



# Cycle Alton Newsletter

**Edition 6, October 2021**

Here is the latest news from Cycle Alton. We'd love to hear your comments on local cycling issues, so please message us at [cyclealton@gmail.com](mailto:cyclealton@gmail.com), <https://www.facebook.com/cyclealton>, or @CycleAlton on Twitter. Our website is here: <https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/our-groups/cycle-alton/>

## Cycle Alton news

### Can you help us?

As Cycle Alton has become more established, the amount of work needed to keep up with all the issues has grown. Could you help us in any way? Examples of what needs doing include taking photos for publicity; taking minutes at our meetings occasionally; helping promote our *Cycling in Alton* Charter to local organisations and businesses; helping with the newsletter occasionally; updating our social media – Whatsapp / Facebook/ Twitter (Instagram needs setting up); helping on our stalls for an hour - the next one is the Christmas Market Saturday 27th November; building a website for Cycle Alton or offering advice on this; being another voice/opinion to consult/discuss ideas with.

If you have any particular skills, knowledge or contacts please do get in touch. Many hands makes light work, and a small amount of help from many will make a massive difference to what we can achieve.

### ADULT CYCLE TRAINING IN ALTON



**FREE!**

**NOW TAKING BOOKINGS!**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 10-12 noon**  
**or Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November 10-12 noon**  
**Venue: Amery Hill School, Alton, GU34 2BE**

**Which group do you fit into?**

Group A: "I haven't ridden my bike for years; I'd be a danger to any traffic and will wobble like mad". Small group of up to 6 'wobbly' cyclists practicing in the car park.

Group B: "I'm OK riding my bike on quiet roads but I hate cycling through Alton when it's busy". Small group of up to 6 'nervous' cyclists will ride quiet roads through the town.

Group C: "I've always wanted to ride a bicycle. I've got one in the shed - it glares at me!"

Individuals who want to learn to ride a bike from scratch.

Usually £20 a session but offered **free**, generously funded by East Hampshire District Council; limited number of places available

**To discuss your abilities and reserve a place, call Darren on 02392 290474 or email [pedalpowertraining@gmail.com](mailto:pedalpowertraining@gmail.com)**

Arranged by Cycle Alton in conjunction with Pedal Power Training, one of the country's largest providers of quality cycle training, with a focus on safety, quality and service.



### Adult Cycle Training

Following the success of our first adult cycle training session, we arranged two further dates with Pedal Power Training, and the next one is Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November.

To book a place on this FREE session email [pedalpowertraining@gmail.com](mailto:pedalpowertraining@gmail.com) or ring Darren on 02392 290474.

### Alton's Cycle Routes linking Schools and Colleges

The routes which were investigated by teams of supporters have been collated into a linked network throughout the town. This was presented to Alton Town Council (ATC) at a recent planning meeting and afterwards a very informative discussion was held on the vision for cycling in Alton, in which the safe cycle routes to schools and colleges for senior school-aged children is viewed as a first step in a 10-year plan. ATC wholeheartedly supported the proposals and resolved to agree the principle, help define the routes with Cycle Alton, identify the responsible authorities and make formal requests.

Cycle Alton looks forward to working with ATC on this.

We are now liaising with Alton's schools and colleges on safe routes for a senior school-aged child to cycle independently to school.

## Alton Cycling Charter

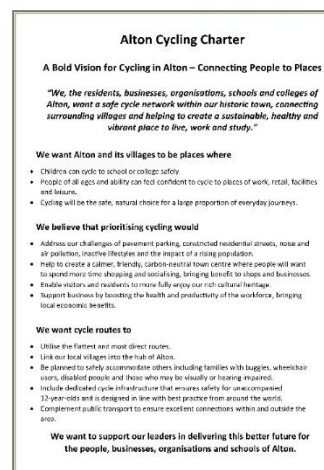
The Alton Cycling Charter was launched in the summer and has been signed by nearly 200 individuals so far. If you haven't already, please add your signature at <https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/alton-cycling-charter-please-sign/>.

In the coming months we would like to raise the profile of the Charter by approaching local businesses and organisations to gain their support. The aim eventually is to present this to our local decision-makers to show the breadth of support for the promotion of cycling in Alton.

## Cycle Four Marks News

Parents from Four Marks School recently met Angela Forsyth, HCC School Travel Planner, Angela Baxter from EHDC and Chris King-Smith from Cycle Four Marks. They walked the proposed safe active route to school from a Park and Stride facility in the Recreation Ground.

Despite no funding being available, Cycle Four Marks will continue to offer help to the small group of parents pushing for better provision for active travel to their school.



## Alton & Town Council News

### New Shared Cycle Path along Anstey Road



The long-overflow road works at the Anstey Road–Anstey Lane junction are finally complete, and local cyclists will have noticed some new road markings indicating where they should hop on and off the pavement. The new wide stretch of shared path is designed to be one-way only for cycling towards Holybourne (first photo) while those cycling towards town are expected to cross the carriageway at the traffic island and continue on the road, after just a couple of metres on the opposite pavement (second photo).

This junction was planned and designed years before the recent government guidance on prioritising active travel, and falls short on enabling children to cycle to and from school as well as being overly complicated, therefore is already ignored by many who cycle here. The advanced stop lines are welcomed, however.

## Eco Fair 11<sup>th</sup> July

Organised jointly by ATC and Alton Climate Action Network (ACAN), it was another very successful day for all stallholders at this event in the Public Gardens, and Cycle Alton's stall was well-attended throughout the day. A big 'thank you' goes to all our supporters who helped out. We gathered many new supporters and signatures for the Alton Cycling Charter.



## Permanent Closure of Through Road in Anstey Park



Following a request by Cycle Alton, ATC members recently agreed that the temporary barrier installed during the roadworks to prevent rat running through the park is to be made semi-permanent by the installation of several planters which will be spaced apart to enable cyclists and pedestrians to pass through. In addition, the planters will have reflective strips added and they will be weighted down with additional material so they will not be movable by individuals. Signs will be erected at the entrances to the park to advise "No through road".

## East Hampshire District Council news

### COP26 East Hampshire 8<sup>th</sup> October

Cycle Alton was one of 40 local organisations and businesses exhibiting at this event which was attended by hundreds of people. Ahead of the event, three Action Groups were set up to investigate issues and make recommendations surrounding three major causes of carbon emissions in this district – transport, buildings, and land use. Chris Chappell from Cycle Alton contributed to the Transport Action Group's final report here:

<https://cdn.easthants.gov.uk/public/documents/Transport%20Action%20Group%20final%20report.pdf>



The event was deemed a success although was also criticised for not allowing any discussion of the major issues.

Disappointingly there was no cycle parking outside. When questioned, Alton Maltings said "a cycle park is on our planned list of refurbishments ... and we were hoping for this to be in place already but in the current season sadly this has not happened. We are actively looking for ways to fund this and have it in place for visitors in the future."

## Lidl Planning Application

East Hampshire (EHDC) planning officers voted to approve a footpath only along Montecchio Way between Holybourne and the proposed Lidl site. This is a huge disappointment and has highlighted the need for Cycle Alton to see plans for new developments at an earlier stage, in order to comment on proposed cycling provision before final decisions are made. We understand 40 cycle parking stands are to be installed. EHDC expects cyclists from Holybourne to go via Anstey Mill Lane and Garstons Way to Lidl.

## Government News relating to cycling

### New Highway Code

The Department for Transport (DfT) will publish updates to The Highway Code between now and spring 2022. Changes will include a hierarchy of road users that aims to ensure road users who do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger they may pose to others, and a strengthened pedestrian priority on pavements and when crossing or waiting to cross the road. It will also contain guidance on safe passing distances and speeds and ensuring that cyclists have priority at junctions when travelling straight ahead. The overhaul of The Highway Code is part of a £338 million package to promote active travel, announced in July.

## Other Cycling-related News

### Bentley Station Rail Crossing

Following the tragic fatality of a mobility-scooter user here in 2016, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch recommended greater consideration and management of mobility scooter use at crossings which rely on listening and looking for trains. Network Rail (NR) has developed this into plans to install a footbridge over the track, with a lift on each platform for disabled users and cyclists.

Many concerns have been raised:

- The undesirability of using two lifts at an unmanned station (in the event of a lift failure);
- The likelihood of the future maintenance budget being reduced, thereby increasing the chance of lift breakdown;
- The capacity of the proposed lifts: would non-standard cycle users fit in, e.g. recumbent cycles, tandems, trikes, or a cycle club ride of a dozen cyclists?
- The closing of the level crossing would represent the loss of a popular and valuable amenity route in this rural location: National Cycle Network Route 224 crosses the line here, as well as it being the start of the Shipwrights Way and a gateway to Alice Holt Forest.
- The lifts may discourage cyclists from using this route and may choose instead one of two road routes, exposing them to further risk from speeding traffic;
- Cycling is being encouraged by the government who have issued detailed guidelines on removing barriers to cycling have been published; the closing of the crossing would represent such a barrier to many who might otherwise like to use this route.

Solutions cheaper than the installation of two lifts with ongoing maintenance costs do exist: automatic locking gates would prevent pedestrian access when a train is expected; alternatively every train could stop at Bentley.