

# ALTON TOWN COUNCIL



## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Rain Stiffens British Resolve at Alton Proms Concert*

The numbers may have been well down on previous years, but those that ignored the gloomy weather forecast and sat huddled in the rain, often heavy, in Alton's Public Gardens on Saturday night for the town's annual Last Night of the Proms concert, showed true British spirit say organisers.

Approximately 300 hardy folk, young and old refused the attraction of warm, dry sitting rooms and turned up, not just armed with raincoats and umbrellas, but an assortment of gazebos, tents, and tarpaulins.

Started in 2007, the previous concerts had been blessed with fairly sunny evenings, but it was a case, suggested Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor David Willoughby as he opened the proceedings, of "third time unlucky", thanking Altonians for their support of such an important community event and showing true British Spirit.

MC Paul Le Feuvre, dressed in a dashing white tuxedo, introduced the programme featuring Alton Concert Orchestra, Alton Community Choir and the Alton Choral Society performing a mixture of well known popular classical tunes and songs. With usual rousing numbers, some lead by soprano Joy Windsor, the ACO's performance of Strauss' Radetsky March had the audience providing the traditional clapping accompaniment. The first half's part American theme, including a whistle stop tour of melodies from West Side Story, was inspired by a greeting from a sister orchestra in Alton, Illinois.

Dr Chris Leggett of the Alton Concert Orchestra added, "We have been rehearsing the programme for many weeks and with it being one of the Orchestra's highlights of the year, we were determined to continue. We knew that the Alton residents would not let us down and they did us proud; we feel sure that we in turn made it worth their while."

Recreation Committee Chairman Councillor Pam Bradford, echoing these sentiments was delighted to see so many still turn up despite the weather. "So much work goes into organising these events, that it is heartening that hundreds still came out to brave the elements on such a filthy night."

This year's event had the added attraction of a licensed bar to 'keep everyone warm inside' and vibrant red, white and blue floral displays decorating the stage to give it a truly professional look, courtesy of Garthowen Garden Centre.

Organisers Alton Town Council are still putting the final figures together, but it is expected that there will be a shortfall in income for this year's event, due to lower attendance. The occasion relies heavily upon the retiring collection, programme donations, flag sales and catering concessions to meet the approximate £3,000 cost of the prestigious event. The council was very keen to thank all those who had advertised in this year's programme and also reassure music-lovers that rumours that the shortfall meant that this year's would be the very last, '*Last Night of the Proms*' were unfounded.

Ends

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Photos of the evening are available from Martin Saban-Smith LMPA 01420 542020  
[www.lnotp.co.uk](http://www.lnotp.co.uk)