

love our **Ouse**

Community Mapping

Lewes Climate Hub

March 22-24th 2023



Overview

Love our Ouse delivered their second community mapping exercise at the Lewes Climate Hub, 32 High St, Lewes BN7 2LL as part of their 'Water month'. The activity ran for 3 days, 11-3pm daily during an open, free event suitable for all.



Aims and purpose

- Gauge and understand how people interact and connect with their river
- Build a picture of what's important to people
- Identify and build upon key features of the river
- Create a means for identifying problems & solutions
- Identify and sign up interested people/groups to get involved
- Help prioritise, link up & focus learning areas and actions

Specification

The mapping consisted of 7 large A0 sized laminated maps of the entire length of the River Ouse and surrounding land 2km each side of the river with tributaries included for limited stretches where they meet the Ouse.

Features added to maps:

- The route and key tributaries were highlighted by pathways of coloured dot stickers
- Key town and village names identified by stickers
- photos of specific places added next to their location

Method of delivery:

The exercise was delivered by a rota of volunteer facilitators with Love our Ouse staff guidance and visual prompts in the form of printed sheets next to the maps. Public were invited to contribute entries by writing on post it notes and sticking them directly to the maps.

44 post it note contributions

A large majority of contributions are assumed to be by different people.



love our Ouse

celebrate learn act

RIVER MAPPING INSTRUCTIONS

We want to understand and look after our beautiful River Ouse and we want to hear from you!

Please answer any of the questions (below) that you'd like to, on the corresponding-coloured post it notes, and place at the relevant location along the river or one of its tributaries.

If you are happy to write your name and a contact email on the back of the post it note that would be very helpful too.*

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and appreciate your help in our work to Love Our Ouse!

Thank you

*Love Our Ouse will only use your contact details in connection with our work and will never pass them to any other organisation

RIVER MAPPING QUESTIONS

Rights of the River - Blue Post it Notes

We believe the River Ouse has rights. Help us to evidence these rights by considering the following:

- **The right not to be polluted.** Are there particular locations on the river you think are being polluted? What is the type of pollution?
- **The right to a rich and diverse ecology.** Do you know of any places where the river's wildlife and nature is being impacted? What is the cause?
- **The right to flow.** Have you seen any blockages in the river? Where?

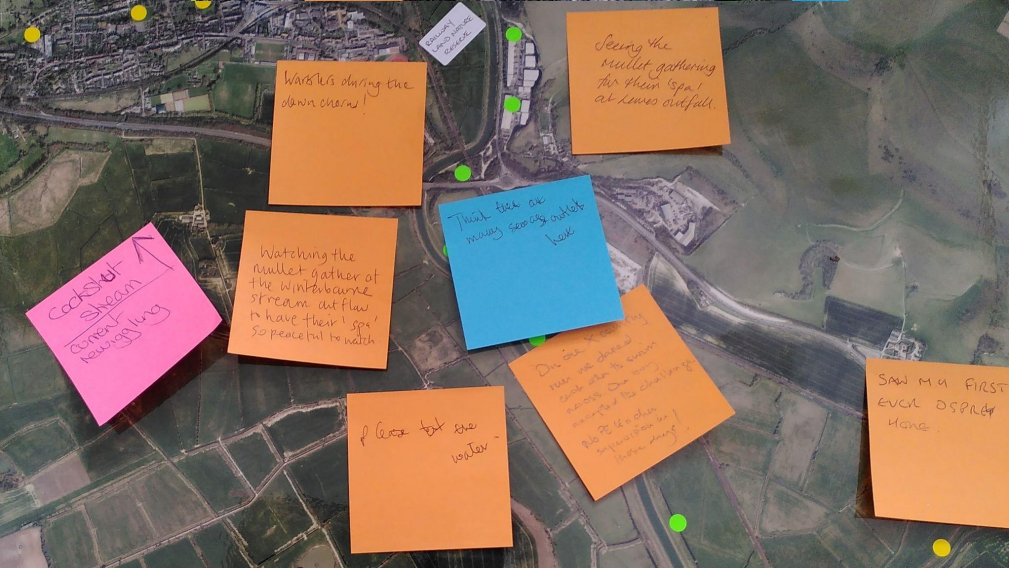
Water Quality – Green Post it Notes

We are planning a citizen science project to test water quality at fixed points along the river on a regular basis. This will involve using water testing kits in partnership with the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust and the Railway Land Wildlife Trust.

Place a post it note where you think water quality should be tested. Write your name and a contact email on the back of the note if you are interested in being a water quality tester for that spot.

River Moments – Orange Post it Notes

Please share a favourite moment or memory at a specific location on the River or one of its streams.



Main theme groupings - The most interrelated themes grouped together and in order of abundance

Location Specific - 27 entries

Nature - 14 entries

Problems - 12 entries

Interacting with river - 10 entries

Solutions & Aspirations - 9 entries

Emotive response/personal perspective/reflection - 5 entries

Memories - 4 entries

Descriptive words people used

paddle
spa
gather
wild
picturesque
ditches
polluted
serious
discharges
sick
industrial
viaduct
access

Emotive words people used

love
magical
enjoy
peaceful
concerned
protect

Species people have spotted

White Legged Damselflies

Oystercatcher

Swans

Mink

Warblers

Osprey

Lizards

Bats

Lapwings

Birds

Marsh Frogs

Seals

Declining/disappeared species mentioned

Coarse fish

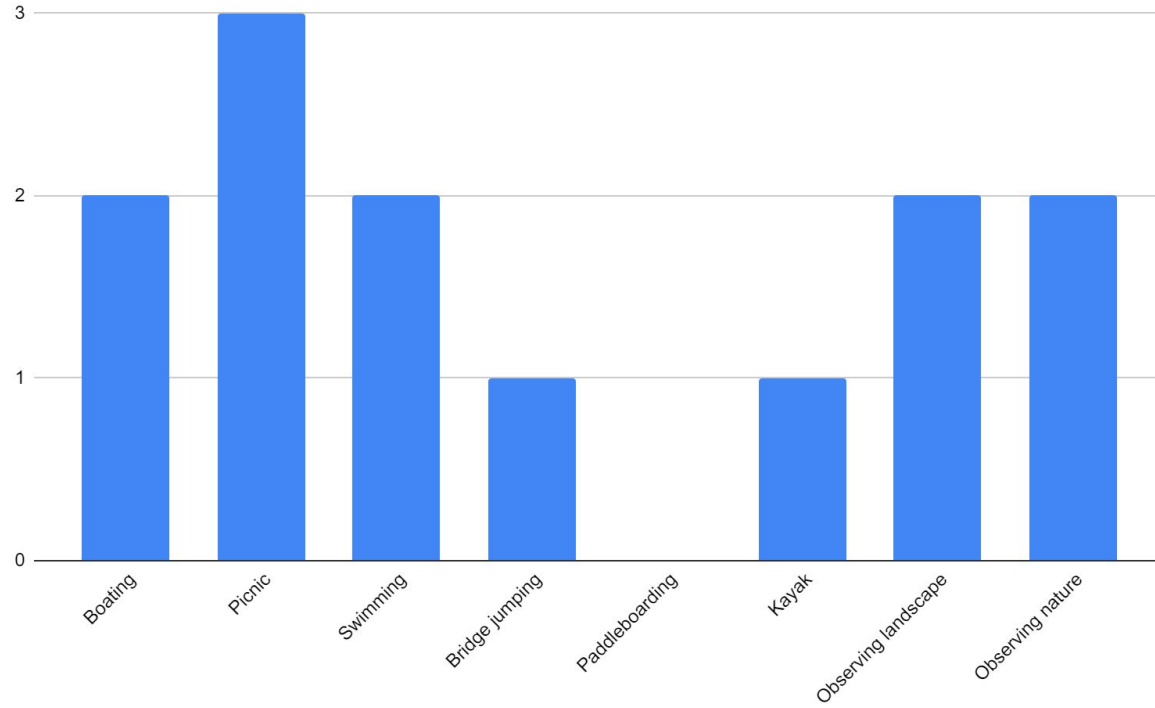
Seatrout

Bullhead fish

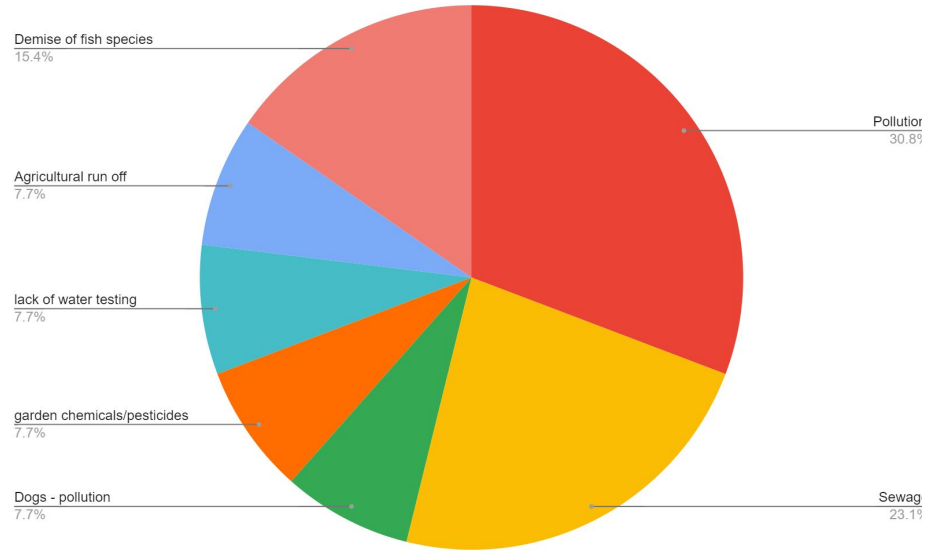
Loach

Otters

Recreational use

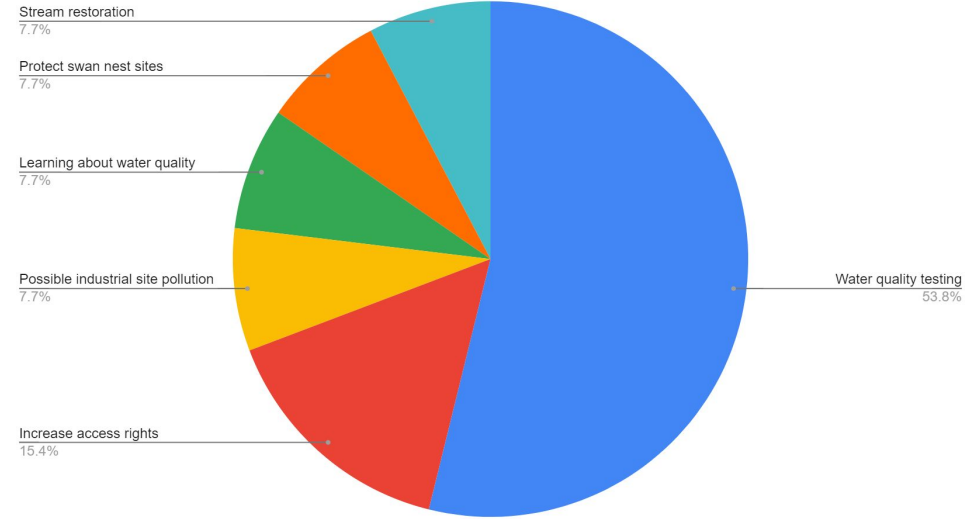


Problems identified



Solutions identified

Frequency



Interpretation summary

- 24 out of 44 entries were location specific
- 'River Moments' comments were most abundant (23), 'Rights of River' themed comments in second (11) and 'Water Quality' related least (10)
- The denser areas of comments are at high public use locations e.g. Barcombe Mills, Piddinghoe & Lewes. These include on/in water activities
- Nature spotting and naming species they saw are popular entries
- 'pollution' as a broad term was the most popular term cited in river problems with Sewage 2nd most popular and decline in fish species in 3rd place
- 5 species were mentioned in relation to demise or decline. 4 out of 5 were fish.
- Four potential citizen water testers identified
- Broad variety of recreational users both on the banks and in/on the water