

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

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Full details of all of your Town, District and County Councillors (including their email and/or fax addresses) can be found on the Alton Town Council website, along with a full range of essential local phone numbers and useful points of contact

A true Bird's-eye view



A pigeon recently made itself at home in a window-box at the Town Hall. Deputy Town Clerk Greg Burt said the pigeon had been enjoying a bird's-eye view of proceedings in the Council Chamber, adding: "We don't get that many residents coming to council meetings, and it's even rarer for a member of the public to stay to the very end!" We wonder if it raced here to assist our Alton In Bloom efforts...

Water way to go

"You can save water and save energy."

"But what has water got to do with energy?"

The short answer is... plenty! About 70% of global freshwater is used in agriculture, which provides us with our food energy. Hydro-power now provides around 20% of global electricity.

On average each person in the UK uses 150 litres of water a day. According to Waterwise, this rises to 3,400 litres a day once you add on the water used to produce the goods we import. Moving this lot around takes energy too.

We're lucky - we get rain in the UK but, as summer hosepipe bans imply, we should not take our water for granted, and there are many easy ways to use less:

* Keep your showers as short as you can, especially if you have a power shower

* Re-use water, and don't forget that bath water is fine for watering plants

* Have a water meter fitted - on average metered homes use 15% less water than unmetered ones

* You can modify your toilet to give you a reduced or graduated flush

* Fix those dripping taps!

Did you realise that 30% of the average UK gas bill goes on heating water? Insulating your hot water tank effectively and using less hot water will save you money.

If this article has aroused your interest, you can find out much more from this website -

www.cocoonyourhome.co.uk/saving

In Bloom Roll of Honour 2010

- 1) *Small Front Garden, for the Alton Horticultural Cup:*
6 Dove Court
 - 2) *Larger Front Garden, for the Town & Country Cars Cup:*
St Marys Hall, 18 Albert Road
 - 3) *Best Domestic Patio, Window Box or Tub, for the Garthowen Cup:*
Windmill Court, St. Marys Close
 - 4) *Best Residential Premises, for the Alton Herald Plate:*
Windmill Court, St Marys Close
 - 5) *Best Neighbourhood, Street or Locality, for the Pritchard Salver:*
Barton End
 - 6) *Best Public Building, for the Alton Community Hospital Shield:*
Assembly Room Gardens
 - 7) *Best Schoolchildren's Garden, for the Pam Jones Cup:*
Alton Infants School
 - 8) *Best Planted Unusual Container, for the Clarke Trophy:*
Alton Infants School
 - 9) *Best Retail Frontage:*
"Get Fresh & Fruity"
 - 10) *Best Commercial or Office Frontage, for the Communiweb Learn Direct Cup:* Mid Hants Railway - Platform 3 Alton Station
 - 11) *Best Licensed Premises, for the Mid Hants Cup:*
French Horn
 - 12) *Best Shop Window, for the Alton Post Gazette Cup:*
Market Street Gallery
- Overall Winner From Holybourne, for the Vokes-Dakley Trophy:*
"Old Streamacres"
- Best Individual Private Entrant, for the Norman Pointing Trophy:*
6 Dove Court
- Outstanding Contribution to the In Bloom Effort, for the John Smith Trophy:* Grange Hotel, London Road
- The Alton Society's Tidy Up Alton Cup:*
ALFI (Alton Local Food Initiative)
- The ACCI President's Cup:*
Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery

KIDS HALLOWEEN DISCO

ASSEMBLY ROOMS

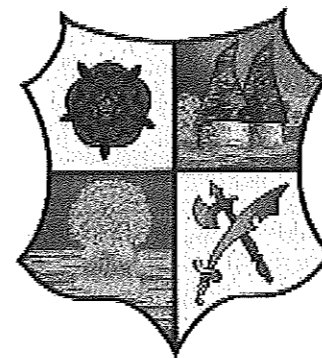
FRIDAY 29th OCTOBER - 5pm TILL 7pm

Fancy-dress competitions for both the kids and parents.

Plus magic, games, prizes and treats!

HOSTED BY STEVO
THE MAGICIAN

Tickets: CHILD £2.50 & ADULT £1.00 - Tel: 01420 82283



THE ALTONIAN

ISSUE NUMBER 32 - AUTUMN 2010

The Official Newsletter of Alton Town Council -

published quarterly to keep you informed

Residents can help in any event

Alton's Event Calendar in question due to a lack of manpower

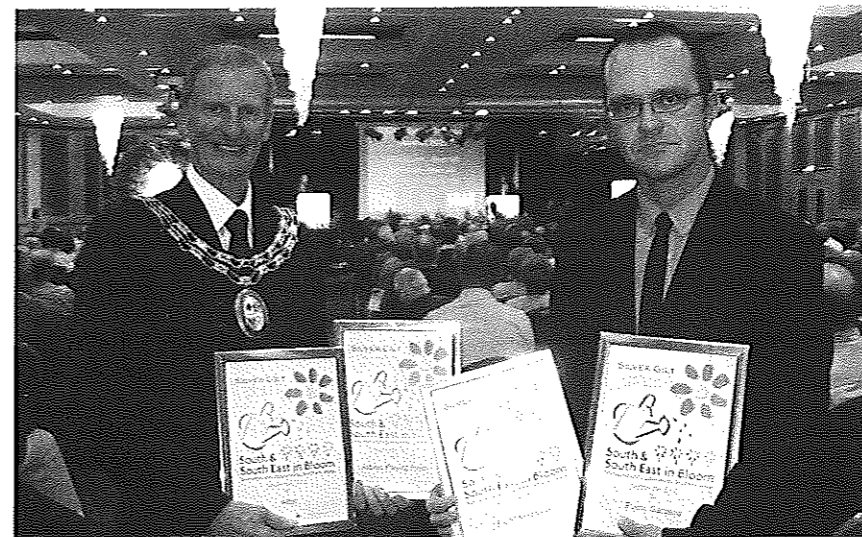
The future is still uncertain for some of the big events in the town following the winding-up of former town management group, Alton Initiatives Management (AIM), at the end of last year.

The 2010 programme of town centre activities has been carried on largely thanks to Alton Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and Alton Town Council. However ACCI, who led on the Spring and Food Festivals this year to help out, have said they are unable to do the two festivals again, due to the ever-increasing work needed not just in advance, but on the big days themselves. They will continue to be active on the events front, concentrating on their established Jane Austen Regency Week and Wordfest. No organisation was able to take the lead on the Forties Day this year, to the disappointment of many, although the ever-popular Classic Car Show went ahead on Saturday 25th in the centre of the town thanks to the Town Council and the *Alton Herald*.

It is not necessarily a lack of money that is leading to questions about the future of town events. Market income formerly used by AIM to run these is now being made available directly by the Town Council both to support existing events and to encourage new ones, with the fund being strategically managed by the council's Events Coordination Working Party. The biggest stumbling block is simply manpower, whether before the event or on the day itself.

Cllr Atul Patel, who chairs the Working Party, explained that many of the people who enjoy the events are unaware of the immense work that goes into making it all happen. "Apart from booking all the activities, organising road closures and trying to publicise what's going on, there is more and more work going into the Health and Safety side," he explained. "This is not just to ensure that the public are safe, but also to ensure that the organisers themselves can demonstrate that they have acted responsibly. Volunteers who run events are

Proof that Alton Blooms beautifully



Town Mayor Cllr David Willoughby and Alton In Bloom co-ordinator Greg Burt proudly hold the awards harvested by the town and its residents at the 2010 Regional In Bloom Awards Ceremony. "Alton retained its Silver Gilt standing in its category, as did the Public Gardens," said a delighted Mr Burt. "This year we also put in Jubilee Playing Fields and Flood Meadows as separate entries for the first time, and they too were both awarded Silver Gilt, which is an excellent result. I think that to achieve such high marks across our open space entries is a great tribute to the hard work of our outdoor staff, and also to the volunteers of The Alton Society in respect of Flood Meadows. Every resident who helped the In Bloom effort deserves our warmest congratulations." (For the roll of honour of Alton In Bloom 2010 winners, see the back page)

finding it increasingly time-consuming to do all of this, and are of course worried by the responsibility that organising events carries."

While the Town Council organises some events and tries to support others as much as it can, there is a limit to what it can do without implications on staffing, which may have additional costs. "Alton has built up an impressive calendar of events which is the envy of many towns," stressed Cllr Patel. "The town collectively may need to make a decision as to whether it wants this to continue, and indeed whether council tax-payers are willing to possibly pay more in council tax for it to continue. If residents have any views on this I would be delighted to hear from them, if they would care to drop me a line via the Town Hall."

Meanwhile, an appeal has gone out to local residents or groups who would like to help out on the day at some of the town's big occasions. Jobs can range from manning a road closure barrier, marshalling classic cars or helping set stalls up, to giving out helpful information or litter-picking. Sadly no payment can be made, but plenty of free tea, coffee and biscuits should be on hand - not to mention the satisfaction you can gain from helping make events happen which not only bring pleasure to many people, but help keep Alton a vibrant community.

Celebrating ALTON

Have you got a picture of Alton you are proud of? Could you write a few words about it or compose a short poem? Perhaps you have a photo of that amazing homecoming parade through the town last winter, or another fondly remembered local event... or how about turning your hand to a simple drawing?

Maybe, on the other hand, you have recently moved to the town and would like to record and share your first impressions. You could have lived here all your life and have many fascinating glimpses of Altonian history to share.

Whatever your background or reason, now is the time to send in all your contributions, big or small, as varied and individual as possible, for the Celebrating Alton! event currently being prepared by the Alton Society ready for display in the Assembly Rooms on November 13th.

Many local organisations have already signed up for the exhibition, and the intention is to include as many as possible of the individual items submitted alongside their displays. Not only will items be posted up, they can be included in the rolling video show, uploaded to the website, broadcast on local media, and, if the idea really takes off, compiled as part of a commemorative DVD after the event.

"It does us all good to be proud of our town, and that is why the Alton Society has chosen this way to mark its 40th anniversary," explained its Chairman, James Willis. "Nobody is suggesting things which take weeks of preparation, and something straight off the top of your head is often the best. The only stipulation is that we are concentrating on the positive aspects of the town. In other words, only mention that pot-hole in the road if it made you fall off your bicycle into the arms of your future husband (or wife!)."

"If you really don't want to give your name with your contribution that's fine, but please at least give your age. Full details of the kinds of things we are looking for are on the website www.altonociety.org.uk, but the bare essentials are outlined below."

* The Curtis Museum, next to the War Memorial on Crown Hill, is acting as the collecting point. You can drop things in between 10am-5pm, Tuesday to Saturday, remembering they close for lunch (12.15pm-1.15pm).

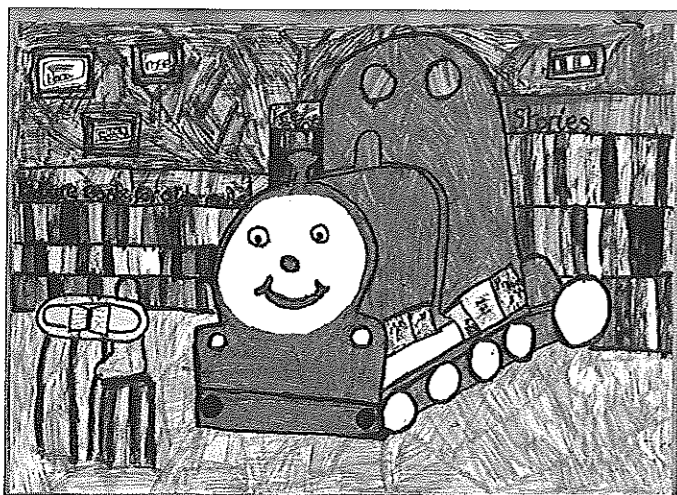
* You can email words and pictures to info@altonociety.org.uk.

* You can post items directly on the Celebrating Alton! Facebook page. But bear in mind that photographs posted on Facebook, though very welcome indeed, are unlikely to be of sufficient definition to be included in the exhibition itself, so you might wish to email better quality versions as well.

* Text messages will also be extremely welcome and can be sent directly to 077 688 40717 - this would be an ideal way to send a haiku, for example (three lines totalling up to seventeen syllables, usually with some reference to season).

"Please join in and show how much we all think of our town," urged Mr Willis.

The wonderful picture below may inspire our younger residents to challenge their parents and grandparents...



Winner of 'My Favourite Place in Alton' competition, 2009 - The interior of Alton Library, by Grace Heath, aged 6

Greening begins at home

Greening Alton and Holybourne members are hosting a Home Energy Day on Saturday, October 9th at the Assembly Rooms, from 10am to 4pm. There will be talks and displays full of ideas on reducing energy costs in the home. They also promise to provide you with all you need to know about renewable energy.

"Drop in for a few minutes or spend the day with us," said their spokesperson. "Free refreshments will be provided. If you can't make this date, don't forget our Green Drinks, from 8.30pm on the second Tuesday of every month at the Railway Arms, Anstey Road. We are always happy to share our knowledge or find out more information for you."

Making Alton feel good

This is Alton, a brand new monthly magazine for the town and surrounding villages, has been established to promote the area through free, full colour publicity for non-profit making organisations, and with content to which local businesses are invited to contribute.

"It seems to be filling a need within our community for a 'feel-good' publication," said Editor and independent publisher Martin Saban-Smith. "The response received so far for the first three issues has been amazing! There seems to be a real need for a magazine like this in the area. The lifestyle feel of the magazine, local content and use of the internet to promote it have gone down a storm."

"The first issues have been read by over 3,000 people to date, and yet this piece in *The Altonian* is one of the first public notifications about it," said a delighted Mr Saban-Smith

You can read the magazine *This is Alton* by visiting www.thisisalton.co.uk. To catch up on the previous issues, head to the 'Archive' section of the website. There is a mailing list on the site which you can sign up to, which will ensure you're notified when the next issue is released. Issue 4 is out now!

Dates for your diary

Car treasure hunt on Sunday 10.10.10, starting from Anstey Park.

Great prizes to be won!

Fundraising for the new Family Centre at Wootey Schools site. For full details of the event, go to www.goldrush-alton.com

Electric Blanket Safety Checks

are taking place on Monday October 11th at Alton Fire Station in Butts Road. Part of Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Electric Blanket Safety Check Programme for 2010, these checks are free, but you need to book an appointment by telephoning Trading Standards on 01962 833 358. Did you know.....that in 2009 **just 49%** of the electric blankets tested **passed?**

Pavilion Project lifted by Lottery 'win'!

Seven years of hard work on a project to replace Anstey Park's ageing Finnimore Pavilion seems to be paying off. The chance of turning dreams into reality has taken a big leap forward, following recent confirmation that an application for Lottery Funds, via Sport England, has been given the green light.

This significant financial award comes in two parts: the first puts £296,264 towards the capital costs of the scheme, while the other provides £56,420 to fund a full-time Sports Development Officer for two years.

This means that the Town Council, which is leading the project, has now accumulated funds of £613,264.00 towards the likely total cost of £824,944, leaving a shortfall of just over £200,000. Talks are ongoing with the Rugby Football Union - rugby players being key users of Anstey Park - to see if they can offer any assistance to help bridge the gap, before the Town Council decides how to come up with the last few pounds! However this may unfold, the council is still looking to get the 26-week-long project underway as soon as the winter sports season finishes in the spring of 2011.

It was Sport England who originally suggested a tandem Sports Development project, to ensure that once finished the gleaming new facility is fully utilised. The SD Officer will work both with existing clubs based in the park, whose potential to develop has up to now been hampered by poor changing and social facilities, and with potential new users who might be attracted by a brand new pavilion. Discussions are now underway with East Hampshire District Council and the Alton & District Sports Council about how best to deliver this sports development element of the project.

The new-build includes a ground floor of eight changing rooms, all individually accessed from the outside of the building, accommodation for ground staff and new public toilets to serve the park, while the first floor will house a large clubroom for social activities. The whole building will be designed and constructed to ensure full access for disabled people.

For more information, contact Greg Burt at Alton Town Council on 01420 83986 or via greg@alton.gov.uk

One Yule event you'll not want to miss

As we cling onto the last vestiges of summer, Christmas hopefully still seems a long way off, but it's time for Alton Town Council to confirm that this year's Yuletide Festival will be held on Sunday December 5th.

Now in its fifth year, the giant town centre event is once again likely to attract thousands of visitors from across the area and will this year include a ride-on railway, miniature donkeys, a fairground organ, reindeer

and a French Market - to name but a few of the attractions.

"There is a good case that in a recession we should be doing even more to attract people into our town centres," suggested Cllr Pam Bradford, who chairs the council's Recreation Committee. "So, while regrettably some towns have felt they had to cancel their town centre Christmas events for a variety of reasons, we are delighted that it will be business as

usual here in Alton!"

Funded largely by the Town Council with some financial support from Alton Chamber of Commerce and Industry and East Hampshire District Council, bookings for stalls and pitches, both in the street and in the Assembly Rooms, are now being taken. Forms are available from the Town Hall or Assembly Rooms, online at www.alton.gov.uk, or by calling 01420 83986.

2010 Town Calendar

Date	Event	Time	Venue
26-Oct. 2	Word Fest		Community Centre
30-Oct. 3	Alton Art Society Exhibition	10am-4pm	Assembly Rooms
1st-3rd	Charter Fair (Funfair)		The Butts
3rd	10K Downland Challenge	10.30am	Anstey Park
9th	Farmers' Market & Craft Market		High St/Market Sq
9th	Greening Alton Energy Exhib'n	10am-4pm	Assembly Rooms
22nd	The Wool-lovers' Sale	10am-4pm	Assembly Rooms
23rd	Food & Produce Market	8am-4pm	High Street
29th	Hallowe'en Disco for Kids	5-7pm	Assembly Rooms
Nov. 4-6	Alton Op & Dram Society Show		Assembly Rooms
6th	Round Table Firework Display	t.b.c.	Anstey Park
13th	Holybourne Remembrance S'vice	10.45am	London Rd, Holy'ne
13th	Alton Society Show	from 10am	Assembly Rooms
13th	Farmers' Market & Craft Market		High St/Market Sq
14th	Alton Remembrance Service	10.45am	Crown Hill, High St.
14th	Band Concert - Help The Heroes	7pm	Assembly Rooms
19th	Children In Need Coffee Morning	10am-12	Assembly Rooms
26th	Christmas Lights Switch-on	from 5.50pm	Market Square
27th	Food & Produce Market	8am-4pm	High Street
27th	Townswomen's Guild Bazaar	10am-3pm	Assembly Rooms
Dec. 5th	Yuletide Festival	10am-4pm	Town Centre
11th	Christmas Ultimate Ladies' Night	from 7pm	Assembly Rooms
11th	Farmers' Market & Craft Market		High St/Market Sq
16th	"Jane's Birthday"	10am-4pm	Jane Austen Museum
23rd	Carols Around The Tree	7pm	Market Square
27th	Hampshire Hunt	11-11.30am	The Butts

SITUATION VACANT: FOOTPATH WARDEN

(Must like fresh air!)

A vacancy has arisen for the post of Honorary Footpath Warden in the South West area of the town.

Cllr Pam Jones, Chair of the Town Council's Parish Paths Working Party, explained the duties of the post. "They were created to try to identify problems on our vast network of footpaths and alleys that criss-cross the town before they result in complaints and become major problems. It's a sort of early warning system! The idea is that the Warden reports items needing attention so that they can be passed on to the County Council for action."

The wardens are not expected to carry out any of the physical work themselves, as this would have insurance and liability implications. As well as reporting defects, the Wardens attend meetings of the Working Party, held three to four times a year.

"The post unfortunately carries no salary, but would suit someone who already does a lot of walking around this area of the town, possibly a dedicated dog walker!" concluded Cllr Jones. Any one interested in the post should contact Greg Burt on 01420 83986 or via e-mail to greg@alton.gov.uk