

Alcester Town Council



Spring Newsletter

March 2022 Bumper Issue 65

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I find it hard to believe that this is the final newsletter for my Mayoral year. The last three months have been rather stop-start, with initial optimism that we had Covid on the run - changing to concern about the Omicron variant, and back again to making hopeful plans for the year ahead.

I was delighted to open the Christmas Fayre at the Greig Hall on 4 December 2021. This was a wonderful day, when the doors of the hall were finally opened to the public once again. It was tremendously heartening to see the number of people who supported the event and thoroughly enjoying the variety of entertainment throughout the day. The craft fair inside the hall was also a great success, with many traders asking if they could come back again next year. Whilst our main aim was simply to give people the chance to have a look around and to have some fun, we actually made over £2500, funds which are much needed for the ongoing refurbishment work. Our planned schedule will see us hopefully reopening for 'taster' events in the autumn, so keep an eye on the Greig Hall website and social media for the latest updates.



Winter is usually a busy time in the civic calendar, but this year many plans have had to be changed or cancelled. However, one highlight of the post-Christmas period that is always able to go ahead is the Window Wonderland event. This is a highlight for the Mayor, as judging it is simply a pleasure. That said, it is also a serious responsibility! Now in its third year, the standard of the entries gets ever higher. We thoroughly enjoyed our tour around the town to see all this year's creations. Particular mention must go to the group of Beatles-inspired entries in Moorfield Road, but in the end first place was awarded to Carri Craig in Gerard Road. Many congratulations to her and her team.

I am delighted to welcome three new councillors to our team: Alison Leask, Kathrin Foster and Steve Blackman. This is very good news, as it brings us back to full strength at a time when we have a significant amount of work to do. I'm sure they are familiar to many of you, but if you want to know more about them and their interests, there is a brief resume later in the newsletter and their details are on the Town Council website.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you about a new project which is about to start on the Town Council's Abbey Fields site. Alcester Youth Project, working with Alcester Grammar School, have secured lottery funding for an ecological education project on part of the site near to the allotments. Please see the dedicated article later in the newsletter. And finally, plans are coming together for events in the town to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee in June. Details are being finalised, but I can tell you that we will be having a variety of activities on Centenary Field on the Thursday evening, culminating in lighting the beacon in coordination with the rest of the nation. The High Street will be closed on the Sunday for a street party lunch, with the option to bring your own picnic or purchase food and drink from various local businesses and hostelrys. There will also be entertainment throughout the afternoon. Keep an eye on the notice boards and social media as plans progress!



Cllr Kathryn Cargill, Mayor of Alcester

CLERK'S CORNER

Greig Hall funding

At the January Town Council meeting, Councillors agreed to apply for a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan of £100,000 to pay for a new heating system for the Greig Hall. Councillors noted that although £250,000 has already been raised for the renovation work on the Hall, it was essential that the heating system was commissioned at this stage to enable the project to proceed as planned. As required by the PWLB, an online consultation was undertaken and of those who responded 94% supported the loan. Thank you to everyone who responded. An application for the loan has now been submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Further information is available on our website: <https://www.alcester-tc.gov.uk/town-council/full-council/full-council-documents/>

Precept 2022-23

The Town Council sets the precept each year in January. The precept is the primary source of income for the Town Council and is a small part of the Council Tax which residents pay to Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

At the Full Council meeting on 4 January 2022, the Town Council agreed to request a precept of £306,536 from Stratford-on-Avon District Council for the year 2022-23. The precept in 2021-22 was £286,277.

The agreed precept will result in a small increase in the precept charge to Alcester residents (Band D) from £134.36 to £137.60 per annum. This rise is equivalent to 6 pence per week for a Band D Council Taxpayer.

The Town Council uses the precept to run council business and to provide a range of services to residents. These include four allotment sites, four playgrounds, the cemetery on Birmingham Road, civic and community events such as Remembrance Sunday, grants to voluntary organisations, the Health and Wellbeing projects, maintenance and upkeep of the Eric Payne Community Centre, maintenance of Priory Meadow, Centenary Field and other open spaces and miscellaneous street furniture such as signs, benches and bins.

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

Office administrator: office@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Planning: administration@alcester.gov.uk

Facilities: reception@alcester-tc.gov.uk

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

Health and Well-Being: info@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.alcester-tc.gov.uk

Advance Notice - Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 7pm

Alcester War Memorial Town Hall

The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting for all the local government electors of the Parish.

It is not a meeting of the Town Council

Anyone may attend and registered electors of the Parish may speak and vote during the meeting.

The Town Council would like to invite all local voluntary trusts and organisations to attend.

Please contact Alcester Town Council for more information on:

01789 766084 or clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk



KEEPING ALCESTER LITTER FREE

Litter Free Alcester volunteers will be active again with their Big Spring Clean on Saturday 2 April 2022 from 10am - 12pm.

Please come and join us. We will meet at the Eric Payne Centre – all equipment and maps will be provided. The more volunteers we have, the more of Alcester we can

cover.

Contact Susan Juned (01789 762751) if you want to litter pick a specific area or you want to organise a group of friends or family. Keep an eye on our Litter Free Alcester Facebook page for more details.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Work on the integration of services between SDC and WDC continues with all departments having a single head of service. There was a vote by both councils in December that committed them to both a service and political merger. A request has been sent to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for permission to merge the two authorities creating South Warwickshire District Council. We are not aware as yet of timescales but we are looking at 2023 or 2024.

A new contract for waste disposal is starting in August this year. This encompasses waste collection from Warwick and Stratford. Part of the new contract includes the purchase of new vehicles. The materials recycling facility at Kineton is very unlikely to reopen following the fire hence we are now taking our recyclate to other sites namely Worcester and London. Needless to say this adds to our costs however we are looking at ways to mitigate these. The new recycling facility is still on schedule to open in April next year. Due to the improvement in recycling (thank you everyone) and reduction in residual waste, a new collection system will be rolled out this year from August. This is the '1-2-3' system. Food waste will be collected each week to go to an anaerobic digester producing methane gas and electricity. (Residents can request a 23 litre caddy). Every 2 weeks Biffa will collect the blue and green bins (green waste collection requires a subscription) and every three weeks will collect the residual waste.

There has been an increase in fly tipping though, sadly, this is a national issue. Although we are affected and still above 2019 levels, we do not have as much fly tipping as many other areas. If you spot any fly tipped rubbish please report it to Street Scene at SDC (streetscene@stratford-dc.gov.uk, 01789 260616). Council tax is due to increase this year by £5, the maximum allowable by Government. For example, this will make the tax payable to SDC £154 for a Band D property. Please note that only just over 7% of the tax collected goes to SDC to run all their services. WCC get 77% with the Police & Crime Commissioner and parishes receiving the rest.

Cllr Mark Cargill, Alcester & Rural Ward

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT



Last year I was pleased to be able to award the Councillor Grant of £6,000 to nearly all the worthy causes that applied. These are great causes that we need to support and the following received a share of the funds; Alcester in Bloom, Alcester Hopkins Precinct Play Area Upgrade, Wixford Village Hall, The Depot Youth Club, Cook and Eat your Tea and the Binton Village Hall Renovation.

Many of you continue to contact me with concerns and issues. The vast majority of these related to Highways and the ongoing issues with hedges, roads and pavements. The team are working hard to clear the backlog of work requests and I am currently managing a list of sixty or so issues that need urgent attention. There is the ability to report these now directly into Warwickshire's system by visiting the ReportIT section of the website either from your PC or phone – www.warwickshire.gov.uk/reportit. In the future you will receive updates when issues have been resolved. Speeding continues to be a big issue for the town and surrounding villages. We have a number of volunteers working on the Speedwatch campaign who you will see in the coming weeks in the area speed checking cars. We are looking at other options such as more 20 mph limits and traffic calming with the use of bollards for the high risk areas.

If you are on social media I post regularly to /AmazingAlcester/ for updates and news from District and County Council so please follow.

Cllr Piers Daniell

ALCESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL - NEW PRINCIPAL



The governing board of Alcester Grammar School has announced the appointment of Rachel Thorpe as their new principal from 1 June 2022. Rachel is currently deputy head at Pate's Grammar School, Cheltenham, and director of the Odyssey Teaching School Hub which is responsible for teacher training at 140 primary and secondary schools across Gloucester, Tewkesbury and the Forest of Dean. She will become the first female headteacher of Alcester Grammar School.

Congratulations on your appointment Rachel and Alcester looks forward to welcoming you.

WARWICKSHIRE SEARCH & RESCUE - LOWLANDS TEAM



Everyone associates rescue with the dramatic work of the RNLI or Mountain Rescue teams. Highly skilled rescuers rushing in life and death conditions to the aid of an injured, stranded or shipwrecked traveller. But they aren't the only teams looking out for us. Would it surprise you to hear that there is a team here in



Warwickshire, not only ready to come to our aid, but frequently tasked by the Police to do so? Lowland Rescue teams do just that. Their primary function is to search for vulnerable missing people.

Warwickshire Search and Rescue are based in Kenilworth, but have been on several searches in the Alcester area. Whenever there is a need for the team to deploy there is a family in real distress with someone missing and at risk. Volunteers will leave their homes and jobs in any weather and commit significant time to focused and systematic wide area searches.

Finding the missing person isn't the end of the matter. They train in the skills needed to deal with the needs of the person in whatever state they find them. Utilising First Responders, Advanced and Mental Health first aiders they will look after the casualty and move them to a place of safety where needed until they can hand them over to blue light services.

Like all our volunteer rescue services they need to raise the funds to keep them working. If you want to know more about them, join them or donate to keep them running, please visit www.warksar.org.uk

ALCESTER IN BLOOM

Did we ever think we could get the town full of flowers in 2021? Fund raising seemed very doubtful - but with common sense we were able to hold several cakes stalls in my garage and donations were kindly sent in by residents. Thankfully, by September we were able to have our Coffee Morning which was mainly outside. The weather was perfect and the atmosphere was very happy as usual.

The In Bloom team and other helpers have planted up around the town for spring so now we just have to wait for the flowers to appear. Although by the time the newsletter goes out, we will have had yet another cake stall in my garage in February, we still do hope to have our proper Coffee Morning before summer planting. The hanging baskets will be just as glorious as in other years but we will introduce red, white and blue in some of the bedding out areas for the Queen's Platinum celebrations.

We can only hope this year along with the Alcester Lights and Bunting we can cheer everyone up after such an horrendous year for residents. Hopefully we will be selling samosas again at the Street Market dressed in who knows what this year!!

Maggie Payne, Chair, Alcester in Bloom



BAG IT AND BIN IT!

There has recently been a noticeable increase in dog mess on pavements around the town. A minority of dog owners don't bag it and bin it. The Environmental Health team of Stratford District Council receive complaints about this but it is difficult to obtain evidence to fine owners. The Town Council is raising awareness by stencilling signs on footpaths and putting up posters. Please be a responsible owner, pick up your dog's mess, and help to keep our community clean!

Cllr Wendy Mills

LIVE MUSIC IS BACK! ALCESTER MALE VOICE CHOIR RELEASE TICKETS FOR THEIR ANNUAL CONCERT



One of the highlights of the Alcester Male Voice Choir's year has always been their Annual Concert. Due to the pandemic the last one was held in 2019.

Since September choir members have returned to rehearsals with great enthusiasm and positivity and are now putting the final touches to their 48th Annual Concert programme.

The concert will be held in the peaceful and inspiring environment of Pershore Abbey on Saturday 2 April at 7.00pm. Judith Land BEM, the choir's founder - conductor has put together a varied programme which will include classical music, many favourites and some new pieces for the choir's repertoire. The choir will be supported on stage by Domonkos Csabay a young and talented Hungarian classical pianist and John Wilderspin resident organist at Pershore Abbey.

The concert will be opened by Alcester's Town Crier, David Parkes and presented by Philip Cotterill. Tickets cost £18 each and are available from the choir's box office 07752 563068 or email amvcboxoffice@gmail.com. All seating is unreserved.



ALCESTER BOWLING CLUB - LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Alcester Bowling Club, Meeting Lane, can be traced back to around 1760 and is one of the most southerly positioned Crown Green bowling greens in the country. Our members take part in competitive bowling in various leagues, mainly in the South Birmingham area.

The Club is looking for new members whether novices or experienced bowlers and also we are keen to attract junior players (tell them Jurgen Klopp plays Crown Green Bowls!). Visitors are allowed providing they are accompanied by a club member and equipment is available to borrow for anyone new to the sport.

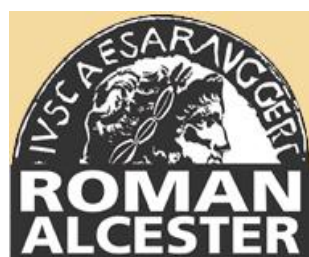
We have friendly bowling sessions, which a number of members attend on Monday and Thursday mornings from 10 am and on Saturday afternoon/evening from 3 pm. Open days are held when anyone is welcome to try their hand at Crown Green Bowling. In addition, our members are always available to help anyone at any time who is considering taking up the sport. No experience is necessary as we will show the basics of how to play, the skills and the tactics – all that is needed is a willingness to have a go and learn how to play a new sport which is both skilful and enjoyable.

The bowling season generally runs from 1st April, through to the end of September.

Please contact our secretary John Westmoreland for further information:

Email: john.westmoreland@lineone.net Phone: (07483) 240465

Or visit our website : <https://alcester-bowling-club.business.site> and Facebook page for further information.



ALCESTER'S ROMAN MUSEUM – A CELEBRATION

Please keep the weekend of 11 – 12 June 2022 free for a weekend to celebrate the Roman history of Alcester. Roman enactors and craft events have been booked for Saturday 11 June. This will be followed by a Roman themed street market on the 12 June.

More information is to come, but if anyone is willing to volunteer, please let the organisers know. Drop into the museum between Wednesday and Saturday, leave your name, and details with one of our volunteers in the museum and we

will contact you.

Susan Juned, Chair, Alcester Heritage Trust

**We're
back!**



*It's the Alcester &
Bidford Rotary*

Charity Breakfast

*Still only
£6
or go large for
£8*

**ENJOY A FRESHLY COOKED FULL ENGLISH BREAKFAST
AND HELP US RAISE FUNDS FOR GOOD CAUSES
IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND BEYOND.**

**Crawford Hall, Bidford
Saturday 5th March
9.00am – 12 noon**

**Alcester Town Hall
Saturday 12th March
8.30am – 12 noon**

For more information please email alcesterbidfordrotary@gmail.com
or visit our website www.alcesterbidfordrotary.co.uk

Rotary
Alcester & Bidford



Organised by Rotary with the generous support of
Bidford Co-op, Clay Hall Farm Eggs, Freemans, Plato,
Simply Fresh, Waitrose and other local businesses



We are very pleased to report that the current total for the **Alcester Poppy Appeal** stands at £12,700.

This a fantastic amount bearing in mind the restraints we were all under during last year.

A massive thank you to all the Poppy volunteers, shops, businesses, local groups and townspeople that supported the appeal. We hope to reach thirteen thousand pounds by the end of September.

David Malin, Poppy Appeal Organiser Alcester District

OYEZ, OYEZ, OYEZ



On 16 April 2022 the streets of Alcester will once again reverberate to the sound of Town Criers and their bells from all over the United Kingdom. After a gap of two years the Heart of England Town Criers Championship returns to Alcester.

Criers belonging to the Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers from all over the country are invited to compete at the event to be held on 16 April 2022 (Easter Saturday) at Malt Mill Lane.

The format remains the same with each crier performing two cries, one for their own town and one given to them by the organisers, this year the given cry, being Jubilee Year, is 'HM Queen Elizabeth II'.

Cries are judged by a panel of local judges – Alcester's own Town Crier Dave Parkes is therefore not eligible to compete but will host the event.

Marks are awarded for clarity, diction, volume and inflection. An award is also made for the best dressed crier. The prizes for the competition are sponsored by Alcester Court Leet.

The event commences with a parade from the Town Hall at 12.45pm, and proceeds to Malt Mill Lane where the event gets underway at 1.15pm.

Cllr V Blake, Heart of England Town Criers Association

WINDOW WANDERLAND

For the third year running, Alcester enjoyed its streets being lit up with wonderful window displays. From 15 - 22 January 2022 window makers brought Covid proof joy to window wanderers in our lovely community.

The Mayor of Alcester, Cllr Kathryn Cargill, would like to compliment all the entrants on a very high standard of design. The overall winners of the Window Wanderland Challenge were the Craig family and their team from Gerard Road with a theme from The Greatest Showman (see Mayor's Message). There was a special mention for The Beatles group of windows in Moorfields Road and the large cluster of excellent windows in Gerard Road. It was a difficult decision!

Here are some of the windows in case you missed them!





THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE BEACONS

2ND JUNE 2022

Alcester Centenary Field



There is a long and unbroken tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, Royal Weddings and Coronations with the lighting of Beacons around the nation of Great Britain.

Her Majesty The Queen will be celebrating her 70th year as our Monarch and Head of the Commonwealth this year. We will be celebrating this unique milestone in the history of our nation by lighting the Alcester Town Beacon on Thursday 2 June 2022

Alcester Town Council, Alcester Branch of The Royal British Legion, Alcester Court Leet, Alcester Victoria Silver Band, 'Oversthree' along with other local volunteers and organisations will host the event. All Alcester organisations and residents are welcome and the following will take place on the evening:

The event will start with an invitation to the town to gather with picnics on Centenary Field from 6pm.

- There will be a fancy dress competition and parade for all ages. In addition, there will be a pet dog section. The Theme will *loosely be* 'Jubilee'. Prizes will be given to all those taking part
 - Judging of the Children's Bunting display will commence and awards given
 - Jubilee cakes, soft drinks, hot dogs and popcorn will be available, 'Free to all'
 - Pimms and cider will be on sale at a special celebration price
 - Further early evening events are planned and information will follow
- At 8.30pm the AVSB will provide a musical interlude. Finally, at 9pm there will be a Proclamation and Prayer, followed by a thank you to Her Majesty The Queen. The Alcester Town Beacon will then be lit to join the thousands being lit around the world to commemorate this incredible



achievement.

Any offers of help, ideas or further suggestions to the coordinator mike@gittus.com





PLANNING MATTERS - UPDATE

Planning Committee members are as follows:

Cllrs Mike Bowe (Chair), Mark Cargill (Vice Chair), Vaughan Blake, Kathryn Cargill, Gill Forman, Wendy Mills and Clive Neal-Sturgess. All their contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.

This Planning Committee update covers the period November 2021 to 31 January 2022.

There were five scheduled meetings in this period, one held in person on 15 November with the remainder all held via Zoom. Committee members were asked to respond to 21 planning applications on those occasions plus a further four applications that were received outside these meetings, the latter all dealt with via email response from committee members. The applications were a mixture covering trees, advertising, house extensions, development of wildflower meadow and orchard including construction of a detached dormer bungalow, barn conversion, to name but a few. The committee responses to all applications can be viewed by visiting the Council website at www.alcester-tc.gov.uk and clicking on Committees – Planning Committee - Minutes

Representatives of Stansgate Planning attended the 6 December meeting and addressed the committee in respect of Item 4 (a) on the agenda which was planning application 21/03337/REM that referred to land North of Arden Forest Industrial Estate where Cal Gavin Ltd plan to expand their research, development, production, and testing facility. Stansgate representatives also gave a broad overview on the progress at Alcester Employment Park. More details can be found on the Town Council website above and are also available on the Stratford District Council Planning portal at Stratford-on-Avon District Council:eplanning-Application search.

Building planning matters within Alcester can be an emotive issue to residents in the town, so I encourage anyone that has an opinion either in support of, or against a particular application, to attend the relevant planning meeting to voice that opinion.

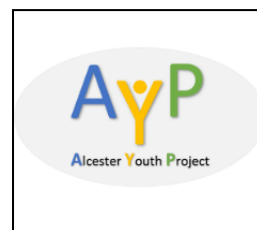
Details of meeting dates and agendas can be found on the Town Council website. For further information contact the Planning Committee Clerk at administration@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Cllr Mike Bowe, Chair, Planning Committee

NEWS FROM ALCESTER YOUTH PROJECT

Alcester Youth Project (AYP), a local community group dedicated to providing opportunities for children of all ages in Alcester, are delighted to announce that the National Lottery have agreed to fund their latest initiative to tackle climate change in Alcester!

The successful grant application to the National Lottery will enable AYP to work with Alcester Town Council, local schools and local wildlife organisations on an



Alcester Grammar School pupils and staff are supporting the Abbey Fields environmental project along with other local schools

environmental education project on the Abbey Fields in Alcester.

The application for the National Lottery's 'Together for Our Planet' programme was for a programme to help young people promote practical climate action.

The new project will involve preparing an area in the corner of the Abbey Field for school termly events beginning in Autumn 2022. These will involve tree-planting workshops, making bug hotels and bird boxes, soil and worm workshops and bat walk & talk events. Outdoor studies of the plants and wildlife of the site will involve pupils of all ages from many local schools.

AYP committee member and Education consultant Elizabeth Lake said, "We are really looking forward to collaborating with wildlife charities, teachers and students to transform Abbey Fields into a hive of activity where young people can learn how to enhance the local environment and contribute towards meeting net zero emission."

The other AYP committee members are David Biesok, Chris Brannigan, John Mattocks and Susan Juned. Let them know if you are interested in helping.

THE GREIG HALL

Work continues apace with the restoration of the hall. Many of you came to the Christmas Fayre on the 4 December to see the hall and enjoy the Fayre. We had an excellent turnout (thank you) and will look to doing it again next year.

The major works we are undertaking are the electrics and the heating system. There is much more to be done to get the hall fully open. To maximise the usage of the hall we decided to go ahead with the installation of the heating system although we do not as yet have sufficient funds to pay for it. That's not as bad as it sounds as we are expecting more funding over the next couple of years. Following the public consultation, we approached the Public Works Loan Board for a £100k loan to ensure we have enough funds to complete the work. Sadly our anticipated spring reopening will now not happen due to a delay in the tender process but we now anticipate it will happen in the summer. We are already planning some events! When the hall is safe we will be asking volunteers to come along and help with tasks such as minor repairs and painting. Your help will be greatly appreciated

The working group have set up a charity to operate the hall when it is handed over by the Town Council. This will operate under Charity Commission rules and will give all members of the public the opportunity to be a part of the hall into the future.

CLlr Mark Cargill, Chair, Greig Working Group



Present

Mozart Requiem Haydn Te Deum

CONDUCTOR: Helen Smith

SOPRANO: Katie Leaver ALTO: Rebecca Mitchell-Farmer TENOR: Robert Jenkins BASS: Paul Mocroft

**Saturday 2nd April 2022
7.30pm**

St Nicholas Church Alcester

Tickets £12.50 Under 14s free.

**Tickets available at Humphries Shoes (cash only),
High Street, Alcester or on the door
Telephone 01789 764023**

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Alcester Town Council awards small grants to community groups and organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to benefit Alcester by:

- Providing a service
- Enhancing the quality of life of community members
- Improving the environment
- Promoting Alcester in a positive way

The application form and full details are available on the Town Council website <https://www.alcester-tc.gov.uk/> or by contacting the office on 01789 766084

The deadline for this year's grants is Thursday 31 March 2022

REPAIR CAFÉ



Every fourth Thursday of the month 2pm until 5pm at The Depot,
Eric Payne Community Centre, St. Faiths Road, Alcester. B49 6AG

Email Wendy:

info@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01789 766084

Mobile: 07434664435

COMPUTER GROUP

Every second and fourth Wednesday of the month

10am – 12 midday
at Alcester Unionist Club

46 High St, London House, Alcester B49 5AB



RIVERSIDE ANGLING CLUB

The coarse fishing season ends at midnight 14 March and I hope you have had a good season.

Those of you who will now target either lakes, pools, commercials or canals, best of luck! I would like to take this opportunity to remind residents of Alcester who fish the River Arrow controlled by the Riverside Angling Club that a new permit will be required at the start of the new season.

Please contact me for the new permit.

Tight lines.

*Robert Jones, Hon. Secretary, Riverside Angling Club
Tel: 07745358603*

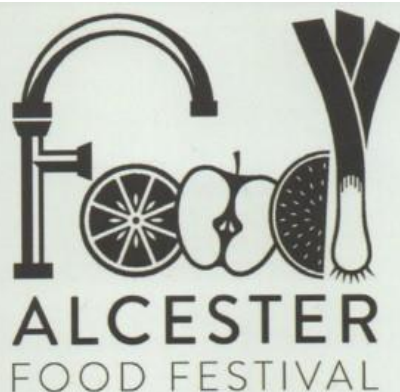
The Crafty Lunch Club

The Crafty Lunch Club is a group for adults with learning and/ or physical disabilities where we meet to take part in a different craft each week, form friendships, share a hot meal together all whilst having a great deal of fun! Launched in December 2021 the group has seen us take part in baking, painting, weekly exercise, hold our own awards ceremony, meet a Roman soldier and sing along to popular songs.

This group aims to tackle social isolation not just for the adults who attend but also their carers. A team of volunteers work hard to enable people to come in, relax and take an hour or so to enjoy the activities on offer. We provide a hot meal to everyone which is usually tied in with the theme which we are following. This half term has seen us 'visit' a different country each week from London to the USA. We have fun learning about the country through fun quizzes, crafts, themed bingo and then eat a meal together.

The Crafty Lunch Club has had tremendous support by Alcester Town Council and it is clear to see each week how valued the group is to those who attend.

The Crafty Lunch Club runs on Wednesday 11.30-1pm from The Eric Payne Community Centre. If you would like to know more contact lizlorne@hotmail.co.uk



Meat, Poultry, Game, Fish, Dairy, Pig Roast, Veggie Treats, Wines, Beers, Ciders, Prepared Foods, Artisan Breads, Cheeses Preserves and much more!

Saturday 21st May 2022

9am - 5pm

Saturday 15th October 2022

Alcester High Street, Church Street and Henley Street

The perfect foodie day out, forage through an array of festival stalls, visit local pubs, cafes, restaurants, shops and enjoy the day.

Free Park and Ride Shuttle

from the Mill Industrial Park (opposite Alcester Rugby Club)
on the A435 Alcester to Studley, B49 5QG, to the festival and return.



www.alcesterfoodfestival.org.uk

07926 467957



ALCESTER AND FOREST OF ARDEN FOOD FESTIVAL LTD

A Community Benefit Society run by volunteers

It has been a long time since we have been able to make plans for another Alcester Food Festival. I am pleased to announce that 2022 sees the return of both one-day events on Saturdays, 21 May and 15 October from 9am to 5pm. Happily, many of our regular stallholders are returning with several new producers to titillate the taste buds. Also, our local High Street pubs, cafés and shops will be participating once again.

The Food Festival began about thirteen years ago as a non-profit making organisation with the aim of not only promoting quality food and drink but also the wide range of independent shops in our historical town. We believe the Food Festival succeeds in doing this. Each year, the organisers make donations to local organisations.

The organisers thank, in advance, the individual volunteers, Alcester Litter Pickers, the Town Council, ABLE, the Court Leet, the Town Hall, Mr Tony Turner and Steven Hine. Without their valuable support, it would be difficult to

organise such large events. If you would like to be involved, please contact Dianne Williams on 07921 3588022. Please visit our website for details of this year's May event – www.alcesterfoodfestival.org.uk .

Dianne Williams, Director, Alcester Food Festival



ALCESTER TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB- COME ON DOWN AND SUPPORT THE ROMANS!

Alcester Town Football Club has been glad to get back to playing football again after a disruptive couple of seasons due to the Covid pandemic. During this time a lot has been going on at the club and

we have made extensive improvements to our car parking facilities and we can now accommodate up to 120 cars on site.

The club have also been successful in being awarded a grant from the Football Foundation to improve our pitches at the Stratford Road ground. The grant will be paid over five years and means we can improve both our adult and junior playing surfaces.

The Club were also successful in being awarded a community 'Free Tree' planting scheme from the Woodland Trust and over 400 wild fruit trees are being planted at the far end of the ground.

The Club are happy to announce that their popular summer World Cup football tournament will take place on the weekend of the 18 - 19 June 2022. The Club welcomes over 2,000 visitors on this weekend so the Stratford Road will be busy.

The club are looking to secure a new main club sponsor for the 2022/23 season. If you would like to find out more about sponsorship opportunities then contact us:

Email: atfc1927@gmail.com

Telephone: Gary Williams (07766) 664289

Or visit our website : <https://www.alcestertownfootball.club> plus check us out on Facebook and Twitter.

DOMESTIC CCTV SYSTEMS

Guidance for People Using CCTV or Camera Doorbells

Many of us have installed security cameras or doorbells which record people around our homes. If properly used, these are a deterrent against burglaries and may be useful to the police in the event of a crime.

However, if your camera records anything outside the boundary of your property, you are subject to Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The attached guidance notes issued by the Information Commissioner's Office will tell you what you need to do to comply with GDPR. Please read them on the link below:

<https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-people-using-cctv/>

Particular requirements are:

- You must not record more than is necessary to protect your property
- You must have visible notices stating that CCTV is in operation
- If requested, recordings must be made available to anyone who might appear on them and to the police
- Recordings must not be stored any longer than is necessary for protection of your property



ALCESTER CEMETERY

Our Winter Newsletter 2020 advised residents of the situation regarding the Cemetery on Birmingham Road. In summary:

- Although there appear to be large empty sections, our records clearly show that this is not the case
 - Our Cemetery is almost full and depending on demand, has capacity for a further 2 years approximately
- We have looked for a new site, but so far without success.

A recent ground penetrating survey of the old Cemetery, where

very few headstones remain, revealed that this area contains many burials, so is not available to us. In January, the Cemetery Working Group identified a small number of areas which could provide an additional, (but limited) number of plots. To use these areas we will probably require planning permission and/or permission from the Diocese. We are now pursuing this short term solution, while continuing to seek an alternative for the longer term. We will provide residents with regular updates through our quarterly Newsletters. On a lighter note, courtesy of a grant from Waitrose, we have recently installed 5 bat boxes in the Cemetery. Let's hope these wonderful creatures will take up residence.

Cllr Erick Wilson, Cemetery Working Group

ALCESTER WELCOMES THREE NEW COUNCILLORS

Three candidates were nominated in January 2022 for the three vacancies for the office of town councillor in Alcester Oversley Ward, all of which were therefore automatically elected to the Council.

Cllr Alison Leask

I moved from Birmingham to Alcester with my partner and our two children just over ten years ago. I immediately felt welcomed and very lucky to have such a lovely town in which to bring up my family.

I qualified as a nurse over 30 years ago, working primarily in the community. I have worked in a variety of roles such as Health Visiting and School Nursing, latterly working as a Child in Care Nurse, looking after the health needs of children and young people in care.

At the beginning of the pandemic, I started with Alcester Covid Volunteers. Although I didn't feel like a very active member, I really enjoyed what I was able to do. Seeing the responses to people's requests for help made me feel proud to live in such a kind and caring town. Being involved in the group made me feel part of a thriving community and was instrumental in my application to become a town councillor.



Cllr Kathrin Foster

Married to Andrew, I was born in Saxony (Germany) where I grew up and went to university before emigrating to the United Kingdom. Before moving to Alcester in 2007, I lived and worked as a Secondary Teacher in the Greater London area.

I consider myself privileged to live and bring up our two sons and daughter in Alcester, where they attend local schools and facilities.

I have previously served as a parent governor at a local primary school, am currently an active trustee of Alcester War Memorial Town Hall where I have been looking after Health & Safety, Risk assessments as well as general compliance including policies. I have also been involved in a working group

improving a local playground. I have been a supporter of equal rights and opportunities for all ensuring that residents of all genders are able to participate in Alcester's life and town proceedings.

My motivation to become a Town Councillor has been to enhance community facilities for young people and equal opportunities for all, improve communication and community engagement, as well as finding ways for the town council to combat climate change.

Cllr Steve Blackman

I have lived in Alcester since 1982 when my wife and I bought our first house here. Our sons were educated at primary and secondary level in Alcester schools.

I was fortunate to be able to retire from a 34 year long career in primary education in 2013, most recently as a Head Teacher for nearly twenty years in Warwickshire schools, Great Alne Primary and Bridgetown Primary in Stratford. During my teaching career I had a number of books published, a couple of which for Oxford University Press are still in print and selling in China!

Following retirement, I joined the education departments at Warwick University and Northampton University where I was involved with Teacher Training. I then enjoyed spells working on the outer fringes of the entertainment industry, firstly as a Duty Manager for the Artrix Arts Centre in Bromsgrove and now for a thriving music festival organisation in Birmingham.

In the last few years, I have volunteered with the team at the Alcester Roman Museum mainly working with schools on educational visits.

I thoroughly enjoy all aspects of the countryside, and spend a great deal of time walking the many and varied footpaths across the region and the wider country.

Locally, Oversley Wood is probably my favourite place and for some time now I've been working alongside Forestry England to ensure the woods are looked after and preserved for future generations. This includes regular litter picking and generally working on projects throughout the woodlands. I have also recently started a "Friends of Oversley Wood" Facebook group which has rapidly grown to well over 400 local members.





NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ALCESTER

It could be you! Lottery fraud reports reach highest levels in two years

New data from Action Fraud, the national reporting centre for fraud and cyber crime, reveals almost £1 million has been lost to lottery fraud in the past seven months.

What is lottery fraud?

Criminals will contact unsuspecting victims informing them they have won a lottery or prize draw. The victim is then informed that they will need to pay an advance fee in order to receive their winnings. In reality, the winnings are non-existent and it is an attempt to steal the victim's money, personal or financial information. Action Fraud has received 629 reports of lottery fraud in a matter of months. Fraudsters use gift cards as a form of payment as they can be easily redeemed and sold on. These criminals don't need the physical card to redeem the value and instead get victims to share the serial code on the back of the card with them.

In some instances, victims reported being asked for personal and financial information in order to obtain their alleged winnings.

Action Fraud advises that the public follow the advice of the '**Take Five to Stop Fraud**' campaign to keep themselves safe from fraud. (Please Google it!)

Stop! Unsolicited offers of large sums of money in return for a small upfront payment should always raise a red flag. Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

Challenge! Could it be fake? Remember, you can't win a prize in a competition you didn't enter. It's okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

Protect!: If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040

Online charity fraud over the past year

Data from Action Fraud reveals that £1.6m of the public's money was lost to online charity fraud over the past year.

The fraud captured by this data includes requests for donations for non-existent charities and the fraudulent collection of funds for genuine charities. Members of the public must make some simple checks before giving to charity to make sure their donations reach the intended recipient. These include: **Check** the charity name and its registration number on the Charity Commission website to find out whether the charity is registered and committed to fundraising. **Look** out for the Fundraising Badge on charity marketing materials – when people see it, they can have confidence in the charity's fundraising. **Ask questions** about the cause – if people are still unsure about giving, they should always ask for more information. Legitimate causes will be happy to respond.

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 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 by email:

SGT 1685 David Ebbs

PC 1672 Beat Manager Rob Davies

PCSO 6327 Carolyn Davis

alcestersouth.snt@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

david.ebbs@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

robert.davies4@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

carolyn.davis1@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk

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

PCSO 6111 Gary Johnson-Jones

Online reporting services are also available on our website - <https://www.warwickshire.police.uk/>

Alcester Office - 01789 444816

Twitter [@AlcesterCops](https://twitter.com/AlcesterCops) Facebook [Alcester Police](https://www.facebook.com/AlcesterPolice) Instagram [southwarwickshiresnts](https://www.instagram.com/southwarwickshiresnts)

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

To join Neighbourhood Watch Alcester, contact nhwalcester@gmail.com or telephone Dorrie Manders on 01789 762999

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

TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

With effect from January 2022, most Council meetings will be held in person at Globe House. Community Care and Community Facilities meetings are held bimonthly. Planning Committee meetings will generally be held online via Zoom or by email.

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


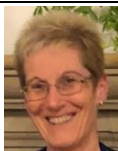

















Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings and are given time at the start of the meetings to speak.

Draft and approved Minutes from meetings can also be found on the Town Council website.

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

www.facebook.com/alcester and we are also on Twitter: www.twitter.com/AlcesterTown

Town Councillor's Contact Details

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	Oversley Green Ward
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