

Our Vision: Our Town (2020-2024)



Houghton Regis Town Council is still very much committed to ensuring it is in the best position to help, support and enhance our new and growing community. Through public consultation the Council have listened to what you want and developed a further Plan to cover the next 4 years.

Our Vision: Our Town

The plan has identified things to improve on, what you would like to change, and services and facilities that would improve where you live, play and work.

With the help and support of local organisations, strategic partners, and the community working together we can help to achieve this vision.

This booklet represents our objectives and aspirations for the next 4 years,

We hope you'll be able to share our Vision and help make it a reality.

In 2016 the council developed its first Vision to cover the period until March 2020. During that time the council worked to deliver the Objectives of the plan. The outcomes achieved from this are listed on the back page.

Our 4 objectives are:

1. **Grow your own**
2. **A greener cleaner Houghton Regis**
3. **A safe and vibrant town**
4. **To focus on our community**

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Objective 1 : GROW YOUR OWN



The Town council are keen to help the community grow their own food, eat healthier plus try and help wildlife and plants to grow?

You told us that you want us to:

- Support Houghton Hall Park kitchen garden
- Support the management of the Woodside Link Community Orchard
- Help establish allotments within the new housing developments
- Encourage healthy eating and food awareness
- To increase edible planting
- Enhance biodiversity and support wildlife

So from 2020 to 2024 the Town Council will:

- Offer staff services & finance support for the HHP Kitchen garden
- Support existing groups on the woodside link orchard
- Work with promoters of the development sites
- Develop partnership projects with HHP / pop-up café for healthy eating
- Provide fruit bushes and fruit trees
- Provide Wildflower planting



Objective 2 : A GREENER CLEANER HOUGHTON REGIS

We have some fantastic outdoor spaces, and communities in Houghton Regis and we want to help improve the environment and reduce its use of the earth's resources so that Houghton Regis remains a great place.

You told us to:

- To reduce the use of paper by the local council
- To increase recycling
- To encourage sustainable transport including use of public transport, walking and cycling
- To provide outdoor fitness equipment in parks and open spaces
- raise the town's profile

So from 20120 to 2024 the Town Council will:

- We will use electronic mailing to Councillors/Staff & increased use of in house IT services
- Offer recycling at events, offer recycling within our open spaces
- Put in provision of ancillary facilities such as cycle racks, seating
- Use incentives for people using sustainable transport
- Outdoor fitness equipment currently on the Village green, we are looking to expand to further recreational grounds





Objective 3: A SAFE AND VIBRANT TOWN



The Town Council understands that everyone wants to live somewhere safe. We want to explore how to create a **safe and vibrant town**.

You told us that you want us to find ways to:

- Reduce the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and crime levels
- Reduce enviro crime
- Improve access to bulk waste removal services
- Seek to reduce speeding around schools
- Provide clean and accessible town centre toilets
- Provide Christmas lights
- Communicate well with residents and stakeholders
- Support local businesses and retailers
- Welcome new residents

So from 2020 to 2024 we will:

- Continue our Partnership with Beds police and CBC Community Safety Encourage and try an establish a Neighbourhood Watch scheme
- Continue our tackle incidences of graffiti
- work with partners to introduce speed reduction measures
- Look to increase our Town Crier on recyclable paper
- Supply house builders, Estate agents, new residents with welcome packs



Objective 4: OUR COMMUNITY

The Town Council knows that the town is expanding which means more homes and more people.

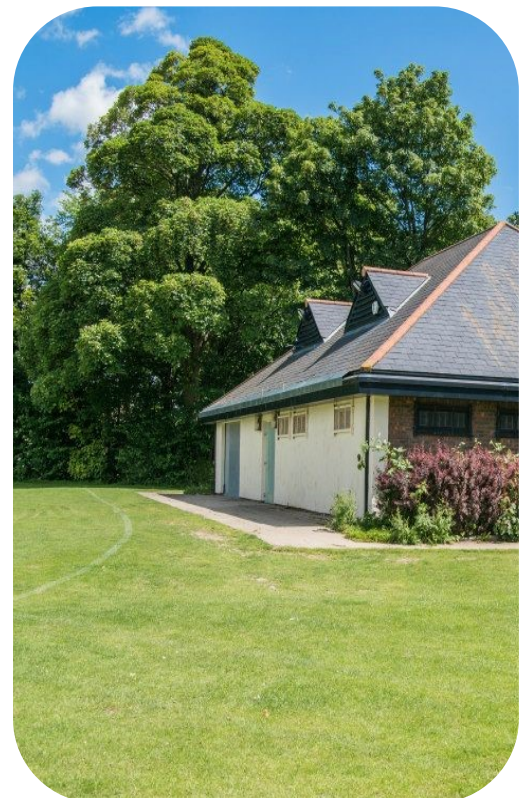
How can new residents feel a part of Houghton Regis and not like an outsider? Are the facilities and events enough or is there more needed?

You asked us to:

- Create/enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion.
- Enhance existing facilities to enable improved use/accessibility
- Provide activities for young people, families and older people
- Help to protect and preserve historic gems
- Provide quality green spaces for leisure and recreation, healthier living, urban attractiveness, improved air quality
- Provide a range of play facilities for all to enjoy
- Support local organisations & HHP to help develop full potential
- Provide a beautiful and tranquil place of rest for future generations

So from 2020 to 2024 we will:

- Development of a sporting hub and all-weather pitch
- Create a dementia friendly town
- Continue our event days for families and young people
- Continue supports the heritage sites within the town
- Continue our maintained areas of the green areas with the town
- Promote the new tranquil area of the cemetery to residents and wider community



OUTCOMES ACHIEVED FROM HOUGHTON REGIS: OUR 2020 VISION

Objective 1: To develop a stronger local economy which promotes local businesses

The council has:

- Worked with a range of local stakeholders to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. This is in its final stages before a local referendum. This Plan will put the council and the town in a much stronger position in terms of shaping and securing funding from new developments;
- Promoted the local retail offer and encouraged town centre footfall through the Town Guide, through town centre community events and through a shop local scheme;
- Worked with Central Bedfordshire Council on highway safety and parking concerns in the town centre and in residential areas;
- Helped with the management and promotion of Bedford Square Community Centre;
- Have worked with partners to protect and enhance historic gems including All Saints, Houghton Hall Park and the Red House.

Objective 2: To face the challenges and maximise the opportunities of growth

The council has:

- Developed effective working relationships with CBC planning officers and developers so the council can help shape future development;
- Worked hard to find land for a new cemetery, looking at a number of sites but disappointingly none of the land was suitable;
- Provided information to residents on the strategic growth issues affecting the town through the website, town crier and Planning Committee agendas.

Objective 3: To develop a safer town with a reduced fear of crime

The council has:

- Developed and progressed a number of anti-crime and anti-social behaviour projects including enviro-crime reporting and street cleaning and school parking projects;
- Purchased 2 more redeployable CCTV cameras to help deter crime and ASB in residential areas;
- Worked with CBC to offer subsidised bulk waste removal for local residents, watch this space over the next couple of months or so;
- Installed a speed activation sign on Windsor Drive to help to reduce traffic speeds along this road.

Objective 4: To develop a more active, engaged and inclusive community

The council has:

- Designed and installed a family games area, including exercise equipment, table tennis, football / basketball wall and family type games on the Green;
- Installed exercise equipment on Orchard Close Recreation Ground funded through Fields in Trust;
- Enhanced the skate park by providing better seating and floodlighting;
- Begun working with the Beds Football Association and the Football Foundation and local clubs to deliver a sporting hub, including an all-weather football facility on Tithe Farm Recreation ground;
- Enhanced community events so they are bigger and better and have launched 2 new events, Houghton Rocks and the Fireworks display;
- Worked with CBC on longer term plans for Windsor Drive Recreation Ground including the provision of enhanced recreational facilities;
- Explored options for Community Transport provision and a Village Agent scheme but having looked at the current provision decided to offer support to other organisations who currently provides these types of services;
- Supported a variety of local organisations through the Community Development Officer and through the provision of community grants including SORTED, Keech, SBDAR, Houghton Regis Memorial Hall, Community Action and Citizens Advice;
- Provided youth services through a weekly youth pop-up café and a summer holiday club. We set up and now support the Houghton Regis Youth Council who help at local events, run their own initiatives and feed into the town and youth services in a positive way.

Objective 5: To build a strong, efficient and proactive Town Council

The council has:

- Reviewed the corporate and democratic structure of the town council and have made some changes to improve ways of working and to ensure the council was in a position to deliver on this Vision;
- Completed a variety of energy efficiency measures, including smart meters and automatic lighting sensors, using developer funding via CBC;
- Developed relationships with key partners through improved liaison and joint working on projects;
- Maintained our current premises whilst exploring options for future Town Council premises to ensure continued fitness for purpose;
- Raised the profile of the Mayor through the securing of Mayoral robes and through the Mayoral Inauguration