

THE MAGAZINE OF HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Autumn/Winter 2024 - ISSUE 73

TOWN CRIER



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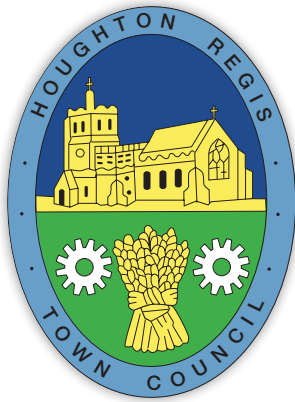
Delivered to all properties in Houghton Regis

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Included in this edition:
Houghton Regis in Bloom
Pride of Houghton Awards 2024
Review of 2024 Events
and much more

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

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

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Cllr Edward Costello	edward.costello@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr David Jones	david.jones@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
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Cllr Jimmy Carroll	jimmy.carroll@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
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Cllr Debbie Taylor	debbie.taylor@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Elaine Cooper	elaine.cooper@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

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Cllr Tracey McMahon	tracey.mcmahon@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr William Henderson	william.henderson@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Abby Slough	abby.slough@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
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Cllr Tracey McMahon	tracey.mcmahon@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Houghton Regis West

Cllr Yvonne Farrell	yvonne.farrell@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
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Mayoral News!

Hello! I'd love to take a moment to introduce myself. I'm Elaine Cooper, a Councillor for Parkside, and since May 2024, I've had the honor of serving as Mayor of Houghton Regis until May 2025. I'm incredibly proud to represent our wonderful town!

I am a mother of 4 (grown up) children. I have lived in Houghton Regis for over 20 years and I want to say, I absolutely love living here.



Prior to moving to Houghton Regis, I lived in London, where for years I volunteered, as a helper, initially, with Down Syndrome children and then also adults. I then went on to be a live-in-carer for three adults, with learning difficulties, sight and physical disabilities. I lived with them for five years, helping them with their everyday duties, travel and ultimately, independence.

When I moved to Houghton Regis, I became a Legal Consultant but then went on to be a carer for elderly people. I retired about eight years ago but felt, there were still things I could offer to the community.

As Mayor, I have two charities, that are close to my heart. The first one is, The Keech Hospice Care, which I visited earlier this year and the only way I can put it, is I was blown away by the work they do and the facilities they have, in order to make, the adults and children they care for, who are approaching their end of life, as easy and comfortable as possible and it's sad to say, that they rely heavily on charitable donations. My second charity is for, The Down Syndrome Association. On the 9th February, 2004, whilst I was viewing the house I live in now, my Daughter,

who lives in America gave birth to a down syndrome little girl. My granddaughter Kaya, is now 20 years old and she is wonderful.



I have only been Mayor for four months but already, we have raised a lot of money for the two charities and will continue to do so, until next May, when both charities will be presented with a cheque.

Houghton Regis is a great place to live, I know, we have our problems, like everywhere else in the Country but I really love living here and we have so much to look forward to. The new 3G pitches when they are up and running and as a football fan (Tottenham Hotspurs for my sins), I for one can't wait. We are also eagerly awaiting the opening of the new leisure centre. We recently, made our debut, into the Anglia in Bloom competition, in which we did really well. The results are on the website. Next year will be even better and I can't wait to see, how our Town is going to look.



I have already met many residents and I am looking forward to meeting many more and I hope, that I will do 'Our Town' proud.

Do you have an event that you would like to invite the Town Mayor to attend?

If so, please contact Sarah Gelsthorp, Civic and Events Manager on 01582 708 523 or email mayor@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Town Mayor's Christmas Card

Each year, the Town Mayor sends a Christmas card to residents aged 65 and over, which includes a small gift voucher.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact us:

Phone: **01582 708 540**

Email: mayor@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk



Houghton Regis in Bloom: A Blooming Success in 2024!



If you read our article in the Summer/Spring edition of the Town Crier, you may recall that we embarked on our inaugural entry into the esteemed regional 'Anglia in Bloom' campaign for 2024. This campaign is part of the RHS (Royal Horticultural Society's) prestigious Britain in Bloom competition, and we couldn't be prouder to share the wonderful news of our accomplishments.

The Houghton Regis in Bloom team worked tirelessly to bring out the best in our town, ensuring that every corner blossomed with life, color, and creativity. From local gardens to public green spaces, the whole community came together in a joint effort to showcase Houghton Regis in its full floral glory. "We're so proud of how the town looked on judging day," said one of the team members. The display of natural beauty and thoughtful arrangements truly reflected the spirit of Houghton Regis, and it paid off in spectacular fashion.



In September, the Houghton Regis in Bloom team attended the Anglia in Bloom awards event in Thetford, where they were thrilled to announce their amazing achievements at the ceremony. The hard work and dedication of all the volunteers, local businesses, and residents shone through, leading to some fantastic results in our first year of competition.

Large Town – Houghton Regis (Silver-Gilt)
 Historic Parks and Gardens – [Houghton Hall Park](#) (Gold and Overall winner)
 Cemeteries – Houghton Regis Cemetery (Award of Merit)
 Churchyard – [All Saints - Houghton Regis Parish Church](#) (Silver award)
 Public Park – The Village Green (Silver award)
 Public Park – Parkside Recreation Ground (Silver-Gilt)
 Public Park – [Linnere Park](#) (Silver award)
 Nursing/Care Home – [All Saints View Assisted Living](#) (Silver-Gilt)
 Nature Conservation Area – Windsor Drive (Award of Merit)
 Nature Conservation Area – Dog Kennel Down (Award of Merit)
 Nature Conservation Area – Houghton Brook (Award of Merit)



as we continue our journey in the Britain in Bloom competition, proudly representing Houghton Regis and celebrating the power of community through the beauty of nature.

Stay tuned for more updates in future editions of the Town Crier

[Follow our Houghton Regis in Bloom Facebook Page.](#)

Pride of Houghton Awards 2024



Earlier this year, it was our great pleasure to host the Pride of Houghton Awards once again to celebrate the work, spirit, and achievements within our local community. The award nominees, local businesses, and the Mayor were among the distinguished guests who attended the event, held at Houghton Regis Memorial Hall on a sunny evening in May.

We are proud to announce that £495 was raised from a raffle and flower auction conducted by the Town Mayor for 2023-2024, Councillor Jimmy Carroll, in support of the 1st/3rd Houghton Regis Scouts.

The following awards were presented:

- Individual Award Winner – Emma Kearey
- Individual Award 'Highly Commended 1' – Kate Bourne
- Individual Award 'Highly Commended 2' – Ken Wattingham
- Care Home Worker – Tracy Davidson
- Young Person – Shianne Jones
- Carer Award – Gillian Doyle
- Local Group Award Winner – The Friends of Houghton Hall Park
- Local Group 'Highly Commended 1' – 1st/3rd Houghton Regis Scout Group
- Local Group 'Highly Commended 2' – Team SP Signposts
- Local Business / Organisation – Louis Probert of Proberts Roofing
- Local Business / Organisation 'Highly Commended' – Signposts, Houghton

- Community Facilitator / Local Hero Winner - Steve Ball
- Community Facilitator / Local Hero 'Highly Commended' - Sally Gray
- Lifetime Achievement Award 'Winner' – Christine Harris
- Mayor's Choice Award – Time2Connect
- Special Awards – Beverly Lennox and Gaynor Taylor

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the following sponsors in making this year's Pride of Houghton such a big success: Central Bedfordshire College, Spicer and Co Chartered Accountants, the Safer Luton Partnership, and Houghton Regis Memorial Hall. Thank you to the volunteers from 'The Friends of Houghton Hall Park' for the table arrangements, too.

Photos by Joanna Cross Photography



Events

Since the Spring / Summer Town Crier, the Town Council has hosted a whole range of free or low-cost activities for the local community!

The events have included the Easter Egg Hunt, a Beacon Lighton for D-Day 80, Houghton Regis Carnival, The Skate Jam Event, Open Air Film Screenings, four family fun days, a coach trip, and Houghton Rocks!

There has been plenty of activities with the Youth Team, which included a sailing residential trip for the young people, (which gave them an accredited award in Practical Sailing), open access youth work i.e. the Pop Up Café, sessions at the Sandringham Hub and Houghton Regis Baptist Church, and Houghton Regis Youth Council, Boxing Sessions and Bike and Scooter Coaching. There was also a visit from the team from Sporting



Aid who put on lots of sporting activities, including sessions for the summer, alongside the Youth Workers.

The Later Living Social Group has delivered 'Tea and Treats' at All Saints View every month to retired residents, and 2 coach trips. Towards the end of the year, the group are looking forward to a trip to the pantomime in December, and a Christmas meal.

Moving forwards for the remainder of 2024, the Town Council still has plenty of events to look forward to, such as the Fireworks Display (3rd November 2024), Crafty November event (date TBC), Christmas Carol Service (7th December) and Santa's Grotto (14th December). There will also be the annual service for Remembrance Sunday on 10th November 2024 at All Saints Church (with the act of Remembrance afterwards at the Memorial Stone) and the Armistice Day Act of Remembrance at the Memorial Stone at 10.40am on Monday 11th November.

We are excited to put on these special events for the community and look forward to seeing you there. Please check out the Town Council's website and social media pages to learn more.



Committee Update

Town Council

Following the adoption of the Corporate Plan, Houghton Regis Town Council (HRTC) has been exploring ways to improve the town services and facilities for its residents. As part of this HRTC is looking to work with Central Bedfordshire Council to create more opportunities for local businesses, jobs, and training.

Earlier this year, HRTC took part in a Corporate Peer Challenge Review to explore ways of operating more effectively. Councillors, local businesses, and community groups came together to feedback on their perceptions of the council. The resulting report highlighted the good work that the council currently does along with some useful pointers for going forwards. HRTC has produced an action plan to take these pointers forwards. A copy of the Report and of the Action plan can be found via our website under Council Plans, Policies and Strategies

In April, HRTC launched a new, user-friendly website, designed to make it

easier for everyone to find information about local events and services. Work was also carried out on a town branding project to create a sense of civic pride and ownership. Look out for this new logo.

Cllr Elaine Cooper was welcomed as the new Town Mayor in May. Councillors and residents thanked Cllr Jimmy Carroll for his work and dedication during his time as mayor and looked forward to working with Cllr Cooper.

Council meetings are held throughout the year and residents are welcome to participate at these in person or virtually. A calendar of meetings can be found via our website under Council Committees, Meetings & Minutes.

The Houghton Regis Partnership

HRTC and Central Bedfordshire Council continue to consider ways in which the Partnership can be even more effective. The aim of the Partnership Committee is to improve services and facilities across Houghton Regis, with immediate priority being given to boosting health, wellbeing, and education.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Committee has been working on issues relating to staffing, policies, finances and investment in order to ensure the smooth running of HRTC.

The Committee regularly reviews its approach to its practices to ensure HRTC meets the needs of changing employment and local government legalisation.

Planning

Since February this year, over 45 applications have been considered. The Neighbourhood Plan, following a successful referendum, has been officially adopted, this plan will guide future development decisions in the town. In its decision-making process, the Committee will also take into account the objectives outlined in the Corporate Strategy, aiming to enhance the community for all residents.

The Committee has maintained its role in providing feedback to Central Bedfordshire Council on local matters, including parking and transportation issues.

Houghton Regis Unveils New Town Logo Celebrating Heritage and Charm

Houghton Regis, a town with a rich history and semi-rural charm, has proudly revealed its new town logo, blending its royal heritage with its natural beauty. This fresh emblem captures the essence of a community that values tradition and progress.

Honouring Royal Roots - Dating back to the Domesday Book of 1086, Houghton Regis' historical ties to the crown are central to its identity. The "Regis" in its name reflects its royal connections, and the new logo subtly acknowledges this with regal elements, symbolising the town's noble past.

Celebrating Rural Identity - The logo also embraces the town's semi-rural character, nodding to its green spaces, countryside views, and local wildlife. Houghton Regis has a long-balanced development while preserving its natural landscape, and the logo reflects this harmony. The incorporation of nature-inspired details, such as leaves or local plants, highlights the town's commitment to safeguarding its environment while continuing to grow.

A Community Symbol - At its heart, the new logo represents the welcoming, close-knit community of Houghton Regis. It captures the spirit of a town that offers a peaceful rural lifestyle while remaining vibrant and connected. The emblem reflects residents' pride in living here, where history and progress coexist.



As Houghton Regis looks to the future, this new logo proudly celebrates its royal past, rural beauty, and thriving community. It's a visual reminder of everything the town holds dear.



The Town Mayor's
Christmas Carol Service
07 December 2024

Town Mayor
Cllr Elaine Cooper

ALL WELCOME

Vicar
Fr Diego Galanzino

Join us from 5:00 PM
All Saints' Parish Church
Houghton Regis

www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk



Christmas Tree LIGHTING CEREMONY

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER 6PM
FOLLOWING THE CAROL SERVICE

BEDFORD SQUARE. HOUGHTON REGIS

Lets countdown together!

www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk



Please find below the calendar of meetings for the Town Council from October 2024 to the 24th February 2025. All council meetings are at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated and are open to the public. Members of the public may wish to attend the meeting remotely, if so links can be found via each agenda. Members of the public may also attend in person if they wish.

Date	Day	Committee	Time
2024			
7th Oct	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
14th Oct	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
21st Oct	Monday	Community Services (Grants)	7.00pm
22nd Oct	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
28th Oct	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
4th Nov	Monday	Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee	7.00pm
11th Nov	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
18th Nov	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
25th Nov	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee	7.00pm
26th Nov	Monday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee	7.00pm
2nd dec	Monday	Corporate Services	7.00pm
9th Dec	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
16th Dec	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
2025			
6th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
13th Jan	Monday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
20th Jan	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
27th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
28th Jan	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
3rd Feb	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee	7.00pm
4th Feb	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee	7.00pm
10th Feb	Monday	Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee	7.00pm
17th Feb	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
24 Feb	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm





Santa is coming back to Town!

Santa's Sleigh is Coming to Town!

The magic of Christmas is on its way! Santa will be visiting once again, spreading joy and festive cheer!

Keep an eye on our social media for updates on when and where to catch Santa's sleigh in your neighborhood! Don't miss out on the chance to see Santa and his helpers before Christmas!

Follow us on Facebook for the latest updates!

Houghton Regis Town Council
Tel: 01582 708540 | info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

[f](#) [i](#) [x](#) [v](#)



From Santa's Office

To All the Children of Houghton Regis,

Come visit Santa....

I've heard you've all been very good this year, so with the help of Houghton Regis Town Council, I have something extra special planned—a magical spot right in the heart of the town where I can see all of you together!

I'm preparing your surprise gift's for every child with the elves! You might hear my sleigh when I arrive! I look forward to seeing you all!

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2024

Location TBC

(Please keep at eye on the Town Council Social Media channel for further details)

Don't forget to leave some cookies and milk for us on Christmas Eve We love them!

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Santa Claus

www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

[f](#) [i](#) [x](#) [v](#)

Pride of Houghton Awards 2025

I would like to nominate:

For: (please tick appropriate box)

Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young Person (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carer (The extra mile award)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Facilitator/Local Hero	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Business/organisation in Houghton Regis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care Home Workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lifetime achievement/special award	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Name:

Your contact number:

Your address:

Do you know any individual or groups of people, young or old, who deserve recognition for their efforts, skills, perseverance or commitment? This is their chance to get the recognition that they deserve.

Use the form below to forward your nominations to the Town Council Office, Peel Street, Houghton Regis by **5pm on 28th February 2025**.

Nominees must be residents of Houghton Regis and nominated for their work within the town. Nominations can also be received from people outside the town and for immediate family, (nominations cannot be made for Town Council Staff, Town or Central Bedfordshire Councillors) Previous winners can be considered again.

Name of your nominee:

Nominee address:

Why do they deserve an award? (use extra sheets of paper if required and affix to this form)