

THE MAGAZINE OF HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Autumn/Winter 2025 - ISSUE 75

TOWN CRIER



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Web: www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

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Included in this edition:

Update from our MP Alex Mayer

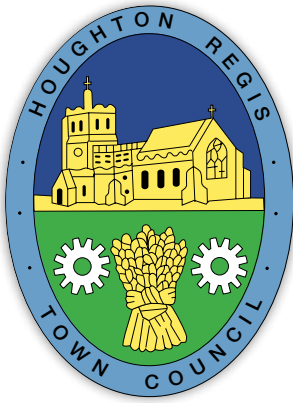
Houghton Regis Later Living Social Group

Review of the year's events

Houghton Regis Bowls Club 30th anniversary

And Much More

Welcome to your Autumn / Winter edition of the Town Crier – it's jam packed with news from the council and details of all the FREE events taking place in and around Houghton Regis.



Houghton Regis Town Council Contact Details

Houghton Regis Town Council

Peel Street, Houghton Regis

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Telephone: 01582 708540

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[@HoughtonRegisTC](https://www.instagram.com/HoughtonRegisTC)

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

HRTC Senior Officers:

Clare Evans	
Town Clerk	01582 708 542
Debbie Marsh	
Head of Corporate Services	01582 708 544
Ian Haynes	
Head of Environment & Community Services	01582 708 543
Louise Senior	
Head of Democratic Services	01582 708 540

HRTC Councillor Contact Details:

Houghton Hall Ward

Cllr Emma Billington	emma.billington@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Edward Costello	edward.costello@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr David Jones	david.jones@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Yvonne Farrell	yvonne.farrell@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Carole Rollins	carole.rollins@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Parkside Ward

Cllr Jimmy Carroll	jimmy.carroll@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Pam Burgess	pam.burgess@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Debbie Taylor	debbie.taylor@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
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Tithe Farm Ward

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
Cllr Chris Slough	chris.slough@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk
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Cllr Chloe Alderman	chloe.alderman@centralbedfordshire.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
Cllr Susan Goodchild	susan.goodchild@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

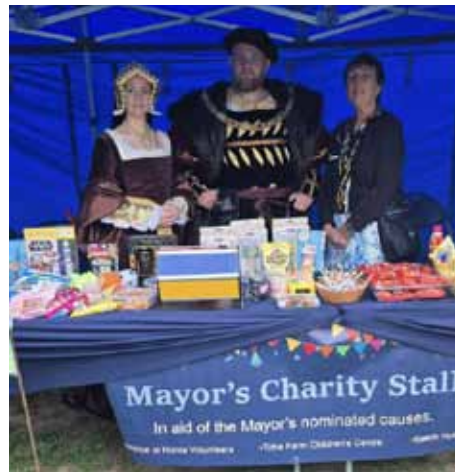
Mayoral News!

Dear Residents,

I am Michelle Herber, Councillor for Tithe Farm Ward since May 2023. Although I represent Tithe Farm, I work with residents across our town who contact me with questions or concerns. In May, I was truly honoured to be elected as Town Mayor—a privilege I never expected when I first stood for election. I am proud to represent our beautiful town and am committed to working hard on your behalf, both locally and across counties.

As Mayor, I have chosen to support three charities close to my heart:

- Hospice at Home Volunteers
- Houghton Regis Children's Centre
- Keech Hospice. These organisations have helped my family and many others during difficult times. The Children's Centre assists families facing trauma and domestic violence. Hospice at Home Volunteers provide essential services that families often cannot access elsewhere. Keech Hospice offers compassionate end-of-life care for both adults and children, making tough times more manageable.



I've lived in Houghton Regis for over 43 years, raising my three children here. Since becoming Mayor, I've raised significant funds through events and charity stalls at HRTC and Houghton Hall Park. From tombolas and cupcakes to sweets and popcorn, every effort has been dedicated to supporting these vital charities.

Our town's events have been remarkably well attended, demonstrating the strong community spirit we cherish. I was proud to join our grounds team at the Green Flag Awards, where Houghton Regis received accolades for:

- The Village Green
- Houghton Hall Park
- Windsor Drive Recreation Ground.

- We also celebrated success at the Anglia in Bloom Awards, winning:
- 4 Gold awards
- 3 Silver Gift awards
- 1 Silver award

Overall, Joint Category Winner for best public park for The Village Green

It was our second time entering, and we earned a Silver Gift for the town—a testament to the dedication of our grounds team and the splendour of our floral displays, which residents have praised.

Excitingly, the Town Council has unanimously approved the development of a new multifunctional community hub, currently called Project H (our current working title). This venue will serve residents, young people, and local partners, providing a vibrant space for activities, services, and community cohesion.

I also wish to thank Paul Geary, Chairman of the IBC Employee Charity, for his generous donation to my Mayor's Appeal. As a former Vauxhall employee of 23 years, I understand how meaningful these contributions are. I am now determined to double this donation to further support my chosen charities.

Thank you to everyone who has attended events, supported my fundraising efforts, and visited my charity stalls. Your involvement truly makes a difference.

Warm regards,
Michelle Herber
Mayor of Houghton Regis





Update from Alex Mayer MP

As autumn settles in, I'm delighted to share my latest update on the changes happening locally, and what I have been doing on your behalf in Parliament.

Neighbourhood Policing: Every neighbourhood now has a named officer. This comes as part of the Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee which hopes to return more visible policing to communities. Meanwhile, I'm continuing to back the Crime and Policing Bill as it makes its way through Parliament. Of particular local interest are the new powers to immediately seize dangerous off-road bikes and tackle antisocial behaviour, issues I continue to receive a lot of emails about. The Police and Crime Commissioner has welcomed these plans.

Big boost for the 42: The improved 42 bus stopping off on the High Street, Morrisons, All Saints Church and Roslyn Way is already making life easier, especially for students at Bedford College and Central Bedfordshire College travelling between Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Bedford. I also welcome the £13 million boost in local transport across Central Bedfordshire – a fourfold increase in funding. I look forward to the Council setting

out detailed plans to make the most of this Labour Government investment.

Support for families: Free childcare hours doubled from the start of the autumn term rising to 30 hours a week, helping over 2,000 local families. There is also targeted investment going into schools, including All Saints Academy, to upgrade buildings and provide tailored support. I'll soon vote for new laws to reduce the costs of school uniform by next September by capping how many branded items a school can require. I have also repeatedly pressed the Council to speed up the delivery of the much-needed new primary school in Bidwell West.

Poor mobile signal? Newer communities often face frustrating gaps in mobile coverage. I'm in discussions with mobile operators about their plans to fix black spots on new-build estates.

High Streets: There is a chance to transform long-term empty shops on Houghton Regis High Street. New government laws allow the council to insist that a shop that's been empty for 365 days in a 24-month period must be entered into a "rental auction" where businesses can bid for the lease. Now for the first time Central Beds council plan to use these powers.

As ever, if you have ideas you think I should take forward or issues I can help with, please get in touch: alex.mayer.mp@parliament.uk or 01525 301390.

LLSG – Houghton Regis Later Living Social Group

The Houghton Regis Later Living Social Group (LLSG) was established especially for retired residents of Houghton Regis, providing a friendly and welcoming space for people to come together, socialise, and enjoy shared activities. The group meets twice a month, on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday, from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm at All Saints View, Sapphire Place, Houghton Regis, Dunstable (LU5 5LP).

Each session offers a relaxed and cheerful environment where members can enjoy tea, coffee, and delicious treats while catching up with friends or making new ones. The group regularly invites guest speakers and local organisations to give talks, demonstrations, and interactive activities, ensuring that there's always something interesting to learn or experience.

Members also look forward to special annual events, including trips to Southend, visits to the pantomime, and other exciting outings that make life more fun and memorable. Whether it's participating in games, creative workshops, or simply enjoying good conversation, there's something for everyone.

The Later Living Social Group is a wonderful way to stay connected, active, and engaged in the community. It's not just a club—it's a place where friendships flourish, laughter is shared, and retired residents of Houghton Regis can enjoy meaningful, social, and enjoyable experiences every month.

ALL RETIRED RESIDENTS WELCOME

Time for Tea & a Treat

Enjoy a change of scenery,
FREE tea & a treat along with conversation and laughter.

1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month
10:30am - 12pm

7th & 21st October 2025
4th & 18th November 2025

All Saints View (entrance left of Costa Coffee)
Sapphire Place,
Houghton Regis, LU5 5LP

Make new friends!

For more information please contact:
Klara Justin - Houghton Regis Town Council
01582 708 540

Event Review – Town Crier Autumn/Winter Issue 2025

Since our last edition of the Town Crier, Houghton Regis has been buzzing with activity! We've had the pleasure of hosting a huge variety of free events for residents of all ages, and we hope you've been able to enjoy some of them with family, friends, and neighbours.

The Spring and Summer months have been particularly lively, offering something for everyone in our community. Houghton Hall Park has once again proved itself to be the heart of many of our celebrations, with highlights such as the much-loved Easter Egg Hunt, our exciting Dinosaur Days, the always popular Annual Dog Show, open-air cinema and theatre performances under the stars, the beautiful Classics in the Park concert, and—new for this year—our very first Heritage Day, which gave us all the chance to celebrate the town's history together.

Beyond the park, the town centre and other venues have also been alive with activity. We celebrated community pride at the Pride of Houghton Awards,



filled skateboarding at Skate Jam to bouncing inflatables, a hands-on mobile farm, thrilling games of laser tag, spellbinding magic shows, and even a chance to meet Birds of Prey up close—it was a summer to remember. The programme ended on a high note with a sold-out family trip to Southend, which was a brilliant day enjoyed by all who came along.



of Remembrance (11th November), followed by the magical Christmas Lights Switch On (6th December) and Santa's Grotto at Houghton Hall Park (13th December).

We can't wait to see you at one—or hopefully many—of these events. They're a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community, make



delighted children with circus skills during half term, danced and paraded at Carnival, and rocked out with live music and entertainment at Houghton Rocks.

For our younger residents, the Summer holidays brought an incredible line-up of activities through our Summer of Fun programme. From adrenaline-

But 2025 still has plenty more in store! As the evenings draw in, we'll be getting ready for autumn and winter festivities. Coming soon are the spooky Halloween Trail at Houghton Hall Park (31st October), the spectacular Fireworks Display at Thorn Park (1st November), the moving Remembrance Day Parade and Service (9th November) and Armistice Day Act



memories, and celebrate everything that makes Houghton Regis such a special place to live.

For full details and updates, keep an eye on our social media pages, check the events calendar on our website, or pop into our office—we're always happy to help.

Looking for a Safe and Fun Place for Your Young People?

Houghton Regis offers engaging youth group sessions every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 5:00pm to 7:00pm, providing a safe, supportive, and fun environment where young people can learn, play, and make friends.

Weekly Sessions:

- **Mondays – Village Green Pavilion:**
Our Pop-Up Café session gives young people the chance to learn simple cooking recipes, develop practical kitchen skills, and enjoy creating tasty treats in a friendly setting.
- **Tuesdays – Houghton Hall Park:**
An open-access session packed with games, sports, and activities that cater to all interests – perfect for young people to socialise, be active, and have fun.
- **Thursdays – Tithe Farm Pavilion:**
Access the brand-new 3G football pitch for energetic play or unwind in our PlayStation area. It's all about friendly competition, teamwork, and having a great time.

Extra Activities:

Throughout the year, we also organise trips, workshops, and special events – from sports tournaments to creative projects – giving young people opportunities to try new experiences, build confidence, and make lasting memories.

Why Parents Choose Our Youth Groups:

- A safe, supervised environment for young people
- Opportunities to learn new skills and build confidence
- Fun, structured activities that encourage teamwork and creativity
- A chance for young people to make friends and feel part of the community

Give your young people the chance to grow, play, and connect with others – Houghton Regis youth sessions are the perfect place for them to spend their evenings safely and positively.



YOUTH CLUB
EVERYONE WELCOME
Ages 12 - 18 years
5pm - 7pm
EVERY TUESDAY
Houghton Hall Park, Park Road North,
Houghton Regis, LU5 5FU
EVERY THURSDAY
Tithe Farm Recreation
Ground, Tithe Farm
Road, Houghton
Regis, LU5 5JF

FUN, FRIENDS,
AND ADVENTURE!
JOIN THE CLUB!

Houghton Regis Town Council
01582 708540 | www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk



Pop-up Café
Village Green Pavilion
5pm - 7pm
2025
MONDAYS

Looking for a safe, engaging activity for your young person? Our Pop-Up Café gives young people the chance to:

- Learn simple cooking skills and practical kitchen techniques
- Develop confidence and independence
- Socialise and make new friends in a supportive environment

Open to the ages of 12-18?

JOIN US

Houghton Regis Town Council | 01582 708540



MAYROL CHRISTMAS CARD LIST

Every Christmas, the Town Mayor sprinkles joy across our community by sending out special Christmas cards to residents **over the age of 65!**

Not only do you get a heartfelt card, but also a small gift voucher tucked inside!

If you would like to be included on this list, please contact us via email: Mayor@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk or call **01582 708540**

Christmas reception opening hours:

Tues 23rd Dec	9am-4pm (Normal hours)
Wed 24th Dec	9am – 1pm
Thurs 25th Dec	CLOSED
Fri 26th Dec	CLOSED
Mon 29th Dec	RECEPTION CLOSED*
Tues 30th Dec	RECEPTION CLOSED*
Wed 31st Dec	RECEPTION CLOSED*
Thurs 1st Jan 26	CLOSED

Office hours resume Fri 2nd Jan 2026

* During these times, the Council can be contacted on: **01582 708540** or by email info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Santa's Grotto

Get ready to step into a winter wonderland at Houghton Hall Park this Christmas! The park will be filled with festive cheer as we host our free Santa's Grotto in the beautiful Kitchen Gardens. Families can meet Father Christmas himself and enjoy a truly magical experience surrounded by twinkling lights and Christmas decorations.

One of the highlights of the day will be the chance to meet our live reindeer, bringing a touch of North Pole magic to the park. Children (and adults alike!) will also love a ride on Robbie the Train, adding an extra dash of excitement to this special event.

Visitors can continue the festivities in the Visitor Centre, where there will be Christmas stalls, free festive face painting, and plenty more seasonal surprises to enjoy.

For details on how to book your place, visit the Houghton Hall Park website and keep an eye on social media channels for the latest updates. Come along, soak up the festive atmosphere, and make wonderful Christmas memories at Houghton Hall Park!



Town Council Calendar of Meetings 2025/26

Please find below the calendar of meetings for the Town Council from October 2025 to the 20th May 2026. All council meetings are at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated and are open to the public. Due to ongoing Covid concerns, members of the public who wish to attend the meeting are encouraged to do so remotely. Members of the public may also attend in person and, if doing so, are requested to socially distance as much as possible.

The links for the virtual meetings can be found on our website under each meeting agenda: www.houghtonregis-tc.org.uk

The agendas for the forthcoming meeting can also be found on the notice board outside The Town Council offices.

Date	Day	Committee	Time
2025			
6th October	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
13th Oct	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
20th Oct	Monday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
21st Oct	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
27th Oct	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
3rd Nov	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
10th Nov	Monday	Community Services (Grants)	7.00pm
17th Nov	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
25th Nov	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee	7.00pm
1st Dec	Monday	Corporate Services	7.00pm
8th Dec	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
15th Dec	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
2025			
5th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
12th Jan	Monday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
19th Jan	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
20th Jan	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee	7.00pm
26th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
27th Jan	Monday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
2nd Feb	Monday	Staffing Committee	7.00pm
16th Feb	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
23rd Feb	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
2nd Mar	Monday	Corporate Services	7.00pm
9th Mar	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
16th Mar	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
23rd Mar	Monday	New Cemetery Sub-Committee	7.00pm
24th Mar	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee	7.00pm
30th Mar	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
13th April	Monday	Annual Towns Meeting	7.00pm
20th April	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
21st April	Tuesday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
27th April	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
28th April	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
11th May	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
20th May	Wednesday	Town Council (AGM)	7.00pm

*subject to confirmation. Please see website for updates.

Houghton Regis Bowls Club Celebrates a Remarkable 2025 Season (30th anniversary year)



Houghton Regis Bowls Club is celebrating one of its most successful seasons to date in 2025, with outstanding performances across both the men's and ladies' teams.

The Men's Over 55 Fours team Mark Wilkinson, Martin Dawkins, John Winter, and Duncan Shearer, with Steve Mead as a valuable substitute were crowned County Champions and went on to earn silver medals at the National Bowls Finals in Leamington Spa, proudly representing Bedfordshire on the national stage.

More success followed in the Men's Triples, with Mark Wilkinson, John Winter, and Terry Starkey securing another County Championship title for the club.

In the Ladies' Pairs, Linda Burgess and Toni Chiriaco also emerged as County Champions, adding to the club's impressive tally.

At club level, the Houghton Regis men won the Harmsworth Cup for the third consecutive year, while the ladies claimed victory in the Knockout

Cup, underlining the club's consistent excellence.

Rising talent Owen Harker added to the celebrations as one half of the Under-25 Pairs County Champions, a promising sign for the club's future.

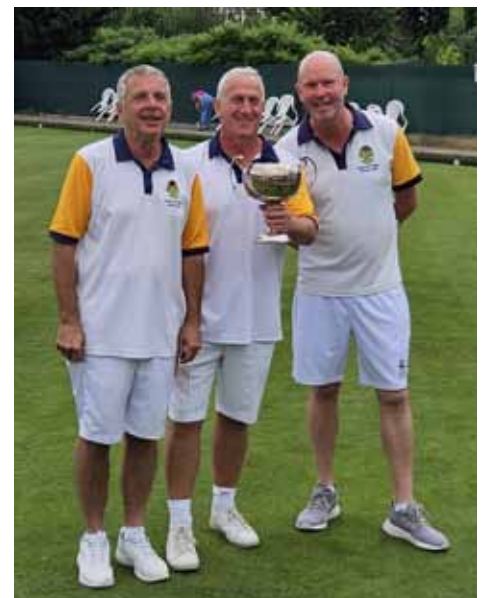
Adding to the individual honours, Chris Dawkins was crowned the Hastings Open Singles Champion, further showcasing the depth of talent at Houghton Regis.

Off the green, the club continues to invest in and improve its facilities, including its green widely regarded as one of the best in the county this season. These ongoing upgrades are part of Houghton Regis's ambition to host top-level competitions such as the Middleton Cup, a prestigious inter-county event featuring some of the highest standards of bowls in the country.

The club is also proud of its continued support for Prostate Cancer UK, a cause championed under the dedicated leadership of Taff Owens. Thanks to his efforts and the generosity of members and the wider community, the club has raised over £20,000 to date for this vital charity.

The playing season runs from April to September, and new members are always welcome. For details about signing-on nights and open days in 2026, visit www.houghtonregisbowlsclub.com and follow us on Facebook to stay up to date with news and events.

With both competitive success and strong community spirit, 2025 has truly been a landmark year for Houghton Regis Bowls Club.



Houghton Regis in Bloom: Celebrating Our Achievements and Looking Ahead



Since our group was established in February 2024, we've:

- Brought people together with a passion for community gardening
- Brightened streets, parks, and green spaces
- Created habitats for wildlife and celebrated our natural heritage
- Built community pride through teamwork and care

No matter the colour of our awards, this has always been about more than medals – it's about what we can achieve together and the difference we can make to Houghton Regis. Thank you to every volunteer, supporter, local group, councillor, resident, and member of the Houghton Regis Town Council grounds team who has contributed so far.

Anglia in Bloom Awards 2025

This year, our team achieved fantastic results:

- Large Town – Houghton Regis: Silver-Gilt
- Historic Parks and Gardens – Houghton Hall Park: Gold
- Cemeteries – Houghton Regis Cemetery: Silver
- Churchyard – All Saints, Houghton Regis Parish Church: Silver-Gilt
- Public Park – The Village Green: Gold (joint winner)
- Public Park – Parkside Recreation Ground: Gold
- Public Park – Linmere Park: Gold
- Nursing/Care Home – All Saints View Assisted Living: Silver-Gilt

We also received nominations for four Special Awards and won one, recognising it as the best of the best. Congratulations to Julie at Houghton Regis Memorial Hall and All Saints View, and to the teams at Houghton Hall Park and The Chiltern School for their award-winning projects.

A huge thank you to all our friends and colleagues who made this possible –

your support has been invaluable.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Even as we celebrate our successes, preparations for next year are already in progress. In a recent meeting with Michael and Cas from Lubbe Lisse, we agreed to create over 400 square metres of bulbs and wildflower mixes – more than 30,000 bulbs. These plantings will improve our town's beauty while supporting wildlife and the local environment.

Next year, our focus will be on boosting horticultural impact, enhancing environmental responsibility, and broadening community participation. We will soon be deciding on the colour scheme for 2026 and welcome your ideas.

Houghton Regis continues to become greener, brighter, and more lively each day, thanks to our wonderful community. We look forward to building on this success in the year to come.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

You can access information online at:
www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Information and advice about all our services is available to help you save time and go online.

01582 708540 | info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Reception Hours:

Main Office Monday-Friday | 9am - 4pm
Telephone Monday-Friday | 9am - 5pm

Most popular pages to visit:

- ☒ Your Council > Councillors & MP
- ☒ Your Community > Events
- ☒ Your Council > Council Committees, Meetings & Minutes

