



Welcome to the March edition of this year's newsletter.

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Spring is on its way, or it may be here already, depending on whether you follow the meteorological or astronomical calendar. In any case, ACAN has lots to share, both about recent successes and upcoming events so read on to find out what's been going on and what's happening soon!

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Diary Dates

Sunday Mar 2nd from 2pm: The first of '*Eco-Streets Guided Walks*', a wildlife trail in Ackender Woods. Meet at Pertuis Avenue entrance. More details below.

Thursday 6th March from 10am: Alton Litter Pick, starting in Anstey Park car park by the British Legion clubhouse. Make an immediate and obvious difference to the appearance of our town!

Saturday 8th March meeting from 9:30am: [Cyle Alton's 'Confidence-building bicycle rides'](#).

These events are aimed at cyclists wanting to develop their confidence when cycling in local traffic. Rides start at Chawton or Holybourne and will be limited to 6 cyclists led by an experienced rider! Please book early to avoid disappointment. For more details and to book, please email cyclealton@gmail.com

Saturday 8th March meeting from 10 - 11am: AVLAN's '*Invertebrate sampling*'. Fancy kick-sampling for invertebrates, such as cased caddis, freshwater shrimp and mayfly larvae? Meet near the bridge across the river from the Basingstoke Road entrance to Flood Meadows and find out how to measure water quality. Fun, interesting and educational!

Saturday 8th March meeting at 10am: Alton Society litter pick, starting from the Assembly Rooms. Please do come along and help! Families welcome. Litter pickers and bags will be provided.

Saturday Mar 8th from 4pm: The second of '*Eco-Streets Guided Walks*', an ecology walk through Chawton Woods. Meet at the cricket pavilion in Jubilee Fields. More details below.

Saturday 15th March meeting from 9:30am: [Cyle Alton's '*Confidence-building bicycle rides*'](#). For more details and to book, please email cyclealton@gmail.com

Sunday Mar 16th from 2pm: The third of '*Eco-Streets Guided Walks*', a wildlife trail in Chawton. Meet in Chawton car park. Again, see below for more details!

Saturday 22nd March meeting from 9:30am: [Cyle Alton's '*Confidence-building bicycle rides*'](#). For more details and to book, please email cyclealton@gmail.com

Saturday March 22nd and Saturday 29th from 2 - 4pm: *Alton Community Share* will open its doors to receive donations of toys and games at St Lawrence Parish Centre. Please see below for more details.

Saturday 29th March from 2 - 3:30pm: '*Knowledge Mosaik*' completely free, group-led climate change workshop held at 16 Market Square, Alton. It promises to be a supportive and inspirational opportunity and a chance to meet like-minded people. See below for more details about this exciting event.

Saturday, April 12th, from 10:30 – 12:30pm: *Alton Repair Café* at Alton Community Centre. Bring along your cherished items and get them repaired! Free but donations much welcome.

Saturday, April 12th, from 2 - 4pm: The grand re-opening celebration of *Alton Community Share*, again at St Lawrence Parish Centre

Young ACAN 'Treasure not Trash' Conference

Young ACAN has been supporting young people in and around Alton to become agents for positive change since 2021. On January 31, it hosted its third eco-conference at Alton College, bringing together 82 students from 12 local schools. The 'Treasure Not Trash' conference, funded by the Transition Network, aimed to empower young minds by transforming them into trash-fighting superheroes, equipped with the knowledge of how to reduce waste and how to share this information with their school communities.

The students were welcomed by Young ACAN Lead, Emma Jones. Hampshire County Council Waste Champion, Roland Richardson, presented students with frightening statistics about the problem of waste, including the surprising fact that food waste and clothing, not plastic, make up the majority of global waste. During the conference, students participated in diverse workshops covering topics such as sustainable fashion, composting, ocean plastic and waste-free food. Through these workshops, the students learned practical ways to reduce waste and promote sustainability in their schools and beyond, including visiting a refill shop like Fill-Up in Alton or making a patch to mend jeans.



To conclude the conference, students and teachers were treated to the premiere of a film about Alton's Repair Cafe, made by film students from Alton College. This showcases the value of repairing rather than discarding items. Additionally, a competition was launched to create a comic strip featuring a waste-monster fighting superhero, with the winning entry set to be turned into an animated film by local artist Flossie Waters.

The Young ACAN 'Treasure Not Trash' Conference was a resounding success, leaving a positive impact on both students and teachers as well as a shared commitment to a greener future. The knowledge gained and enthusiasm shown by these young trash-fighting superheroes will be shared with their peers in their schools, making a lasting impact on their communities. By empowering young people, we can harness their energy, creativity and commitment to drive transformative change and secure a healthier, more sustainable future for all.

Follow the link to a short video from the conference:

[Young ACAN 'Treasure not Trash' Conference](#)

PeCAN's 'Fruit Tree in Every Garden'

Saturday, 22nd February saw the return on PeCAN's 'Fruit Tree in Every Garden'. The ACAN team, supported by Alton Men's Shed, distributed approximately 420 trees to 170 keen growers. A resounding success! These trees will not only draw in carbon dioxide but will provide delicious fruit for decades to come, cutting down on transportation and waste. Fruit trees also provide habitats and food for wildlife. Whatever isn't eaten by people will certainly be devoured by something else instead!



Community in Action at the Repair Cafe

Alton Repair Café has now been going for several years and has made a huge difference during that time, not just in terms of the climate, but to the people who brings their items along. Not only does the sterling work save people money but it also makes a positive difference by saving cherished items from being thrown away.

The February session of the Repair Café had many delightful highlights:

- The joy of a lady who brought in an antique china doll (about 100 years old). She had a lovely photograph of her great aunt clutching the doll. James reattached the head and legs.
- A 1885 Jones wrought-iron sewing machine which had been found in a garage belonging to the current owner's grandmother. It was partially restored and the owner went away with tips on how to further free up the mechanism.
- An elderly gent with poor eyesight whose cassette player was successfully repaired. He donated a tin of toiletries by way of thanks!
- One woman had come along to the last session and was so thrilled she wanted to show her elderly dad how it all worked.
- Finally, there was a visit from a couple in Twickenham. They run the Repair Café there and their hobby appears to be touring: we were the thirteenth café that they had visited!



Give your electricals a little love

In the UK, we discard 103,000 tonnes of electricals every year instead of reusing or recycling them. Binning electricals means that the raw materials like gold, copper, aluminium and steel can't be used again and will need to be produced again for your new kit. If we all recycled our old electricals, we could cut as much carbon dioxide as taking 3.8 million cars off the road.

If your electricals still work, sell them second hand or pass them on to a charity. If they're broken, you could get them fixed (or learn to fix them yourself) at a Repair Café. If they're beyond repair, recycle them at your local household waste recycling centre. Old mobile phones are taken by Oxfam who raise money through the recycling of the metals inside.

Visit: recycleyourelectricals.org.uk for more details.

Alton Community Share

Alton Community Share is thrilled to announce its return after a brief hiatus. This community-powered project, which allows families to borrow toys and games for free, has been thriving for over four years. At the end of 2024, the group's dedicated volunteers stepped down, and the toys were donated in time for Christmas.

Thanks to the generosity of new volunteers within the community, we are now ready to restock our library of toys and resume lending. To kick off this exciting new chapter, we are inviting the community to donate toys, games and jigsaws at **St Lawrence Parish Centre** on **Saturday March 22nd and Saturday 29th** from 2 – 4pm.



A grand re-opening celebration will take place on **Saturday April 12th** from 2 – 4pm. We encourage families to join us for free nature-themed face painting, delicious free buffet from SustainaBites (another local project promoting plant-based food) and to explore our new selection of toys available for borrowing.

After the re-opening, Alton Community Share will be open on the **second Saturday of every month** from 2 – 4pm. We look forward to welcoming families back to this much-loved community initiative!

Eco-Streets March Guided Walks

Come along and join us for a guided walk! All walks are free to attend and suitable for all ages and abilities. The duration of each walk will be approximately 75 minutes (at a leisurely pace) and will provide participants with a chance to experience spring and perhaps notice signs that we often miss in our busy lives. Please do come along for a stroll, a chat and a chance to see some of our glorious nature at first hand.

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'Knowledge Mosaik' Workshop

Join us for an enlightening 75-minute workshop on **Saturday 29th March** from 2 - 3:30pm at 16 Market Square, Alton. You'll gain a deeper understanding of how climate change affects our world and how its causes and effects are interlinked.

This free, group-led session, facilitated by a trained environmental scientist, offers a unique opportunity to explore what you already know and make new connections. Through interactive discussions and collaborative activities, you'll better understand the impacts of climate change and discover practical solutions to help mitigate its effects. This workshop promises a positive group experience, fostering shared purpose. Don't miss this chance to be part of the solution—reserve your spot today!

For more details, click here: ['Knowledge Mosaik' Workshop](#)

To book your place, click here. But hurry, there are only 14 free tickets available! [Workshop tickets](#)



AVLAN Update: Lead Volunteer Needed

After several years of acting as coordinator for the Butts wildlife garden, Nancy Clarke is stepping back. Thank you so much for all of your hard work, Nancy. This really is an inspirational place for so many people and a fantastic example of how a piece of unused ground can be made into something extraordinary.

AVLAN are now looking for someone to coordinate work parties and lead maintenance at this site, supported by the many willing volunteers. If you would like to be directly involved in AVLAN's flagship project, please do get in touch.

See flyer for contact details.



AVLAN'S FLAGSHIP BUTTS ROAD COMMUNITY GARDEN NEEDS A LEAD VOLUNTEER

to take the baton from Nancy who has been the volunteer leader since 2021

The garden is already well planted (though of course you can add your own planting ideas). All you'd need to do is keep an eye on the garden, decide when working parties are needed, and organise them (with help from the AVLAN core group.)

Please help! Leave a message on the AVLAN Facebook page or email AltonClimateNetwork@gmail.com

Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Pollin-8 competition winners

Bee the Change

'Greening Alton': get your Garden on the Map!

And finally, a plea! The Greening Alton map is looking great but it needs your garden. If you are a wildlife gardener, a keen grower of flowers or vegetables or even a 'relaxed rewilder', please go get in contact. And it doesn't need to be a large garden. Just a tiny corner, a few pots or a balcony makes a difference to local wildlife.

It's easy to include your wildlife-friendly garden on the Greening Alton map. Just email ACAN's James Willis on altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com

If you can, send a photo or two and a couple of lines of text describing your patch (see example in the picture) – this is not essential but it does bring it alive for visitors to the site. Only your road/street will be identified – we do not publish names or house numbers to protect privacy.

Visit the map here: bit.ly/GreenAltonSites.

James Willis' video guide to using the map is on ACAN's You Tube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY8sBumBBn0>

Volunteer with ACAN

Here at 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](#)

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