



CYCLE ALTON NEWSLETTER

Edition 01, July 2020

Government Bike Repair Vouchers

We are waiting for details of how to claim a £50 voucher for your bike repairs. This applies especially to those dear old 2-wheeled friends that have sat at the back of the garage for years! Meanwhile see our list of local cycle repair services, given that our nearest repair shops are now Farnham, Petersfield or Alresford.

- Hilary Repairs, Wentworth Gardens, Alton. Hilary is happy to advise on, or repair & tune up your bike. Charges: £25 for 1st hour plus parts, then £10 for each further hour. Hilary taught Bicycle Maintenance for many years and can also show you how to do it yourself. May be able to fix electric motor problems. Email: hilaryhillrepairs@gmail.com

- Alresford Mobile Cycle Repairs tel 07813 211451 / 01962 738534, covers Alresford & surrounding villages.

- Hartleys Cycles tel 07710 513892. Kent is based at Selborne but cannot allow customers to his workshop during lockdown. He can collect and repair/service bikes within the local area, but not electric bikes

- Precision Cycles tel 07848 156520, based at 4 Clover Field, Lychpit, Basingstoke. RG24 8SR. Happy to do repairs at his workshop and will collect from up to 15 miles for servicing. Can service Bosch or Shimano motors on electric bikes

- **Owens Cycles** Stoner Hill, Steep, Petersfield GU32 1AG. Offers a bike repair service, including electric bikes. Also a £10 collection & delivery service to Alton. (sponsor of Alton Cycling Club and giving 10% discount to Alton Cycling Club members). Tel 01730 260446.

- Cyclesphere Tel 01420 470331. 2 High Street, Bordon GU35 0AY. Services and repairs to any bike including electric. Phone first for an appointment.

- E-bike shop. Teo 01252 279279. 4 Dogflud Way, Farnham GU9 7SS. Sells electric bikes, by appointment. Taking video calls only during lockdown. Will only repair and service their own bikes.

Welcome to our first Cycle Alton Newsletter

Cycle Alton was started on May 20th 2020, to:

- bring together the views of everyone who cycles in and around Alton
- focus on short trips to work, schools, shops, the station etc
- improve connections to/from the surrounding villages
- represent the five local cycle groups
- work with our councils
- improve road safety for everyone who cycles
- and campaign to make Alton a truly 'Cycle-Friendly' town

We are under the umbrella of **Alton Climate Action Network** (ACAN)



So far we have:

- Developed a list of ideas to get things started, from the quick and simple wins to a major re-think of cycle ways
- Publicised the county council's urgent 'call for ideas' while lockdown eases- (see page 4)
- Talked to county, district and town councillors about 'what' and 'how' we can best bring about action.

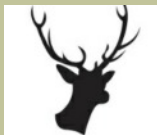
Now we need your ideas to get things moving- please!

Alton's Famous Five

If you're tempted to get out on your bike a bit more, and would like some company, have a look at Alton's five cycle groups- full of friendly folk like you.

1

The White Hart Vuelas



Helen tells us:

The White Hart Vuelas are an informal group of cyclists based at The White Hart pub in Holybourne. We are mainly a road cycling group that meets on Friday evenings and Sunday mornings and whenever else anyone suggests on a very active Whatsapp group. There are no rules or formal membership though there are currently 65 people in the Whatsapp chat. Everyone is welcome!

The WHVs would like to support Cycle Alton achieve better cycling infrastructure that will make it easier to use cycling for transport and leisure in Alton, including secure cycle parking and joined up cycle routes. Tipping the balance away from the dominance of the car to prioritising walking and cycling will improve health and the liveability of Alton and surrounding villages.

Anyone who is interested in joining should turn up, at the pub, at either 6pm on a Friday or 9am on a Sunday when there are likely to be some WHVs around.

2

Hearty Riders



Janet writes:

HEARTY RIDERS was started about five years ago by Alton and Basingstoke Cardiac Rehab as part of their "stay well" programme. At first we were very few in number, maybe three or four of us but, over time, as word spread numbers have increased. We invite anyone who wishes to stay fit to join us on Friday mornings at 10am outside the centre which is beside the sports centre (in post Covid-19 times, of course). We cycle anything from 12 - 20 miles at a casual pace, usually stopping at a coffee shop somewhere en route.

On the third Friday of the month we join together with Cycling UK for their monthly ride which has also meant that some of this group now come on the Hearty Riders rides. There is no membership involved and you don't have to be an attendee at CR in order to come on the rides. Normal and e-bikers welcome. Anyone interested in joining us on Friday mornings for a leisurely ride around the wonderful Alton countryside should contact janetpagehaynes@msn.com

Naturally the main focus for this group is to increase fitness and to stay fit in order to help prevent heart and stroke problems and post treatment, when well enough, after suffering from these ailments to help return to fitness. Being part of an umbrella group will, hopefully, enlighten more cyclists to come and join us and also help promote safer cycling. on our roads in and around Alton.

3

Alton U3A Social Cycling Group



Brian writes:

Alton U3a Social Cycling Group was formed 3 years ago to encourage retired and semi-retired people living in the Alton area to get back onto two wheels and enjoy riding through the local highways and byways at a relatively gentle, leisurely pace. A typical Tuesday morning ride will cover about 15 miles, with a stop for coffee, cakes and refreshments at the halfway point. Nobody gets left behind, and you don't need the full lycra kit to join in one of these rides – just a serviceable bicycle and a safety helmet.

I would like Cycle Alton to help make the town feel safe and non-threatening for cyclists and pedestrians rather than being dominated by cars. We need to have the right infrastructure to enable this, such as clearly marked cycle paths and lanes. However, what we really need is a culture shift to make this the norm. I cycle in mainland Europe quite a lot, especially the Netherlands, but also in France, Belgium, Germany and Austria, and I think that here in the UK we have a lot to learn from our neighbours when it comes to taking cars out of towns and cities and giving them back to the people.

Membership of Alton U3a is open to anybody who is retired or semi-retired and living in the Alton area. For a modest sum, a year's membership will provide access to a wide range of activities. The monthly social cycling group outings form part of this offering. For further details please visit the website www.u3asites.org.uk/alton or contact Alton Community Centre.



Becci tells us:

Alton Cycling Club is a community-based, volunteer-run club, affiliated to British Cycling and Cycling Time Trials. We have around 100 members and are keen to attract new riders. We offer regular adult rides, training and events for all ages from 16-year-old upwards. We have three differently-paced Sunday rides every week. The club is active in time-trial competition, hosting a 10 mile League Championship, several Open Events and a Hill Climb Championship. We also offer a range of social activities from an annual club dinner to monthly club nights, a summer barbecue and an annual curry and quiz night.

Alton Cycling Club is sponsored by Owens Cycles, Hi-Tech Heating, fff Brewery, ClearSignal and Everyone Active.

In terms of what we'd like to see Cycle Alton achieve, it would be great if Cycle Alton is able to promote cycling amongst people living in Alton and surrounding areas, and the variety of benefits this has for people's fitness, wellbeing, the environment and more. Cycle Alton can become a collective voice, representing our local communities in influencing local policies and decision-making, as well as promoting a variety of measures and opportunities, that make cycling easier, safer, accessible and enjoyable. With the climate change emergency, and more people having got on their bikes whilst the roads have been quieter since the lockdown, we have a real opportunity to help secure changes which have multiple benefits. Cycle Alton can help to realise this.

Of course, it would also be wonderful to welcome new members to Alton Cycling Club, for those who are interested in group riding, racing and getting to know other cyclists. See our website: <http://www.altoncyclingclub.org/>. To get in touch with ACC, please fill out the form on our website at <http://www.altoncyclingclub.org/page10.htm> or send an email to altoncyclingclub@gmail.com

Cycling UK



Janice tells us:

Cycling UK is a national organisation whose aim is for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to be able to cycle safely, easily and enjoyably. Previously known as the Cyclists' Touring Club, over the years they have helped change the law, improved conditions for cycling and inspired and supported people to cycle, understanding the potential of cycling to make life better for people. There is a very active group in Alton who arrange bike rides throughout the year. Our focus is on non competitive cycling and we always welcome new members.

The Alton group cycles approximately thirty miles twice a week and rides include a refreshment stop. To cater for different speeds of riders, once a month we have two rides at two different paces. On the third Friday of each month we have an easy-paced ride of about 15 miles including a coffee stop, and these tie in with the Hearty Riders who organise a very similar ride on all the other Fridays.

We in Cycling UK would like to see safe cycle routes to the villages, particularly along the A32 to Far-rington, and an extension to the cycle path alongside the A339 from New Odiham Road to a pelican crossing at the Beech turn-off. Many of the roads out of Alton are no-go areas for cyclists, such as the B3006 to Selborne and the B3004 to East Worldham and beyond. These are direct routes which could and would be well-used by cyclists if they felt safe.

We hope that Cycle Alton will have some success in improving conditions for cyclists along these routes.

The ride destinations are advertised on our website <https://www.cyclinguknorthhampshire.org.uk/>

We're also on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Cycling-UK-Alton541624279198619/>

Contact Janice for more information on 01420 80783 or email danjanmontgomerie@gmail.com



The one big lesson we have learnt so far is that:

*In order to make things happen, the councillors need to see/hear **a ground swell of public opinion** to justify expenditure of public money. So, if only a handful of people shout for change, nothing will happen.*

**County Council
urgent 'call for
ideas'**

With the easing of lockdown, are you concerned about:

- Your children walking or cycling to school
- Cycling to your place of work
- Walking or cycling to do your shopping
- Walking or cycling to use Alton's café's and restaurants

Hampshire County Council (HCC) is asking all of us to comment on any specific areas in our town that need temporary improvements during the easing of lockdown, to make it safe for us all to maintain the social distancing. See:

<https://hantscovidtravelmap.commonplace.is/comments>

- The HCC Transport Dept are reviewing the map weekly, looking at priorities
- They will prioritise those icons that appear red; ie have been marked as having a serious effect on social distancing. So if we enter new comments it's important that we move the icon along the 'bar' to the left/ the 'serious' end re' social distancing
- Have a look at existing comments and tick if you agree- saves time!

NB We understand that the government is focussing on the following temporary ideas:

- 20mph speed limits
- Road closures
- Pavement widening
- Pop-up cycle lanes

NB- If you want further reading, see the [government guidance for councils](#)

John Hubbard of Cycle Alton recently led a small group of local councillors on a bike ride around part of Alton, to highlight the problems that bicycle riders face at various locations around the town.

The route started in the Market Square and took them through Bank car park, the Flood Meadows, Lenten Street, Pertuis Avenue, Chawton Park Road, Mounters Lane and Winchester Road, finishing at the new Butts Bridge. There was plenty of discussion with solutions suggested to many of the gaps in the cycling infrastructure.



Contact:

Please join us to:

- receive our newsletter, and /or
- tell us what we should be addressing and /or
- offer to help

Email cyclealton@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook

at <https://www.facebook.com/Cycle-Alton-108176250895096/>

We'd love to hear from you. Every voice matters.