

Alcester Town Council



Summer Newsletter

Welcome to our first online newsletter- Issue 58 June 2020

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

If we had been told six months ago how our lives would be today I'm not sure we would have believed it, but during these difficult times please follow Government advice and protect yourself, your family and friends, the community and our wonderful NHS staff from this terrible virus.

Due to Government guidelines Councillors are unable to hold Council and Committee meetings in person, so for the past few months we have held Full Council meetings using technology and the internet. Many town and Civic events have also had to be cancelled, including our annual Mayor Making, which was due to take place on 5 May. Therefore, I will remain in office for the next twelve months and Cllr Kathryn Cargill will remain as Deputy Mayor. The mayoral charities for this year will also remain the same.

I am so proud of our town and our fantastic community spirit and as always, we are all pulling together to battle this crisis and to support each other during these difficult and challenging times. I would like to say a very big thank you to my fellow councillors for the commitment, time and hard work that they have put into setting up the Alcester Community Resilience Support Network. This network is not only available for the residents of Alcester but also to residents of the surrounding areas. We also owe a great debt to all the volunteers that have come forward to make the Resilience Network function. If you find yourself in isolation or finding it difficult to leave your house and you need help or assistance and have access to the internet, please join the Facebook page: Alcester Community Resilience or call the helpline: 07707 598379. Alternatively, email alcester.response@outlook.com. Once again, I would like to pass on my thanks and gratitude to everyone for all of your efforts in this time of unprecedented uncertainty.



The Mayor's Consort, Cllr Tim Forman, The Mayor, Cllr Gill Forman and the Mayor of Stratford upon Avon Town Council, Mrs Kate Rolfe

In February we held the Mayor's Civic Dinner. This was very well attended by many civic dignitaries from surrounding towns. I would like to thank [Florence Cain](#) for her fantastic musical performance during the evening, a truly talented young lady. She won the BBC Young Chorister of the year in 2016 and the Rotary International of Britain and Ireland Young Musician of the year in the vocal category in 2019. We were very fortunate to secure her services.

On 9 March Alcester joined many other communities in celebrating Commonwealth Day by holding a Flag raising ceremony on Church Green. During the ceremony I read out the Queen's message to the people of the Commonwealth.

On Friday 8 May the Country celebrated VE Day, 75 years since the second world war

ended in Europe. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 virus restrictions, all the wonderful events the Alcester branch of the Royal British Legion had organised had to be cancelled. Again, the community spirit of Alcester shone through and many streets and roads in the town organised their own street parties, including the road where I live- of course sticking to social distancing rules. Whilst this was not how everyone had originally planned to celebrate such an historic event, I hope you enjoyed your day as much as I enjoyed mine.

Please continue to follow government advice and guidelines so we can overcome this crisis, meanwhile may you all stay safe and well.

Cllr Gill Forman, Mayor of Alcester

Clerks Corner

Following government advice, the Town Council offices have been closed since March. At the time of writing, there is no immediate prospect of this situation changing, but we do all hope that normal service will resume as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, office staff have been working from home. We are all connected remotely by email and phone and we have tried to keep services operating as normally as possible.

In line with government legislation, Full Council meetings are being held remotely (via Zoom software). Committee meetings have been cancelled with the exception of the Planning Committee who are reviewing planning applications by email meeting.

If you need assistance from the Town Council please phone our usual number 01789 766084 and leave a message or email me on clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Our grounds staff have been working hard whilst maintaining social distancing. I hope that you will agree that the Cemetery and open spaces look fantastic – thank you to the team for all your efforts in such difficult circumstances!

Councillors and staff have been very busy helping with the Alcester Community Resilience group. We are pleased to be able to help such a dedicated group of volunteers who are doing such a worthwhile job in helping the most vulnerable in our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various local charities and individuals who have made such generous financial contributions to the community resilience effort. These donations, together with significant grants obtained by the Town Council, have enabled the resilience effort to support those in need. Funds are inevitably limited and if you would like to make a contribution, cheques made payable to “Alcester Town Council” can be delivered to Globe House or please email me on clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk so that I can advise you of our bank details.

Stay safe.

Vanessa Lowe, Town Clerk

Alcester Town Council Contacts

Office of the Town Clerk: Tel: 01789 766084

Town Clerk: clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Mayor's Secretary: mayor@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Planning: administration@alcester.gov.uk

Facilities: reception@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Community Care: office@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Health and Well-Being:

info@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.alcester-tc.gov.uk

UPDATE ALCESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The [Plan](#) contains draft policies on Housing and the Built Environment; Economy; Transport and Infrastructure; Community, Leisure and Well-being and the Natural Environment. When the Plan is finalised, anyone submitting planning applications must follow the policies in order that future development respects the needs and character of the town. Alcester will also benefit from additional money that developers will have to provide for local infrastructure and facilities.

We had hoped that the Plan would be finalised in May but unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the local referendum had to be postponed. Currently it's not clear when the referendum will be rescheduled and at worst case it may not be until next May. We will let residents know once we have a date and deliver a summary leaflet to your home.

The good news is that even in its current status the Plan carries significant weight when planning applications are being considered. Amongst the policies are those which protect our local green spaces which many of us have been grateful for when taking daily exercise in recent weeks.

If you require more information please contact Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group, c/o Alcester Town Council, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DZ, or by email to: administration@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Wendy Mills, Chair, Alcester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

The Covid19 crisis has affected every level of society, none more so than local authorities. Within a few short days of the lockdown announcement by the Prime Minister, actions were being taken to provide support for our residents.

Shielding hubs were set up under the control of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) working closely with Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC). It was a huge logistical challenge, but thanks to the close collaboration between the authorities and with support from the army, it went very smoothly. Staff from both authorities worked to distribute many hundreds of food parcels to the very vulnerable unable to get out of their homes.

WCC are the Health Authority and are responsible for Health and Social Care. In the period of the crisis so far, no hospitals within our trusts have run out of intensive care beds or PPE. No care homes were 'red flagged' meaning that they had run out of PPE. This is a testament to the organisation of the county in these times. Well done to all.

One of the biggest concerns to Councillors at this time is of course for our business community. The order to shut a business down unless able to continue trading safely has had a devastating effect on many small and medium sized businesses. Government grant aid has been passed to many such businesses via the local authorities. So far SDC has paid out more than £28m to over 1500 businesses.

If you know of a business that has been unable to obtain a grant or arrange a loan, please call or email me. Details below.

Due to social distancing restrictions, the waste & recycling centres were closed, however roadside collections have remained fully operational. Most sites opened on 18 May for essential visits but only to residents that have booked online at the WCC website (link below). There will be some restrictions on what can be taken to the sites. People arriving without an appointment will unfortunately be turned away- so please book in advance.

Work on our highways has stopped until social distancing rules could be drawn up. We hope to restart some road maintenance shortly. However, larger works may have to come later.

Even with Government help, all local authorities will see a fall in revenue and income this year. SDC will see a significant fall in revenue and be one of the hardest affected in the country. We do not expect to see a return to 2019 levels of tourism for some years to come.

Finally, we often hear the phrase 'front line heroes'. Well, many of our staff have performed that role beyond the call of duty. A magnificent achievement and my thanks to them all.

If I can be of help then do not hesitate to contact me: markcargill@warwickshire.gov.uk or 07988485050
Cllr Mark Cargill

Information on waste & recycling centres in Warwickshire: When a site is [reopening](#) and [general information](#) on sites.



ALCESTER COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The Alcester Community Resilience group was set up in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the lockdown measures introduced by the UK Government in mid-March.

The group offers practical and emotional support to residents in the parishes of Alcester, Kinwarton, Arrow & Weethley and Great Alne. It comprises over 200 registered volunteers who provide help such as shopping, dog walking, prescription collection and companionship calls.

By mid-May the group had received nearly 500 requests for assistance and will remain in place for as long as people need it.

The group has received financial support from Alcester Town Council which has been used to provide twice weekly complimentary meals to the most vulnerable residents in our area.

Anyone needing help should either call our helpline on 07707 598379 or email alcester.response@outlook.com

Cllr Andrew Foster

ALCESTER MALE VOICE CHOIR

Free Music for care homes



The Alcester Male Voice Choir are offering to donate, free of charge, CD recordings of the choir to care homes in the area.

Judith Land the choir's founder and Director of Music explains "We are aware that music is so important in a care home setting, and our recordings include a wide variety of songs which do appeal to all musical tastes - many of the songs residents will know and we hope that they will bring back happy memories. We appreciate that this is just a tiny gesture compared with what is going on in care homes at the moment. Residents can no longer enjoy live entertainment but if we can somehow help to bring a little cheer to residents, then we are happy to do so. Any care home that would like a CD should contact me on 07886 139781 or email me on judithamvc@hotmail.com and I will then arrange safe delivery".



Handel's Messiah

**Saturday 5th December 2020 in St Nicholas Church,
Alcester.**

The choir hope to be singing this wonderful work in the Christmas Concert. Covid-19 restrictions permitting, rehearsals for the performance will begin in early September.

If you wish to take part in the rehearsals and the concert performance, make a diary note and register your interest with the choir by emailing or contacting us via our website or on Facebook.

DO NOT MISS THIS WONDERFUL SINGING OPPORTUNITY.

events@alcestersingers.co.uk

www.alcestersingers.co.uk or find us on Facebook

COMMUNITY GRANTS 2020/21

With a few exceptions where funds were needed urgently, all applications will be reviewed in July 2020

ALCESTER'S KIDS RUN FREE- Launches Activity Hub to keep children moving



Alcester-based children's charity Kids Run Free (KRF) has set up an extensive [Activity Hub](#) packed with exercises and games to keep young people of Warwickshire and across the rest of the country active during the current period of lockdown.

Younger kids can '[Get Active with Dash](#)', the charity's friendly mascot, as he takes on various exercise challenges which can be found on the KRF YouTube channel, as well as lots of games such as 'Freeze Dance', 'Land, Sea and Air' and 'Sharks and Minnows,' many of which were filmed in the local Alcester community.

And for older children, there are workouts specifically for teenagers on the [Marathon Teens](#) YouTube channel, while Nike Community Ambassadors have been busy putting together a series of high-intensity videos which will go live on the KRF facebook page and YouTube over the coming weeks.

'Clearly, it's a challenging time for our children, and while they have been kept busy with work being sent from schools, we also thought it would be a good idea to produce content that hopefully inspires them to keep active during this period. Lots of local people have been in touch with suggestions, ideas and even contributed their own live video workouts that we have been streaming on the [KRF Facebook page](#) each week' said Martine Verweij, founder and CEO of Kids Run Free.



'It's amazing to be able to harness the community spirit of Alcester within the Activity Hub, and push the videos out to a much wider audience, something as a resident of Alcester I am extremely proud of. We are also very grateful for the support from Nike at this time, and we would encourage children of all ages to get involved via the Activity Hub which can be found on the website,' she added.

Kids Run Free can also confirm that a new Park Kids event will be coming to Alcester – the spiritual home of KRF since it launched in 2010 - when the lockdown restrictions are finally lifted.

'The Alcester community has been a backbone or support for the KRF charity since our inception a decade ago. It will feel very special to host another Park Kids event where we enjoy so much feel-good factor,' added Mrs Verweij.

INFORMATION: Would you like more details on Kids Run Free? Please visit www.kidsrunfree.co.uk or email info@kidsrunfree.co.uk



VE DAY

75TH ANNIVERSARY

A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION

8 - 10 MAY 2020

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY

On Friday 8 May Alcester commemorated the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe. The current restrictions meant that this had to be done safely at home. This was not a problem for the townspeople of Alcester who quickly rallied to produce home made displays, picnics and entertainment - the results being fantastic.



Alcester Royal British Legion circulated a proposed timetable for the days proceedings and many people shared photographs of their celebrations online during the day. These photos will be collated to create a historical record with the potential for an exhibition in the future.

The next events in the Royal British Legion calendar are Armed Forces Day on 27 June and the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Japan Day on

15 August. More details will be released soon.

VE Day- thank you again to everyone who marked this very special occasion.

David Malin, Secretary, Royal British Legion Alcester Branch





ALCESTER YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY

February seems so far away now since our last performance and the world has changed so much. Our last show - Fight for Callisto was a story about a crystal mining town on a far off planet and the inhabitants' brave attempts to fight against the big bad Star Mining Corporation. Science Fiction with an added flavour of the Wild West.

The show was very successful and pretty much sold out on the Saturday night. We had a lot of enthusiastic and talented new young actors join us this season, which was great and they brought with them some talented and helpful parents which was equally great. As usual the excellent team behind Alcester Junior Drama Club did a brilliant job on all the background things that make the show successful, make up, music, scriptwriting, props, scenery and light and sound. Talking of the team.... we said goodbye to our friend and long serving team member Matt Newby who left us to get married and travel with his new wife. Sadly the lockdown has meant that all that has been postponed, so you never know we might see him for one more year!

At this year's show we announced we will be changing our name to **Alcester Youth Theatre Company**. We are doing this partly because we felt that it was time for a rebrand, and partly because the word junior doesn't represent our young actors as well as it used to. Our age range is from 8 to 16 so we felt Youth was a better description. One of the parents has offered to help us with publicity which is great. It's something we always mean to do properly but always run out of time! Covid and lockdown has very much stopped progress on that for a while but we are hopeful that over the summer we can get back on track.

For next season's show we have one very exciting option, more of that later, but it sort of depends on how the restrictions go... If schools are fully back in September then we will pretty much start up as normal. If not, then we might start back later, and go for a simpler option if rehearsal time is shorter. However, whichever way it goes I am sure there will be a performance of some sort next February for all our fans to enjoy.

For more information please contact Julie Smith on 07807894635, or jules_045@btinternet.com

Stratford Hospital is open for patients on chemotherapy (staff are keeping a 2 metre distance). But if you are not on treatment you can still have a conversation with the Macmillan team via email:

macinfo@swft.nhs.uk or phone 01789 205831 x 5871

Macmillan helpline is open- please call 0808 808 00 00

9am- 5pm

Warwickshire's Lord Lieutenant sends a [thank you](#) message to volunteers who have given their time during the COVID-19 pandemic to support vulnerable residents.

BITS & BOBS

There is plenty of help and information relating to the **COVID-19** crisis on the Town Council [website](#) covering up to date [government guidance](#) and [health and wellbeing](#).



Do you know about some of the help and advice available from SDC?

- [Council Tax Debt](#)
- [Covid-19 and Business Rates](#) and how to apply for the grant
- Business Rates Grant [FAQs](#)
- [Non-Domestic rates relief](#)- Hardship Relief
- [Top up to local business grants scheme](#)



Unsure how to use Zoom for meetings or chatting to friends and family? Here are some tools which may help you:

PDF Zoom Tutorials- the following are downloads:

- [A step by step guide to using Zoom and joining a meeting](#)
- [Setting up a zoom meeting](#)

Zoom Tutorial Videos:

- [Getting Started with Zoom Meetings](#) 38 minutes (skip to 18 minutes in to jump straight to the hosting meetings section)
What is a Zoom Meeting? The basics with Zoom expert. Also covers scheduling, inviting others, host controls.
- [Zoom Meetings](#) 1 hour
Once you have completed the Getting Started with Zoom Meetings session, the Zoom expert will guide you through tour of Zoom Meetings, taking you beyond the basics.



BritishRedCross

[Training](#) for Coronavirus volunteers- designed by the British Red Cross for anyone who is responding to the coronavirus outbreak. Whether you've been deployed by a charity or have decided to lend a hand to a neighbour, it tells you what you need to know to look after yourselves and others.



A46 Nighttime road closures 8 June to 3 July 2020 between 8pm- 6am from A46/ A422 Shottery roundabout to 'The Stag' at Redhill, Stratford-upon-Avon for resurfacing the A46, repainting road markings and replacing the road studs. Diversion to be fully signed.

ALLOTMENTS AND THE CEMETERY ARE STILL OPEN

PLEASE KEEP 2M APART FROM OTHER VISITORS



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ALCESTER

It is wonderful to report that many types of crime in the UK have fallen sharply since the start of the Covid-19 lockdown and that many examples of good neighbourliness have risen.

Government Measures to stay at home have led to a surge in good neighbourliness as people look out for the vulnerable and talk to those next door more than ever before, according to a new study. Almost three quarters (72%) of UK adults can now identify which of their neighbours are vulnerable.

A fifth (21%) say they have spoken to their neighbours more in the past two weeks and, one in ten (10%) say they have got to know them more. Despite not being able to spend time physically with neighbours, a sixth (16%) of UK adults say their relationship has become better in the last two weeks.

Almost a fifth (18%) say they have chatted online or over the phone to their neighbours in the last two weeks and a further sixth (16%) have dropped off essential food and medicine for them.

The different ways people are keeping in touch with neighbours

- Almost half (46%) have spoken to their neighbours in the street at a distance
- Two fifths (42%) have chatted to them over a garden fence or wall
- Over a quarter (28%) have waved at their neighbours through a window
- A quarter (26%) have checked to see if they need anything
- 18% have spoken to them on the phone or online
- 17% have spoken to them about the Government's advice to stay at home
- 12% have dropped off shopping for them
- 4% have dropped off essential medication

Furthermore, the study shows technology is playing a huge part in keeping communities in contact. In the last two weeks alone, a sixth (17%) of people have received new contact details for their neighbours, ensuring they can keep in touch during this time.

Neighbourhood Watch believes that building strong communities where neighbours look out for each other is key and it's good to be reminded of the ordinary people who make our nation great even in the most trying of times. The kind, everyday deeds of neighbours help create safe, secure and happy neighbourhoods where people, families and communities thrive and it's times like these that communities need to stick together and look out for one another.

The next meeting of Neighbourhood Watch Alcester will not take place until advised. For further information on NHW Alcester please email nhwalcester@gmail.com or telephone Dorrie Manders on 01789 762999

Communicating with the Police: Emergencies dial **999**

The Police Non Emergency number: 101 To be used to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. **101** diverts to your local Police. Calls cost 15p per call (landlines and mobiles).



Alcester South Safer Neighbourhood Team dial 101 or 01789 444815/444816

Please feel free to contact the team direct: Email:

alcestersouth.snt@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

SGT 1284 Angus Eagles - angus.eagles@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

PC 1672 Beat Manager Rob Davies - robert.davies4@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

PCSO 6327 Carolyn Davis - carolyn.davis1@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

PCSO 6111 Gary Johnson-Jones

gary.johnson-jones@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

Twitter- [@AlcesterCops](https://twitter.com/AlcesterCops)

Facebook- [Alcester Police](https://www.facebook.com/AlcesterPolice)

Instagram- [southwarwickshiresnts](https://www.instagram.com/southwarwickshiresnts)

Facebook- [Warwickshire Police](https://www.facebook.com/WarwickshirePolice)

Call **Crimestoppers** anonymously with information about crime on 0800 555 111. Crimestoppers is a charity who will pass on information to police without revealing any details of the caller.

Contact Warwick Trading Standards on 01926 414040 to report a rogue trader. For general advice on scams and rogue traders contact 0845 4040 506.

Action Fraud Report a Fraud or Cyber Crime to 0300 123 2040

Alcester is a relatively crime free area. We work together to keep it that way

Town Council Meetings

In line with government legislation, Full Council meetings are being held remotely (via Zoom software). Committee meetings have been cancelled with the the exception of the Planning Committee who are reviewing planning applications by email meeting.

Agendas are published online at: www.alcester-tc.gov.uk three days before each meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the Council meetings and are given time at the start of the meetings to raise any relevant issues. Draft and approved Minutes from meetings can also be found on the Town Council website.

The Alcester Town Council Facebook page is another source of information regarding council matters:

www.facebook.com/alcester Please click "like" and share with your friends.

We're also on Twitter: www.twitter.com/AlcesterTown

Town Councillor's Contact Details

Alcester West Ward	Alcester Oversley Ward (contd)
 <p>Mark Cargill 07988 485050</p>	 <p>Gill Forman (Mayor) 01789 763828</p>
 <p>Laura Pusey 07928 327923</p>	 <p>Tim Forman 01789 763828</p>
 <p>Emma Randle randle.atc@gmail.com</p>	 <p>Andrew Foster 01789 766708</p>
 <p>Clive Neal-Sturgess 01789 764416</p>	 <p>Keith Greenaway 01789 766818</p>
 <p>Erick Wilson 01789 764366</p>	 <p>Mat Hempell 07939 797582</p>
Alcester Oversley Ward	
 <p>Vaughan Blake 01789 764128</p>	 <p>David Henderson 01789 765271</p>
 <p>Mike Bowe 07775 500993</p>	 <p>Kathryn Soares 07551 311528</p>
 <p>Kirsten Forbes 07810 522920</p>	
	Oversley Green Ward
	 <p>Kathryn Cargill (Deputy Mayor) 07745 608567</p>