

# Green heritage projects : Three Choughs Ale

As an environmentally conscious university located in a heritage site of international importance, hop cultivation, beer and brewing have become a focal part of our sustainability agenda, our celebration of the seasons and our unique 'sense of place'.



Image: Chaplain Dave Stroud leads a procession of staff and students to the brewery with sacks of freshly picked hops .

We grow four types of heritage hops in our University hop gardens, two of which are not known to grow anywhere else. The oldest of the gardens is between the Moore and Fleming buildings, while a new hop garden has been established next to the Verena Holmes building, and both are tended year round by the Sustainability Projects Officer, often with the help of volunteers during Wednesday afternoon *Potter and Prune* gardening sessions.

Every September, the Christ Church community then comes together to pick the hops across the course of a single morning, and take them on a procession down through the city to the Canterbury Brewers & Distillers micro-brewery where the brew is blessed by one of our chaplains, and ale production begins within hours of the picking; this is what makes the ale a 'green hop' ale.

**25**

staff and students  
picked this year's  
harvest of hops

**37kg**

of hops picked in one  
morning, our highest  
yield so far

**2400 pints**

of green hop ale  
brewed from  
our 2021 harvest

The 2021 harvest took place on the 10th September, with staff and volunteers picking a record quantity of hops — enough for a double brew. The resulting green hop ale was then bottled and distributed; and half of this was sold over the counter at The Foundry in Canterbury, selling out within 2 weeks!

Each year's ale is given a different name, brand and label, designed by Christ Church staff or students, and this latest brew was named 'The Three Choughs'. Choughs are a member of the crow family and used to be residents of the White Cliffs of Dover; this year's brand was named in part to celebrate and raise awareness of a new rewilding project that will be reintroducing choughs to Dover, and partly as a nod to our own heritage, referencing the choughs that also appear on the Coats of Arms of St Thomas Becket, Canterbury City Council, and Canterbury Christ Church University.



Image: A close-up of ripe green hops on the bine and a ladybird taking flight from them, snapped by a hop picker .

**Find out more:**

[www.canterbury.ac.uk/sustainability](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/sustainability)

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