

# Eco Church at St Martin's



## How can we do more?

Living Streets want a nation where walking is the natural choice for everyday local journeys. They are concerned about the serious decline in numbers of children walking to school so publicise the issues during 'Walk to School Week':

<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/products-and-services/projects/walk-to-school-week>

'Plastic Free July' is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution – so we can have cleaner streets, oceans, and beautiful communities. Choosing to avoid single use plastics for a month is a simple way to participate. Perhaps you could link up with schools or other community groups to take part in this together?

<https://www.plasticfreejuly.org/getinvolved/what-you-can-do/>

'Carbon Fast' in Lent. Christ Church, New Malden did this and are happy for you to use their resources:

<https://ccnm.org/carbonfastforcreation>

'Earth Hour' is a WWF initiative. At 8.30pm on the last Saturday in March, you are invited to turn off your lights for one hour. Earth Hour is one of the world's largest grassroots movements for the environment, with millions of people in more than 180 countries, switching off their lights to show support for our planet.

They have resources such as videos and statistics to share with your church:

<https://www.earthhour.org/>

## LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

'Transition Movement for Churches. A prophetic imperative for today' Timothy Gorringe, Rosie Beckham, Canterbury Press Norwich, 2013

## CASE STUDIES

Can you combine the community of a city farm with the spiritual life of a local church? That is what Partner in Action, Hazelnut Community Farm decided to do in Bristol in April 2019.

The concept is taking off with other churches-cum-allotments, joining in:

<https://hazelnutcommunityfarm.com/>

## Community clean up

It is easy to arrange a church or community litter pick yourselves at a date to suit you following the advice of 'Forge Recycling': <https://www.forgerecycling.co.uk/blog/organise-a-litter-pick/>  
There are also national and regional initiatives which you might want to use as a catalyst for your own event. Clean-ups are organised for beaches, schools, waterways, cities, parks and just about anywhere else!

Here are some suggestions of groups who may have activities going on in your area:

Clean up UK: <https://www.cleanupuk.org.uk/>

Keep Britain Tidy: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/>

The Marine Conservation Society: <https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/join-a-beachclean/>

Many National Parks or beauty spots will have 'Friends of' groups helping to keep things tidy.

Friends of the Lake District:

<https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/news/great-cumbrian-cleanup-from-top-to-bottom>

There is also the ambitious World Clean Up day: <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/>

## Car-sharing schemes

Churches are in a unique position for car sharing as there are predetermined times for arrival and departure, and it is relatively easy to connect congregation members who live near each other to organise themselves. Most churches already have a heritage of helping those without cars get to church on a Sunday or to a midweek group, with the driver being focussed on pastoral concern rather than carbon reduction.

There are also several commercial schemes which encourage people, particularly in urban areas, to save costs, and reduce carbon emissions by sharing, rather than owning, a car. The schemes fall roughly into three categories: car clubs, lift-sharing and peer-to-peer car hire. In all these schemes, be sure to confirm insurance and personal safety arrangements.

Lift-sharing (also known as car-pooling) schemes link two or more people to share a car and travel together on a pre-agreed route. This might be on long-distance trips or to work (as in Peter Kay's 'Car Share' sitcom).

You can find lift shares at <https://www.blablacar.co.uk/> and <https://liftshare.com/uk>

Peer-to-peer schemes allow you to 'hire' a car from another member of the public in your local area. The charity 'CoMoUK' shows you where you can find shared cars, bikes, e-scooters and lifts near

you: <https://como.org.uk/where/>

## How can you engage with local conservation projects?

### **Wildlife Trusts:**

It was in May 1912 – a month after the Titanic sank – that Charles Rothschild held a meeting to discuss his radical idea about saving places for nature. This ultimately led to the formation of the Wildlife Trusts, which aim to save wildlife and wild places, bring people closer to nature and combat the climate and nature emergency.

You can find your local group here: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-trusts>

### **The Conservation Volunteers (TCV):**

TCV undertakes a range of activities in both urban and rural areas, from planting trees and wildflower meadows, to building stiles, clearing footpaths or creating new food-growing projects. Perhaps some church members might like to volunteer individually or together?

<https://www.tcv.org.uk/communities/find-community-group/>

TCV also run 'Green Gym' sessions which have an emphasis on health and fitness as people participate in conservation projects. They sound like a fun way of making friends and keeping fit!

<https://www.tcv.org.uk/greengym/>

### **CHARITIES WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS, WHICH HAVE SITES OR RESERVES WHERE YOU MAY BE ABLE TO VOLUNTEER INCLUDE:**

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT): Founded by Sir Peter Scott, an early conservation pioneer, the WWT works with communities around the world which depend on wetlands. Currently (in 2021), they have ten reserves across the United Kingdom, where volunteers can undertake practical conservation work or other valuable tasks:

<https://www.wwt.org.uk/join-and-support/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/>

The National Trust: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/find-an-opportunity>

The National Trust for Scotland: <https://www.nts.org.uk/volunteering-jobs>

The Woodland Trust:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/volunteer-with-us/opportunities/>