

**Alton is a town that welcomes walkers.
Walking is good for you and it's good
for families, so – Start Walking!**

Walk Alton works with the local community, businesses,
walking-related organisations and local authorities.
The initiative is supported by Alton Town Council.



Start Walking

...around Alton

A town where walkers are welcome!



www.walkalton.org.uk

Introducing Walk Alton

We are a community group that was originally set up to gain *Walkers are Welcome* accreditation for Alton. Working closely with Alton Town Council, we were proud to achieve this in 2019. *Walkers are Welcome* is a national network of small towns which promote walking.

We champion walking in Alton and the surrounding area. Through the Walk Alton Forum, local organisations support our work, advise upon issues and bring new ideas and perspectives.

We support the Alton Walking Festival through planning, providing leader training and promotion. This event, held each May, is one of the largest and longest walking festivals in the country.

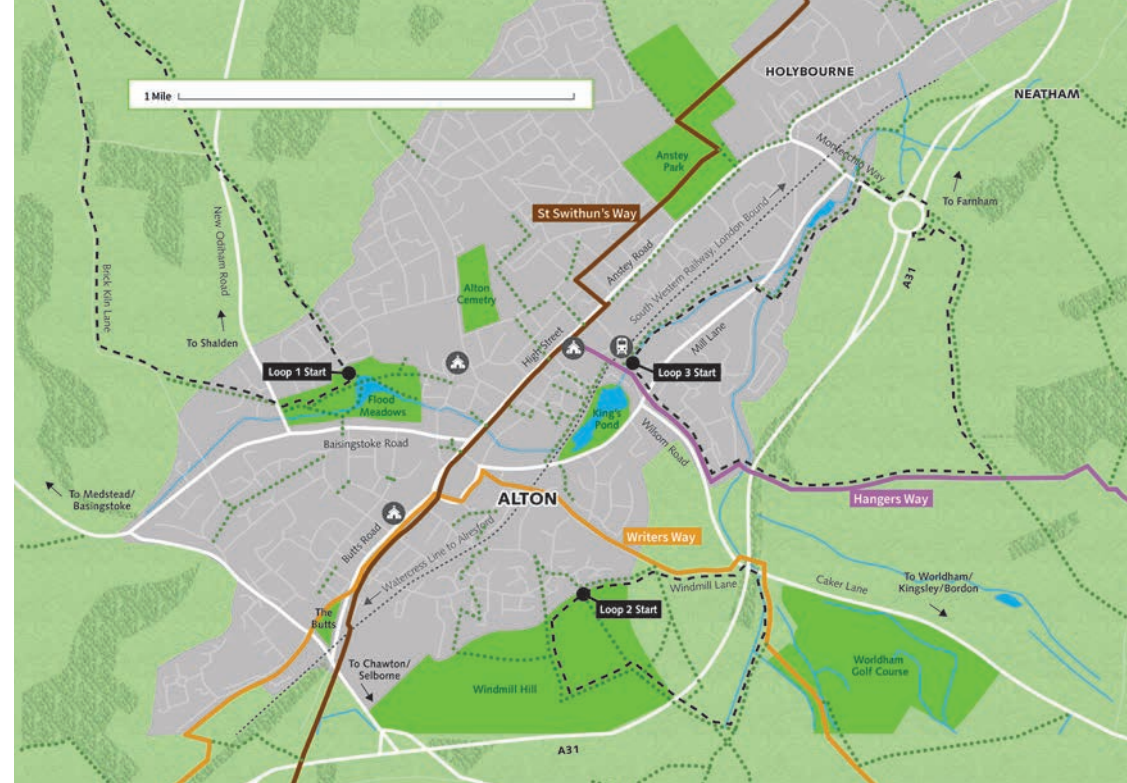
Other initiatives:

- Walk Alton sponsors two walking groups; *Alton Women Walkers* and the *Five to Ten Group*, both offering monthly walks and free to join
- We work with local walking organisations and publicise all walks locally

- We provide walk leader training for new Alton Walking Festival walk leaders
- We encourage all kinds of walking and countryside recreation, including walks to combat social isolation and promote mental wellbeing

If you join a local walking group you'll have lots of opportunities to explore the countryside around Alton with the support of an experienced leader and friendly fellow walkers.

Want to keep up-to-date with our activities and discover new walks in your area? Subscribe to our newsletter at: tinyurl.com/7kdsdyvf



Are you making the most of our town's urban footpath network?

Alton's footpaths can take you directly into the beautiful and varied Hampshire countryside that surrounds the town. The map above indicates Alton's urban footpaths with green dotted lines. Other named long-distance footpaths are also indicated. Why not try one of these local loops – none should take more than a couple of hours...

Loop 1: From Flood Meadows (GU34 IHR) exit via Netherfield Close to take a loop leaving town at the Greenfields playpark (off Northanger Close), climb on a shaded path then drop down through some woods to cross the New Odiham

Road, over the Shalden fields and back into town via Brick Kiln Lane.

Loop 2: Start at the Salisbury Close (GU34 2TF) entrance to the Windmill Hill open space, go over the hill and head down through the fields to cross the A31, then follow the River Wey to Caker Lane and join the **Writers Way** up Windmill Lane and back on to Windmill Hill.

Loop 3: Begin behind the station beside the river (GU34 2QU), continue along the riverside, crossing Mill Lane and dropping on a path under Montecchio Way, then down to the A31 roundabout, where you cross (with care!) to rejoin the path along the edge of fields and then down to reach a crossroad of paths in the middle of a huge field, then bear right along the **Hangers Way**, crossing the A31 to head back to the station along Wilsom Road.



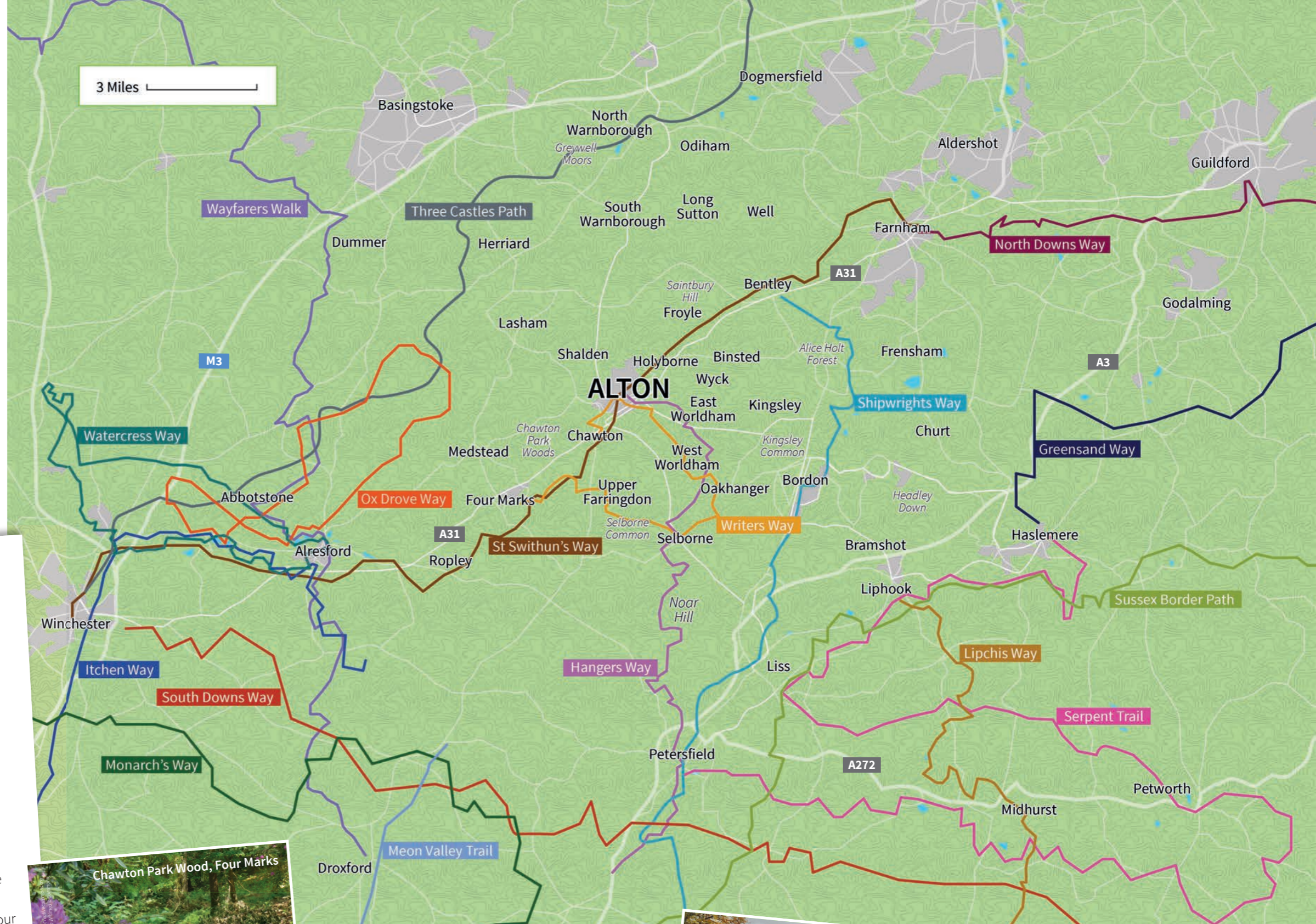
Long distance paths? In Alton, we're spoilt for choice!

As you can see from our main map, Alton is positively surrounded by some of the UK's best long-distance footpaths. There are also a couple of National Trails; the **South Downs Way** (100m), and the **North Downs Way** (153m). The nearest long distance paths are **Monarch's Way** (625m), **Three Castles Path** (60m), **Wayfarers Walk** (70m), **Itchen Way** (31m), **Watercress Way** (27m), **Greensand Way** (108m), **Lipchis Way** (39m), **Serpent Trail** (64m) and **Sussex Border Path** (150m), with **St Swithun's Way** (34m), **Writers Way** (13m) and **Hangers Way** (21m) actually passing through or starting in Alton. Not far away, you'll also find **Shipwrights Way** (50m), **Ox Drove Way** (25m) and the **Meon Valley Trail** (11m) all of which are both cycling and walking routes. Full details on these trails and more can be found online.

Of course most of these routes are major undertakings, so to build up to them with a shorter walk we recommend:

- A circuit of Chawton Park Wood, starting and finishing at Alton Sports Centre (5m)
- To Farringdon via the disused Meon Valley railway and return to Chawton, taking in Chawton Park (4m)
- Alton to Hartley Mauditt via Watery Lane, returning via Truncheaunts (5m)

Look for our *Ticket to Stride* leaflet for more ideas about linear walks using local Stagecoach bus services.



Ten tips for Walkers

- 1 Be aware of rights of way.** A right of way marked as a footpath (yellow arrow waymarks) is for walkers only. Bridleways (blue arrow waymarks) can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- 2 Stay on the path.** Not only is this for your safety, but it's to protect the area you're walking in. Straying off the path may also be trespassing
- 3 Leave gates as you find them.** The landowner may have closed gates to keep livestock in, or left them open for farm vehicle access
- 4 Dress comfortably and practically.** Check the forecast before you leave, but prepare for any weather – take a waterproof, sunscreen and layers
- 5 Keep dogs on a lead.** You never know what's around the corner or who might be scared of dogs. Don't risk letting them off unless you're very familiar with the route and completely trust your dog's instincts and training
- 6 Technology can fail you.** Take a paper map and save your walking route offline, in case you lose signal or battery charge.
- 7 Take plenty of water.** Use a reusable water bottle you may be able to refill along the way and take snacks if you are on a long walk
- 8 Leave wildlife alone.** Both plants and animals – and don't feed any animals
- 9 Leave no trace.** Take your rubbish home
- 10 Smile and greet people that you pass.** It cheers everyone up, yourself included

Want to know more? Check out the Countryside Code at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code

