



***"Happiness is a place between too little and too much"  
- old Finnish proverb.***

***Perhaps that's why Finns are so much happier than Brits!***

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## ***Share it, Repair it and Make it last.***

The climate news couldn't be more bleak just now, so if we are looking for a way to really make a personal difference, maybe we should consider our addiction to stuff!

Of course there are ever growing numbers of people who are prevented from overconsuming by the cost of living and increasing inequalities in our society.

Then there are those of us who have spent years of our lives accumulating far more stuff than we really need. We cannot be blamed for this addiction. We are urged to replace our cars every 3 years and to replace our white goods when they break down, rather than getting them repaired. But this is not for our benefit - this is to allow manufacturers to go on raking in their profits regardless of the cost to the environment.

***Did you know manufacturers are legally required to keep spare parts for a full 10 years, for every model they sell?***

## **Retail therapy or madness?**

***Lots of people consider "Retail therapy" to be just a bit of fun, but the expression was first coined in 1986 by a Chicago journalist reflecting on the Christmas shopping frenzy :***

***"We've become a nation measuring out our lives in shopping bags and nursing our psychic ills through retail therapy."***

***There are so many better way to address our psychic ills!***

And don't get me started on the throw away economy as evidenced at festivals. Apparently 2,000 tons of waste is left behind at Glastonbury

every year - a lot of it "disposable" tents and sleeping bags.

***This can't go on.***

Let's see festival organisers include the hire of a tent and sleeping bag in the ticket price with a deposit repayable on departure if the items are returned in good condition.

## **We can choose to minimise our environmental impact.**

Why hang on to stuff we are never going to use again, often things that could be re-used if we donated them to Alton Community Share, Resurrection Furniture or one of Alton's many charity shops.

Which brings me back to the story of my stepfather who, when downsizing from the old family home, decided to buy 2 neighbouring bungalows - one to live in and one to store all the stuff he had accumulated over the years and could not bear to part with!

I am hugely relieved to report that common sense did eventually prevail, he was allowed to withdraw from the purchase of the second bungalow and we were able to order a skip instead.

**12,795 possessions!**

And if you missed the article in the Guardian a couple of weeks ago about a [woman who photographed all her possessions](#) it is well worth a look.

She is by no means unique. We could probably all learn a lot from taking such an in depth look at our own accumulated stuff!

## **So where to start?**

Did you hear about "Nothing new in 22"?

I thought it would be harder than it was, actually it was liberating to have an excuse not to buy new when I had perfectly good stuff already. In fact I was able to enjoy many a trip down memory lane as I rediscovered old favourites in the darker reaches of my wardrobe.

Add to that the money and time saved and the only question is "why stop now?" Like giving up smoking - it only gets easier the longer you keep it up. So how about:

***Carbon free in 23  
Nothing more in 24  
Thrift and thrive in 25  
Learn to fix in 26***

And just because you didn't start in January doesn't mean you cannot start now, like giving up any addiction you just have to keep trying, forgive yourself every time you fail and start again. How about doing it with a friend for the mutual support - you can wardrobe dive together and enjoy reminiscing about where those old outfits have been.

## Reuse Survey

Hampshire County Council is looking for ways to help people reuse items that might otherwise be thrown away.

They are particularly looking at how people purchase second-hand items, borrow or rent items instead of buying them, and repair and refill items.

Complete the 2023 Reuse Survey today for a chance to win vouchers!

<https://hampshirecc.welcomesyourfeedback.net/s/2023WasteReuseSurvey>



*Our feedback will help them to identify where and how the County Council can support us to reuse.*

*A prize draw to win 1 of 2 Leisure Vouchers worth £50 each will take place after the survey has closed!*

Let Pete Seeger have the last word on all this:

“If it can’t be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production.”

– Pete Seeger

Pete Seeger would have been pleased to see a [refurbished section on ebay!](#)

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### ***In this newsletter***

[Breaking News](#)

[Extreme weather events are here to stay](#)

[Eco Fair](#)

[Car Share request](#)

[What's happening at the Eco Cafe](#)

[East Hants Business Breakfast](#)

[ALFI Local Food Directory](#)

[Cycle Training](#)

### ***Dates for your diary***

[Litter Pick](#) 10am Thu 3rd Aug Anstey Park Car Park GU34 2NB

[Eco-Chat Cuppa for the Climate](#) Thu 10th Aug, Eco Cafe, 16 Market Square, GU34 1HD

[Community Share](#) Sat 12th Aug 10am-12pm St. Lawrence Parish Centre, GU34 2BW

[Alton Repair Cafe](#) Sat 2nd Sep 10:30 - 12:30pm Alton Community Centre, GU34 1HN

[Is Alton prepared for the next heatwave](#) Thu 7th Sep 7:30pm Community Centre GU34 1HN

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## News and views

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## Stop Press

At the East Hampshire District Council meeting last Thursday a motion was approved to bring forward their target date for becoming Carbon neutral from 2050 to 2035.



The first step will be to conclude the audit of the council's carbon footprint, looking at what can be cut or changed and finding ways to speed up decarbonisation within the council.

Thanks go to all the councillors who voted for the motion which was passed almost unanimously.

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## Is Alton prepared for the next heatwave

June 2023 was the hottest on record in the UK. The year 2023 is set to be the hottest on record globally. Heatwaves are increasing in frequency and severity. Whilst some welcome the heat, it can be uncomfortable or even dangerous for others, such as the elderly or those in poor health. Hot weather puts a strain on our infrastructure, health services and green spaces, including the risk of wildfires and melting tarmac.

ACAN is delighted to welcome a team of speakers from the Petersfield Society, PeCAN (ACAN's sister organisation Petersfield Climate Action Network) and Hampshire County Council who are experts in public health and the built and natural environment.

The purpose of the meeting is to share practical ways in which we can prepare our homes, gardens and local environment for hotter weather. There will be ample time for questions and discussion.

[Thu 7th Sep at 7pm for 7:30 start at Alton Community Centre, GU34 1HN](#)

### **Speakers:**

Andy Moffat – Trustee of Petersfield Society, Convenor of Green Infrastructure Group

Peter Moss – Trustee of PeCAN, Project Leader for Petersfield SuperHomes

Melanie Oxley – Trustee of PeCAN, Project Leader for Engaging with Nature Recovery

A public health practitioner from Hampshire County Council



## All the fun of the Eco Fair

If you missed the Eco Fair do take a look at this [report on our website](#).



We are sorry to be saying goodbye to Lillie Ewins who spoke so eloquently at our first Eco Fair and again this year.

We will miss her commitment and passion and wish her every success in her university course.

As she said in her [speech at this years Eco-Fair](#)

***"our voices are strongest when we put them together."***



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## Do you have a car you don't use much?

Gareth Hurd from our AVLAN group needs use of a car for nursery runs 8am-9am Monday-Thursday during term time and is wondering if a member of our community in the Butts Road area might be interested in a car share.

He would cover the extra insurance and fuel as well as paying £20-30 a week for the inconvenience. Neither he nor his wife Helena have any points on their license and have never been in an accident.

As nursery runs are a relatively short term problem, getting a second car feels a bit excessive and he wonders if a car share might offer a win-win by also putting some spare cash in the hands of a member of the local community!

Please contact [gabhurd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gabhurd@yahoo.co.uk) by August 15th if interested.

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## Eco-Cafe and Eco-Chats

Come and have a browse! We have displays about ACAN's groups and various environmental issues.

Sometimes we have an "Eco-chat" on a topic led by an appropriate enthusiast.

Kids welcome with a grown up - we have activities to keep them occupied.

Phinna is in the Eco-Cafe every Thu 3.30 - 5 & Sat 10-12.



### See programme of Eco-Chats below on Thu 3:45 - 5pm & Sat 10-12pm

Thu 3 Aug	Solar PV and batteries	Mike Ward
Sat 5 Aug	Bees and Butterflies	Jenny Griffiths
Thu 10 Aug	Kids crafts	Phinna Brealey
Sat 12 Aug	Choosing to install a domestic Air Source Heat Pump	Tim Woolman
Thu 17 Aug	Powering-up - Energy Alton's Community Energy plans	Stuart Mills
Sat 19 Aug	Tasting plant-based foods	Eleanor Hill
Thu 24 Aug	Ticket to Stride - walks based around bus stops and railway stations	Ian Fleming
Sat 26 Aug	Kids crafts	Phinna Brealey
Thu 31 Aug	Reduce and Recycle	Roland Richardson

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## East Hants Local Businesses Meeting on Climate

Local business people came together to discuss saving money by being more environmentally friendly at Goldfinch Bookshop in Alton last month.

The Rural Business Network (part of EHDC), Energy Alton and ACAN (Alton Climate Action Network) were on hand to answer questions about access to loans and grants, waste management, and how to collect and use energy data to lower both costs and emissions.

Pennie Brown, the Strategy Manager for Sustainable Growth at EHDC, said:

"We are currently refreshing the council's [climate and environment strategy](#), and the conversation with the businesses was invaluable to find out how we can best help.

Stuart Mills, from [Energy Alton](#), said:

"From the free energy surveys that our volunteers provided to 30 local businesses, we found that business owners really appreciated being given a tailored list of energy efficiency improvement options."

Eleanor Hill, from [ACAN](#), added:

"The journey to a business becoming fully sustainable can take the form of many small steps – such as encouraging members of staff to break daily habits and try something new – to larger projects such as undertaking a waste energy audit, or actively encouraging different modes of transport to get to work."

**To get involved and to have your say about what is important to your business, please [fill in this short survey](#) or [contact the team direct](#).**

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## Alton Local Food Directory

ALFI has updated the [Alton Local Food Directory](#) do take a look, before your next shopping trip.



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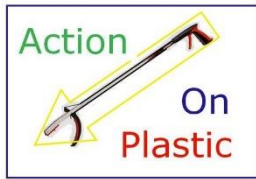
Cycle Alton will be offering more free cycle training sessions in August and September - see their Facebook Page or email [cyclealton@gmail.com](mailto:cyclealton@gmail.com) for further details.



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## Dates for your diary

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## Litter Pick Anstey Park Football Club Car Park GU34 2NB

Thursday 3rd August - 10am - 12 noon

Please email if you can make it to give us an idea of numbers [plasticacan@gmail.com](mailto:plasticacan@gmail.com)

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## Every 2nd Thursday of the month.

Join us on **Thu, Aug 10th 4-5pm** at the Eco Café (Market Square, GU34 1HD)

You can be sure of a friendly welcome.  
We have comfy sofas, hot drinks and biscuits.  
😊🌍 We look forward to seeing you!

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## Alton Community Share

Next session Sat 12th August

Reduce waste & save money at this free library of jigsaws, games, toys and activities

On the 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month  
at St Lawrence's Parish Centre  
10am to 12 noon



## Next Session Sat 2nd September

Bring your items for repair along to Alton Community Centre from 10:30am to 12:30pm on:

2nd September, 28th October, 9th December

The repair team will be at your service to assist and advise you on repairs to small household items.







# IS ALTON PREPARED FOR THE NEXT HEATWAVE? LOOKING BACK ON 2023 & FORWARD TO 2024

Hear from experts in public health and the built and natural environment, discover practical solutions to making our homes and gardens resilient, and find out how we can keep ourselves safe in the climate crisis.

*Join our open forum*

*7:30pm Thu 7th Sep*

*Alton Community Centre, GU34 1HN*

*Bar open for refreshments from 7pm*

email [altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com) for more information



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## As ACAN has grown so have our costs.

Most grants do not cover running costs, such as insurance, zoom subscription, examination of accounts.

If you can help with one off or regular donations please use the button below for our CAF donate page.

Many thanks.

[Donate to ACAN](#)

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