

justin.french-brooks@cpresussex.org.uk

- Wealden District core strategy public examination
- Mid Sussex District Plan.
- Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath & SW East Grinstead.
- Neighbourhood groups campaigning against proposed urban extensions.



## CHICHESTER NORTH

Michael Dew

01428 741322

michaeldew97@yahoo.com

- Manhood Peninsula – Almodington Glasshouses Appeal dismissed – see page 16.
- Tangmere, Selsey – Solar Arrays Applications challenged as intrusions into the countryside.
- Summersdale, Lavant – Developments proposed in Strategic Gap between Chichester, Goodwood motor circuit and South Downs villages.
- Open meeting planned for winter to help monitor Local Plan.



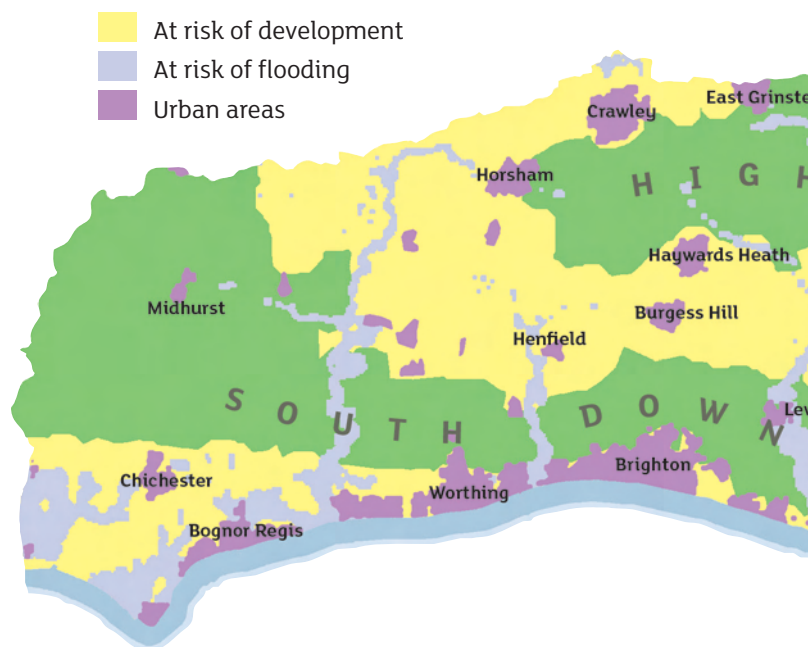
## CHICHESTER SOUTH

Rodney Chambers

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rodneychambers@hotmail.co.uk

- Lavant/Chichester Strategic Gap application for 92 houses between South Downs villages and city.
- Woolbeding – St Cuthman's School plans to increase use of old school site from 100 to a 650 pupil school. More suitable sites are available for evaluation.
- Boxgrove Quarry – objections to impacts of delivery and processing of 980,000 tons of waste over five years.



## ARUN

Martin Beaton

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martinl.beaton@gmail.com

- Arun District Council consulted on its draft Local Plan to 2028.
- Identifies Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate to take at least 1700 new homes, Angmering named a strategic growth location for up to 1030 new homes.



## 2% of East Sussex is unprotected, undesignated countryside.

local area and watch out for new development proposals.

ies to both Liz Beeney at [info@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:info@cpresussex.org.uk) and to your District Representative.

ct reports please visit: [www.cpresussex.org.uk/news/news-from-sussex-districts](http://www.cpresussex.org.uk/news/news-from-sussex-districts)



### WEALDEN NORTH

Lesley Wilson  
01825 768886  
[lesley@oldoast.com](mailto:lesley@oldoast.com)

- 'Glamping' – luxury camping, often with semi-permanent structures placing strain on countryside and woodland – watching brief.
- Wealden Core Strategy – includes highly controversial proposals for Ashdown Forest and Heathfield – inspector's report due.



### WEALDEN SOUTH

John Hurwood  
01323 870020  
[john@hurwood.com](mailto:john@hurwood.com)

- Building on AONB sites around Heathfield almost ruled out.
- Since 1st April all planning in the southern part of Wealden South is the responsibility of South Downs National Park Authority.



### LEWES

Gerald Summerfield  
01273 305416  
[bgsumfield98@talktalk.net](mailto:bgsumfield98@talktalk.net)

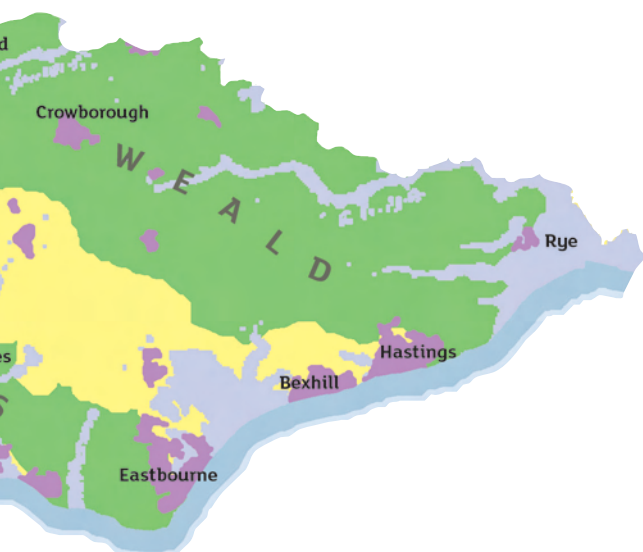
- Newhaven Incinerator now operational.
- Peacehaven Wastewater Plant – now constructed underground.
- Lewes District Core Strategy – revised version to be published taking account of consultation.



### ROTHER & HASTINGS

Stephen Hardy  
01580 883850  
[stephen@stephenhardy.org.uk](mailto:stephen@stephenhardy.org.uk)

- Bexhill Hastings Link Road – see page 7.
- We hope the NPPF spurs both Hastings and Rother to finalise local plans.



### ADUR & WORTHING

David Start  
01903 232585  
[david.start255@btinternet.com](mailto:david.start255@btinternet.com)  
*Pictured – volunteer Danielle Page*

- Adur Local Plan proposal includes threats to fields on village and town edges.
- CPRE Sussex Spring Conference to be held at Ropetackle, Shoreham-by-Sea.



### BRIGHTON & HOVE

Stuart Derwent  
01273 555151  
[stuart.derwent@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:stuart.derwent@cpresussex.org.uk)

- Brighton & Hove City Plan – vision for growth up to 2030 includes development on Toads Hole Valley green space.
- Rampion Wind Farm – Response to Environmental Impact Assessment submitted.

# NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER

A call for action by Tom Bradford

Many of my childhood memories are of being forcefully dragged to country gardens, local nature reserves, woodlands and lakes only to get there and become completely absorbed in play. My brother and I would tear around gardens terrorising visitors with our energetic games, clamber over specimen trees, hide in dense shrubberies, charge through flower beds and generally have the time of our lives whilst burning off bottled up energy from sitting indoors.

Today there is a distinct lack of children engaging in outdoor activities and there are far fewer visits to natural settings. Research suggests this is a very significant

problem for the future of the English landscape and even more detrimental to the lives of children.

During this period with a growing gap between children and nature, there has also been a rise in physical and mental health problems, most importantly obesity and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Richard Louv linked these events and coined the term Nature Deficit Disorder to describe the human costs of alienation from nature.

Frequent childhood visits to woodlands and country places increases the likelihood of repeat visits during adulthood. The importance this is recognised by David Attenborough:

“No one will protect what they don’t care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced.”

The children of today are the future decision makers of our planet. If they don’t value the landscape, it will be low on their list of priorities.

Many groups in the UK are working to bridge the gap, campaigning for safer play areas, greater access to green spaces and organising trips to nature sites. Parent and teacher associations in schools, parish councils, the Scout and Guide Movement, Mumsnet, the Women’s Institute, Neighbourhood Watch and the National Trust are among those working on incentives to get children outdoors.

In Australia and the USA, family nature clubs have been set up to encourage groups to experience the rewards of being outdoors. This is a model the UK could follow to get families, friends and communities together.

A modern way of thinking in relation to tackling the deficit seems to be not taking people to nature but by bringing nature to people. Kofi Annan stated back in 2002: ‘The future of humanity lies in cities,’ and with over 90% of the UK population living within urban areas this is already beginning to ring true. By bringing extracts from





**The children of today  
are the future decision-  
makers of our planet.**

the countryside into towns and cities you're not only giving the population the benefits associated with nature but you're also giving them a glimpse of the greater outdoors. This can lead to a curiosity amongst people and eventually drawing them into the countryside to see the wonders that lie there.

High profile sites such as the London Olympic Games arena have integrated natural plantings into the designs to encourage biodiversity and interaction with people and nature. This includes linking the site to the surrounding areas with "fringe" projects which connect the neighbouring communities to the park with pleasant green spaces.

The Leyton Links project aims to "re-ruralise" a road (Marsh Lane) using adventurous design to make it feel like a rugged and wild setting right in the heart of the east end of London.

Cities are starting to put together comprehensive biodiversity action plans and implementing projects within urban areas. Councils and housing associations like Worthing Homes have begun increasing the wild areas in green spaces to encourage wildlife and increase biodiversity. Fairly run down green spaces have been transformed into diverse spaces incorporating outdoor play for children of all ages. These sites have now been bordered by natural plantings such as those seen in hedgerows aligning agricultural land or meadows that caress the top of the South Downs.

We already have lots of ideas for encouraging children and young people to explore the countryside through creative competitions, and would also love to hear your ideas of ways to help communities create their own nature hot spots.

This action would go a long way to realising Andrew Motion's exhortation for CPRE to "make an effort to get people in general, and young people in particular, out there: to walk through a field, to learn how their meat gets onto the table."



Photographs: Rose Hoare

# From a Puddle to a Drop in the Ocean

By **Fran Southgate, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Arun and Rother**

## On the whole, I am a big fan of water and anything wet. It would be a worry if I wasn't as I'm the Wetlands Officer for the Wildlife Trust!

But even I started to tire of the constant rain which dogged our British summer and which caused local flooding chaos. Flooding is particularly annoying when you've just been told there's a drought, and the next minute you're up to your knees in water. It seems beyond belief – surely someone is getting it wrong? Either it's wet or it's dry but let's make up our minds!

Surprisingly, despite the presence of water in our every breath and in everything we do, we seem to have lost our understanding of how water weaves its way through our lives and landscapes. Less than 0.01% of the world's water is fresh water, and that fresh water has to keep people, wildlife habitats, food production and industry going. It is sobering to think that when consumer goods are taken into account, each resident of Sussex uses around 23 tonnes of water per week!

The recent drought is largely a drought of our underground aquifers, from which we take up to 70% of the drinking water in Sussex. We are drawing water much faster from these aquifers than our landscapes can replenish it. The current floods are caused mostly by surface water running off impermeable surfaces. It eventually drains out to sea before we can use it to quench the thirst of our parched gardens and fields.

In April this year, the Heritage Lottery Fund approved funding for the first year of the Arun and Rother Connections (ARC) Project: Linking Landscape and Community. In developing ARC, the Sussex Wildlife Trust is working closely with the RSPB, South Downs National Park Authority, Natural England, the Environment Agency, West Sussex County Council, and the new Arun and Rother Rivers Trust. We hope project funding will continue until at least March 2016.

ARC hopes to help communities understand and find sustainable solutions to some of the bigger problems they face, including flooding and invasive species invasions. We're not envisaging that these solutions involve building a big wooden boat on to which we lead animals two by two before a flood! Instead, we aim to give the local community a real say in identifying the problems faced by their local rivers and water, and how we can all work together to find adaptable solutions. The combined population of the Arun and Rother river catchments is huge. Just by using one litre of water less a day each, people can make a difference to the drought. They often just don't



*Above: Arun and Rother river catchment (blue)*





know how to achieve this and that is where we hope ARC can help.

We hope to involve people from all walks of life. Local project officers will be available to provide support and advice. Funding will be available for local community and education projects based around rivers and water. Grants will be available to help people understand, access and improve their local river landscapes. Improvements to visitor facilities on nature reserves at Pulborough Brooks, Burton Mill Pond and Waltham Brooks will help local people enjoy their local rivers more. There will also be opportunities for people to get involved with positive management of their rivers.

Wetlands and rivers are incredibly bio-diverse places and fascinating wildlife can be seen in the ARC project area. We hope to encourage water voles, otters, brown trout, dragonflies,

rare plants, rare wetland birds and much more to return to less threatened levels – and we hope that local people and visitors will thoroughly enjoy watching their return. We hope that ARC can be the rainbow which signals the end of the decline of the essential natural goods and services that this stunning river valley can provide.

What we are doing now is just a drop in the ocean. We need to do much more to develop a flourishing and healthy landscape in order to continue to support the large populations in Sussex. We want to help people to see how important some of the soggy bits of Sussex are for helping us provide food, water, carbon storage and more, as well as being beautiful places. We've made a start. With your help we can do more to tackle some of the really big issues we face with water in the landscape and our interactions with it.

**Just by using one litre of water less a day each, people can make a difference to the drought.**

If you would like to be involved in the ARC project, then please contact the ARC project officer, [Rachel.Carless@rspb.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.Carless@rspb.org.uk).

A report on the State of and Potential for Sussex Wetlands will be available shortly from [www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk).

# GLASSHOUSES REFUSED

## Ratty and CPRE celebrate!

By **Jane Reeve & Andy Boddington**  
(with apologies to Kenneth Grahame)

"Hullo, Mole!" said the Water Rat. "Hullo, Rat!" said the Mole. "Have you heard the news?" enquired the Rat presently. "News?" said the Mole. "Oh, it's all very well to talk," he muttered, not being one for much talking.

"It's important to talk," the Rat complained seriously. The Rat could be very serious. So serious he didn't like being called a Rat at all. He was a Water Vole. He was proud of it. "It's the glasshouses we must talk about," he said with an air of importance.

"What glasshouses?" muttered Mole as he trotted off. Hither and thither through the meadows he busied, along the hedgerows, across the copses, finding everywhere birds building, flowers budding – everything happy, and progressive, and occupied. "It is too good to be true," Mole said out loud without knowing he said it. "It is too good to be true," said the Rat shortly as he climbed out of the ditch after a swim.

Ratty was an expert swimmer. All the water voles of the Manhood Peninsular are expert swimmers. They need to be, otherwise they would soon become a meal for the cats, foxes and any other hungry predator passing by. Here, in the rifles and ditches of the Peninsular, the voles are at least snug and safe from the beastly American minks that are killing their friends elsewhere. But alas! they are threatened by an even more deadly enemy.

Humans said the name of the enemy was Madestein, but Ratty and

even Badger did not know how to say that word. So they called the enemy Toad. And it was Toad that wanted to build the glasshouses over Rat's ditches and Mole's burrows. It was Toad that wanted to bury the homes and feeding grounds of all manner of animals, beasties and bugs too numerous to mention.

"It is too good to be true," Rat said again rather too loudly. "The glasshouses will destroy it all!" But Mole was in no mood for listening to words. So they both stepped into a little boat and drifted down the

**It was Toad that wanted to bury the homes and feeding grounds of all manner of animals**

ditch in the hot sun. Soon they felt very tired and they curled up in the reeds at the side of the ditch for an afternoon nap.

"The hour has come!" The Rat and Mole woke with a start to find the Badger towering over them.

"The hour has come!" boomed the Badger again with great solemnity. The two animals looked at each other and laughed. "What hour?" they said in unison. "Whose hour, you should rather say," replied the Badger. "Why, Toad's hour! The hour of Toad! I said I would take him in hand over these foolish glasshouses and I'm going to take him in hand to-day!"

"Hooray!" cried the Mole. "We'll teach him to be a sensible Toad!" Ratty shouted. Presently, all three trotted off to confront Toad. Eventually they found themselves in a big room and Badger told them solemnly they were at The Public Inquiry.

Mole would admit, if he ever admitted to anything, that he did not understand anything about The Public Inquiry. Even the Rat had to confide to Badger that he didn't understand what The Public Inquiry was. Badger turned to him knowingly and whispered that even most humans didn't understand either The Planning System or The Public Inquiry. That made the Rat feel happier, but no less confused.

Rat and Mole made themselves comfortable in armchairs and waited patiently. As they dozed, they could hear the long continuous drone of the Badger's voice, rising and falling in waves of oratory. Toad was replying with great spirit. It seemed to go on for days. Mole and Rat took it in turns to sleep at The Public Inquiry, each in turn pretending to listen while Badger and Toad argued about the glasshouses.

"Greenhousegasesclimatechangeconomyjobsprofitfoodsustainability," is what Rat thought he heard Toad say.

"Watervolesenvironmenttranquilityecologytrafficcommunitiessustainability," is what Mole thought he heard Badger reply. Then, suddenly, it was over.





Photo by Joan North

*'Ratty' – a water vole.*

Rat was not sure just what was over but, to be on the safe side, he said to Badger “You did it awfully well.” Badger grumbled. He was in much need of a long ramble round his wood and a scramble down his earths and burrows. “We have won,” he said rather too proudly. “Won what?” said Mole blinking sleepily. “There will be no glasshouses on the Manhood Peninsular! Your homes are safe from Toad,” Badger said triumphantly.

“Oh, good,” said Rat. “Can we go home now?” muttered Mole. “We will all go home and live happily ever after,” Badger declared forcefully.

But is Badger right? Toad’s plan for glasshouses has been shattered, but has he learnt the folly of his ways? Will Badger, Mole and Rat live happily ever after?

Or will Toad, as gaily as before, try to build glasshouses again?

“We are delighted that this damaging development will not be allowed to go ahead, as are other campaigning groups. Our representatives at the Public Inquiry Stuart Meier and Martin Small fought hard and stood up for the distinctive landscape and unique tranquility of the Peninsula, which once lost to commercial development would have been lost forever.

“The Inspector upheld the important principle that truly sustainable development has three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. We welcome her robust interpretation of government policy, which we feared, could leave the door open for commercial economic gains to come before the environment and people.

“Only sustainable growth is supported in national and regional policies. The harm to the environment from this scheme would not be outweighed by its overall economic benefits.

“In her report the Inspector responded directly to the concerns about the local landscape, concluding: “The serious impacts of the development on the character and appearance of the area are severe.”

Georgia Wrighton, Director



# SUPER FARMS

## Big is not always beautiful

By **Ben Stafford**  
CPRE Head of Campaigns

Earlier this summer, a vigorous debate bubbled about so-called super farms. Peter Kendall, president of the National Farmers' Union (NFU) said that the UK could do with more and bigger farms. He argued that these would contribute to profitable farming and food security, as well as providing environmental and animal welfare benefits.

His suggestion followed controversy last year over a proposed mega dairy at Nocton in Lincolnshire, which was eventually refused permission after the Environment Agency raised concerns.

The super farms debate has subsided for the moment, in part because not all farmers welcomed it, but pressure is likely to continue for large-scale agricultural models. So could super farms really be 'super' – or are they a recipe for a kind of countryside most of us would not want to see?

CPRE wants British farming to be both profitable and successful. We count many farmers among our members and supporters, and value the variety of the farmed landscape as fundamental to the character and quality of our countryside. We have also worked with the NFU to support our farming industry and those who work in it.

But how our farmers farm – the mix of farming, its location and



Photo: Andy Boddington

**How our farmers farm – the mix of farming, its location and scale – shapes much of England's countryside.**

scale – shapes much of England's countryside. We do not believe that a move towards intensive super farms would improve the quality of the countryside, a source of relaxation and inspiration to millions.

Extensive production of livestock plays an important role in supporting local food networks and the rural economy, and helps maintain wildlife habitats. It ensures that features that add character to our landscapes, such as hedgerows and dry stone walls, are maintained. Consolidation of production into a few large intensive units would place even more

*Grazing helps maintain wildlife habitats*

pressure on small producers who are already struggling. It might suit the supermarkets, with their centralised supply and distribution models, but it would almost certainly lead to a poorer and less diverse countryside. It would probably also mean fewer small farmers, and that might explain why Mr Kendall's comments were not welcomed by everyone in the industry.

CPRE is very happy to see a debate about the kind of farming we want in this country. We're contributing to that through our Vision for the Future of Farming and our Mapping Local Food Webs work. But let's not think that big is always beautiful.



# Organic steelworker

**Andy Boddington** talks to Tim Hassell

As I chat to Tim, I am puzzled by his accent. It's certainly the voice of a countryman but it's not quite Sussex. I am finding it hard to place his roots.

Tim Hassell is Farm General Manager of Goodwood, the estate of the Dukes of Richmond that is famed for horse and motor racing. There, with a team of nine, he oversees more than 3,000 acres which are home to 180 dairy Shorthorn cows, 400 beef cattle, 1,000 breeding ewes, a 40-strong suckler herd of Sussex cattle, 30 sows and almost too many piglets to count. The whole operation is organic, thriving at a time when some organic producers are giving up. Last year, the number of organic producers and processors in the UK fell by 4% and sales of organic foods went down by almost as much. Not so at Goodwood, which is seeing year on year growth, though premiums are inevitably being squeezed in the current financial climate.

"I think organic has a future," Tim tells me. "Organic is not for everyone and not everybody can do what we do. The Downs fit organic farming well. Conventional farming wouldn't get more out of the land."

The aim is to add value to produce before it is sold from the farm. Goodwood's organic milk, neither pasteurised or homogenised, is so popular it has to be ordered in advance. More milk is turned into Goodwood cheese – either the tangy and hard Charlton, the creamy Camembert-style Levin Down, or the soft Molecomb Blue. Goodwood products succeed, Tim tells me, because "customers are interested in where food comes from. As a country

we produce fantastic animals." Most of Goodwood's food is sold within 30 miles of the farm, though rose veal – produced to the highest welfare standards – is delivered to the restaurants of Fortnum and Mason in London.

Tim also grows 500 acres of cereal. Malt and barley is dispatched to the Hepworth brewery in Horsham. Bottled beer is shipped back to quench the thirst of the crowds at Goodwood's horse and motor racing events, where punters can also tuck into burgers crafted from meat produced on the farm.

Tim lets slip he was born in Deepcar, north of Sheffield. There he fell in love with farming while

helping out on a small beef farm. A boyhood passion turned into a career, taking Tim to Gloucestershire, Northumberland, Hampshire, and then to Sussex and Goodwood. That's why his accent is hard to place.

He loves every minute of his job. "It's a pleasure to be driving around the countryside as part of the job, doing what other people can only do as recreation." He particularly enjoys talking to groups of visiting children, trying to sow seeds of interest in good food and farming. "Will your children be farmers?" I ask. Tim laughs. It seems that the days of farmer's sons and daughter's following in their parent's footsteps has ended. After all, his own father was a steelworker. And as Tim's work at Goodwood shows, you don't have to be born into farming to make a success of it.

*Tim Hassell is Farm General Manager at Goodwood, the estate of the Dukes of Richmond*



*Don Foster at Brighton Farmers' Market*

# MORE THAN JUST FOOD



Photo: Communities Department

## It was good to see local government minister Don Foster visit Brighton Farmers Market to support “Organic September” and encourage the public to “Buy British.”

Fortunately, it does not take a government minister to encourage us to shop local. The local food and drink sector in England last year was worth at least £2.7 billion according to CPRE estimates.

Over the last five years CPRE has established itself as a champion of local food. In a series of Field to Fork studies around the country, it has worked to raise awareness of the importance of local food networks to producers, retailers and communities.

One of the studies looked at local food in the Hastings area. CPRE Sussex volunteers, supported by Transition Hastings and Hastings Environment Network, conducted interviews with retailers, producers and local residents. The team found that over 60 local producers (within 30 miles) supplied Hastings. The local food network supported between 130 and 170 jobs at shops,

cafés and markets, and up to 600 jobs at producers. Local food sales in Hastings are estimated to be between £1.7 and £3.4 million a year.

Small shops also play a community role. One café owner explained: “You end up counselling people. You have to nurture and listen. People don’t just come in for tea; they come for a chat!” Half of outlets surveyed promoted local events, clubs and organisations by displaying posters, selling tickets for local events and telling their customers about local issues. “I am determined to support good local causes; I’m always backing local campaigns,” one said.

CPRE is calling on Hastings Borough Council to ensure that its policies recognise that smaller outlets selling local food contribute to the social and economic life of the town as well as environmental sustainability. It says that councillors should identify butchers, greengrocers and bakers as essential

local services and make it harder for them to be converted to other uses, such as chain cafés.

Outlets selling local food also support diversity in the farming system and help maintain the character of the local countryside. But agricultural land producing local food is threatened by the proposed Hastings to Bexhill relief road (page 7), which is set to reduce the landholdings of five farms. One of these is a community supported agriculture (CSA) scheme directly feeding 25 Hastings families. As Sarah Blackford of Upper Wilting Farm and the CSA told the researchers: “If the road is built it will take about 5% of the farm and will cut through prime pasture; effectively this will take our pigs and cattle enterprises. The viability of the farm will be seriously in question.”

Would you be interested in getting involved in Local Food Mapping in your area? For more information email [info@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:info@cpresussex.org.uk)