

Sharing our Story: Trinity Church Lewes work with the local community on sustainability initiatives.



Provided by Martin Pett, the Trinity Eco Church coordinator

Trinity Church Lewes is a vibrant and outward-looking church that meets across three sites and has six congregations in the historic county town of Lewes, East Sussex. The town nestles within the boundary of the South Downs National Park. Trinity are passionate about Creation Care and are pleased to have received an A Rocha 'Eco Church' Silver Award.

Our three churchyards, whilst being quite different in character, are all managed for biodiversity, and form a part of the 'Living Landscape' that is helping to link together sites of wildlife value and form important wildlife corridors.

This has led to the Trinity Creation Care team to work with local sustainability movements such as the Lewes Climate Hub. This is an alliance of local environmental and community groups, which provides an information and networking point on all climate and environment-related projects, events and activities happening in and around Lewes.

A new local campaign is 'Rewilding and Renaturing' which aims to give 30% of cultivated land back to nature by 2030, to help safeguard biodiversity and also look after our wellbeing. Trinity helped launch the campaign by giving a webinar (during the 2020 lockdown) on '*Wildlife Gardening: Churchyards, School Grounds and Domestic Gardens as Havens for Biodiversity*'. This has already led to contact from other local churches looking for advice on wildlife gardening in their own churchyards: <https://lewesclimatehub.org/renaturing>

CASE STUDY

The Trinity Creation Care team has also worked with Transition Town Lewes (TTL), which is one of the most active Transition Towns, reflecting Lewes' long radical history. Since 2007 TTL has undertaken 27 practical projects, notably:

- OVESCo (the Ouse Valley Energy Services Company Ltd) creating community renewable energy projects: <https://ovesco.co.uk/>
- The Lewes Pound, a system of local currency created to encourage money spent locally to stay local. Over 100 businesses now accept the Lewes Pound: <https://www.thelewespound.org/>
- A weekly food market providing low 'food mile' provisions to the town: <http://www.lewesfoodmarket.co.uk/>
- 'Rain gardens for Lewes' where rainwater plants have been installed at the churches and other community buildings to help alleviate the problem of flooding: <https://transitiontownlewes.org/rain-garden-planter-jon-g/>