



Cycle Alton Newsletter

Edition 4, May 2021

Welcome to the May 2021 edition of the Cycle Alton newsletter! We hope you find it interesting. Do let us have any comments or suggestions you may have via cyclealton@gmail.com, <https://www.facebook.com/cyclealton>, or look on Twitter for @CycleAlton. Our website is here: <https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/our-groups/cycle-alton/>

What Cycle Alton has been doing

Alton Cycling Charter

We have produced an Alton Cycling Charter, drawing inspiration from cycle campaign groups in other towns who have produced a similar document. Ours is "a bold vision for cycling in Alton, connecting people to places."



A pre-launch photo of the Alton Cycling Charter – watch this space for more news soon!

We will be approaching and encouraging local organisations, businesses and individuals to sign up to it and it will be published on the Alton Climate Action & Network (ACAN) website. The Charter sets out the benefits to everyone from improving the safety of cycling in and around Alton while

demonstrating to local authorities the demand that exists for safe cycling infrastructure here.

Adult Cycle Training Lessons 12th June

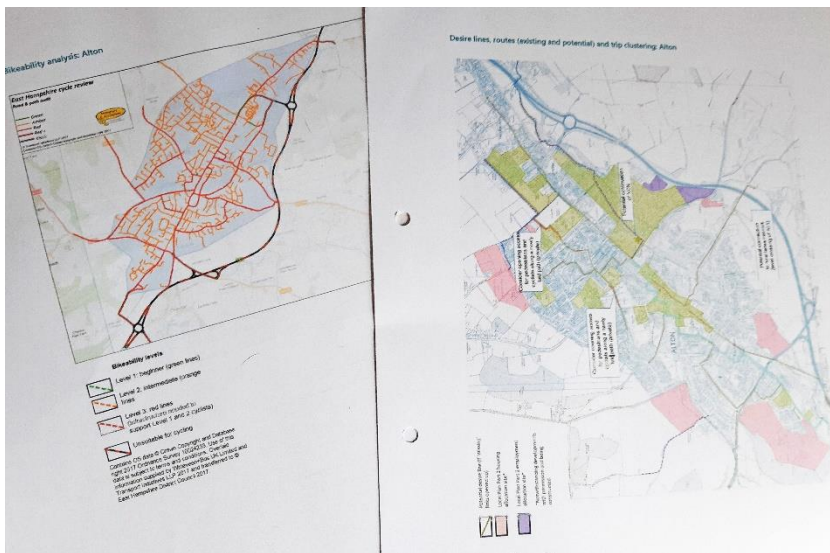
From talking to Alton residents last summer Cycle Alton realised there was a need for local adult cycle training. We've therefore engaged Pedal Power, which runs children's Bikeability classes in schools, to put on an afternoon of mixed classes in small groups, tailored to individual needs. The more-confident will get to ride on local roads, while free post-training rides with a Cycle Alton volunteer will also be available on request.

Date & location: Saturday 12th June, 2-4pm in Amery Hill School playground.

To book your place contact Darren at pedalpowertraining@gmail.com or tel 02392 290474 for further details and to discuss your needs. The cost is £20 per adult. We have applied for a grant for a few subsidised places - do ask Cycle Alton if you are interested: cyclealton@gmail.com

See more information here: <https://altonevents.co.uk/events/bicycle-training-for-adults-in-alton/>

Alton's Cycle Routes



Pages from EHDC's LCWIP

Over the past six months Cycle Alton has been working through the 'desire' lines identified in the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), published last October by East Hants District Council (EHDC). Ten Cycle Alton teams have been working on separate routes, looking at the challenges, options and alternatives. These have been discussed over Zoom with other supporters and refined and revised to produce the best possible solution.

These will be combined into a master plan that aspires to create a network of cycling routes, safe enough to allow an unaccompanied 12-year-old to cycle to school, both within Alton and connecting to nearby villages. We believe this will help EHDC to focus on priority routes. Updating and improving the LCWIP will also be a key step to getting further funding.

Cycle Four Marks News

Problems with the NCN Route 224 through Chawton Park Farm led to an alternative route being sought. Peter Wykeham Way is a possible candidate, being a bridle path through Chawton Woods. It was walked recently by Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee with supporters of Cycle Alton and Cycle Four Marks. However, while the Four Marks end has a hard surface, the Alton end is unsuitably narrow, steep and muddy and would require considerable work to bring it up to standard.

A survey among parents at Four Marks School to find out current travel practices is underway. Response to date has been slow but a clear view on current travel problems is beginning to emerge. Random counts of parked cars on adjoining roads at school opening and closing times are being made to complement the survey results. These counts have shown up to 100 cars parked, depending on time and weather. The School has been asked for its view on the School Streets initiative. Imposing restrictions on local parking and on excessive speeds on the Hawthorn Road through route would be necessary.

What our Town Council is doing

Alton Walking & Cycling Festival 7th-9th May



This event, which had to be cancelled last year, is definitely going ahead this year. While the walking festival takes place over the whole month of May, the cycling weekend is 7th - 9th May only. All walks and rides must be booked in advance.

See the Alton Town Council (ATC) website for full details and how to book.

http://www.alton.gov.uk/Alton_Walking_and_Cycling_Festival_2021_25042.aspx

Cycling and Walking-themed Open Air Market 8th May

The first of ATC's themed open air markets this summer will be held in the Market Square on Saturday 8th May, 10-2pm, coinciding with a Farmers' Market. Cycle Alton will be attending, so please come and say hello! Some of the local cycle clubs will also be hosting a stall, along with a Bicycle Maintenance Stall offering free bike checks and minor repairs for a small fee, so if you have any bicycle issues, do bring your bike along.

What our District Council has been doing

Alton Station Forecourt Regeneration

Cycle Alton submitted a number of suggested improvements for this project, in line with the Active Travel principles and objectives described in the Enhance East Hampshire Place-Making Strategy 2019-2036, the EHDC LCWIP and the Hampshire County Council (HCC) Active Transport Plan. The regeneration has been designated a place-making priority to be delivered later this year, and after many years in the design phase Cycle Alton understands a design review cannot be considered at this late stage as it could potentially delay or jeopardise the whole project.

What our County Council has been doing

Alton Town Centre Proposals – Feasibility Study



Initiated by Cycle Alton's proposals submitted last year to restrict motor traffic in the town centre, funding has now been approved by HCC for a feasibility study. The proposed study is likely to take 7-8 months and has been expanded to encompass a full Alton Town Centre Health Check, including a desk-based analysis, followed by a wider public consultation and engagement of key stakeholders once it is safe to do so. The Cycle Alton submission will be considered along with everything from parking provision, pavement widths, pollution, permeability of access, bus routes and the impact of Covid.

New Local Transport Plan

HCC is drawing up a new local transport plan (LTP4) which will form its primary transport policy to 2050. A public consultation ended on 28th February and the new plan will be published later this year.

Cyclist & Pedestrian Access to Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

After Cllr Rob Humby deferred a decision on readmitting cyclists and pedestrians at HWRCs, Cycle Alton and other campaign groups requested that access to the tip be restored to its pre-COVID levels (pedestrian and cycle access with no booking system) - with masks and distancing, once non-essential shops reopen on 12th April - given that it is an outside space and poses less risk than entering a shop.

Cllr Humby said "it remains a priority, however it is not straightforward and requires some potentially significant changes to operational practices as well as to the back office systems to ensure that any trial runs efficiently and safely....I still fully intend that a trial will go ahead in the summer..."

The need for a 3-month trial is questioned when the government timetable proposes the lifting of all restrictions on 21st June. In the meantime, the denial of access to everyone not in a car continues to discriminate, promotes inequality and is contrary to HCC's stated policies on increasing recycling and tackling climate change.

Funding for Hampshire Roads Cut

Operation Resilience - HCC will invest an extra £3million this year in Operation Resilience, its planned road maintenance programme, after Government cuts reduced funding for the repair of Hampshire's roads by 24% to £38.8million.

Cllr Rob Humby said: "Looking after Hampshire's network of over 5,500 miles of road is one of our top priorities, but, over the years, national funding for local road repairs has fallen to the point where the funding gap is now around £3m-£5m each year and much of the local network, particularly in rural areas, is in a state of decline."

You can report potholes here: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/roadproblems>

What our Government has been doing

E-Scooters

The Transport Select Committee has urged the government to legalise electric scooters as part of a wider drive to encourage the public out of their cars, particularly for short journeys. The UK is one of the last countries in Europe where the use of e-scooters on roads is illegal, and they remain banned everywhere except on private land. Despite this, anyone who has visited a city recently will have seen their widespread use for short journeys.

Before their roll-out a host of potential problems will need to be addressed, including riding on pavements, the need for enforcement measures and trials to monitor their use. Portsmouth is currently running such a trial, but it's likely they will be more useful in cities than in rural towns such as Alton where there is almost no suitable infrastructure.

Other Cycling-related News

Bike Parking Outside Our Churches



Three bike stands have recently been installed outside St Lawrence's Church in Alton. This is as a result of the parish's participation with Eco Church, an award scheme which encourages churches to engage with the local community and in the personal lifestyles of the congregation, as well as in global campaigns.

More bike stands are also planned for the Church of the Holy Rood, Holybourne, and All Saints in Alton, and the group organising this roll out is to be congratulated.

This is a great initiative to encourage cycling to church, and an acknowledgement that cycling is a valid means of transport for its congregation.

Decathlon launches "Second Life Marketplace"

Decathlon, the sporting goods shop, has announced plans for a "Second Life Marketplace" in its stores where refurbished second-hand bikes will be available for purchase. The firm is also set to offer customers a buy-back option on old Decathlon bikes, in exchange for money or vouchers to spend in store.

Bike Week 30th May-5th June

This year Bike Week will launch with the World's Biggest Bike Ride on 30th May. Organised by Cycling UK, join in by visiting <https://www.cyclinguk.org/bikeweek/worlds-biggest-bike-ride>.

Also during Bike Week you can commit to the challenge of #7DaysofCycling. For more information see <https://www.cyclinguk.org/bikeweek>.

Local Elections 6th May – HCC Candidates for Alton Town & Alton Rural

Cycling UK has published a manifesto for the local elections and is asking every candidate to commit to:

- supporting the investment needed in Active Travel to achieve the 2025 target to double levels of cycling, making active travel a priority in all transport and neighbourhood decision-making.
- the development and delivery of an Active Travel network of safe, accessible and direct routes including cycling infrastructure networks designed to national standards in every town and city, and rural routes to link these.

https://www.cyclinguk.org/sites/default/files/document/2021/03/cycling_uk_england_may_elections_stage2.pdf

Police & Crime Commissioner Candidate (PCC) Elections 6th May

Roads Policing - PCCs set priorities for the police forces, and campaign groups have called on them to put roads policing high on their agenda. Cyclists are at disproportionate threat from bad driving, and perceived road danger is the primary reason given by many for not cycling. Stronger roads policing could make all the difference.

Action Vision Zero - 20s Plenty, RoadPeace, British Cycling, Cycling UK, Living Streets, Sustrans and the Road Reduction Forum came together to create Action Vision Zero to campaign for safer, people-friendly streets. Its 2021 Police & Crime Commissioner Manifesto asks candidates to commit to tackling road crime, by 1. Make road danger reduction a priority; 2. Tackle speeding (the greatest threat); 3. Be transparent and accountable; 4. Work with your community; 5. Improve the post-crash response.

See the Action Vision Zero Manifesto here:

<https://actionvisionzero.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/JointRoadDangerPCCManifesto2021-SM.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3ltqE2lWv1XJsApAQS3dpYyC3nE7sEtoGugNBL7sm2z8ghmDrgbkeQAzE>