

# TOWN CRIER



Telephone: 01582 708540

E-mail: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)

Web: [www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)

Delivered to all properties in Houghton Regis

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## Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday 4th April 2020**  
**Between 9am – noon**  
**Bedford Square**

**Review of  
events over  
the last few  
months**  
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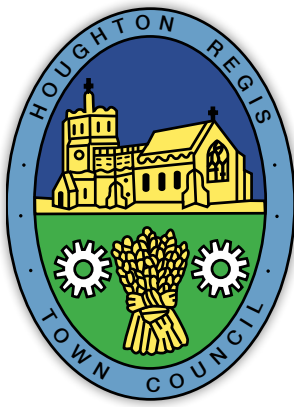
**Also inside...**

**My Mayoral Year  
Words from the Town  
Mayor - Page 2**

**Information about  
the Budget - Page 5**

**Dates for your diary  
of upcoming Spring/  
Summer events - Page 7**

Your 'Town Criers' are still free, delivered straight to your door,  
You'll disappoint us for sure, if it stays on the floor!  
So open it up and explore, all the FREE events and more that you don't want to ignore!



## Houghton Regis Town Council Contact Details

Houghton Regis Town Council  
Peel Street, Houghton Regis  
Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Telephone: 01582 708540  
Fax: 01582 861102

Email: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)  
Website: [www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)

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[pinterest.com/houghtonregistc](https://www.pinterest.com/houghtonregistc)

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@HoughtonRegisTC

Houghton Regis Town Council

### Officers:

Clare Evans Town Clerk	01582 708542
Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager	01582 708 544
Tony Luff Head of Grounds Operations	01582 708543
Sarah Gelssthorp Civic and Events Officer	01582 708523
Tara Earnshaw, Community Development Officer	01582 240252
Sonia Stennett Accounts & Cemetery Officer	01582 708541
Chantel England Promotions and Administration Officer	01582 240251
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services	01582 945697
Connie Woolhead Office Apprentice	01582 708540

### Councillor contact details:

Houghton Hall Ward:	
Cllr Susan Goodchild	01582 708540
Cllr Yvonne Farrell	07915 088302
Cllr David Jones	01582 708540
Cllr Ray Morgan	01582 708540
Cllr Ken Wattingham	01582 705 830
Cllr Susan Thorne	07847 702 499

Parkside Ward:	
Cllr Jimmy Carroll	01582 708540
Cllr Don Dixon-Wilkinson	01582 529 554
Cllr Clare Copleston	01582 708 540
Vacancy	

Tithe Farm Ward:	
Cllr David Abbott	01582 894 060
Cllr Tracey McMahon	07948 532 662
Cllr Martin Kennedy	01582 708 540
Cllr Abby Slough	01582 708 540

Central Bedfordshire Councillors:	
Cllr Antonia Ryan (Parkside)	0300 300 8518
Cllr Susan Goodchild (Houghton Hall)	0300 300 8525
Cllr Yvonne Farrell (Houghton Hall)	0300 300 8537
Cllr Patrick Hamill (Tithe Farm)	0300 300 8567

## Mayor's Forward

The past few months have been so dreary, and storms Cairn, Dennis and Jorge have taken their toll. But at last, the nights are becoming shorter, and the smell of spring in the air is almost upon us.

Former Mayor Cllr Martin Kennedy has given me an unprecedented gift, for which I am both grateful and sad. You may already know that I was elected in January to serve out the remainder of the calendar year until May 2020 as Mayor of Houghton Regis. This is a great and unexpected honour for which I am grateful and I know my mum would be so chuffed, but I am sad for the circumstance with which it was granted.

Last week I was preparing for my first official event to raise funds for my two charities. I busily got to baking muffins for my Mayor's Coffee Morning, and was told that I am the first Mayor to actually bake for this event. My charities for the remainder of the year are two that are very close to my heart, but what I mostly want to do with my time as Mayor is inspire.

Shelter is the first of my charities. I have been in the situation where I have had to use their services, and I do not hide this fact. Anyone can lose their home, for a whole variety of reasons. Many of us are just one pay packet away from it at any one time. It doesn't have to be an end, and it can be overcome. I am proof that the hardships and failures that we may face along the path throughout our lives do not have to define us. It's what we do in spite of them that does.

My second charity is the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). This is another cause that I am passionate about, and improving the education around this autoimmune condition is my goal. Juvenile Diabetes, or as it's more commonly known, Type 1 Diabetes can affect young people of any age, at any time. There is no known cause, and it is incurable. Those diagnosed are insulin dependent for the rest of their lives, there is comparatively little funding towards finding a cure, and research suggests that incidences of diagnoses are on the increase. Our children with diabetes are often subject to ridicule, and the support from government to help with managing their

life long, life altering/ threatening condition has been eroded over the past ten years. I hope you will support me with making the lives of these children a little more bearable by raising awareness, and donating to help to fund research for a cure.

I am presently preparing for a St Patrick's Day themed quiz (with a lovely Irish themed supper) at St Vincent's on Friday 20 March to raise some money for my charities, and I will be hosting an Afternoon Tea at the Bowls Club in May. The Mayor's Annual Civic Service will be held on Sunday 26 April at All Saints Church. All are welcome. This is a great opportunity for me to sing really badly, and no one will complain.

The Mayor's Office is FULL of Easter Eggs ready for the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday 4 April. The event is FREE so please be sure to join us in the library between 9am-12noon. In a slight change of schedule this year, the Town Council will be hosting a special event in place of May Day to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. The Bank Holiday has been moved in recognition of this occasion to 8 May. Arrangements for this event are still being finalised, but at the time of writing, I can confirm that this event will be held in the Bedford Square Centre, and in the shopping centre (weather permitting), and it will include an Afternoon Tea, with a talk about Enigma by Nick Hill from the Bletchley Park Museum, stalls including the RAF Association, displays from the Houghton Regis Heritage Society, and musical entertainment. We hope that you will join us. Keep an eye out on our Facebook page/Twitter/website for updates in the coming weeks.

Looking ahead to the summer...who remembers summer? This year our Town Council Carnival is being held on Saturday 11 July with the theme of 'Keep it Green', our revamped 'Skate Jam' event is at Tithe Farm Rec on 23 July, and don't forget to join us for our ever-popular Houghton Rocks at Parkside Rec on Saturday 5 September.

Just a few last words. Be kind to each other. There is more that we have in common than divides us.



# Review Of Events Of The Last Few Months

## Pride of Houghton 2019

The annual Pride of Houghton Awards returned this year to celebrate the achievements and success of some truly remarkable residents of the town. The award nominees, local businesses and the Deputy Mayor were just some of the guests that attended the event held at Houghton Regis Memorial Hall on Saturday 12th October 2019.

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Tracey McMahon opened the event to the audience of almost one hundred special guests, which included the Mayor of Dunstable. Eight Pride of Houghton Awards and Highly Commended certificates were presented, as well as trophies from the Carnival.

The event included a table buffet, Bingo hosted by DJ Big Man Craig, and a video presentation of previous winners.

The following awards were given out on the evening;

- Individual Award Winner – Josephine Jarvis  
Sponsored by Perfect Profiles and presented by Damian Edwards of Perfect Profiles.
- Individual Award 'Highly Commended' – Dawn Kingsley  
Sponsored by Perfect Profiles and presented by Damian Edwards of Perfect Profiles.
- Local Group Award Winner – Donna's Dance School  
Sponsored by The Safer Luton Partnership, presented by Felicia Bailey
- Local Group 'Highly Commended' – Streetlife  
Sponsored by The Safer Luton Partnership, presented by Felicia Bailey.
- Local organisation – Houghton Regis Heritage Society  
Sponsored by Proludic and presented by Annabel Brown of Proludic.
- Local organisation – 'Highly Commended' Streetlife  
Sponsored by Proludic and presented by Annabel Brown of Proludic.
- Carer Award Winner – Sarah Cremin

Sponsored by D&I Family Butchers and presented by Dean Rudelhoff of D&I Family Butchers.

- Carer Award Winner 'Highly Commended' – Kim Taylor  
Sponsored by D&I Family Butchers and presented by Dean Rudelhoff of D&I Family Butchers.

• Local Hero Award Winner – Anne Bailey

Sponsored by Zebra Properties and presented by Zaky Pasha of Zebra Properties.

- Local Business Award Winner – Go Houghton

Sponsored by Spicer & Co Accountants presented by Steve and Suzanne Spicer

- Local Business Award 'Highly Commended' – Meaningful Education

Sponsored by Spicer & Co Accountants presented by Steve and Suzanne Spicer.

- Lifetime Achievement Award – Roger Turner

Sponsored by Vauxhall Motors and presented by Councillor Ken Wattingham.

- Lifetime Achievement Award 'Highly Commended' – David Hill

Sponsored by Vauxhall Motors and presented by Councillor Ken Wattingham.

- Mayor's Choice Award – Streetlife  
Sponsored by the Town Mayor of Houghton Regis, Councillor Martin Kennedy and presented by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Tracey McMahon.

The Olive Burgess Shield for the most support on, or before, Carnival Day was presented to Houghton Regis Youth Council for the support with the Carnival and Town Council events and the St Vincent's Trophy, for the most help and support from an individual at the Carnival, on or before the day, was presented to Carol Butler for her help and support with the Carnival, and in particular the design and work on the Town Council floats. The awards were presented by Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Events Working Group, Councillor Tracey McMahon.

Houghton Regis Town Council would like to take the opportunity



to thank the following sponsors of the event for all of their support and help in making this year's Pride of Houghton a real success: D&I Butchers, Creative Decorations, Frugal Frog, Lisa Roberts Catering, Perfect Profiles, Proludic, Safer Luton Partnership, Spicer & Co, Vauxhall Motors and Zebra Properties.



Photos by Joanna Cross Photography

## Fireworks Display:

On Sunday 3rd November 2019, Houghton Regis Town Council teamed up with the award winning Fantastic Fireworks, to host a spectacular display which saw a crowd of over 3,000 enjoy the free family event. A dazzling array of fireworks lit up the sky accompanied by a soundtrack filled with contemporary music, wowed the audience who braved the cold weather to watch the event at Tithe Farm Recreation Ground.

The large crowds were entertained by DJ Big Man Craig who counted down with the audience to the eagerly anticipated opening fireworks, whilst a whole host of rides, food stalls and glow items were also on offer throughout the evening for everyone to enjoy.

Clare Evans, Town Clerk for HRTC added "The Fireworks Display was a very successful occasion and we



estimate that over 3,000 attended to see the Fireworks spectacular. The Pyrotechnic display lasted for 20 minutes and it was set to some contemporary music, which added to the atmosphere. The weather was perfect for the event and we hope that everyone had a enjoyable evening”.

Houghton Regis Town Council would like to thank all of the staff and councillors involved with the

organisation and smooth running of the event. Finally a huge thank you to Signposts for their support with marshalling at the event and the sponsors, Perfect Profiles and Zebra Properties, and everyone who was involved in this special occasion.



Santa very much for the time that he spent with us.

The Town Council would also like to thank Perfect Profiles and Zebra Properties for their kind sponsorship and Houghton Regis Library for facilitating the event.



## Committee Update

### Since October 2019:

#### Town Council

January 2020 saw Councillor Martin Kennedy stand down from his role as Town Mayor.

The Town Council meeting held on 20th January 2020 saw the election of the new Town Mayor Cllr McMahon and new Deputy Mayor Cllr Thorne for the rest of the municipal year.

Updates were provided on the fundraising events held and on the community and civic events that had been attended. Other councillors provided verbal reports from meetings they had attended on outside organisations or from training courses they had attended on behalf of the council.

Of particular note was:

- Discussions on the proposal for an enhanced sports facility at Tithe Farm Road.
- Continued discussions regarding the open space management of land at HRN2
- Continued discussions on the proposed HRN2 community building
- The approval of the audited annual governance and accountability

return 2018/2019

- The approval of the draft vision 2020/2024

#### Town Partnership

Many issues continue to be considered at this joint meeting, ranging from environmental health matters to car parking to the provision of services.

Of particular note was:

- The development of the independent living scheme, All Saints View, in the centre of the town is well under way.
- The agreement to establishment of a Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group

#### Corporate Services Committee

This committee have:

- Reviewed available s106 funding
- Considered revisions of various town council policies.

#### Community Services Committee

This committee have:

- Received reports about the youth work and pop-up youth cafes in Houghton Regis;
- Discussed playschemes including the increased number of people who enjoyed the family day trip

which had employed two coaches for the 2019 outing.

- Awarded Key Partner Grants
- Awarded Small and Large Capital Grants
- Agreed the production of a revised Town Guide 2020/2021.

#### Environment & Leisure Committee

This committee have:

- Continued to address enviro crime matters reported by councillors.
- Repaired and maintained existing play areas and outdoor gym equipment
- Received funding for:
  1. Improved energy efficiencies in community pavilions
  2. Flag pole illumination
  3. Community defibrillators

#### Planning Committee

This committee have:

- Considered 41 planning applications, some were supported, some were objected to and some were commented on
- Received updates on strategic development sites in the town and on the local plan.
- Supplied Central Bedfordshire Council with suggested themes for street names for various developments in Houghton Regis.

# Houghton Regis Town Council - Budget 2020/21

After much deliberation and hard work over the last few months the Town Council has set its budget and precept for 2020/21 and is able to advise residents that the precept has been set at £904,518. This represents a 2% increase in the Band D charge which equates to an increase of £3.50 per year or 7p per week.

The budget which has been set makes provision for the delivery of the projects identified within the Houghton Regis: Our Vision: Our Town (2020-2024), including:

### Corporate Services Committee:

- Continued provision for central services such as accountancy and investment fees, councillor services and support, IT and communication costs, insurance, advertising and property maintenance costs along with officer salaries and training.

### Environment & Leisure Committee:

- Ongoing provision has been made to manage and maintain public open spaces, sports facilities, play areas, the cemetery and All Saints churchyard;

- Capital provision for projects including refurbishment of Orchard Close pavilion, 5 additional community defibrillators, and additional outdoor fitness equipment.

### Community Services Committee:

- Provision for 3 family days out, Summer Holiday club, for the Youth Pop Up Cafe, for town centre toilet cleaning, for Christmas lights, Council communications and a community grant scheme;
- Continued provision of community events;
- Local retailer support (Shop Local Campaign and town centre events);
- Improved community safety and reduced fear of crime.

### Planning Committee:

- Professional support to guide the Council in relation to the planning developments;
- Completion of the Neighbourhood Plan



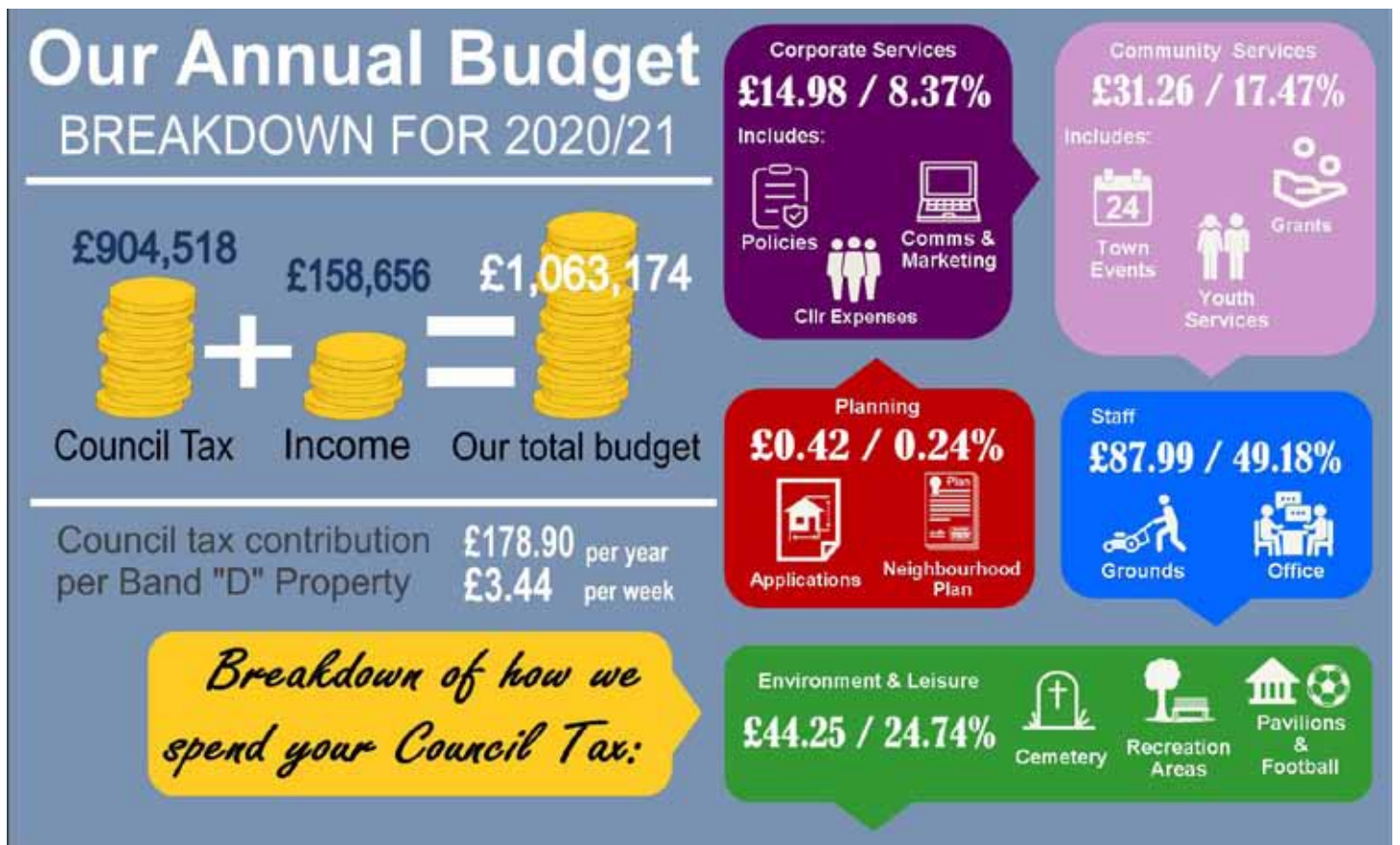
**Houghton Regis Town Council**

**Responsible for:**

- Town Mayors Christmas Cards • Consultee for planning • Local elections • Civic & Mayoral events • Recreation grounds
- Dog Kennel Down & former railway line
- Recreation Play Areas & Sports Facilities (including multi use games area & skate park) • Football pitches • Bowls • Burial Grounds (Houghton Regis Cemetery, All Saints churchyard) • Noticeboards, Seats, Litter bins, Dog bins • Community events (Inc. Carnival, Pride of Houghton Awards, Fireworks, Santa's Grotto) • Fair visits, Circus visits • Social Media & Website
- Town Crier Newsletter • Town Guide
- Town Centre Public Toilets • Community Grants Scheme • Community Services
- Community Safety

**Tel: 01582 708 540**  
**Email: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)**

For further details on the budget, please contact the Town Clerk on (01582) 708540 or by e-mail on [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)



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# Houghton Regis Cemetery & Garden of Remembrance

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The Town Council has been honoured to have been able to offer residents of the Town a tranquil cemetery in which to inter loved ones and to visit them in due course. It is acknowledged that the Cemetery is a valued facility within the town and the Council are committed to ensuring this continues.

Inevitably as time has progressed the Cemetery has become increasingly occupied. In planning for the future the Town Council has sought to secure a new cemetery site through emerging planning applications and through investigations into existing areas of green open space to see if they could be converted. It was with deep regret that the Council were not successful in securing a new cemetery site within the

plans for Linmere (HRN1) and HRN2 and although hope remains that other land in proximity to these developments may come forward in due course, it cannot be guaranteed. Residents can be assured that the Council will continue to monitor and explore options as they arise in future years.

However, to meet the challenge of providing burial options within the confines of the existing cemetery the Council is pleased to announce that the new Garden of Remembrance has been laid out. As the spring comes around the Garden will flourish as the plants and trees grow. Loved ones can be laid to rest in memorial vaults with a choice of granite stone and headstone. There is also

a beautiful leaf memorial feature on which families can display a commemorative plaque.

It is with deep and genuine regret that the Council had to come to the difficult decision to cease full body burials once the existing body burial space has been completed. Whilst it is acknowledged that this may present a great disappointment to some as personal burial choices may not be able to be met within a person's home town, the Council is confident that the high quality environment of the Garden of Remembrance will provide an exceptionally beautiful and tranquil space for many years to come.

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## The Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

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**It has been a long road to get to this point, but we are almost ready now to bring the plan out for its statutory consultation!**

In recent weeks we have had some informal talks with Central Bedfordshire Council, who have given us their initial thoughts. This has been very much appreciated and has led to a few changes, particularly to one section of the plan. The advantage of doing this now is that it is a much simpler process than responding to a formal comment received during the consultation and should result in a smoother formal consultation process with the Council.

The consultation will be a minimum six-week period when various interested bodies, such as other local town councils, Central Bedfordshire Council, and environmental

groups, along with all Houghton Regis residents get to look over and comment on the draft plan. Following on from the consultation, the steering group will take that feedback and either make changes to the draft plan or document why no change was made, and then the revised plan will go to an outside expert for one more looking at before it will be put on a referendum for residents to vote on.

As of the time of writing, we are not sure of the exact dates of the consultation, but we are looking at May-July as the most likely window. For residents of Houghton Regis, the consultation will consist of an online questionnaire and several public drop-in meetings. Comments will also be welcome by mail or email. Details of all this, along with a summary of the actual proposals in the plan, will be sent in a flier to every

household in the town and there will be an active advertising campaign in various media, so everyone should have a chance to look at and comment on the plan.

The plan document is quite long, but we do hope residents will look at those parts that particularly affect them and at the summary of the proposals. We believe that this is a good plan that will help us, the people of Houghton Regis, have a strong voice in the future of our town, something many have been lamenting for a long time that we have not had.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the consultation events and hope you will all turn out to vote when the referendum comes.

**David Gibbons,**  
Chair, Houghton Regis  
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

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### Follow us

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You can use the following platforms to Follow, and keep in touch with Houghton Regis Town Council.



[www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)



@HRCouncil1



[Houghton Regis Town Council](https://www.facebook.com/HoughtonRegisTownCouncil)

## Spring/Summer Events 2020

### Easter Egg Hunt

4th April 2020

Bedford Square Shopping Centre

9am - 12noon

Children up to age of 12 years old.

### VE Day

8th May 2020

Bedford Square Community Centre

1pm - 3pm

### Carnival

11th July 2020

The Village Green

9am - 4pm

### Skate Jam

23rd July 2020

Tithe Farm Recreation Skate Park

12noon - 3pm

### Houghton Rocks

5th September 2020

Parkside Recreation Ground

12noon - 6pm

### Pride of Houghton

13th February 2021

Memorial Hall, Houghton Regis

7pm - 10pm

***Don't forget to take a look at our website and Facebook page to see more information about these events.***



Please find below the calendar of meetings for the Town Council from April 2020 to the end of June 2020. All council meetings are open to the public and are held in the Council Offices on Peel Street at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated. The agendas for forthcoming meeting can be found on the notice board outside the offices and on the Town Council website. Copies can also be obtained from the office.

Date	Day	Committee	Time
<b>2019 - 2020</b>			
27th April	Monday	Planning	7.30pm
28th April	Tuesday	Town Partnership	
13th May	Wednesday	Town Council (AGM)	
*18th May	Monday	Planning	
*26th May	Tuesday	Planning	
*1st June	Monday	Environment & Leisure	
*8th June	Monday	Corporate Services	
*15th June	Monday	Town Council	
*15th June	Monday	New Office Provisions Sub-Committee	6pm
*15th June	Monday	Planning	

\*subject to confirmation. Please see website for updates.

## Need Some Grant Funding?

**Are you part of a local group or organisation? Would you benefit from some additional funding. If so the Town Council may be able to help.....**

The council have a grant scheme to which local groups and organisations are invited to apply. So whether you have a small project in mind or are raising funds for something more substantial and need a bit more cash, why not look at the grants scheme and decide if the town council can be of help. Applications for funding need to be received by early October to be considered at the meeting in Oct/Nov 2020. Follow this link for more details..... <https://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/community-grants-scheme>

# Houghton Regis: Our 2020 Vision

From 2016 the town council has been working hard to fulfil its Vision. As this Vision comes to an end, we wanted to let you know how we have done. However the list is long, so here is the highlights only, we have...

- Helped to develop a stronger local economy which promotes local businesses through developing a Neighbourhood Plan, promoting the town centre and its retail offer, working with partners on town centre issues and through looking after local historic gems.
- Faced the challenges and maximised the opportunities of growth through further developing relationships with stakeholders, providing information and advice and looking for a new cemetery.
- Developed a safer town with a reduced fear of crime through a number of anti-crime and anti-social behaviour projects including enviro-crime reporting, street cleaning, improved parking and speed controls, more CCTV, and the emerging bulk waste removal project.
- Developed a more active, engaged and inclusive community through enhanced play equipment, outdoor exercise equipment, skate park improvements, bigger and better community events including the new Houghton Rocks and Fireworks display, youth events and opportunities, and a wide-reaching community grants scheme. We are also progressing a very exciting project to create a sporting hub with an all-weather pitch at Tithe Farm recreation ground.
- Built a strong, efficient and proactive Town Council through a process of reviewing and adapting structures and systems to ensure fitness for purpose and effective ways of working, maintaining our offices whilst searching for a longer term solution, developing relationships with local key partners and stakeholders and offering local apprentice opportunities.

More detail can be found on our website:-  
<http://bit.ly/3cNzEvV>

## Our Vision: Our Town (2020-2024)

Since the election in May 2019 the council has worked on developing its corporate plan for the next 4 years until March 2024; We have been delighted with the support from the community consultation for the Aspirations and Objectives listed. Here is what we are looking to achieve:

### Our Aspirations

To develop and enhance **partnerships** between HRTC, stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents  
To effectively and proactively **represent** our community  
To positively promote the town  
To develop a new **cemetery**  
To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

### Our Objectives

#### Objective 1:

**Grow your own:** - support HHP kitchen garden, support appropriate management of the Woodside Link Community Orchard  
Establish allotments within new housing developments, encourage healthy eating and food awareness,  
To increase edible planting  
Enhance biodiversity and support wildlife

#### Objective 2:

**A Greener Cleaner Houghton Regis:** - reduce the use of paper by the council, increase recycling by the council, encourage sustainable transport including use of public transport, walking and cycling, provide outdoor fitness equipment in parks and open spaces

#### Objective 3:

**A safe and vibrant town:-** 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

#### Objective 4:

**Our community:-** create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion, enhance existing facilities to enable improved community use and accessibility, provide activities for young people, families and older people, help to protect and preserve historic gems, provide high 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, support HHP to seek to develop the site to its full potential, complete the extension of the existing cemetery to provide a beautiful and tranquil place of rest for future generations

Over the next couple of months or so we will be looking at how we are going to achieve this Vision. Please use our website and social media pages to see updates on progress and to see how you can become involved.

**Together let's make Houghton Regis an even better place to live, work and play.**