

Alton News

Issue 42 Spring 2026



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Produced by Wandsworth Council to help keep you informed about the renewal of your estate





New Block A residential building



Aydin Dikerdem looking at Block A site

In the meantime, we're continuing to work on detailed designs for the whole regeneration area – including what is known as the new Alton masterplan. Overall, we plan to provide up to 650 new homes, together with the Block A buildings, new green spaces, improved shops and community facilities and better routes around the estate.

I want to encourage everyone to get involved with looking at the plans and telling us what you think. Check out our website and keep in touch with us for future opportunities to have your say.

This edition is packed with the latest information on all the new things happening on the Alton, from the colourful murals, wayfinding signage and vibrant artwork around the estate, to the creative play spaces being built at Downshire Field and the Alton Activity Centre in time for summer.

And finally, the council is delighted to be re-opening Focus Hall after extensive refurbishment. The new building provides a spruced-up new home for community groups, activities and cultural events. You're all welcome to join us for the official opening event with creative sessions and refreshments on 26 March – check our website for more information.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Aydin Dikerdem
Cabinet Member for Housing



Getting on with the Alton plan

The colourful signs of spring are now here and we're moving quickly on plans for your estate, following the supportive Alton resident ballot last autumn.

We're really pleased to be getting on with building a new community hub and council homes on the corner of Danebury Avenue and Holybourne Avenue – currently known as 'Block A'.

Planning permission has now been granted for us to demolish the old Co-op building, garages and boys' club so we can build a new library, youth club, new GP surgery, council offices, community spaces and new council homes.

I went down to Block A ahead of the demolition team getting started with their work on-site and was happy to see people stopping to look at the new designs for the estate that are on show on the hoardings around the Block A site.

New boards

You may have seen the new hoarding that has been placed around the Block A site, which we will continue to use to display the most up to date designs for the Alton as they develop.

The fencing also keeps the site safe while the old buildings are being demolished and makes sure all construction work stays within the site boundary.





New Block A community building



This means work can now begin to demolish these old buildings and replace them with a new community hub. The new building will include a library, a community space, meeting rooms, a youth space (The Base), and a new GP surgery. It will also become a key landmark for the Alton area.

Next to the community hub, there will be a new 9-storey residential building with 55 family-sized council homes. Each home will have a large private balcony and access to a shared garden.

Both new buildings have been designed to fit in with the character and history of the Alton Estate. The community hub's curved roof is inspired by the original Roehampton Library (which will be kept and reused). The new housing building uses similar colours and strong horizontal lines to match the style of the estate.

The project has also been designed with sustainability in mind. The buildings will make the most of natural light and fresh air, while helping to prevent overheating.

We're very excited that planning permission has been granted and look forward to starting work on these important new buildings for the Alton community.

'Block A' gets green light

We're pleased to share that Wandsworth Council has approved plans for the buildings currently known as Block A – the old Co-op building, council office, police station, and old boys' club at the top of Danebury Avenue.



Current residential building on Block A site

Library Legends: Bringing our community's imagination to life

A burst of colour and creativity is coming soon to the hoarding panels surrounding the old Co-op site, thanks to 'Library Legends', a brand-new community art project celebrating storytelling, imagination, and the people who make our neighbourhood special.

The site will become home to the new children's and adult libraries, so we couldn't resist giving this project a literary twist. With this year's World Book Day theme in mind - Reading for Pleasure - we invited residents of every age to draw their favourite book characters.

Many young people told us how much they loved seeing their photographs on the previous hoarding, so we're bringing that joy back in a brand-new way. We photographed all our budding artists and will be placing their faces onto the characters they created (see the front cover for a sneak peek!). An illustrator is now crafting a vibrant, library-themed backdrop, where these playful portraits may become book covers, posters for fictional book signings,

curious characters browsing shelves, or lively storytellers bringing tales to life. When complete, these creations will merge into a bold, joyful artwork celebrating the power of reading, the spark of imagination, and the spirit of our community.

We know children especially will be delighted to spot themselves hidden among the shelves and scenes and adults might enjoy a little "Where's Wally?" moment too! Keep an eye on the hoardings... the Library Legends are nearly here!

There will be many other opportunities for you to get involved in a creative display for the hoarding this year – keep an eye out for the posters advertising the next events.





Design progress

We were delighted with the positive resident ballot result at the end of last year and have been working hard since then to progress the design of each area of the Alton.

You may remember from the ballot information that we showed, that there are five areas proposed for redevelopment:

- 1 **Block A** – Community Hub and new council homes
- 2 **Danebury Neighbourhood** – the area of new housing that currently occupies half of Danebury Avenue, Harbridge Avenue and Kingsclere Close. This area is planned to provide most of the new homes. It will also create a local centre within the estate, featuring a village green, a new community square, dedicated community spaces and commercial opportunities
- 3 **Danebury Retail area** – replacement shops, a new supermarket and homes where the current shops and homes sit
- 4 **Portswood Place** – a new community building with a nursery, GP surgery and community spaces replacing the current buildings
- 5 **166/168 Roehampton Lane** – the Family Hub facilities will move to Portswood Place and make way for around 120 new homes

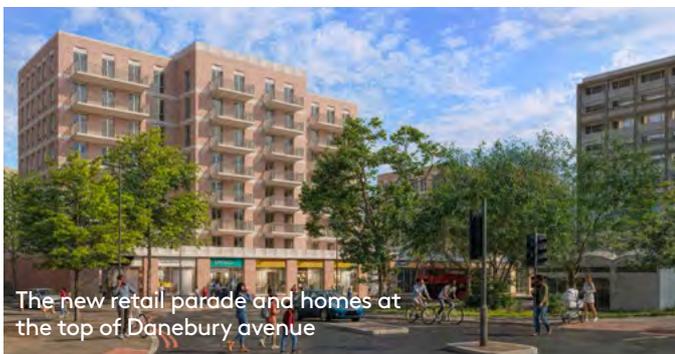
New community square proposed for Danebury Avenue



The overall vision builds on the estate’s existing green spaces and mature trees, which are an important part of its character. The new buildings are designed to fit into the landscape in a similar way, keeping open views and making it easy to move around. The plans will also create new public spaces and improve walking routes across the estate.

Over the past 18 months, the designs have been shaped through lots of community engagement. This has included large public exhibitions, smaller community meetings, and workshops focused on specific elements of the design.

This engagement will continue, with a full programme of events planned. These will give you the chance to share your local knowledge, ideas and feedback as we develop the designs further. Our aim is to hear from as many people as possible before we submit a planning application for the overall Alton masterplan, which we are aiming to do early next year.



The new retail parade and homes at the top of Danebury Avenue

Apprentice Week

In February, the Alton Regeneration team, along with our design team (HTA) and landscape contractors (Elite), took part in Apprentice Week at South Thames College.

We met lots of young people and talked about jobs and career opportunities in construction, design and other related industries.

We explained how they can get started, including through work experience or apprenticeship roles.

There will be more job opportunities coming up. If you’re interested in a career in design, construction, or anything connected to the regeneration project, please speak to a member of the Alton Renewal Team.



HTA meeting with potential apprentices



There is plenty going on across the estate over the coming months and years.

Below is some of the activity that you will see starting to happen. Keep an eye out for where you can get involved.

<p>2026</p>	<p>Spring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Hall refurbished and re-opened • First demolition works planned on site of 'Block A' new community hub and council homes • Improvement works continue on Alton Activity Centre & Downshire Field play spaces • New ramp at Roehampton Family Hub to improve accessibility • Focus Hall community space re-opens after refurbishment • Portswood Place artwork unveiled • Play Rangers start • Food waste bin roll-out completed across Alton • Youth Hub opened at Roehampton Family Hub • Drop kerbs delivered across the Alton • E-bike/E-scooter parking bay installed at the Base <p>Summer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed design work with community on Alton area masterplan • Alton Activity Centre & Downshire Field playspaces open • New creative lighting projects installed <p>Winter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community bluescapes programme delivered (co-designed SuDS systems across 4 priority areas: Alton School, Highcliffe Drive, Roehampton Methodist Church & Norley Value)
<p>2027</p>	<p>Spring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction works continue on 'Block A' community hub and council homes • Alton masterplan considered for planning permission
<p>2028/ 2029</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Block A' community hub and homes completed • Construction works start on Portswood Place new community building
<p>2030/ 2031</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction works start on Danebury Neighbourhood new homes, public square and retail parade • New Portswood Place community building with nursery and GP surgery completed
<p>2032</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danebury Neighbourhood completed with new homes, public square, community spaces and retail parade





Focus Hall



Community spaces and local culture

Focus Hall – designing a new creative heart for Roehampton fit for the community

Focus Hall is set to become a lively cultural and community space, with activities shaped together with local residents and delivered by organisations that are rooted in the local area.

Earlier this year, the community was invited into the newly refurbished Hall for the first time. We held an open afternoon focused on listening, exploring ideas, and understanding what local people would like the space to become and how they would like to use it.

At the official launch on 26 March, we'll have hands-on activities that encourage people to imagine possibilities and help plan the future of the Hall.

Local people are actively shaping how the Hall will serve different groups. Suggestions so far include workshops, exhibitions, wellbeing sessions, cultural celebrations, and community-led programmes that cover performance, skill-building, creative learning and opportunities for people to meet, talk and connect with one another.

This collaborative way of working will help Focus Hall develop into a welcoming place that builds from local talent, interests, and creativity.

Sherret Angus has recently been appointed as the Community Clubroom Assistant for the borough, supporting the management of Focus Hall. To contact Sherret, or for bookings and general requests, email communityclubroom@wandsworth.gov.uk

Murals, identity and local pride

A third mural has been finished in the Danebury Avenue car park, inspired by the colours and ideas from last year's Splash of Colour event. Along with the murals at Roehampton Library and Allbrook



Sherret, the new clubroom assistant for Focus Hall

House, it helps brighten up the estate and build local pride, and more murals are planned.

We're also improving signage around the Alton to make it easier for people to find their way around. This includes new artwork along the walkway between Roehampton Sports Centre and Danebury Avenue, and a new feature marking the entrance to the estate.

Creativity in Roehampton schools

Creativity is flourishing in Roehampton schools this term, through a series of standout cultural programmes. These include A Small Tale by Punchdrunk Enrichment - a magical storytelling project that brings learning to life through imagination and play.

Pupils across Roehampton also created artworks for the Our Beautiful Neighbourhood exhibition, which was celebrated on 5 March. Teachers are seeing a strong impact from the music creativity and therapy programme too, with one describing it as **"a breath of fresh air... a space where students can express their feelings without judgement."**



New mural at Danebury Avenue car park



Accessibility, movement and safer streets

Improving everyday movement & access

The council is accelerating work to help everyone move more freely around the Alton. At the Family Hub, a new accessibility ramp is being installed, improving independent access for families, SEND users and those with mobility aids.

Across the wider estate, a major programme of 54 new drop kerbs at 27 sites, spanning Fontley Way, Minstead Gardens, Harbridge Avenue, Ibsley Gardens, Highcliffe Drive and more, will significantly improve step-free movement, wayfinding and safety.

Community bus, lighting & safety

The relaunched community shuttle bus continues to grow in popularity, offering weekly shopping trips and monthly outings that help residents stay connected.

The Community Safety team continues to strengthen its relationship with organisations across the neighbourhood to improve safety, partnering with schools and running violence prevention sessions, as well as supporting two successful Community Cuppa+ events hosted by Our Roehampton and Rackets Cubed, which welcomed over 160 residents in January and February.

In addition, the council worked with TfL to reduce the speed limit



Community Bus

to 20mph on Roehampton Lane from the end of February, marking an important and long-awaited goal for the community.

At the same time, the Lighting Strategy is moving forward, with creative lighting planned for key areas including Portswood Place, the Family Hub and the incoming Gateway area. The strategy received a special mention at the LUCI Association Cities and Lighting Awards. This was only possible due to the residents of the Alton who enthusiastically participated from the outset and selected the priority areas for the meanwhile lighting projects through night walks, workshops, and on-site dialogues. This community-driven process shaped a sensitive and context-aware lighting strategy that addresses safety concerns while respecting biodiversity and preserving the estate's character.

Local spaces, shops and the environment



Shopfront improvements – supporting local business

Chantelle's Community Kitchen is the first shop to benefit from a full frontage upgrade, setting the tone for future improvements across the Alton.

These upgrades support local businesses and contribute to a safer, more attractive, and more vibrant local centre.

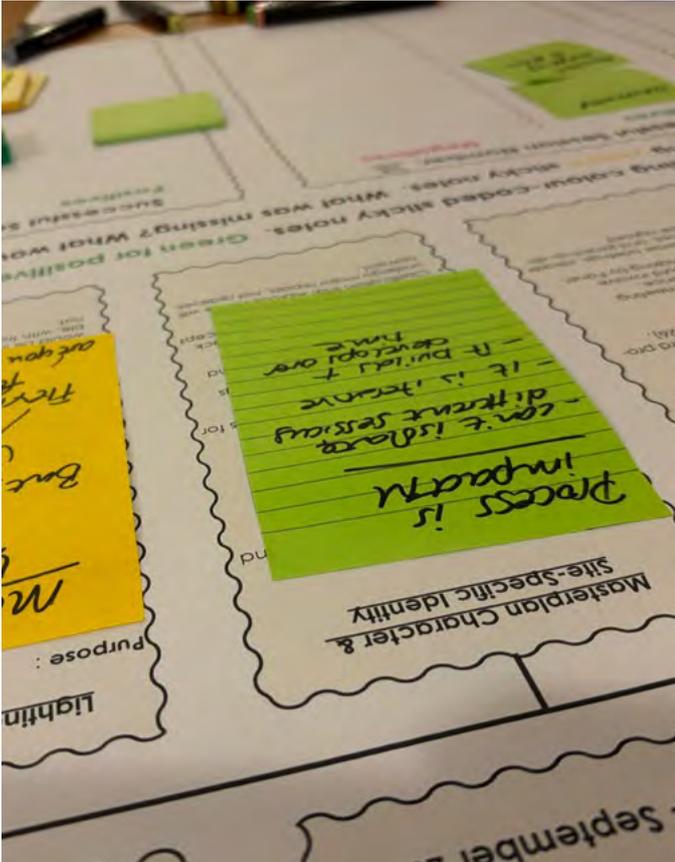
Community Bluescapes – greener streets and climate resilience

The Bluescapes initiative is working across the estate to reduce flood risk and strengthen climate resilience.

Four priority sites at the Alton School, Highcliffe Drive, Roehampton Methodist Church and Norley Vale are now moving into concept design and co-development stages.

Work with schools, families and community groups is central to the project, ensuring nature-based solutions such as SuDS (sustainable drainage), rain gardens and landscape improvements are shaped by those who use the spaces every day.





The Alton Community Panel

The Community Panel is a key voice in the Alton community.

The purpose of the Panel is to give community members the opportunity to work directly with council officers and design teams, helping to review and shape projects across the Alton. The Community Panel was created as part of the council's shift towards a more collaborative approach to some of the design elements, ensuring residents have a meaningful influence over the work taking place in their neighbourhood.

Since the Panel was established in May 2025, there have been 11 meetings, covering a wide range of issues - from pedestrian improvements and a lighting strategy to the proposed new village square. Each member's individual experience adds depth to the discussion, producing insights and recommendations that are then fed directly into the work of the relevant council teams, including the Alton Renewal Team, the High Streets and Transport Teams, and our regeneration masterplanning team, ensuring the community's voice shapes the ongoing work across the Alton.

At its core, the Community Panel is the Alton's voice - a platform for residents to be heard.



Finding library inspiration

On 15 January, the Panel took part in a site visit to the Una Marsden Library on the Aylesbury Estate in Southwark, which forms a key part of the regeneration project there.

This gave the Panel a first-hand look at an HTA-designed space — an important opportunity as HTA are the same design team who are developing the masterplan for the Alton, including the new community building.

Throughout the visit, Panel members asked questions, shared observations, and discussed which features they felt worked well and which were less successful. They particularly appreciated aspects of the library such as the children's library space, the dedicated buggy area, and the shared space for community groups. With this understanding — and reflecting on how the space made them feel — they can now take these insights into the design process for the new Alton Community Building.

Reflections from the Visit:

"It was really useful to see the space and reflect on what felt successful and what could be developed with Block A" - Jo

"I loved the Una Marsden library! I've not been in a library in years and would happily spend hours in that gorgeous space. A really wonderful community resource" - Charles

A festive round-up

Back in November, Danebury Avenue was alive with festive spirit as residents of all ages came together for the sixth annual Roehampton Christmas Tree Switch-on.

The towering tree shimmered under hundreds of lights, its branches beautifully adorned with baubles decorated by local residents. This year, we were joined by two stilt walkers who dazzled in their sparkling suits, rising high above the crowds, like celestial figures against the night sky. Children's services played a central role, opening the Base youth club up to the whole community for popcorn, hot chocolate, biscuit-decorating and crafting. The afternoon was completed with the schools' choir - a mixed group of children from local primary schools - singing songs they had been practising for weeks, while their parents/guardians looked on proudly.

Our 60+ residents enjoyed a fantastic evening of dancing at our 'Rockin' into Christmas' event, featuring a lively Rock 'n' Roll singer. The Minstead Clubroom was filled with festive cheer,



complemented by a delicious buffet of finger foods provided by Chantelle's Community Kitchen. Everyone had a sing-a-long and many hit the dance floor for a boogie.

During Christmas week, we had a fantastic time at The Night Before Christmas show. Families were delighted by the interactive performance, which brought the magic of the season to life. Children had the chance to get creative with festive arts and crafts, adding an extra touch of sparkle to the day. The highlight for many, of course, was meeting Santa himself - who took time out of his busy North Pole schedule to make a special visit to the Roehampton Family Hub.

All hail King Louis

During the February halfterm school holiday, Holly Lodge kindly hosted a wonderful family visit to explore the ancient art of 'wassailing'.

Wassailing is a centuries-old English tradition rooted in good luck, community celebration, and joyful winter gatherings. Its purpose is to encourage a bountiful apple harvest by blessing the trees, scaring away mischievous spirits, and awakening the good ones with cider*, music, and plenty of cheerful noise.

A highlight of the day was the crowning of 'King Louis', who took on the important ceremonial role of leading the wassail. As tradition dictates, the 'wassail king' helps guide the group through songs, chants, and rituals to protect the orchard and bring prosperity for the coming year.

Holly Lodge, an educational centre in the heart of Richmond Park, provided the perfect setting for families to learn, take



part in the rituals, and enjoy this lively slice of English heritage together.

*The cider was replaced with spiced warm apple drinks for our family day!



Alton Activity Centre and Downshire Field

A day in the life: tree tagging for the Alton landscape

By Kevin Otchere, Regeneration Project Officer

It's still early when I arrive at the tree nursery, the air cool and quiet, with the soft crunch of gravel underfoot as the team begins to gather. Today is one of the most important days in our landscape programme: selecting and tagging the mature trees that will eventually become the defining features of the new spaces at the Alton Activity Centre and Downshire Field.

Morning: walking the nursery rows

By 8am, I'm already deep within the rows of carefully grown specimens - oaks, birches, hornbeams and other species cultivated over years into the strong, balanced forms we need for our design. I'm joined by Spacehub, our landscape architects, and Elite, our expert landscape construction partners.

Together, we examine each tree one at a time. I focus on form and suitability for the character of our new spaces; Spacehub assess structure, canopy quality and species balance; Elite evaluate practical aspects like transport readiness and rootball condition. Every tree selected today will eventually stand within the renewed landscapes at Alton, so attention to detail is everything.

Late morning: tagging the best specimens

By mid morning, we've narrowed down a shortlist. Each chosen tree is carefully tagged, photographed and catalogued, ready for lifting and delivery later in the programme.

It's incredibly rewarding work, physically selecting the very trees that will shape the play environment and natural spaces

residents will enjoy for years to come. Standing among these mature specimens, you really get a sense of how much care and collaboration goes into building green spaces that feel established from day one.

Lunch: reviewing plans among the trees

Lunch is taken quickly, leaning against a stack of pallets and warming our hands on coffee cups. Even here, surrounded by the ordered rows of trees, conversation quickly turns back to design integration and timelines. We review planting layouts and reflect on how these selections will tie into the wider Alton landscape vision.

Back on site, extensive groundwork, drainage installation, sub bases, and early surface preparation has all been progressing steadily. Today's work is a reminder of why that engineering matters: the landscape we're building needs strong foundations to support mature planting and resilient outdoor spaces.

Afternoon: final quality checks

In the afternoon, we carry out final checks.

Some trees are ruled out for imperfect structure, sparse canopies, or subtle weaknesses that would only show years down the line. Others stand out immediately, with perfect form and healthy growth patterns. We move through the final section of the nursery, reassessing each selection before confirming the list in full. Everything is logged, tagged and scheduled, ready for the next stage of the project.

Late afternoon: looking ahead

As the day winds down, I take one last slow walk through the rows of tagged specimens. It's peaceful, and the setting sun brings out the textures in the bark and branches.

I can already imagine these trees forming the shaded seating areas, natural play zones, and welcoming entrances at Downshire Field and the Alton Activity Centre.

This tagging visit has been a crucial step in ensuring that the new landscapes don't just look good on day one, but will thrive, mature and contribute to the character of the Alton Estate for decades. And as I leave the nursery; boots muddy, notes full, and camera even fuller, I feel the same thing I always feel at the end of days like this: pride that the decisions we make now will soon become places residents can enjoy, explore, and make memories in.

What's next for the new playspaces

As we move into spring, residents will start to see:

- Continued formation of paths and new play zones
- Installation of utilities and servicing infrastructure
- Landscape bed preparation and first soil imports
- Early construction of the new Alton Activity Centre play structures
- Ongoing biodiversity planting design and coordination

Both spaces are on track to be completed by the summer.



Council contractor refreshes Eastwood Nursery garden

The Alton Activity Centre and Downshire Field works have a fringe benefit - Eastwood Nursery has a new garden.

The council requires all the private firms it works with to invest in the community, as part of our 'social value' rules. When Elite (the contractor at Alton Activity Centre and Downshire Field) asked how they could help, we put them in touch with the nursery.

The result is an outdoor area that plays an important role in the nursery's approach to early learning, wellbeing, and play.

The refreshed garden provides a safer, more engaging environment where young children can explore nature and take part in hands-on activities.

Recent enhancements at Eastwood include:

- Raising planters to make gardening more accessible for young children
- Clearing overgrown vegetation to open up the space
- Installing new timber sleepers to strengthen the garden's structure and safety
- Improving existing plant beds to support interactive outdoor learning
- Adding new plants and greenery to bring colour and life back into the space

Staff at Eastwood Nursery expressed their appreciation for the improvements, noting the positive impact on the children's experience:

"The changes to the garden are already creating a more welcoming and stimulating environment for our children. Outdoor learning is at the heart of what we do, and the refreshed space will support children's curiosity, confidence, and connection with nature." - Eastwood Nursery School and Centre for Families

The council will continue working closely with local partners, schools, and families to ensure regeneration activity delivers meaningful social value and supports the everyday spaces the community relies on.



Building new homes



Proposals for land adjacent to Farnborough House

Since achieving Planning Approval in 2024, and our last Alton News update, the council and our design teams have completed a comprehensive tender process to identify a skilled and experienced main contractor. We're pleased to announce that Kind & Company (Builders) Ltd has been appointed for this exciting project. Kind & Company has previously delivered several high-quality schemes for the council, and their extensive experience with projects of this scale and complexity gives us great confidence moving forward. With this appointment, the contractor will soon begin preparations and some minor enabling works in anticipation of a main site start in late spring or early summer 2026.

To ensure residents are kept informed and engaged, the council and Kind & Company will host a 'Meet the Contractor' event on site before the main works commence, providing an opportunity to discuss how the building works will be managed.

You may have already noticed that a significant portion of the enabling works has been completed on site, including the diversion of existing services and the installation of a new substation.

Proposals for land at Bessborough Road

Much like the Farnborough House scheme, the tender process for Bessborough Road is now complete, with both schemes being combined under one contract and delivered by Kind & Company. This approach will provide better coordination across the sites. Our target date for starting on site is also late spring or early summer 2026.

As we move closer to the proposed start on site, we will keep residents updated with further communications about the schemes and next steps, including details of the upcoming 'Meet the Contractor' events.

You can also find details about the 'Meet the Contractor' events on the website [wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-approved](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-approved)



EGGTASTIC EASTER EVENT

Join us for a book themed scavenger hunt and Easter crafting

11.00 am – 12 noon Under 5's
12.30 pm – 13.30 pm Over 5's
 If you have children in both age groups, please come at 11.00 am

11.00 am – 2.00 pm Meet the council's Alton design team and find out what's planned for your estate

SATURDAY
28 MARCH
11AM - 2PM

- In Roehampton Library
- Face Painting
- Refreshments provided

altonrenewal.co.uk
@AltonRenewal

Kids Metal Detector Club

Wednesday 8th April
2.00pm - 3.30pm
 Meet outside Roehampton Library

Find tokens and swap for collectors coins
 Refreshments provided

@AltonRenewal
 altonrenewal.co.uk

Alton Newsletter - have your say

The Alton Team try to put together news and articles that we think you'd like to read. Do you enjoy it? Is it relevant and of interest? What else would you like included? We'd appreciate your feedback to help shape future editions. Please send any positive comments or constructive criticism to our mailbox altonrenewal@wandsworth.gov.uk putting 'NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK' in the subject line. Or call us on **020 8871 6207**. We look forward to hearing from you.

Alton Team contact details

You can contact the Alton Renewal Team on **020 8871 6207** or [@AltonRenewal](https://www.altonrenewal.co.uk) or at [wandsworth.gov.uk/alton](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/alton) If you would like to discuss anything in person with a member of the team, please contact us and an appointment can be arranged. You can also find us at the Information Stall **outside the Base** on Danebury Avenue each **Friday, from 2pm-4pm**.

Roehampton Ward Councillors

- Councillor Jenny Yates**
cllr.j.yates@wandsworth.gov.uk
 - Councillor Matthew Tiller**
cllr.m.tiller@wandsworth.gov.uk
 - Councillor Graeme Henderson**
cllr.g.henderson@wandsworth.gov.uk
- You can also contact the Cabinet Member for Housing:
- Councillor Aydin Dikerdem**
cllr.a.dikerdem@wandsworth.gov.uk

Councillor advice sessions are held on the **first Saturday of every month at Roehampton Library**, 2 Danebury Avenue, from **11am - 12 noon**.

