

# TOWN CRIER



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Delivered to all properties in Houghton Regis



Find us on     



It would be an understatement to say that the year so far has been beyond out of the ordinary, sometimes scary, and difficult for many. Each and every person on our planet has been affected in some way or another, and it's very easy to find ourselves consumed by it all and focusing only on the negatives that surround us; but as I am reminded of all these things, I have been overwhelmed by the way in which we have rallied as a community. The kindness and generosity of so many people has been truly inspiring and humbling, and continues to be so. I thank all of you for this.

Lockdown restrictions have had a massive impact on my Mayoral year so far, and trying to plan for anything has been like juggling with water. I only just managed to squeeze in a Leap Year Coffee Morning before everything suddenly changed. We've been forced to cancel so many of our traditional events which has been devastating for everyone, and raising money for my charities (Shelter and JDRF) has taken a bit of a back seat as we have been focusing more on emergency help by providing aid to the local Foodbank and Women's Aid, with a donation also made to the Royal British Legion.

Finding new and innovative ways to reach out to each other has been challenging for everyone, and by now most of us will have become more tech savvy in our attempts to stay in touch and run our daily lives. We have ran a Stay at Home quiz to help generate donations, held a Virtual Carnival, and I personally held a socially distanced driveway plant sale, on a give what you can honour basis, with donations made digitally to the Town Council. I've participated in a number of online events, including a Murder Mystery evening, and a virtual quiz - which I came second in, despite being the sole member of my team! As restrictions were reduced and our local businesses began to re-open, I visited some of our local shopkeepers who had remained open to thank them for their extra efforts during lockdown, and a few weeks ago I popped along to All Saints Church Open Day for a tour of the renovation works and the fantastic new commemorative footpath with Fr Diego, of course with social distance rules in place.

I need to emphasise though, and with no intention of causing distress or panic, this emergency is not over and we must ALL continue to do our best to keep each other safe. These are uncertain times, and we should be prepared for the possibility that things could change as quickly as they did before. We should ALL be doing our best to prevent a worsening situation, and I expect the majority are. Keep on

keeping an eye out for your elderly and vulnerable friends, relatives, and neighbours.

I also want to reassure everyone that if you are struggling, if you need help with anything, you can contact any of your 13 Town Councillors, 4 Central Bedfordshire Councillors, or the Town Council Offices. All of our contact information is on the Town Council website. If we cannot help personally, we will be able to put you in contact with those that can. Please use us as a resource, it's what we're here for. If you have concerns about criminality in our town, please report incidents to either 101 or 999, or anonymously through the Bedfordshire Police website here: <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report/Report>

On a brighter note, as we move into the colder and darker seasons of autumn and winter, it's good to remember that this too shall pass. We WILL see the spring flowers poking their heads out in a few short months, we WILL be able to get back out into our gardens and parks, and we WILL feel the warmth of sunshine on our faces once again and hear birdsong in the air. We WILL be able to do all of these things if we continue to stick with the guidance: HANDS, FACE, SPACE, and we CAN all start getting back to a semblance of normality in our lives.

Take care of one another, be kind to each other, and stay safe x

## HELPLINES AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT YOU DURING COVID-19

Houghton Regis Mutual Aid (Covid-19) - [www.facebook.com/groups/houghtonregismutualaid](https://www.facebook.com/groups/houghtonregismutualaid)

Houghton Regis Helpers - 07587 004514 or 07708 201112

One Houghton.uk - [www.onehoughton.uk/request-support](http://www.onehoughton.uk/request-support)

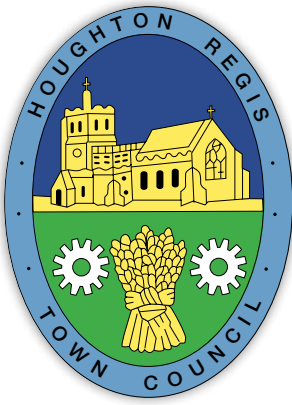
Central Bedfordshire Council - Covid Help - [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/covidhelp](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/covidhelp)

Your Wellbeing Bedfordshire - [www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk](http://www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk)



Your 'Town Criers' are still free, delivered straight to your door, you'll disappoint us for sure, if it stays on the floor!

Printed on Recycled Paper. When you have finished please dispose of me in your recycling bin!



## Houghton Regis Town Council Contact Details

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Email: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)

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[facebook.com/hrtowncouncil](https://www.facebook.com/hrtowncouncil)

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

@HRCouncil1

@HoughtonRegisTC

Houghton Regis Town Council

Town Clerk, Clare Evans 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

## Houghton Hall Park In Bloom!



The team at Houghton Hall Park were delighted to receive an award for Anglia in Bloom 2020! The award for 'Best Planting on a Theme' was given to acknowledge the exciting and imaginative themed beds in the kitchen garden. You might have spotted some of these on recent visits to the park – the themes have included favourite fairytales, a pollinator bed, and Dig for Victory. The volunteers and Community Gardener also paid

tribute to the NHS working hard throughout the Covid-19 pandemic with a colourful 'Thank You NHS' display. This is the first time the park has received an Anglia in Bloom award, and surely will not be the last!

Thank you to wonderful park volunteers who have continued to get stuck in during the last few months, starting off volunteering from home through lockdown and later returning to the park while adhering to all social distancing guidelines.

There are some spooky half term activities in store at the park for October - for more details and to keep up to date, follow the Facebook page [www.facebook.com/houghtonhallpark](https://www.facebook.com/houghtonhallpark) or visit the Houghton Hall Park website [www.houghtonhallpark.org](http://www.houghtonhallpark.org).

## Top day as All Saints View reaches highest point

Construction of All Saints View, Central Bedfordshire Council's new independent living scheme reached another milestone recently with a virtual 'Topping Out' to celebrate the building reaching its highest point.

All Saints View, being built right at the heart of the town, will provide 168 apartments for the over 55s, along with shops, restaurant, café and community facilities.

Dramatic new drone footage from the air and photos from on the roof were shared on the dedicated Facebook page for the project [www.facebook.com/allsaintsview](https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsview)

A topping out ceremony had been planned, but in the light of new COVID-19 restrictions, the council wanted to share the views with everyone.

Councillor Jamieson, Leader of the council, said: "We felt it was still important to mark this milestone because it's such a key project. The scheme itself is a major investment for us in times where there is less government funding, ever more pressure on our resources and a population that is older, with more complex needs. Against this background, and with the additional complications of a global pandemic, we are forging ahead with our commitment to deliver quality housing options for our older



*residents because we simply must plan for the future."*

*"And the future here looks bright. Our aim for All Saints View is that it will be a place to celebrate life and, although we are still some way off the finish line, this milestone feels really significant."*

Work continues onsite, thanks to a dedicated team run by Vistry Partnerships, and windows are in, internal walls and kitchens are going in and electricians are on site. The first phase of the building is set to be completed in autumn 2021, although progress is dependent on restrictions from the current pandemic.

You can sign up for dedicated email updates at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/all-saints-view](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/all-saints-view) or see up to date photos and videos at [www.facebook.com/allsaintsview](https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsview)

## Houghton Regis Town Council – Opening Hours

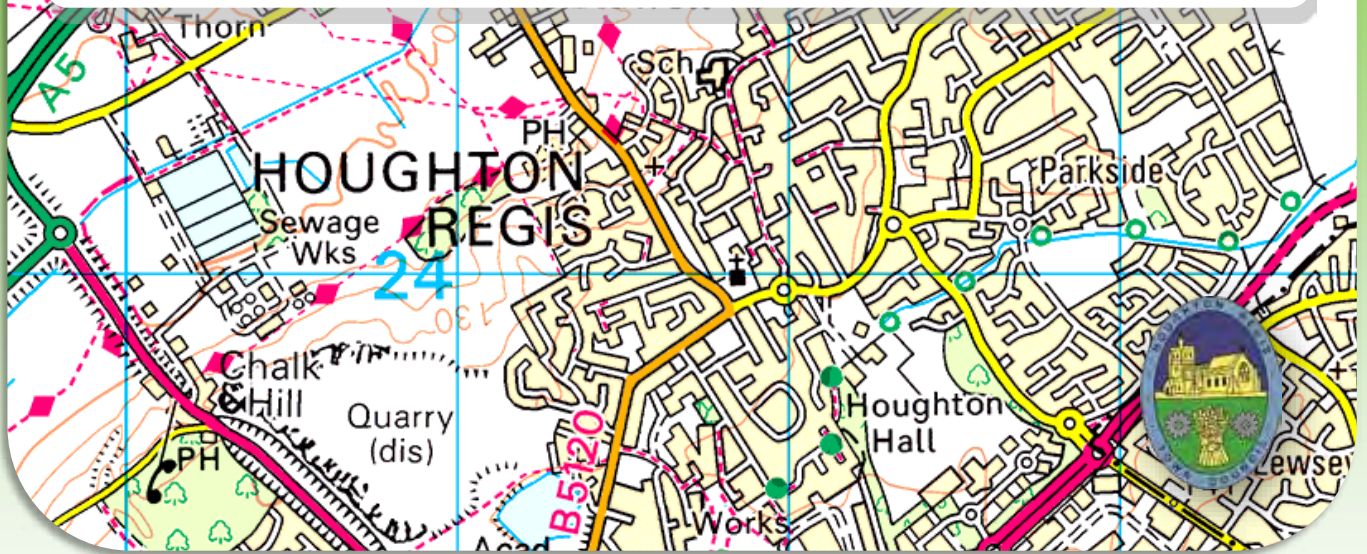
Throughout the unprecedented times of late the Town Council has remained contactable by local residents. Whilst we may not have been able to maintain a Reception service at the Council offices, staff and councillors have continued to be available by email and telephone. As lockdown eased a little, we have

responded by opening the Reception with somewhat reduced hours. If you would like to visit us in person, please call ahead to check on opening times or look on our website or social media pages. Opening times are also displayed at the Council offices themselves.

**Between Christmas and New Year you can still contact us by email and phone, please be aware that the Reception will be closed.**



# Our Vision: Our Town (2020-2024)



Houghton Regis Town Council is committed to ensuring it is in the best position to support and enhance our community.

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 Page 6.

Through public consultation the new Council, elected in May 2019, have listened to you and developed a Vision to cover the work of the Council over the next 4 years.

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

The Vision has identified services and facilities to improve where you live, play and work.

With the help and support of strategic partners, local organisations and our local community, together we can achieve this Vision.

These are our Aspirations and Objectives for the next 4 years.

### 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

### THE VISION HAS 4 OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES, UNDER WHICH ARE SPECIFIC ACTIONS:

**Objective 1:** Grow Your Own

**Objective 2:** A Greener Cleaner Houghton Regis

**Objective 3:** A Safe and Vibrant Town

**Objective 4:** Our Community

Houghton Regis Town Council, Peel Street, Houghton Regis, LU5 5EY  
Tel: 01582 708 540 Fax: 01582 861 102  
Website: [www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)



Our Vision: Our Town



## Objective 1 : GROW YOUR OWN



*We want to encourage and support people to grow their own food, to eat a healthy and balanced diet and to enhance biodiversity and encourage wildlife in our town.*

### We will:

- To support Houghton Hall Park kitchen garden by offering staff services & finance support
- To support appropriate management of the Woodside Link Community Orchard
- Help establish allotments within new housing developments
- Encourage healthy eating and food awareness especially through partnership projects with Houghton Hall Park kitchen garden and the Council's Pop-up Youth Café
- To increase edible planting by providing fruit bushes and fruit trees
- Enhance biodiversity and support wildlife through open space management and wildflower planting



## Objective 2 : A GREENER CLEANER HOUGHTON REGIS

*We want to reduce our use of natural resources, help improve the environment and improve fitness and wellbeing.*

### We will:

- Reduce the use of paper by the council by switching to electronic communication methods
- Increase recycling within the council and by offering recycling points within our open spaces and at events
- Encourage sustainable transport including the use of public transport, walking and cycling by promotion, by the provision of ancillary facilities such as cycle racks and seating and the use of incentives to encourage people to use sustainable transport to access the town centre, community services and events
- Provide outdoor fitness equipment in parks and open spaces







## Objective 3: A SAFE AND VIBRANT TOWN



*We want to help everyone feel safe and confident about where they live by creating a safe and vibrant town.*

### We will:

- Reduce the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and crime levels through our continued partnership with Bedfordshire Police (Operation Hana) and Central Bedfordshire Council Community Safety team (redeployable CCTV cameras), and through support and encouragement for local Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- Reduce enviro crime through direct action to remove incidences of fly tipping and graffiti
- Improve access to and reduce the cost of 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 through our website, social media pages, Town Crier, noticeboards
- Support local businesses and retailers through continuation of the Shop Local scheme and advertising / sponsorship opportunities



## Objective 4: OUR COMMUNITY

*We want to look after, support and develop facilities and services for our residents.*

### We will:

- Create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion, such as the development of a sporting hub and all-weather pitch and will work with partners on the delivery of community facilities with the strategic growth area
- Enhance existing facilities to enable improved community use and accessibility such as a refurbishment of the village green pavilion and the creation of a dementia friendly town with supportive services, signs, assistance and aids
- Provide activities for young people, families and older people
- Help to protect and preserve historic gems such as All Saints Church, Houghton Hall Park and the Red House
- 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 through a grants scheme, advice and support
- Support Houghton Hall Park 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



## 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 Tithes 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

## Events

### Remembrance Services

8th and 11th November

The Town Council has been working with All Saints Church to provide a safe and socially distant Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day Services. The service at All Saints on 8th November will be by ticket only and limited to 50 people. Local organisations and groups have been invited to lay wreaths at the stone on both 8th and 11th November.

As it will difficult for us all to commemorate together as we have done on previous years, why not stand in your own front gardens and observe the two minute silence and Wreath Laying with us on Facebook Live (on the Town Council's Facebook site).

If you wish to lay a wreath or cross at the Memorial Stone you will of course be welcome to do in private either before or after the services at 11am.

### Christmas Events

To find out details of events taking place near Christmas – please take a look at the Town Council website

([www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)), Facebook or Instagram. Further details will be revealed as soon as possible.



### Tithe Farm Recreation Ground sports project



The Town Council is hoping to bring forward a new and exciting project to Houghton Regis – the creation of an all-weather pitch, new changing rooms and car parking on Tithe Farm recreation ground. The project is being developed and progressed in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and the Beds Football Association (Beds FA). Funding for the project is likely to come from the Town Council, CBC and the Football Foundation.

Important initial steps have been taken already – we have secured the support of the Football Foundation, and we have appointed a Bid Consultant and a Design Architect to support the project development. We are just starting to talk about design and site layout. The project is moving forwards very positively.

Please follow us on social media or check on our website for updates as we go forwards.



Please find below the calendar of meetings for the Town Council from November 2020 to the end of March 2021. All council meetings are held virtually at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated and are open to the public but following guidance from the Coronavirus Act 2020.

The links for the virtual meetings can be found on our website: [www.houghtonregis.org.uk](http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk)

You can find Committee updates by following the link: <https://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/committee-structure>

Date	Day	Committee	Time
<b>2020/21</b>			
2nd Nov	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
9th Nov	Monday	New Office Provisions Sub-Committee	6.00pm
9th Nov	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
10th Nov	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
16th Nov	Monday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
23rd Nov	Monday	Corporate Services	7.00pm
30th Nov	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
14th Dec	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
21st Dec	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
4th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
11th Jan	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee	7.00pm
18th Jan	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
25th Jan	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
26th Jan	Tuesday	Town Partnership	7.00pm
8th Feb	Monday	Community Services	7.00pm
15th Feb	Monday	New Office Provisions Sub-Committee	7.00pm
15th Feb	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
22nd Feb	Monday	Environment & Leisure	7.00pm
1st Mar	Monday	Corporate Service	7.00pm
8th Mar	Monday	Planning	7.00pm
22nd Mar	Monday	Town Council	7.00pm
29th Mar	Monday	Planning	7.00pm

### Register for your Christmas Card

If you are aged 65 or over, you can register for the Mayor's Christmas Card. Please contact Sarah Gelsthorp on **01582 708523** or [sarah.gelsthorp@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:sarah.gelsthorp@houghtonregis.org.uk) to ensure that you are on the list.





# Pride of Houghton Awards 2021

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 **1st January 2021**

*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.*

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"/> |
| Key Worker during Covid-19    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Innovation during Covid-19           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Your name:

Your contact number:

Your address:

Name of your nominee:

Nominee address:

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