



***ACAN's Jenny Griffiths visited
our Gumbi Alton Permaculture
Project in Malawi,
read her report below.***

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Jenny was hugely relieved to find permaculture is working to ease the horrors of drought in Malawi

In 2020, ACAN formed a funding partnership with the Gumbi Education Fund (GEF) to help the community develop sustainable agriculture. The GEF has supported the Gumbi villages in central Malawi in southern Africa since the Great Famine in 2002. A drought disaster has again been declared in Malawi this year, making it a poignant time for ACAN Trustee Jenny Griffiths' visit in May, with the widow of the GEF's founder (John Vidal, for 30 years the environment editor of The Guardian), plus a major donor who approached ACAN last summer.

Instead of rain-fed monoculture maize, GAPP grows a diversity of local fruit and nut trees and bushes, and a wide variety of ground crops, from tomatoes, to onions to cassava, cultivated organically using plant compost and manure from the farm's animals. Jenny was thrilled to see the farm doing well despite the drought; and also to visit young farmers' plots on their homesteads, only recently developed. She learned much from being able to talk at length about future plans with Patrick Kamzitu, GEF's local co-ordinator, whose role is pivotal.

Find out more

On **Friday 21st June at 7.30 pm in the Community Centre**, Jenny will give an illustrated talk about her trip to Malawi, including a visit to the inspirational 23-acre Malawian-run Permaculture Paradise Institute <https://permacultureinstitutemw.com/> where the Gumbi young farmers were trained. She will also talk about the general living conditions of Malawians and of the landscape and wildlife of this beautiful and little-visited country.

Free of charge - All are welcome.



The Malawian GEF co-ordinator, Patrick Kamzitu, with Ivy on her homestead plot. Note the GAPP T-shirt!



Some of the young farmers whose training was supported by ACAN donors, at the large storage pond built 6 months ago and funded by our major donor, still half full despite the drought.



Drought damaged maize crop in Malawi

In this newsletter

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Dates for your diary

- [Ackender Woods Nature Walk](#) Sun 2nd Jun 8:15pm Meet at Pertuis Avenue entrance
- [Litter Pick](#) Thu 6th Jun 10am, Rugby club car park, Anstey Park, GU34 2NB
- [Alton Community Share](#) Sat 8th Jun 10am-12noon, St Lawrence Parish Centre GU34 2BW
- [Kings Pond Nature Walk](#) Sun 9th Jun 8:30pm Meet at Kings Pond Car Park
- [Windmill Hill Nature Walk](#) Sun 16th Jun 9pm Meet at entrance to Salisbury Close
- [Talk on GAPP Project in Malawi](#) Fri 21st Jun 7:30pm Alton Community Centre, GU34 1HN
- [Restore Nature Now](#) Sat 22nd June March in Central London
- [Alton Community Share](#) Sat 22nd Jun 10am-12noon, St Lawrence Parish Centre GU34 2BW
- [Election hustings](#) Mon 24th Jun 7-9pm Rose Room, Festival Hall, Petersfield, GU31 4EA
- [Alton Green Homes Fair](#) Sat 29th Jun 11am-3pm Assembly Rooms, GU34 1BA
- [Alton Repair Cafe](#) Sat 20th July 10:30-12:30 Alton Community Centre, GU34 1HN

Of interest in the neighbourhood

- [Biodiversity Collage](#) Thu 13th Jun 6-9pm Winchester Uni Art Centre, SO22 4NR
- [Young Writers Competition](#) deadline midnight Sun 23rd June

Other ways to help

[Volunteering with ACAN](#)
[Donate to ACAN](#)

The Future of ACAN

We are delighted to report that several people have stepped up to become trustees in the new ACAN and most key roles and tasks will be covered starting in June. We are very grateful to the Future of ACAN group for all the work and enthusiasm they have brought to ensuring a smooth transition to ACAN mark 2.

Further information on the new leadership team will be published on our website and in social media next week.



ACAN's new management team and trustees. Left to Right Rod Pannel, Laura Pambos (Treasurer), Emma Jones, Sarah Gulliford (Chair of Trustees), Louise Hilton (Secretary), Dave Tickner. Unfortunately Angus Berry who is also due to become a trustee was unable to attend our EGM. And of course our newest recruit is the delightful 5 month old Sonny, who promises to lighten the mood at many a meeting to come!!

SustainaBites

BITING INTO A GREENER TOMORROW, ONE MEAL AT A TIME!



Alton Climate
Action Network
Hampshire, UK



Alton Sustainable Eating has undergone a relaunch and is now known by the much more catchy name **Sustainabites**.

Please visit our new [Facebook page](#) and join the conversation - we know that food is a subject dear to all our hearts and we want to hear your thoughts and experiences of trying to reduce the amount of meat and dairy in your diet, whether to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or for the health benefits or both.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Get in touch to find out more or to organise a speaker. altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com



GREENING ALTON

The Greening Alton project is really making progress with 2,000 views of the map so far. But we are still looking for more people to add their own green spaces, from window box to wildlife friendly garden . We want to create a series of wildlife corridors throughout Alton for pollinators and other wildlife to help nature's recovery.

To see the map of spaces added so far go to www.bit.ly/GreenAltonSites

If you have a plot to add to the map email altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com

To learn how you can **Bee the Change** go to the [BumbleBee Conservation website](#)

Election Special - mid June

ACAN's lobbying group have asked all our election candidates to answer 5 questions about the climate and the environment to give us a better idea of where they stand on these vital issues.

The questions are:

1. Describe any actions you have taken in the last 5 years which demonstrate leadership on climate and/or environmental issues.
2. The UK declared an environment and climate change emergency in 2019. How well do you think successive UK governments have handled that emergency since then?
3. In 2023 the CCC gave the government a series of recommendations which they summarised in 9 key messages – which of these messages would you get behind in your first year in office, if elected.
4. What actions to tackle the UK's biodiversity crisis would you prioritise in your first year in office?
5. Will you support the Climate and Nature Bill? Yes/No

We will be sending out an Election Special newsletter in mid June to publicise their answers so that we can all make an informed choice about who to vote for.

Good News and Ideas

At last some positive news about public transport

Stagecoach have launched an upgraded service on the

[65 running between Alton and Guildford via Farnham](#)

This is now going to be running roughly hourly ***including Sundays*** and running later into the evenings as well. Meaning it should be as easy to travel East as it is West from Alton on the bus.

To celebrate the introduction of the new Sunday service, the buses will be completely free to use on all Sundays throughout June!

And remember the **£2 maximum bus fare** is still in place so you don't need a special bus pass to enjoy a cheap day out any day of the week.

New Cycle Repair Hub at Alton Station

Thanks to lobbying by Adopt Alton Station volunteers we have a new bike repair station at the station. More cycle repair hubs can be found around the town, at the junction of Paper Mill Lane and Normandy Street, in the Market Square, at Jubilee Fields by the Skate Park, and in Anstey Park by the Pump Track, although the latter has sadly been vandalised several times.

A new idea in domestic heating

A group of us went to the Festival of Sustainable Homes recently where we discovered this wonderful new idea - dispensing with radiators by [running hot water through specially designed skirting boards](#) instead. If you know anyone who has adopted this new technology and would like to share their experiences do ask them to get in touch via altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com we would love to hear how it is going.

Dates for your diary

Free Nature Walks

Scott Gudrich our inspirational Eco-Streets project consultant will be guiding a series of evening walks, to share the joys of our natural world at dusk, in some of our favourite green spaces.

Ackender Woods Evening Walk Sun 2nd June 8:15 - 9:30pm

Meeting at the Pertuis Avenue entrance to the woods.

Kings Pond Evening Walk Sun 9th June 8:30 - 9:30pm

Meeting at the King's Pond car park.

Windmill Hill Evening Walk Sun 16th June 9 - 10pm

Meeting at the entrance to Salisbury Close.

All walks are free to attend - no prior sign-up necessary.



ACAN's Monthly Litter Pick

The next litter pick will be on Thu 6th June from 10am - 12 noon

Meet at the British Legion / Rugby Club Car Park in Anstey Park, GU34 2NB

Please email if you can make it to give us an idea of numbers plasticacan@gmail.com



Alton Community Share

June sessions Sat 8th & 22nd

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

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

Restore Nature Now

Sat 22nd Jun

Central London

This may be the biggest march yet as environmentalists from many different environmental organisations descend on London in their masses to demand better safeguards for our beleaguered natural world.



We will be demanding our next government shows strong domestic and global nature and climate leadership by:

1. Giving a pay-rise to farmers for protecting nature
2. Making polluters pay
3. Making more space for nature
4. Enshrining a right to a healthy environment in law
5. Ensuring fair and effective climate action

So dust off your banners and join a contingent from ACAN.

We will be in the rearmost coach of the 10:14am train from Alton Station.

The march starts at 1pm from Hyde Park Corner.

Banners and fancy dress optional - ***just be there*** to be counted at a family friendly afternoon in the company of like-minded people.

See the [Restore Nature Now](#) website for more details

Election Hustings on the Environment

As of 1st June we have not heard of any hustings taking place in Alton so please go along to PeCAN's climate hustings to find out what our candidates think about the climate and nature.

7-9pm, Mon 24 Jun, Rose Room, Festival Hall, Heath Road, Petersfield, GU31 4EA.

The following candidates have confirmed:

Conservatives (Damian Hinds)

Greens (Richard Knight)

Labour (Lucy Sims)

Liberal Democrats (Dominic Martin)

Sara Smith from SDP can't make it.

If a Reform UK candidate joins the race they will also be invited.



Alton Green Homes Fair

Saturday
29 June
11am - 3pm
Free entry

Alton
Assembly
Rooms
High St
GU34 1BA

Solar
Panels
Heat Pumps
Insulation

Reduce
your home's
energy use &
carbon
impact

Local Installers
Carbon Calculator House
See a working Heat Pump
Food by Jo's Plant Kitchen
Meet Green Homeowners
& Energy Champions
Talks by Experts

 A member of Alton
Climate Action
Network (ACAN)

We are grateful for
funding from
 ALTON
Town Council  EAST
HAMPSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Energy
Alton 

A not-for-profit community
interest company run by
local volunteers
energyalton.org.uk

General Election - Thursday 4th July

Please don't forget to vote for Climate and Nature.
And remember to take photo ID.

Next Session Sat 20th July

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

20th July, 7th Sep, 2nd Nov, 14th Dec

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



Please note that if you have a zip that needs replacing you will need to bring a replacement zip with you and it will save our repairers a great deal of time if you have removed the damaged zip before you arrive.

In the Neighbourhood

Biodiversity Collage - Winchester Art Centre

Thursday 13th June 6-9pm

The Biodiversity Collage is a *fun and collaborative workshop* that aims to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity.

With a set of cards based on the IPBES reports, you will:

- Recreate **ecosystems** using 2 starters
- Understand the **3 pillars** of Biodiversity and the **5 main pressures**
- Turn your **Collage** into a piece of art
- Reflect and develop an **action plan** to stop biodiversity loss

The workshop lasts 3h.

The Biodiversity Collage association believes that everyone should have access to knowledge, which is why the fee to participate in this workshop is on a voluntary basis, depending on what you can and want to give.

Donations can be made in cash at the end of the workshop: they will help spread this knowledge.

More information: <https://fresquedelabiodiversite.org/en.html>

Book a place here: <https://www.billetweb.fr/uk>

Young Writers Competition

PeCAN's has launched a Young Writers Competition! The winner will be announced at Petersfield Eco Fair on Sunday 14th July 2024, with prizes and publication in local print and radio.

You can choose between Fiction and Non-Fiction categories, but please ensure your entry is submitted to us by **midnight on Sunday 23rd June**.



Non Fiction

'Ten Minutes in Nature'

A piece of *no more than* 250 words that makes the reader long to share in your experience. Use all your senses to describe a special place - as wide as the South Downs or as close up as a bumble bee on a wildflower. Do say on the form if you have any photos or pictures, giving permission for PeCAN to use them if appropriate.

Fiction

'Green Flash Fiction'

A story of *no more than* 400 words - where climate, sustainability, rewilding, recycling are PART of the world, but not the WHOLE story. It could be one of the characters, the location, a theme. Have fun with this. Maybe it's your best dramatic moment where nature or eco themes are featured: just be sure to make this clear. Perhaps a couple fall in love digging their allotment, or a child makes a grandparent's tree special...

[For more details go to the entry page here](#)

Volunteer with ACAN

Here in ACAN we have a range of groups already set up and many more ideas of things we would like to do if we had more volunteers, and, of course, you may have ideas of your own you would like to pursue. It doesn't matter how much or how little time you can spare we have volunteering opportunities to suit.

To get involved do fill in our [volunteers form](#)

Or just email altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com and let us know what you would like to do

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](#)
