

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
CLIMATE CHANGE SUB COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, 21st JANUARY 2026
Held in the Chamber, Alton Town Hall**

Present: Councillor Barbara Tansey (Chair)
Councillor Don Hammond
Councillor Janice Treacher
Scott Gudrich – (Youth Representative) - remotely
Kevin Ray (Energy Alton)
Chris Chappell (Active Travel Representative)
Jenny Griffiths (ACAN)
Pennie Brown (EHDC)

Apologies: Rod Painell (ACAN)

In attendance: Wendy Simson (Assistant to Clerk)

102 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting.

Jenny Griffiths joined the meeting in Rod's absence to give an update on what is happening within ACAN.

The Chair informed all members of the Committee that there was a requirement for any non-Councillors to meet the following criteria:

- Not to hold any paid office or employment (other than the office of chair, vice chair or deputy chair) to which he has been appointed by the council or any committee or sub-committee of the council, or by a paid officer of the council, or by any joint committee on which the council is represented; or
- Are not the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim bankruptcy order; or
- Have not within five years before the day of election, or since his election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment of at least three months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine; or
- Have not been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices or was responsible for incurring unlawful expenditure and the court orders his disqualification.
- They must be at least 18 and a UK citizen or EU citizen who was legally resident before 31/12/2020 or eligible Commonwealth citizen with indefinite leave to remain.

The Chair explained that the Clerk would be writing to all non-Councillor members to complete a declaration to confirm they meet these criteria.

103 Apologies for absence

Rod Painell sent apologies prior to the meeting.

104 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of their obligation to disclose any pecuniary interest in items on the agenda, none were disclosed.

105 Minutes of the last meeting

On the proposal of Cllr Treacher, seconded by Cllr Hammond, with all voting in favour, the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2025 were agreed as a true record. The Assistant to the Clerk provided a set of minutes for signature.

The actions from the last meeting were:

Ref.	Action	Person responsible	Date due
ACAN Grant	Update on Energy Alton Survey results – Jenny gave an update as part of the ACAN report	Kevin Ray	21.01.26
Finnimore	Speak with Energise South Downs to progress this solar panel project – panels are being fitted	Kevin Ray	21.01.26
Cycle storage	Permission to install cycle hoops on the High Street from HCC - Hayley emailing Alexa Rees, Highways Support Officer (Highwaylicences.and.encroachments@hants.gov.uk) Licences to be purchased the grant expires at end of December 2025. – Licences applied for.	Hayley & Barbara	30.11.25
Hedgehog signs	Speak to Cllr Andrew Joy and the Herald about signs to indicate hedgehogs crossing - ongoing	Scott	21.01.26
Solar Panels	Contact Chawton Indoor Bowls and Esteem Ironing for annual energy use for discussion with Energise South Downs - ongoing	Wendy	21.01.26
Trees & benches	Order 20 free Disease Resilient Elm and three packs of hedging – 15 trees were allocated and these have been delivered	Wendy	21.01.26
Trees & benches	Confirm planting locations for trees and sites for benches with Head Groundsman - completed	Cllr Treacher	21.01.26
Trees & benches	Price up a willow tree and benches – the benches have been priced, Cllr Treacher to join Sam and Martin when they go to choose another specimen tree.	Chair & Cllr Treacher	21.01.26
Water Fountains	Talk to Binsted Parish Council about the tap they have installed and if it is tamper proof - completed	Wendy	21.01.26
Committee vacancy	Discussion with any suitable candidates about joining the Climate Change Committee as the business Representative – ongoing, possible applicant from survey work at ACAN	All Committee Members	21.01.26
ACAN Grant	Update on grant for next meeting as Rod is not able to attend – included in ACAN update	ACAN Rep	21.01.26
Solar Panels	Update on fitting of Solar Panels at Energique and Rugby Club – in progress	Kevin & Wendy	21.01.26
Allotments	Chairman of Allotment Association to be invited to join the April meeting	Wendy	22.04.26

106 Questions / Representations to the Committee

There were no questions from the Public.

107 Update of Climate Change Action Plan

The current Climate Change Action Plan is for the period 2023 to 2026, the Chair explained that the Committee should take this opportunity to look at the format along with updating the content. Pennie suggested that the Committee use the Greenhouse Gas Protocol to measure the impact

of the items on the plan. EHDC have used an expert to support with this work and Pennie agreed to send on their contact details.

The Chair asked that all Committee members update the actions on the plan to extend to 2030. The amended plan will then be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

The Committee agree that the plan should be more visual and include a dashboard to depict progress against each action using a traffic light system.

Aims 2 & 3 will be more difficult to track Alton Town Council's impact.

108 Update of Climate Change Strategy

The Chair asked that all members of the Committee review the current strategy and agree if it is still relevant.

Pennie suggested that all reports at EHDC include how they impact on Climate Change, it was agreed to ask that the ATC reports template be amended to include this.

109 Actions of Climate Change Action Plan

The action plan has been updated.

Aim 1

Energy consumption – the data showing the energy use across all the Town Council properties was included with the papers, this data shows that water use was up in most buildings and at the allotments due to the hot, dry summer in 2025. Gas and electricity consumption in the Town Hall continues to drop. However other properties where there are tenants have seen utility consumption increase year on year.

Cllr Hammond and the Assistant to the Clerk agreed to map the change in fuel consumption for the 2023 to 2026 period to identify savings in carbon.

Fuel use for Grounds Team vehicles – the unleaded fuel consumption has decreased; this powers the handheld tools such as strimmer's and leaf blowers. The electric tools purchased at the start of 2025 has impacted the volume of unleaded petrol consumed.

The volume of diesel increased from 2024 but is now back to the level of previous years. The Head Groundsman has reported that in 2024 the ground was very wet and so little heavy machinery was used.

Cllr Hammond and the Assistant to the Clerk agreed to map the change in fuel consumption for the 2023 to 2026 period to identify savings in carbon.

Replacement of one of the Grounds Team vehicles with an electric version – The Council have budget £50,000 to replace one of the Grounds Teams vans with an electric version of the Toyota Hilux or similar vehicle. Assistant to Clerk to arrange test period for Grounds Team in new fiscal year.

The Councillors intend to add sufficient budget to each of the next three years to replace all the diesel vehicles with electric versions.

The Climate Change Committee agreed to investigate installing solar panels at the locations where the vehicles are going to be charged at night.

Replacement boiler at Town Hall – Cllr Hammond and Energy Alton have assessed the proposals from the two companies identified through the Challenge Statement and have agreed that neither meet the needs of the Town Council. The Climate Change Committee therefore resolves to cease the procurement process and stand down both Nexgen and Tepeo.

Kevin informed the Committee that he could support with researching other options including underfloor heating to replace the radiators and replacement of the existing gas boiler with two smaller units which would work in tandem. Whilst this would mean keeping a gas boiler, the new model would run at about 94% efficiency, and the old boiler is operating at about 86%. The underfloor heating would require the water to be at a lower temperature at about 40 degrees where the radiators require 70 degrees to perform.

Pennie suggested that the Town Council may consider responding to the review of the National Planning Policy with reference to heritage buildings to allow greater flexibility for updating heritage buildings like the Town Hall.

Jubilee Pavilion Project – Cllr Hammond informed the Committee that this project is ongoing.

Jubilee Bungalows - currently have oil fired heating and Cllr Hammond understands that one of the tenants has stopped using the oil-fired boiler and is just using electric heaters. It was agreed to investigate installing heat pumps for both buildings and external insulation. Cllr Hammond asked Kevin to assess the properties and provide feedback.

Solar panels at Finnimore Pavilion – Kevin has assessed the energy use at the Finnimore Pavilion and believes it would suit the Energise South Downs model.

Solar panels at Energique, Alton Rugby Club and the Kings Arms – The solar panels have been fitted at the Rugby Club, Energique is in process and the Kings Arms are being installed during February half term.

Solar panel for charging electric tools at Wooteys allotments – The solution the Allotment Association were researching was not fit for purpose and Kevin has redirected to a better option. The Chair of the Allotment Association is to be invited to the April Climate Change meeting to provide an update.

Solar panels for the Public Gardens Bowls group – The Chair agreed to chase again for an update.

Tree and hedge planting – Cllr Treacher informed the Committee that 15 disease-resilient elm have been collected and will be planted on Tuesday 27th January. Pupils from Eggars School will join the Grounds Team, unfortunately Cllr Treacher is not able to attend but will ask one of her fellow Councillors to go along. Four trees were planted at Alton Gateway, three trees at Will Hall Meadows in addition to the eight trees at Anstey Park.

The 840 hedging plants are due to be delivered 24th February and 6th March and will be used to continue the hedge along the London Road at Anstey Park.

The Chair can fund a picnic bench for Anstey Park from the Cllr Grant funding. The exact location for this is to be agreed with the Head Groundsman.

An audit of all the trees planted in the last years is to be carried out, this will include those planted by AVLAN, ACAN, The Alton Society and the Town Council. This data will inform the impact on carbon reduction for the town council.

Alton In Bloom – The Town Council are looking to relaunch the Alton In Bloom competitions and have suggested using the AVLAN checklist for Wildlife Friendly Gardens as environmentally friendly criteria for a “Gold Star” Eco award in each category. The following categories:

1. **Best small garden** (under 5 metres including courtyards and balconies)
2. **Best Front Garden.**
3. **Best large garden** (over 5 metres)
4. **Best new garden** (new build houses under 5 years old)
5. **Best planted container** (including pots, hanging baskets, window boxes and unusual containers)
6. **Best kitchen garden** (including vegetable and fruit plots, allotments, containers, polytunnels and greenhouses)
7. **Best community/communal garden** (community garden project or communal garden tended to by volunteers/residents)
8. **Best commercial building** (pub, restaurant, shop, community hall, local attraction)
9. **Best children’s plot or container at home for growing flowers and pollinators.**
10. **Best children’s plot or container at home for growing for growing fruit or vegetables.**
11. **Tallest sunflower**

The Committee agreed that environmentally sustainable alternatives should be promoted as part of this project. Jenny explained that AVLAN work with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trust to provide guidance of the best plants to use. Jenny, Barbara, and Scott agreed to meet to look at

creating some criteria for the competition, it was agreed that this must not be too complicated and does not have to be for every category in year one.

Management of Will Hall Meadow – the Town Council will be working with the Hopfield Residents Association to create a management plan which will include a cutting regime to support the wildlife.

Update on signage for walking and cycling routes – Chris informed the Committee that the two directional signs are being installed, one at the Ridgeway and one at Gibert White Way. These will indicate walking and cycling route into the town centre.

The round stickers have been created to be used on lamp posts to show cycle routes, these are being distributed to show safe paths across Alton.

Cycle Alton are looking to launch the new map, website, and signage with an event in the spring. Pennie asked that she be informed of the date as EHDC have a drone which could be used to photograph the event and routes, along with promotion of the project.

Chris asked if the Town Council have an updated map of the town showing all the new estates, Wendy explained that it changes regularly and so constantly be out of date. Most people use an online map to navigate as this is current.

Cycle hoops – Hayley, Martin, Chris, and Barbara will be identifying the exact locations to install the new cycle hoops on Monday 9th February. They are being installed at the following locations:

- 2 x at Flood Meadows at the Townhouse Lane entrance
- 2 x at Flood Meadows at Lenton Street entrance
- 2 x at the Butts
- 2 x at the Assembly Rooms on the area at the front of the building owned by the Town Council
- 4 x in the Public Garden at two locations
- 2 x Normandy Street
- 2 x High Street by Costa Coffee
- 2 x High Street near Co-op
- 1 x Windmill Hill

There are 2 hoops at Jubilee Playing Fields which need to be moved to a more accessible location and 2 hoops at Anstey Park which need to be reinstalled.

An additional 6 hoops have been purchased which will be installed on the High Street, but these required a licence from Hampshire County Council which has been applied for.

Reduction in plastic waste – The Assistant to the Clerk updated the Committee on the model of water fountain which Binsted have used. The Clerk at Binsted confirmed that there had been no vandalism of the unit, but it was in a very public position which they believed had stopped this. The unit they purchased as from America so spare parts took time to arrive and it was suggested that a more local supplier be sourced.

It is planned that a unit be added to the Harry Baker Pavilion when it is refurbished.

Barbara asked that a unit be fitted in the Market Square.

110 **Update from Young ACAN**

Scott informed the Committee that the Eco Street Project has now ended, a review of the project can be found on the ACAN website using the following link:

<https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/?s=eco+streets>

The school Eco Conference is taking place on 30th January with a focus on food including growing sustainably, food waste and food miles. A new club for primary school children has been set up called the “Earthlings” and all the primary schools in Alton have signed up for this. Group

activities will be held, and children will be encouraged to take the learning back to their school. This will be launched at the Eco Conference.

Scott explained that getting secondary schools involved was more difficult, but Young ACAN continue to communicate with them. Eggars does have a strong core group which get involved in events like the tree planting.

The hedgehog routes project is being worked on by a resident local to the Butts School and a champion at the Butts.

Young ACAN are delivering a Climate Assembly in every Primary School in the spring term. Scott is also working on 4 or 5 short (1hr) workshops which can be delivered in schools, during the summer term.

111 **ACAN Update**

Jenny informed the Committee that the grant from the Climate Change Committee had been used to complete a feasibility study on the Business Engagement Project. ACAN had contributed a further £500 to the study which has now moved to the recruitment of a consultant to deliver the study. An inception meeting will take place in February where the scope and methodology for the project will be agreed. ACAN hope the report will be delivered in July.

Pennie suggested that ACAN speak to Julie McLatch at EHDC who has worked with business in Alton in the past.

Jenny explained that the groups within ACAN continue to thrive, the Repair Café has moved to the Assembly Rooms and the Mayor attended the first launch session in the new location.

112 **EHDC Update**

Pennie updated the Committee on the following projects:

Community Climate Action Fund (CCAF) – £129,000 allocated to 14 projects from 29 applications (£327,000 requested). The quality of bids was high. Successful projects: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/climate/community-climate-action-fund>

Air Quality Strategy – Local strategy in development. Air quality in East Hampshire remains good, with all monitoring sites compliant with UK NO₂ standards. Under the Environment Act 2021, councils are required to produce a local strategy aligned with the national Air Quality Strategy. Expected to be agreed in Spring.

Climate Action Dashboard – Quarterly progress updates published: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/climate/our-climate-dashboards>

UKSPF/REPF – Programme progressing on track across six project areas.

NPPF – Draft revised National Planning Policy Framework published for public consultation (Dec 2025). ATC may wish to respond on climate, energy efficiency and heritage issues: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

Monthly Green Steps – This report is created every month focusing on 3 areas any items for inclusion to be sent to Pennie Brown.

113 **LCWIP Update**

Chris updated the Committee on the two routes identified to create safe zones for walking and cycling. Parts of these routes will be included in new housing developments and the developer will be encouraged to include the infrastructure as part of the planning. The sections between these new paths, Cycle Alton are looking to the Town Council to deliver.

114 **Date of next meeting**

The Committee agreed that holding the meetings in the Chamber incurred heating a large space and it was agreed that the meetings should be moved to 16 Market Square. The next meeting will therefore be on Friday 17th April 2026 at 9:30am to 11:30am.

Future meetings will be:

- Friday 24th July 2026

- Friday 23rd October 2026
- Friday 22nd January 2027
- Friday 23rd April 2027

The Assistant to the Town Clerk agreed to send meeting invites to all.

The meeting closed at 11:40am.

Minutes signed as a true record of the meeting _____ 17.04.26

Ref.	Action	Person responsible	Date due
Finnimore	Speak with Energise South Downs to progress this solar panel project	Kevin Ray	15.04.26
Solar Panels	Contact Chawton Indoor Bowls and Esteem Ironing for annual energy use for discussion with Energise South Downs	Wendy	15.04.26
Allotments	Chair of Allotment Association to be invited to join the April meeting	Wendy	15.04.26
Action Plan	Update progress on all actions	All members	15.04.26
Action Plan	Update format to include progress against actions	Wendy	15.04.26
Strategy	Add “impact on Climate Change” to Council reports template	Town Clerk	15.04.26
Utilities	Track changes and reduction in carbon for 2023 to 2026. Meeting with EHDC consultant to discuss the Action plan	Don & Wendy	15.04.26
Electric vehicle	Arrange test drive period for Grounds Team	Wendy	15.04.26
National Planning Policy Review	ATC to look at responding reference heritage buildings	Town Clerk	15.04.26
Jubilee bungalows	Arrange a meeting with tenants and Energy Alton to discuss heat pumps to replace oil fired heating.	Wendy	15.04.26
Public Gardens Bowls group	Invite to next meeting for an update on installing solar panels	Barbara	15.04.26
Picnic Bench	Apply for Cllr Grant and order new picnic bench		
Tree planting	Numbers of trees and hedging plants installed since 1 st April 2023 to be collated.	Jenny & Wendy	15.04.26
Alton in Bloom	Launch of competition to be held until criteria for environment sustainability are created	Hayley	15.04.26
Cycle routes	Inform EHDC of launch date for new maps, website, and cycle routes	Chris	15.04.26
Water fountain	Source and have Installed a unit in the Market Square	Wendy	15.04.26