



PROTECTING OUR PRECIOUS GROUNDWATER WITH THE AQUIFER PROJECT

TAP Annual Report for April 2024- March 2025

Governance & Organisation

March 2024

- **We collectively secured the continuity of TAP** for 2024-2025 by hosting the project with The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere team, at Brighton & Hove City Council
- **The TAP team** has welcomed new members with:
 - o Melanie David-Durand, Biosphere Programme Manager, working on TAP 1 day a week
 - o Jennifer Okorie, Flood Risk Manager at B&H CC and Philippa Collidge as Senior Project Engineer in Nick Bean's team
 - o Katie Eberstein, Our City Our World Programme Manager
- **Budget:** The TAP Budget was handed over to ensure the continuity of the Wild Park Rainscape ("WPR") project delivery and community engagement, enabled the continuity of the environmental education programme (OCOW) and continue the maintenance of the suds in schools where commitments had been made.
- **Naming:**

Engagement and Awareness raising

Here's a list of actions that featured and celebrated the work of our partnership:

- Oct 2023 – the Sustainable Development Goals videos produced with the Biosphere: [Local champions inspire children to support Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- March 2024 – featured TAP as one of the Biosphere's strategic delivery projects at the Committee report that was endorsed by BHCC to renew the designation with refreshed vision and goals - [UK's only urban UNESCO biosphere looks forward to the next decade](#)

- April 2024 – contracted the Trust for Developing Communities (Anke Thurm) to continue the community engagement around the WPR project up to this day (April 2025): [Engagement and consultation for Wild Park rainscape](#)
- April 2024 – press release celebrated the continuity of the OCOW environmental education programme thanks to the financial support of the Biosphere and TAP - [Environmental education to continue with new funding](#)
- May – October 2024 - Worked with B& H City Council (BHCC) communications to feature the WPR content on BHCC website and feature the TAP involvement: [Wild Park rainscape project history](#)
- July 2024 – Had a presentation of the TAP Research project at the Biosphere Partnership meeting open to the public at the [Shoreham Sustainability Week](#) by Professor Martin Smith and Polly Walters from the University of Brighton





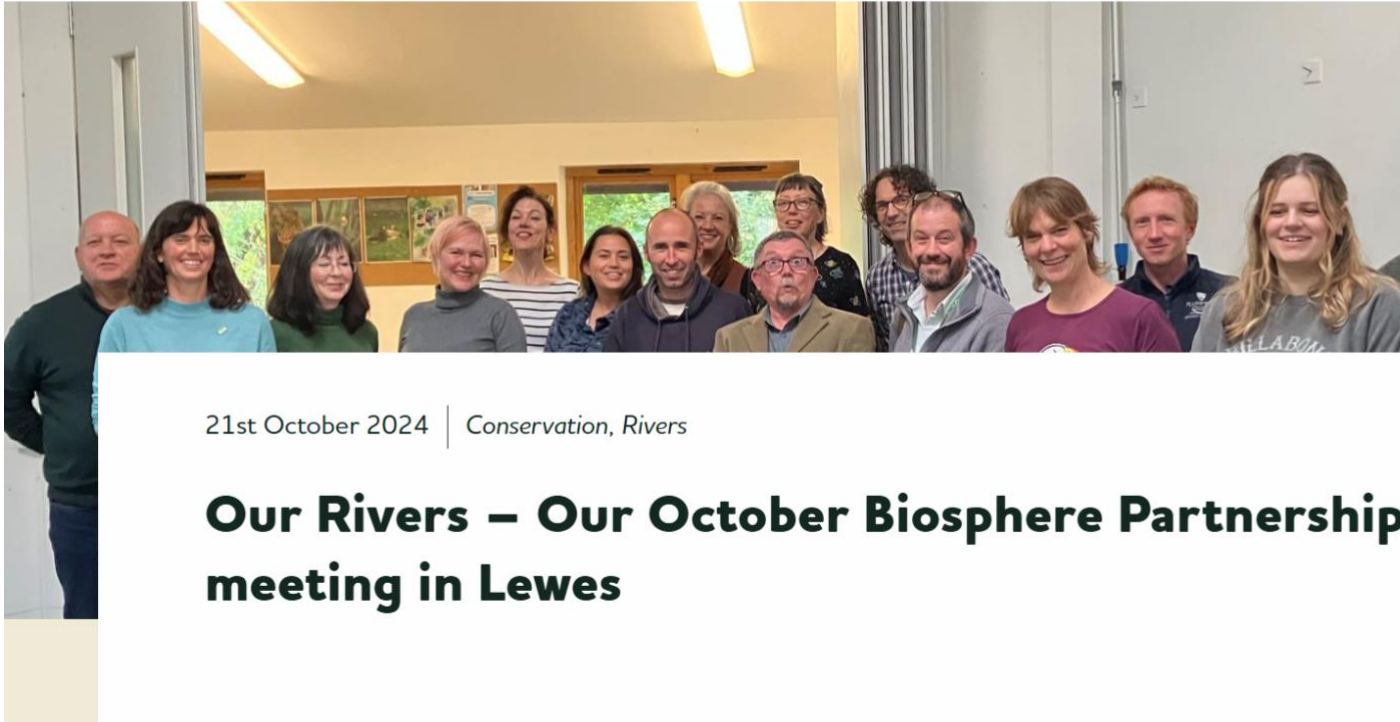
Professor Martin Smith and Master of Research student Polly Walters from the University of Brighton presenting TAP projects at Shoreham Port's Sustainability Week at the Biosphere partnership meeting

- Sept 2024 – featured TAP as one of the Biosphere's strategic delivery projects to UNESCO UK, UNESCO Venice and UNESCO Paris (see reports) as part of The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere's Periodic Review report:
[The Living Coast Visual Summary report for Stakeholders.pdf](#)

A Decade of Projects Across Sustainability:



- Sept 2024 – presented at the Sussex Marine And Coastal Forum (SMACF) meeting (chaired by Nick Gray - EA) – featuring our work on the Biosphere and TAP to the SMACF forum in the presence of Leasa Williams from Southern Water and Nick Bean from B&H City Council
- Sept 2024 – presented the Biosphere core activities including TAP to Cllr Rowkins, B&H City Council [Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services](#) in an internal briefing meeting
- Oct 2024 – Met with [David Hannah](#), UNESCO Chair of Water Science, together with Professor Martin Smith
- Oct 2024 – We had Sean Ashworth, Vice Chair of the Biosphere, TAP Board Member and Southern Water Catchment Management Strategy Manager, speak at The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere Rivers Partnership meeting to present SW's role in the catchment area: [Our Rivers – Our October Biosphere Partnership meeting in Lewes - The Living Coast](#). The whole presentation is available here: [Biosphere-Partnership-Meeting-Our-Rivers-16-10-24.pdf](#)



21st October 2024 | *Conservation, Rivers*

Our Rivers – Our October Biosphere Partnership meeting in Lewes

- Dec 2024 – participated to the British water conference in Brighton & Hove with Nick Bean, Principal Engineer at B&H City Council and TAP Board Member, presenting the Wild Park Rainscape featuring the TAP partnership: [Wild Park Rainscape: Brighton's Innovative Nature-Based Project Featured at British Water Conference - The Living Coast](#) and [Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm](#) Cllr Trevor Muten introduced the event: [Nick Bean & Trevor Muten to speak at the British Water Conference | LinkedIn](#)



Nick Bean Principal Engineer at B&H City Council and TAP Board Member at the British Water conference

- Dec 2024 – had an introductory meeting with Jacob Diamond, UNESCO Programme Specialist on Water quality and [eco hydrology](#) (other interesting UNESCO source includes: [Water security | UNESCO](#))
- Jan 2025 – organised the Biosphere Partnership meeting named [Sustainable economic development in action](#), featuring TAP on the Biosphere's promotional material and mentioned in introduction, with over 90 participants
- Feb 2025 – Jennifer Okorie, B&H City Council's recently appointed Flood Risk Manager, presented BHCC's Flood Risk work and TAP on SuDS, Surface Water Management and Aquifer Protection to Professor Andrew Coleman's MSc Planning students at the University of Brighton
- March 2025 – Introduced Sean Ashworth as Vice Chair of the Biosphere and TAP partner to the City Downland Estate's Downland Advisory Panel (DAP)'s lead at BHCC, Jessica Hamilton. [Organised the Nature starts on our plate – Biosphere Partnership meeting, featuring TAP related topics](#)

- March 2025 – we organised site visits and a reception at the Brighton Pavilion as part of the UNESCO Biosphere gathering, where the TAP partners’ senior managers were invited: [The Living Coast Hosts National UNESCO Biosphere Gathering: A Celebration of Nature and Community - The Living Coast](#)

Education

- April 24 to Summer 25 TAP enabled the continuity of the OCOW programme – press release issued with B&H CC in March 2024: [Environmental education to continue with new funding](#)

Our City Our World (www.ourcityourworld.co.uk) is a transformational whole school, whole city approach to climate change, sustainability and environmental education. Through a structured framework, schools ensure young people have the knowledge, skills and attitudes they’ll need to live in a changing climate whilst ensuring the school as an institution, has a systematic approach to reduce emissions and increase biodiversity. The programme supports young people’s mental health, allowing them to be changemakers at school, influence family behaviour and retain a sense of hope for the future. The programme is recognised nationally as an example of best practice in climate education and is being rolled out in 5 additional local authorities after funding from a national body.

It provides ongoing training, support and guidance to all schools in the city, with at least 90% of secondary schools and 60% of primary schools engaged in B&H.

It ensures all schools have a sustainability lead and works so schools have a Climate Action Plan in place (DfE expectation: Climate Change & Sustainability policy 2022)

It provide specialist training, support, resources and networking to enable whole school engagement on termly themes: **energy, water, transport, food, consumption & waste, biodiversity**

The programme uses the UNESCO framework: [UNESCO launches new initiatives for “greening education” in classrooms | UNESCO](#)

Examples of what has been achieved specifically on water include:

- 'What's under our feet' - webinar on soil, water and the aquifer attended by 5 classes (approx 150 children) from 4 schools. Contributions from Robin Kelly from Southern Water and Farmer David.
- Teacher workshop at Moulsecroomb Primary School with a focus on the raingarden and how they can use it on a visit to the school (+ link with Wild Park next academic year) - attended by 14 teachers.
- Raising awareness of the aquifer in teacher training sessions and business manager Climate Action Plan sessions.
- Promotion of Southern Water’s free water audits - lots of interest including this from Hove Park. - [Hove Park School saves thousands through Southern Water scheme | The Argus](#)



Photo of school children engaging with their Suds in School raingarden, water and biodiversity at Moulsecoomb primary school

Research

- August 2024 - Had our TAP Master of Research student represent The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere and TAP, Polly Walters, at UNESCO Venice gathering with 14 other biospheres
- September 2024 - Handed in our final report on the **Sustainable Management of Urban Aquifers** to UNESCO Venice, including a research piece providing data and evidence to assess the performance of Sustainable Drainage Systems (“SuDS” or “rainscapes”) on water pollution
- Oct 2024 – Met with Zoe Greenslade, Project Officer in the BHCC Transport Team, and Professor Martin Smith on how to improve Suds’ engineering on B&H CC’s roads to consider water pollution especially with heavy metals, and start considering how to implement the TAP research project on sustainable management of urban aquifers
- December 2024 – Submitted a paper for the **International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (2024-2033) - [IDSSD](#)**, introducing our *continued experiment*

and toolkit development for SuDS engineers to optimise SuDS efficiency on water quality

- Feb 2025 - Submitted a piece of research for potential publication to Springer Nature via UNESCO Venice on the road run off water quality
- April 2025 – Continued ongoing communications including on research: <https://youtu.be/xY5xOXAYt7I?si=jZEtoLDR9nUa-ZgG> featured in the Biosphere April 25 newsletter

Capital projects delivery

- November 2024 – March 2025 – Followed up the construction start of the WPR project at the Wild Park Nature Reserve, led by the B&H CC engineering team after several reshuffles of the designs to meet with planning consent and other utilities constraints, and after proceeding with archaeology checks
- March 2025 – Seeds and Trees acquisition and planting at WPR enabled by Environment Agency £5k funding
- Suds in School maintenance progressed at Carden Primary School (see imagery below)
- 2024-2025 - Middle street Suds in School – project continued and progressed



Carden School Raingarden
Before the cut



Carden School Raingarden
After the cut



Carden School Raingarden Pond
removal of couch grass, some
Elodea and edging of banks