

30th October 2020

To: Town Mayor and all Members of the Partnership Committee

Town Councillors:	D Abbott, D Jones, K Wattingham, Vacancy
CBC Councillors	Y Farrell, S Goodchild, P Hamill, A Ryan (Chair)
Co-Opted Members	D Gibbons
CBC Officers	Mrs Hughes, Community Engagement Manager

(Copies to all Houghton Regis Town Councillors for information.)

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend a virtual meeting of the **Partnership Committee** to be held on **10th November 2020** commencing at **7.00pm hours**.

This meeting is being held virtually via Microsoft Teams. If members of the public would like to attend, please click on the meeting link below and follow the online instructions:

[MEETING LINK](#)¹

[MEETING GUIDANCE](#)

To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. To view the Virtual Meeting Guidance please click on the link above.



Clare Evans
Town Clerk

<i>THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED</i> ²

AGENDA

¹ If you require a meeting link emailed to you, please contact the Head of Democratic Services at louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk

² Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.

This meeting is being held virtually due to Covid-19. To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. Virtual Meeting Guidance can be found on the Houghton Regis Town Council website.

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)

To receive questions and statements from members of the public in respect of any item of business included in the agenda, as provided for in Standing Order Nos 1(f) and 1(h).

3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

4. MINUTES

Pages 5-10

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020.

Members are requested to note that due to the re-focussing of work due to Covid-19 the task and finish group set up to consider the Town Centre Benchmarking report had not had the opportunity to begin work.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020.

**5. IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS:
A TIME TO CONNECT**

John Gelder, Director, Community Action Bedfordshire will attend the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

6. KINGSLAND / HR LEISURE CENTRE

Jill Dickinson, Assistant Director Leisure Libraries and Countryside, and Sarah Ferguson, Deputy Director Children's Services, will attend the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments.

7. HOUSING PROVISION AND ALLOCATIONS

Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services, Social Care, Health & Housing Directorate, will attend the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments.

8. PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Pages 11-12

The Partnership Committee workplan is attached for information.

- Community Buildings in Houghton Regis (inc. HRN 2 Community Building, Bedford Square Community Centre) – a verbal update will be provided

9. TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION

To update members on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project. A report will be circulated prior to the meeting.

10. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members of the Town Partnership Committee are invited to provide a verbal report on matters of relevance to Houghton Regis arising in particular from the Committee/s on which they serve. It is suggested that reports be kept to 2 minutes to ensure committee time for other matters on the agenda.

11. CBC UPDATE REPORT

Pages 13-26

The CBC Update Report is attached.

This report is presented for information only.

12. SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRES AND THE WIDER ECONOMY

Pages 27-41

HRTC has received communication from Marcel Coffit, looking for ideas / suggestions to support town centres and the wider economy. This is attached, pages 27-28 a.

The town council would like to prepare a response to this letter. A considerable amount of work has already been completed on aspirations for Houghton Regis including the town centre.

HRTC also responded to the CBC consultation on the Future High Streets fund. The submission is attached, pages 29-34 b

In 2018 HRTC put together a list of services and facilities that the council would like to see in Houghton Regis. This list is attached, pages 35-37c

HRTC has also developed a corporate plan for 2020/24. This is attached, pages 38-41d

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE**

HELD

Tuesday 21st July 2020

Present: Town Cllrs: D Abbott, D Jones (Vice Chair), K Wattingham and
Vacancy
CBC Cllrs: A Ryan (Chair), Y Farrell, S Goodchild
CBC Officers: Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager
HRTC Officers: Clare Evans, Town Clerk
Louise Senior, Head of Democratic Services

Also in Attendance: Tracey McMahon – HRTC Councillor
Awais Younis - CBC Safer Neighbourhood Team Leader
Rev. David Skinner – The Churches Group
John Gelder - Community Action Bedfordshire
David Gibbons – Co-opted member (joined 7.14pm)

Apologies: CBC Cllr: Cllr Hamill
Members of the public: 2

848 ELECTION OF CHAIR

In accordance with the approved committee terms of reference members are invited to elect a chair for the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2020/21.

Nominee: Cllr Ryan Nominated by: Cllr S Goodchild
Seconded by: Cllr Jones

On being put to the vote Cllr Ryan was elected as Chair of Town Partnership Committee for the municipal year.

849 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

In accordance with the approved committee terms of reference members are invited to elect a vice chair for the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2020/21.

Nominee: Cllr Jones Nominated by: Cllr Goodchild
Seconded by: Cllr Ryan

On being put to the vote Cllr Jones was elected as Vice-Chair of Town Partnership Committee for the municipal year.

850 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Hamill.

Members agreed to move item 11 forward, to be discussed after questions from the public.

851 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public queried a parish report showing s106 allocations and queried why none of the £7.7m funds received for Bidwell West had been allocated to the chalk pit.

It was advised that prior to this meeting the same question had been raised with Cllr Goodchild and Cllr Ryan. The Principle Planning Officer had been contacted and had confirmed that arrangements for s106 funding for the maintenance of the Quarry had been secured.

852 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION *(Moved from item 11)*

Members were invited to consider whether they would like to explore the possibility of seeking to co-opt local stakeholders onto the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. In this regard the Terms of Reference for the Committee state:

Co-option

1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Town Joint Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Town Joint Committee. Decision making around removals can either be taken by the whole Town Joint committee or by joint agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair, depending on each Town Joint Committee's preference.
2. The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee

Members were advised that an application to co-opt had been received.

Members discussed the value of Co-opting members from local representative groups and agreed to Co-opt David Gibbons onto the Town Partnership Committee.

Members welcomed Mr Gibbons to the Town Partnership Committee.

853 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Goodchild declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 8, HRN1 Community Building, accordingly, did not participate in any discussion relating to this item.

854 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2020.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2020 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

855 HOUGHTON CHALK PIT

Awais Yunis, Safer Neighbourhood Team Leader, Central Bedfordshire Council, was in attendance to update members on issues relating to Houghton Regis Chalk Pit.

Members were advised that the footpath was closed for maintenance and would reopen once works were completed.

Legal advice had been sought regarding Health & Safety concerns. A Problem-Solving Group had been formed and a meeting held, Central Bedfordshire Council, Police, representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council partners and a Highways Officer were in attendance and discussed the wide range of issues surrounding the quarry.

Members were advised that letters had been sent to local residents urging the reporting of issues and anti-social behavior and to report vehicle registration details in order vehicle owners to be contacted.

Members were advised that the Managing Agent had been contacted and had subsequently passed on concerns to the landowners.

A site visit was being arranged with the Directors, date to be confirmed, whereby representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedfordshire Police and Houghton Regis Town Council would be in attendance.

Members were advised that Bedfordshire Police were arranging a resident information sharing group to enable residents to join and discuss their concerns.

Members were advised that members of the public were unable to join the Problem-Solving Group, however, a follow up resident engagement session would be held to enable residents to share their concerns.

856 HRN2 COMMUNITY BUILDING

Members received a verbal update from Mrs Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council.

Rev Skinner was in attendance at the meeting to respond to any queries members may have.

Members were advised that Rev. Skinner had met with Town Council representatives and ward councillors to share the draft document. It was intended to develop a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and thriving community building.

An invitation was extended to councillors to visit Bromley by Bow, Finchampstead and Youthscape, Luton to glean a vision of similar community buildings.

Members were advised that the document had now been finalised and submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that the health situation may impact the timeline of development of the community building.

857 IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS

In October 2019 the Committee received a report from CBC on a new approach by CBC to improve health and wellbeing in Houghton Regis.

Since then Central Bedfordshire Council Public Health has commissioned Community Action Bedfordshire to deliver a community development project, called Time 2 Connect Houghton Regis. The project would use community mobilisation and asset-based approaches to engage and work with existing and new residents, communities and other stakeholders, in the growing town of Houghton Regis. The project commenced in May 2020 and would be delivered over the next three to five years. Members received a Stakeholder Briefing note which outlined the project.

John Gelder, Director, Community Action Bedfordshire was in attendance to outline the project to members and respond to any queries or comments.

Members were advised that this initiative was to reduce social isolation.

Members praised the local community for their support of each other during the Covid 19 pandemic. Concerns were raised regarding health inequalities across Houghton Regis. Members were advised the health inequalities would be a focus during the first year of CAB's work.

Members were advised that CAB was Linked in with volunteer groups and acknowledged their contributions in response to the Covid 19 crisis and was keen to use examples of good practice within the community.

Members requested that the Partnership Committee receive regular feedback from Community Action Bedfordshire, the frequency was to be confirmed.

858 PARTNERSHIP ADMINISTRATION

In accordance with the approved committee terms of reference members were invited to determine which council would provide the administration for the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2020/21.

Members agreed for the administration for the Town Partnership Committee to continue to be administered by Houghton Regis Town Council.

859 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

This agenda item was moved and discussed at minute number: 852

860 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members received the Partnership Committee workplan for information.

Members requested an update on the Kingsland feasibility study.

Members were advised that an update on the Kingsland feasibility study was unavailable for this meeting but it was hoped feedback would be available for the October meeting.

Members requested that this remain on the workplan.

861 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members of the Partnership Committee were invited to provide a verbal report on matters of relevance to Houghton Regis arising in particular from the Committee/s on which they served. It was suggested that reports be kept to 2 minutes to ensure committee time for other matters on the agenda.

Cllr Goodchild updated members on the committees she was a member of. Several meetings had been attended of Corporate Parenting Panel and Social Care and Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel and Social Care, members discussed providing language that cares, which was changing the way provisions talk about children in care. Available support for care leavers and care leavers views. Listening to children in care and how they have coped during Covid 19.

Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had received reports / updates on:

- a performance update from the East of England Ambulance Trust
- the pressures on housing demands.
- the council's response to Covid 19 and how services were delivered during the crisis.

Cllr Ryan updated members on Children's Services Committee;

- A meeting had been attended where the topic of discussion was SEND.
- Members were advised that Ofsted had looked at Central Bedfordshire's SEND provision during November.
- HRA, in-school support, had assured Children's Services Committee that they would be prioritised to receive their annual reviews.
- Members were advised that 80% of Central Bedfordshire schools remained open during the Covid crisis to support communities and key workers.

- Tithe Farm Primary School and Nursery had provided food and services to the local community throughout the Covid 19 crisis.

Members requested that special thanks go to Deborah Pargeter, Head of Tithe Farm Primary School for her involvement and support of the community.

862 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members received the CBC update report prior to the meeting which detailed the work of CBC during the pandemic in terms of maintaining service delivery and COVID-19 responses.

At the meeting in January 2020 reports on the following were requested, these were included in this report:

- The feasibility study for the Kingsland site
- The health hub
- Addressing health and wellbeing inequalities – see minute number 857.
- School places, as consideration may need to be given to bringing forward the building of an additional primary school

Members received a further overview of the Update Report.

- Covid 19 support had been offered by Central Bedfordshire Council to meet the needs of vulnerable residents in Houghton Regis, with the redirection of referrals from the Community Hub to local support groups such as Houghton Regis Helpers;
- Covid 19 local outbreak control plan and a Communications and engagement plan;
- Welfare provision and business grants had been administered;
- Discussion of the safe commencement of the reopening of Children's play areas;
- Extended Ward Councillor Grant Scheme with the additional funds of £1,000 to support Covid 19 restoration activities;
- Community asset grant scheme £25,00 match funded at 50%. The second bidding round closes 1st September;
- Cheering volunteering; acknowledgement of the support and volunteer efforts during Covid 19, but to also celebrate the day to day volunteering that goes on within the community.

Members requested special thanks go to Central Bedfordshire Council councillors for the community assets grants that had been awarded to Houghton Regis community groups.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Dated this 16th day of October 2020.

Chairman



**HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE –
WORK PLAN 2020-2021**

WORK PLAN 2020-2021 - Draft

Meeting Date	Regular Updates	Work Plan 2020-2021	Reports already received / completed
July 2020	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group	<p>The following suggestions are put forward, the timings of these reports / presentations will be confirmed once the content of the work plan has been agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Buildings in Houghton Regis (inc. HRN 2 Community Building, Bedford Square Community Centre) • Estate Regeneration • Chalk pit • Kingsland / HR Leisure Centre • Housing Provision and Allocations • Tithe Farm sports provision • Improving Health & Wellbeing In Houghton Regis 	Community Buildings in Houghton Regis 21 st July 2020
October 2020	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Estate Regeneration CBC Update report 9 th Nov 2020
January 2021	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Chalk pit 21 st July 2020 CBC Update report 9 th Nov 2020
April 2021	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Kingsland / HR Leisure Centre Housing Provision and Allocations 9 th Nov 2020



			<p>Tithe Farm sports provision 21st July 2020 9th Nov 2020</p>
			<p>Improving Health & Wellbeing In Houghton Regis: Time to Talk 21st July 2020 9th Nov 2020</p>

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

Purpose of report: For information

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1. COMMUNITY SAFETY

CCTV REPORTS

JULY

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
11/07/20	11:19	High Street	Miscellaneous	0
17/07/20	15:07	Tithe Farm Road	Robbery	0

AUGUST

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
04/08/20	18:34	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
05/08/20	18:39	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
10/08/20	14:35	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
27/08/20	13:28	Bedford Square	Breach Of CPN	0

SEPTEMBER

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
02/09/20	20:40	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
03/04/20	20:14	Bedford Square	Offensive Weapon	1
08/09/20	10:13	Bedford Square	Breach Of CPN	0
08/09/20	12:31	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
09/09/20	10:18	Bedford Square	Breach of CPN	0
10/09/20	03:51	Bedford Square	Criminal Damage	0
18/09/20	18:02	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0

CHALK PIT QUARRY UPDATE

Following attendance at the Partnership Committee in July , there has been a significant decline in reports of anti-social behaviour to both the Police and the Council, and residents have been very appreciative of the work that has been done by all agencies.

A multi-agency review meeting was held in September and appropriate actions have been completed although a site visit with the Landowner is still outstanding, but once Covid-19 restrictions allow, it is anticipated that we will be able to address the concerns collaboratively.

2. LEISURE, LIBRARIES & COUNTRYSIDE

LEISURE CENTRE

The Leisure centre reopened with Covid19 procedures on 8th August after a slight delay due to a Covid19 spike in Luton. To ensure that everyone is safe and feels comfortable using our centres, there will be some changes. These include:

- A one-way system and signage to guide customers.
- Changing rooms and showers will also be limited and customers will be asked to arrive at the centre dressed ready for their activity, bringing only essential items.
- Increased cleaning of equipment and sanitisation stations, to ensure the highest possible standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

These measures will be adapted as and when government advice changes throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The centre has been forced to reduce capacity of the areas in the building and put in place certain protocols but have begun to increase availability:

- Specified gym times – capacity been increased since we opened
- Group Ex classes have been expanded to create more classes
- Aqua Ed classes increased times to make it more flexible
- Sports hall available for hire

Year on Year Centre Usage has decreased by 50% due to COVID-19 but, Usage has increased 2-3% weekly since the centre has reopened and capacity has been increased in all areas under health safety guidance.

CENTRE ACTIVITY

National Fitness Day

National Fitness Day was on 23rd September 2020 and it is a chance to highlight the role physical activity plays across the UK, helping us raise awareness of its importance in helping us lead healthier and active lifestyles.

Macmillan Coffee Morning



WORKS COMPLETED AT SITE

Pool lights and sports hall lights have been replaced.

HOUGHTON REGIS LIBRARY

Houghton Regis Library reopened with 'Select and Collec't on the 11th August from 10-2 Tuesday to Saturday. We have seen an average of 10% library borrowers over the last three months compared with pre-lockdown. From Tuesday 27th October we'll be opening at our normal hours, still with 'Select and Collect' at the door. We have contacted the local schools and HRTC with our new opening times to share with the community. HRTC shared this information immediately and I've already had people mentioning seeing the changes through their social media- which is fantastic!

Quite a few of our borrowers have been asking for access to PC's to search for jobs, deal with their benefits and other life enhancing tools. These are measures being worked on with a view to making these facilities available for our borrowers by appointment and will publicise when this will begin and how it will operate once we have secured a date.

Some borrowers are not happy at not being able to access the library service fully but staff have performed a marvellous job with raising awareness for these people and offering suggestions and alternatives.

Bedfordshire Police are assisting with the problem of street drinkers sometimes in the atrium and are attending to discuss the issues and concerns.

HOUGHTON HALL PARK

We achieved:

- An adapted Covid safe engagement programme including displays in the visitor centre, outdoor self-guided trails with downloadable resources, and a high level of interaction via social media.

Key highlights:

- Volunteers continued to be very invested in undertaking tasks, beginning from volunteering from home and gradual reintroduction of volunteering sessions on site in line with government guidelines.
- Recruitment of new staff member, Eleanor Evans who joins CBC as Community Park Ranger.
- Anglia in Bloom award for Best Planting on a Theme for the kitchen garden imaginative raised beds, including Dig for Victory, fairy tales and pollinator themes.
- Green Flag accreditation awarded for the second year.

Key issues:

- Ongoing damage/destruction to signage throughout the park. This has affected the permanent interpretation about the heritage, wildlife and wider information about the park for visitor experience, as well as health and safety signage e.g. for play equipment. The temporary trails have also been vandalised which is undoing the hard work undertaken by the team to create an events programme for visitors.

Looking forward - We are planning:

- The popular wreath making sessions for Christmas run by Jenny Osborne, Community Gardener.
- Finalising creation of a wildlife pond in the park which will be the first of this type of habitat on site and will increase biodiversity as well as providing opportunities for pond dipping with local schools/uniformed groups.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES TEAM

COMMUNITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Low impact outdoor fitness classes have been developed and are continuing to increase across Central Beds. All activities comply with current COVID guidelines.

Indoor Physical activity session will be reviewed in the new year. (this does not include leisure centres)

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES PROGRAMME

Referral programme continued though the lockdown. The service was adapted and support was given to those who were currently on the programme. Since restrictions on lockdown have slowly lifted – referrals have started to increase. Residents can use the leisure centres as part of their referral pathway and in September the Falls Prevention Strength & Balance Programme resumed across 3 sites

HEALTH & WELLBEING KIOSKS

Leisure services at Central Bedfordshire Council are investing in a secure, cloud hosted digital health solution built around a highly accurate, clinically validated body composition device. Boditrax have created the world's only clinical grade (MDD Medical Device Directive) cloud hosted full segmental, self-service Body composition Analyser. Providing individuals with access to a kiosk in a public setting will enable them to self-monitor and continue to improve their healthy lifestyle choices.

These have now been installed across 6 leisure centres and are accessible to the public. You do not have to be a member of the leisure facilities to use them.



For more information please visit www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/health-kiosks

3. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

WORKS COMPLETED

From 20th December 2019 – 30th September 2020

124 Penalty Charge Notices were issued in Houghton Regis and officers visited the area 667 times.

4. BUSINESS, INVESTMENT & SKILLS

The team continue to gather intelligence on economic impact to local business/sectors due to the pandemic. In addition, we have been identifying businesses that are making redundancies and offering our help through the National Careers Service by offering support with CV writing, Online Job Searching, Application Forms and Interview Techniques

With regards to commercial property enquiries for this quarter July – September, the team received 34 inward investment enquiries, 14 of which were interested in Houghton Regis/Dunstable areas. 11 enquiries were from established businesses looking for industrial, office and retail accommodation. 4 enquiries were from community interest / not for profit companies specialising in community services. These figures represent an almost 50% increase on the previous quarter.

BEDFORDSHIRE EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS SERVICE (BESS)

As with other Further Education providers, the Council's Employment and Skills Service (BESS) continues to deliver educational courses via its in-house delivery teams and a range of external training providers working as part of the BESS partnership.

Enrolments will continue throughout the academic year. A number of the programmes we offer are accredited, so residents can work towards qualifications which will help them gain employment, support a career change or help residents progress in their specific sectors.

The BESS curriculum includes:

- English
- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- Maths
- IT and digital skills
- Support with wellbeing and mental health
- Preparing for employment
- Working with and supporting children and young people
- Apprenticeships

A list of workshops and courses with information and how to enrol can be seen by looking at our [upcoming course list](#) , with an overview of the workshops and courses available on the [curriculum map](#).

If residents would like someone to help them get started on the right course they should [contact us](#) with their details or use the comments box in the online form to let the BESS team know what learning they are interested in. An adviser or the relevant training provider will then get in touch to help them get started.

ESTATE REGENERATION

The Estate Regeneration funding intended for feasibility, viability and resident engagement for potential scheme(s) for Tithe Farm and Parkside is still in place. The purpose of the fund is to 'enable high quality, well designed places, more homes and opportunities for residents'. Officer capacity has been focused on progressing the Sandy Estate Regeneration Project, with a view that working up proposals for Dunstable and Houghton Regis will follow.

Some outline early indications and discussions have highlighted the need for improved parking, a need to improve the ex-garage sites, and a recognition that some areas could benefit from better design. Some proposals have been raised, and these will be discussed at a high level in November.'

5. YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

The figures presented below are based on the data stored within the Youth Support Service's CCIS database for young people who are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET) as reported at the end of August 2020. The Youth Support Service is currently conducting the Annual Activity Survey to confirm where year 12 and year 13s went onto in September in terms of education, employment and training.

1) UPDATE ON NEETS WITHIN THE WIDER CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE AREA

HEADLINE FIGURES FOR THE WHOLE CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE AREA			
Cohort	Total number of young people	Positive destinations (EET)	NEET destinations
16 year olds/ Year 12	3006	2886 (96.0%)	92 (3.0%)
17 year olds/ Year 13	2880	2614 (90.7%)	111 (3.8%)
Combined cohort	5886	5500 (93.4%)	203 (3.6%)

2) OVERVIEW OF THE HOUGHTON REGIS AREA COMPARED TO OTHER LOCAL AREAS

	Dunstable		Houghton Regis		Leighton Buzzard	
Total YPs in area	826		469		889	
EET	449	54.4%	248	52.9%	454	50.5%
NEET	22	2.7%	15	3.2%	16	1.8%
Unknown/Refused	355	43.0%	206	43.9%	429	47.7%

3) CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEET GROUP IN THE HOUGHTON REGIS AREA

a. Summary of the individual Houghton Regis Wards

Ward	Total number of YPs in the Year 12-13 cohort	Total number of YPs recorded as NEET	% of NEET within Ward
Tithe Farm	131	5	3.8%
Houghton Hall	199	6	3.0%
Parkside	139	4	2.9%
Total	469	15	3.2%

b. Summary of the Houghton Regis NEET cohort by age, time and gender

Actual Age (Year 12 & 13)		Length of time NEET		Gender	
16 years old	2	Less than 3 months	8	Male	10
17 years old	12	3-6 months	1	Female	5
18 years old	1	6+ months	6	Other/Refused	0

c. Summary status of the Houghton Regis NEET cohort

Status		
Seeking Employment or Training	14	93.3%
Unable to work due to 'Personal Circumstances'	1	6.7%

6. SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The transfer to Secondary and Upper school for September 2021 admission deadline was 31st October 2020.

The closing date Starting school and transfer to Middle school applications is 15th January 2021.

Parents are encouraged to apply for a place online via our school admission web pages [here](#) which contains a wealth of information including the deadline dates for applications, school catchment areas, deferred entries, making an application on religious/faith grounds and how places are allocated.

If parents have difficulty completing their application they must contact Admissions before the relevant deadline, as submission after the deadline will mean applications will be processed in the late round.

Once an application is submitted, applicants will receive an automated confirmation email confirming stated preferences.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

The Council's Schools for the Future Programme has been established to ensure that we plan for the new school places that will be needed in the longer term and ensure that we have them in the right places delivering the best education

In response to both the forecast demographic growth and the forecast deficit in secondary school places in Houghton Regis, the Council approved the proposal to build a new secondary school on the Kingsland Campus in Houghton Regis (subject to planning), through the 'Free Schools Presumption Process'. The new school will be built and operated as an academy and the Council has been working to secure a sponsor for the new provision.

The Head Teacher Board, of the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner, approved the Council's preferred sponsor – Advantage Schools - for the new school at their meeting on 30 September. Officers will now work with approved multi academy trust in order to deliver the new school for September 2022, following the closure of Houghton Regis Academy in August 2022. The initial designs for the new school can be viewed on our website [here](#)

Construction has started in order to expand Thornhill Primary School, Grove Road, Houghton Regis by 60 places in each year group for September 2021, which is also in response to the current and future significant housing development on land north of Houghton Regis.

7. PLANNING

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CHEERING VOLUNTEERING 2020



We know there are amazing volunteers in our communities doing amazing things and have done for many years before the pandemic and many more have come forward to help during the crisis.

We want to recognise them and their efforts and outstanding achievements, across all types of volunteering in our community. The awards are open to all those who have been volunteering both prior to and during the pandemic.

This year the awards ceremony will be virtual, but the recognition will be real. You are encouraged to nominate people in your area – you may wish to nominate volunteer groups and individuals you have supported through the ward councillor grant or the COVID-19 extension scheme. We're seeking nomination in the following categories in particular:

Young Volunteer of the Year This award is for individuals aged 18 and under who have made a positive impact on their community through volunteering. Perhaps they've been involved in a volunteering project by taking a leadership role or by expanding/developing the project. Whatever they've been involved in; this award recognises their passion, motivation and commitment.

Captain Sir Tom Award for Outstanding Contribution Many people give unselfishly of their time and effort without realising that they are volunteering. Too often these people go without any recognition of the difference they have made to people's lives. This award is for an individual that has made a difference to you or someone you know and has had a very definite, positive impact by going the extra mile.

Lifetime Achievement This award is for an individual who is known for their exceptional contributions to volunteering over a significant number of years. Maybe they've contributed leadership, skills and/or time for the good of the community, are consistently dedicated, and have a direct positive impact on others.

Sports & Wellbeing Volunteer of the Year This award is for an individual, group or organisation that has demonstrated an outstanding volunteer contribution to sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing in Central Bedfordshire.

Supporting Communities during COVID Somebody who was inspired to volunteer their time during the COVID-19 pandemic to help others and who has worked tirelessly to look after vulnerable neighbours maybe helping with gardening, delivering food parcels, shopping, picking up prescriptions or just a regular call to check-in and chat.

Full details and nomination forms can be found [here](#).

COMMUNITY ASSETS GRANT SCHEME

Following the success of the first bidding round of the Community Assets Grant Scheme where £239,770 of funding was provided to 16 organisations a second bidding round was launched at the beginning of July and closed on 1 September. Once again this was a competitive bidding round with 17 successful applications, providing £260,000 worth of funding to community infrastructure projects.

The list of approved projects for the second bidding round of the Community Assets Grant Scheme can be found on the website [here](#). We are really pleased that the Orchard Close Pavilion Refurbishment project secured a grant of £14,043.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Over 191 people have signed up to become Community Champions and they have attended virtual introduction and engagement sessions. The Champions have been sharing the weekly COVID report, Public Health videos, ideas for how to celebrate Halloween safely and information about free flu jabs.

Registration is easy and via a short form on our website, we would love for more people to register from communities in Houghton Regis.

<https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/210>

9. SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING

10. PUBLIC HEALTH

STOP SMOKING

The delivery of Stop Smoking Services through GP Surgeries has been severely impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic, but , the latest data from Q4 19/20 shows that in the Chiltern Vale sub Cluster B “Titan” locality both Houghton Regis practices continued to perform well.

Overall, performance by the Titan Primary Care Network of Practices in Chiltern Vale was at 164% against target for the period 19/20 (131 actual quits compared to a target of 80).

Houghton Regis Medical Centre has exceeded targets for both the period and the whole year already, whilst performance at Wheatfield Surgery remains steady but under target:

LOCATION	2019/20 SMOKING QUITTERS
Houghton Regis Medical Centre	66 (target 41): 166% of target for 2019/20
Wheatfield Surgery	48 (target 39): 123% of target for 2019/20

The Stop Smoking Service introduced a re-modelled Service with effect from April 1 2019, to offer more flexible support options, including telephone support, plus a new app, which became available from July 2019.

Extended treatment programmes are available to some residents who would benefit most from them, for example those with a Mental Health diagnosis or COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder). The Smokefree Baby and Me programme is also available for pregnant smokers.

Call one of our advisors free on: 0800 013 0553

Email: stop.smoking@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.smokefreebedfordshire.org/>

NHS HEALTH CHECKS

The NHS Health Check is a national risk assessment and management programme for those aged 40 to 74 living in England, who do not have an existing vascular disease, and who are not currently being treated for certain risk factors.

It is aimed at preventing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease and raising awareness of dementia for those aged 65-74 and includes an alcohol risk assessment. Everyone receiving an NHS Health Check will have a risk assessment which will look at individual risk factors as well as their risk of having, or developing, vascular disease in the next ten years. An NHS Health Check should be offered every five years.

GP practices continue to be the sole provider of the NHS Health Check programme; however, performance varies. As patients are entitled to one Health Check every five years, Practices have a target to invite 20% of their eligible population each year.

The latest data, from April – August 2020, shows that in all of the Chiltern Vale locality there has been significant impact by the Coronavirus Pandemic on delivery of NHS Health Checks, due to them needing to be delivered face-to-face, with no option for virtual delivery. Only 56 were delivered against a target of 681 for the period (8.2% of annual target to date). They have invited 141 patients for a Health Check (target 1,831) so are performing at 7.7% for that indicator.

The local Practices are performing as follows:

Houghton Regis Medical Centre is performing at 48.4% for Health Checks delivered (46 against a target of 95) and 32% offered (82 out of 256 target).

Wheatfield Road has yet to offer or deliver any Health Checks during 2020-21.

Data quality Houghton Regis Medical Centre is excellent at 100%.

Public Health will continue to provide support to Practices looking to deliver Stop Smoking and Health Check services to their patients.

TIME2CONNECT

A new project has started in Houghton Regis to improve health and wellbeing by connecting local residents. The project, time2connect, was commissioned by the Council after the Health and Wellbeing Board looked at a number of projects nationally which had been designed to support and improve the health of residents.



Time2Connect is being run by Community Action Bedfordshire. It aims to develop the social infrastructure of the area by bringing communities from new developments together with the existing population, encouraging residents to becoming more involved in their communities. In turn, this will tackle issues like isolation, and improve mental health, wellbeing and self-esteem amongst residents. Community Action Bedfordshire will look at existing community groups and networks within Houghton Regis and build on those to connect residents with resources in the area.

For more information, visit the time2connect website, or contact Martin Westerby, Head of Public Health Programmes at Central Bedfordshire Council.

11. PUBLIC PROTECTION - POLLUTIONS TEAM UPDATE

The overarching issues reported to us from Houghton Regis this year have been linked to HRN 1&2 regarding dust and noise from the development at these sites.

7 Control of Pollution Act 1974 (COPA) Notices were served to differing companies in June with regard to start times for construction sites and a separate Environmental Protection Act 1990 abatement notice served for the dust.

No issues have been reported from HRN 2 since early August.

It should be noted that an extension to hours has been submitted and approved for HRN 1, following the latest government guidance for construction sites in relation to extended working hours during the Coronavirus pandemic.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

LOOKING BACK

Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing services continued throughout lockdown and beyond. It was necessary to prioritise some service areas due to resource availability during the initial stages of the pandemic, however where service provision was suspended or reduced every effort was made to re-instate these at the earliest opportunity. Services have been fully reinstated for some time now.

Grass cutting and shrub bed maintenance continued throughout the lockdown with limited impact on the service provision or standards. Hedge cutting has recommenced recently following the end of the nesting season and in accordance with RSPB guidance.

There have been various ad-hoc cleansing and clearing operations. Services have been under greater pressures during the lockdown and continue as residents continue to work from home (where possible) and change social habits/exercise regimes to include use of public spaces more frequently. Cleansing services have adapted to these changed and increased demands and will continue to be reviewed as demand develops.

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

All kerbside garden waste collections will be suspended between Monday, 7 December 2020 and Friday, 26 February 2021 inclusive. Residents are encouraged to check their last collection date for their area which will be either the week commencing Monday, 23 November or Monday, 30 November. Collections will resume again on Monday, 1 March 2021.

During the break in service, garden waste can still be recycled at our Household Waste Recycling Centres which are open seven days a week from 9am-5pm, including bank holidays. Certain restrictions due to Covid-19 may be in operation at all four sites.

Details of the amended Christmas collection dates will be detailed on the bin tags to be applied to residents black bins between 2nd and 13th November 2020.

13. CONSULTATIONS

Details of current and upcoming consultation activity undertaken by the Council are provided by the Knowledge & Insight Team. For more information about this update please contact Clare Harding, tel: 0300 300 6109 (ext. 76109).

Current consultations

Subject	Description	Start	End	Lead officer
BT Payphones 2020	Consultation on proposals to remove or retain 29 payphones (as per the list that were identified for removal by BT)	7 Oct 2020	6 Nov 2020	Sarah Hughes 0300 300 6166
Leisure Facilities Strategy consultation	Consultation on the proposed new or improved leisure facilities.	12 Oct 2020	22 Nov 2020	Lisa White 0300 300 4489
Physical Activity Strategy consultation	Consultation on the proposed Physical Activity Strategy informing the service delivery of programmes and activities.	12 Oct 2020	6 Dec 2020	Howard Hughes 0300 300 6163
Abbotsbury Older Person's Home	Consultation on the options for and re-provision of Abbotsbury OPH	23 Oct 2020	29 Jan 2021	Tobin Stephenson 0300 300 4098

Sent to: Clerk & Chairman to the town Councils of:

Ampthill, Biggleswade, Dunstable,
Flitwick, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade,
Potton, Sandy, Shefford

Date: 15/09/20

Dear Clerk to the Council,

Supporting Town Centres and the wider Economy

I am writing to you with regard to the Council's ongoing response to Covid-19 and its economic impact on our local residents, business community and town centres.

As lockdown has eased and our economy has gradually reopened, it is apparent that this crisis has precipitated significant changes to how our resident's shop and access services and, as a consequence how our towns function.

The enforced closure of physical shops has accelerated the long-term trend towards online retail, which for many is now the new norm or first port of call, when it comes to retail shopping. Our town centres have been, and will most likely continue to be, profoundly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, a period of time that has exacerbated trends that were already emerging.

It is therefore important that we plan for this new reality and look for ways to adapt and improve our town centres, so that they can continue to be at the heart of our local communities.

As part of helping to develop our new approach I am inviting your Town Council to work with Central Bedfordshire Council to build on recent work focused on understanding our town centres and the scope to address a range of issues, some of which I have touched on above. Initially I am proposing we focus on the following areas:

- 1) Building on work from earlier this year, when we invited you to share your ideas concerning potential submissions to Government programmes such as the Future High Street programme, we would like to work with you to review what came out of this in light of Covid-19 and the future challenges and opportunities our town centres face. I have asked the Place Delivery team to contact you in order to give you the opportunity to put forward your suggestions and ideas as to what type of activities and projects you would like to see delivered in your area. This can include locally focused schemes or Central Bedfordshire wide initiatives that you feel would help to support our town centre network as a whole.

- 2) In 2019 the Council commissioned People & Places to conduct a round of town centre benchmarking. This gave us vital data on vacancy rates, footfall as well as important qualitative feedback from businesses, visitors, and regular users of our town centres. In order to attempt to better understand the impacts and implications of the Covid-19 pandemic we will also be looking to repeat this exercise. As before we will be looking to ensure that the outputs of this are as beneficial to you as possible, so will be seeking to work with you to determine any additional scope or questions. We envisage this work commencing in November with footfall and vacant unit counts and concluding in March next year, with business confidence and shopper surveys being undertaken. The additional time for the latter surveys to be carried out, will ensure that any emerging changes to shopping patterns due to the impact of Covid 19 are more fully apparent.
- 3) As a Council we are also rapidly progressing work to develop our Economic Strategy. To support this, we need to understand what is important to residents, businesses and key stakeholders – such as yourselves. With that in mind a brief online survey will be available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website at:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/58/business/819/economic_strategy_survey

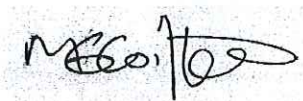
I would be grateful if you were able to take the time to respond; we will also be promoting this to residents and businesses. The survey closes on 30th September.

The results of this survey, in addition to your input concerning town centre specific activities as described above, will be collated and incorporated into the Emerging Economic Strategy currently being developed, as well as potential future bids for funding to Central Government.

If you have any questions on any aspects of this work please contact Stephen Mooring, Head of Place Delivery, Stephen.Mooring@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Yours sincerely



Marcel Coiffait

Director for Place & Communities

Direct telephone 0300 300 5637

Email marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Project ideas submission form

Future High Street Fund

A great place to live and work.

Find us online  www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk  www.facebook.com/letstalkcentral  [@letstalkcentral](https://twitter.com/letstalkcentral)

Item 12(b)

Project background information

Information required	Response
Title of project	Houghton Regis Town Centre Revitalisation
Description (200 words maximum)	<p>Bid Objective:</p> <p>To deliver a revitalised town centre that reflects the heritage of the town whilst embracing the expansion through a comprehensive reshape of physical infrastructure and the development of a viable and high-quality mixed-use retail, commercial, community and housing scheme.</p> <p>The current town centre faces significant challenges, most notably a poor quality, piecemeal environment with businesses on the brink of viability and competition from other centres. Positively there are listed buildings, a modern supermarket, proximity to open spaces and the independent living scheme. However these are offset by deteriorating 1960's developments – the shopping precinct, council offices and medical centre, residential units, a long term derelict site, and a disjointed public realm.</p> <p>The recent benchmarking report summaries the centre as largely offering convenience shopping, with low levels of footfall, low average spend and short length of stay and poor visitor feedback.</p>

As a strategic growth area the town centre is vital in integrating the existing with the new; a range of facilities and services in an attractive public realm is paramount to achieving this.

This project is transformational in its scope and opportunity. It offers a fundamental change to the town centre comprising an enhanced retail offer, commercial services and a vibrant civic centre formed of community facilities, health services and town council offices. Supported by high density, town centre living opportunities. It offers an opportunity to create a vibrant and viable town centre, cardinal to the lives of its residents.

The project spans the area between the Georgina Service Station and the Village Green and specifically includes the derelict former Netto site and the Red House, the Bedford Square shopping centre, town council offices, health centre, Bedford Court and Bedford Square Community Centre. The properties dispersed between these additionally have scope to be included. Please see plan attached. Linking these areas with public realm enhancements will create a sense of place and ownership along with stronger physical links to the Village Green and Houghton Hall Park to encourage health and wellbeing.

The town centre also has scope for improved accessibility both to the wider conurbation and to the town as a whole. There is scope for improved connections to bus services, rail and air and within the town through improved parking and cycling opportunities.

The draft Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan (HRNHP) is due to go to referendum 2020, this emerging plan supports these transformational proposals. More detail is in Chapter 7, Town Centre and Local Centres, of the HRNHP.

Although the proposal is presented as a whole it is possible for the proposal to be segregated. This is indicatively shown on the plan.

Funding required: (general indicative level):	<p>£25,000,000 (Future High Street Fund)</p> <p>£25,000,000 (Other including landowners, developers, CBC, HRTC)</p>
Local match funding potentially available: (approximate, can include land, revenue or capital):	<p>£400,000 from HRTC (subject to approval) comprising current offices and financial contribution</p>
Town Council proposed role in project delivery:	<p>HRTC would be pleased to work as a partner organisation to CBC on developing this proposal and would be supportive as far as possible including stakeholder engagement, consultation, co-ordination.</p>
<p>FHS bid criteria - please review FHS fund bidding guidance and confirm proposal meets basic requirements: (200 words maximum):</p> <p>Bidding guidance can be downloaded from the following website:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-high-streets-fund-call-for-proposals</p>	<p><i>Population and links to wider economic area</i></p> <p>The current population uses the town centre for convenience shopping. There is a negative feel towards the centre as evidence by the Town Centre Benchmarking report.</p> <p>Residents support the town centre but there is scope to enhance usage to the benefit of residents and town centre businesses alike.</p> <p>Equally the town centre faces the challenge and opportunity to link the growth area with the existing town to support community cohesion and integration. This is imperative to avoid a disjointed commuter settlement.</p> <p>As the bid is for mixed use development there are social, economic and environmental benefits to be achieved.</p> <p>The town centre would emerge as a vibrant place, pulling residents in and attracting visits from the wider geographic area.</p> <p><i>Challenges</i></p> <p>The Town Centre Benchmarking Report highlights:</p> <p>The lack of a Key Attractor in the centre</p>

Although the vacancy rate is slightly lower than the national small towns average, the retail units in Bedford Square appear to be barely financially viable, it is suspected that should one or two of the more popular retailers leave that other businesses would fail and the vacancy level would rise dramatically. Given the poor-quality environment it is felt unlikely that the centre would recover and the town centre would fail as a collective.

It has been impossible to attract market retailers to establish a small market in the centre due to a lack of footfall.

Footfall is lower than average of busy days (20% lower) and on quiet days (40% lower)

Visitors have a poor perception of the centre

The proposal addresses all of these challenges and would see the centre flourish and grow.

Rationale for selecting town centre area

This bid covers Houghton Regis Town Centre only. Two of the three wards in Houghton Regis are in the top 20% of deprived wards in the country and the town faces the challenges of significant growth. This bid is transformative and will create vitality and viability for today and the future.

Town centre vision and ambition for change

Vision: for a comprehensive mixed-use development bringing forward derelict sites, reshaping community and health facilities, strengthening and enhancing the retail and commercial offer and adding a vibrancy to the centre with densification of town centre housing provision.

Engagement and alignment of vision

HRTC is in the final stages of developing its Vision 2020-2024. This project is supported by this Vision (draft attached).

Support for town centre vision

HRTC are drawing towards the end of a public consultation (31/01/2020) on its Vision. Preliminary feedback is supportive and encouraging.



Form completed by:	Clare Evans, Town Clerk
Date:	27/01/2020
Return of forms:	
Completed forms to be returned via email (using the contact information on the following page) no later than noon on Friday 31 st January. If you wish to submit more than one project proposal, please complete an additional form. Any queries please contact Sam Caldbeck on 0300 300 4410.	

Central Bedfordshire in contact

Find us online: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Call: 0300 300 4410

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Item (12C)

9722 ASPIRATIONAL LIST OF TOWN FACILITIES

At a recent Members Briefing session with CBC members, the town council was asked to consider a list of facilities that they would like to see come forward within the town as it grows. It was understood that this list could be used as support as developments come forward.

Members were invited to discuss. It was not known what level of detail was needed. It should be noted that within the planning permissions for HRN1 and HRN2 some of the facilities outlined were provided, some may come forward as more detailed plans were presented, and some may come forward should uplift triggers be achieved.

The following list of headings was provided as a prompt: members added specific ideas to the list (additions shown in italics)

- Education – preschool, primary, secondary, further education, *6th Form College, informal education, vocational education.*
- Health – GP, health hub, dentists, hospital, opticians, *children & family centre, chiropody, physiotherapy*
- Community safety – police
- Open space – formal, informal, sports hub / facilities, play sites, MUGA, all weather pitch, splash park, country park (within HRN2) (the quarry site may be another option), *crazy golf, zip wire, ski slope, nature park*
- Health & fitness - leisure centre, trim trails, outdoor exercise equipment, *large swimming pool, circular walk/cycle path around the boundary*
- Civic offices – town council offices, registry office, *multipurpose building encompassing services, maintained grounds for wedding photographs (if registry offices on site), crematorium for obese people as the nearest one was way away.*
- Community facilities - new cemetery, allotments, community centres / meeting rooms / neighbourhood centres, library, youth centre / hub, *speed reduction cameras, updated equipment for speedwatch, multipurpose building encompassing all services, green burial site, community workshops, covered outdoor spaces for youths, covered alfresco eating areas, seating benches, building for food bank storage, outdoor BBQ areas*
- Public realm / street furniture - noticeboards, bins, seats, *signage way markers, higher seats for the elderly*
- Retail – shops, food and drink, evening entertainment, *more variety of merchandise, multibank facility, cinema, bowling alley, go karts, adult ninja park*
- Employment – range of employment outlets from start up units upwards, business, industrial, service, *encourage local shops to use locally sourced produce, hot desk opportunities for small businesses.*

9723 ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE 19TH NOVEMBER 2018 – RECOMMENDATION TO TOWN COUNCIL

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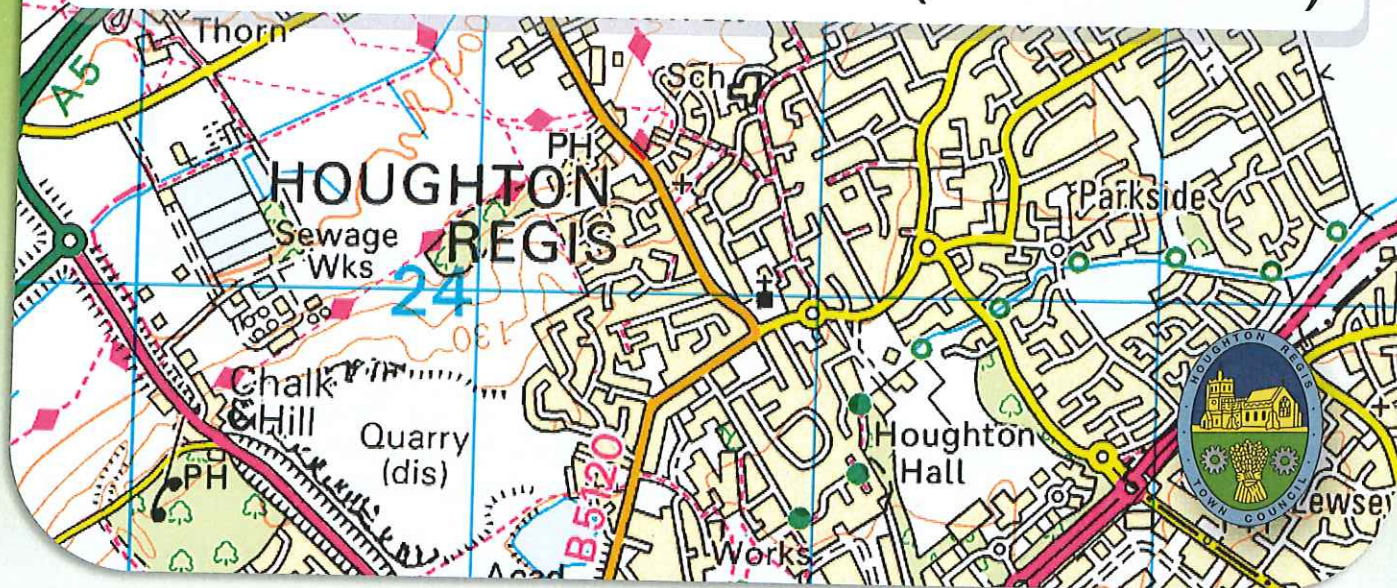


- 1. Former Netto site – currently derelict**
 This is a key site at the entrance to the town centre. It has been derelict for a few years and gives a very poor impression. There are also 2 light industrial properties on the edge of the site, and adjacent to these is the local scout hut. This whole site has the scope to be developed to provide a flagship entrance to the town. This site is large enough to be able to provide a mixed use development including retail, commercial, community facilities, housing, supported by car parking. The scout hut is in poor condition. It would be logical to include the scout hut within the overall schemes community facilities.
- 2. Georgia Service Station – currently operating**
 This is a valued facility within the town, however it is understood that the Operator may consider the re-development of this site. This site is opposite the former Netto's site. There would need to be co-ordination between the 2 sites. The Georgia site has scope for mixed use development inc retail, commercial, community facilities, housing.
- 3. Bedford Court – currently CBC housing**
 This facility is dated. It is a large site closely linked to the town centre. It offers the scope for a higher density housing provision.
- 4. Thomas Whitehead Primary School – currently operating**
 The school is confined by its location. If the education provision could be achieved through other local schools this central site offers the scope for mixed use development inc retail, commercial, community facilities, housing, town centre Parking.
- 5. Bedford Square Centre – comprises NHS Health clinic, library, town centre toilets and community centre.**
 The Community centre is significantly under-used and requires a re-model to become fit for purpose. The centre could be come 2 storey throughout and as such offer enhanced community facilities (potentially including a home for the scouts) and town council offices. It is thought that the NHS Health clinic, library and town centre toilets are fit for purpose.
- 6. Tithe Farm Rd Medical Centre – currently operating**
 Poor quality building with size constraints. Site has scope of high density housing development. Replacement space required.
- 7. HR Town Council offices – currently operating**
 Poor quality building. Size constraints. Not forward facing as a local service deliverer. Site has scope of high density housing development. Replacement office required, suggested as part of the Bedford Square Community Centre.
- 8. Tithe Farm Rd Car Park – currently operating**
 Poor quality car park. Operational issues due to no parking restrictions. Site complexities arising from shop leases. Disabled bays do not meet parking criteria. Scope for public realm improvements.
- 9. Bedford Square Shopping Centre – currently operating**
 Poor quality, built environment. Visually unattractive. Shops back onto highway. Low footfall. Convenience shopping. Flats above. Sub let by retail operators. Scope for mixed use development inc retail, commercial, community facilities, housing.
- 10. Red House – currently being refurbished.**
 Listed building. End use not known at present. Scope for building to play role in town centre – commercial / community use
- 11. All Saints View – currently being developed**
 CBC independent living scheme. 111 housing units. Will play an important role in the town centre. The design of the building is high quality, will highlight poor quality of other local buildings. Development also includes a retail offer. This may threaten the viability of the shopping precinct.
- 12. Village Green & Houghton Hall Park – currently operating**
 There is scope for improved links to these open space resources.

**Future High Streets Fund
 Houghton Regis Town Centre Revitalisation**

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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



Our Vision: Our Town

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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

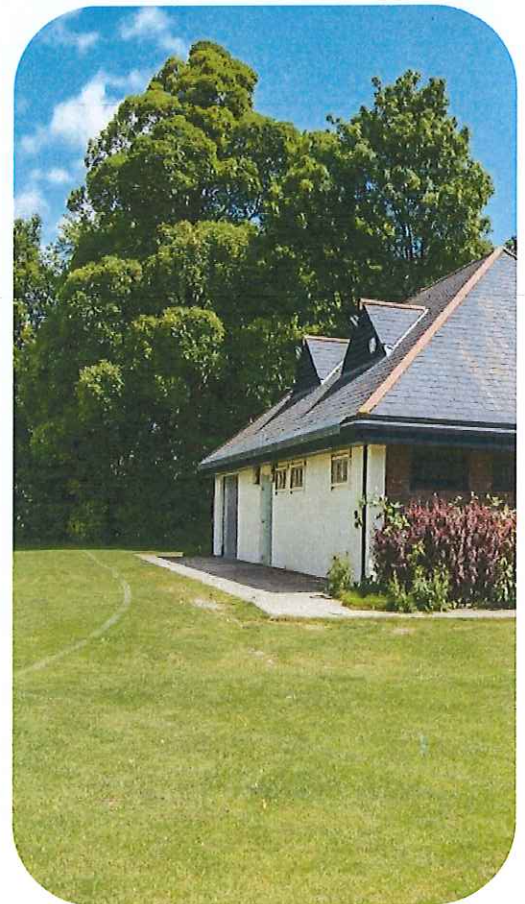


Objective 4: OUR COMMUNITY

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



OUTCOMES ACHIEVED FROM OUR PREVIOUS VISION HOUGHTON REGIS: OUR 2020 VISION

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

The council has:

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

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

The council has:

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

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

The council has:

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

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

The council has:

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

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

The council has:

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