



# THE ALTONIAN WEEKLY

WEEK 23 - 3rd September

Alton Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1HD  
[www.alton.gov.uk](http://www.alton.gov.uk)

## Message From Town Hall

Welcome to Week 23. This weeks issue focuses on some of the amazing volunteering organisations in Alton. If you are interested in volunteering and don't know where to start, you can search for organisations who are looking for volunteers at [www.volunteerfirst.co.uk](http://www.volunteerfirst.co.uk)

Thank you to everyone who entered this year's Alton In Bloom, we will be sharing details of all the winners in two weeks time.

Don't forget our next Open-Air Market in the Public Gardens.

Local Open-Air Market  
Saturday 12th September  
10am - 2pm  
Alton Public Gardens

For more details or to book a pitch go to  
[www.alton.gov.uk](http://www.alton.gov.uk)  
or email [events@alton.gov.uk](mailto:events@alton.gov.uk)

Featuring  
**Repair Café**  
"There's always a way!"

## Community First

The COVID-19 global pandemic has put a tremendous strain on societies around the world and we in the UK have seen first-hand the devastating effect it's had on us not only personally but on our economy, schools, other education establishments and of course, the NHS.



We at Community First have been helping match volunteers with both local groups and individuals throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Now people are starting to return to work the number of available volunteers is dropping and this has a two-fold effect. Groups and organisations need more volunteers because they are, for example, changing the services they provide to say, a befriending service or a buddy-buddy system (e.g. you may be put in contact with a local neighbour who needs shopping collected once a week) yet the pool of available volunteers continues to reduce in size.

Community First recently launched its brand-new website <https://www.volunteerfirst.co.uk> where you can sign up to become a volunteer or if your group/organisation requires volunteers then you can register that need too. It's a fantastic website full of incredibly useful information regarding volunteering. You can search for volunteering roles in your area and contact us for further information.

I hope the above is of interest. If you'd like to know more then please email [richard.setford@cfirst.org.uk](mailto:richard.setford@cfirst.org.uk) or call 07805 349 116 or 01730 777514.

## ACAN - Edible Garden Project

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Alton Climate Action & Network is run entirely by volunteers. We would like to express our profound gratitude to the many dozens of people who have made

such a success of all the projects and initiatives in the Network this year, including the Community Cupboard, the Community Share, the Repair Café, Alton and Villages Local Action for Nature, affiliated organisation Energy Alton, Cycle Alton and our lobbying group. And now a new project ...

ACAN (Alton Climate Action & Network) are planning a "No dig" edible garden project at a central location somewhere in Alton to showcase how permaculture techniques can lead to abundant harvests despite our increasingly extreme weather. If you are interested in getting involved please email [altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com). We are planning the project now and will be needing help with the physical work from late Autumn onwards, all welcome in both capacities. The work would suit those able to spare time in their lunch break or a few hours a month at a weekend. The other weekends you can take the ideas home to transform your own garden or allotment!

## Alton Mutual Aid

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From beginning of September Alton Covid-19 Mutual Aid are changing the days phone lines are open to the public. These changes effect all services: shopping, prescriptions, phone chats, posting letters and transport to hospital.

**Monday, Wednesday and Friday only**  
**Phone lines and emails will be answered between 10am - 2pm.**

The Mutual Aid group was set up by local volunteers to take action to support the community during crisis. Only by volunteers coming forward in the numbers and enthusiasm they have was this group made possible and continues to be possible. Thank you to all Mutual Aid volunteers past and present for your valued support.

## Alton Community Cupboard

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The Alton Community Cupboard is now supporting an average of 92 families in Alton and the surrounding area. Our wonderful volunteers are working hard to collect donations from the local shops and deliver food boxes six days a week. We are now also receiving donations from local allotments and windfalls. A true community project, for the community, by the community. We are now operating from the Community Centre but may be moving again soon as we continue our hunt for donated premises to provide this service to the public for free. We will soon be changing our operation from delivering to collections, asking those who are able, to come and collect their boxes on a pre-booked basis. For those who are housebound, the volunteers at Alton Mutual Aid will help us with deliveries. The local shops continue to support us, allowing us to collect lots of bread, fruit, veg, flowers and even sweets and drinks so we are able to donate a nice variety.