



**Houghton Regis Helpers**  
**07587 004514**



# Houghton Regis Helpers

## Annual Report 2016





# Houghton Regis Helpers Annual Report 2016

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**Houghton Regis Helpers** is your local Good Neighbour Scheme, set up in 2011 to give occasional help to residents in Houghton Regis who are in need. We offer a range of services from gardening to befriending; from light DIY to giving residents lifts to appointments; from shopping to form-filling and letter writing. We can offer advice and act as advocates if family or friends are unavailable.

**Our volunteers** have enhanced DBS checks and are covered by Public Liability Insurance.

## Welcome from the Chair

AGM 21 February 2017

Welcome to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Houghton Regis Helpers.

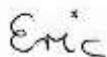
2016 has been an even more eventful year than 2015, with appreciation and recognition of the work of our volunteers from the local and wider community! This included Volunteer Group of the Year for 2016, presented at the Cheering Volunteering Awards in June.

The number of local residents who have been helped with a range of jobs, including driving to appointments, shopping, befriending and gardening, has increased during 2016. In July, several tenants of Habinteg Housing in Clarkes Way worked alongside our volunteers to plant trees in recognition of HM Queen Elizabeth II 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday (see more on pages 5 and 8), and a Christmas Afternoon Tea in December was well received by everyone who attended.

Thank you to our supporters during 2016 – Asda in Dunstable donated £200 through their green token scheme and Morrisons in Houghton Regis gave generously towards Carnival prizes and the Christmas Afternoon Tea. Once again we are grateful to Houghton Regis Town Council for the use of the Council Chamber for our meetings, volunteer events and AGM.

I hope you enjoy reading about the highlights of the year in this Annual Report. You can keep up to date with news of Houghton Regis Helpers on our website, our Facebook page and via our bi-monthly electronic newsletter *E-News*

Warm regards to you all,



Eric Gallucci



## Honorary Officers and Committee Members 2016

Chair	Eric Gallucci	Committee members 2016	
Vice-Chair	Betty Todd	Rae Bird	Terry Jones
Secretary	Jenny Gallucci	Carol Butler	Ange Kings
Treasurer	Sheila North	Susan Goodchild	Peter Todd

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR!

## Promotional and Community Events / Volunteer training and events 2016

### FEBRUARY 2016

#### Pancake Race Day –

winners of the Adult Pancake Race!



### AGM 2016

Special guest Cllr Carole Hegley welcomed everyone and thanked volunteers.



### MARCH 2016

#### Held at Houghton Regis Baptist Church



### APRIL 2016

**Civic Service for outgoing Town Mayor Cllr Rob Shimmin –** several volunteers attended

#### Safeguarding Awareness Training for volunteers – in-house training for 8 volunteers



### MAY 2016

#### Networking –

volunteers met with other good neighbour schemes in South Beds in Caddington.



#### May Fayre

Providing refreshments in the Pavilion on the Green and serving Town Mayor's Tea!

### JUNE 2016



#### Community Engagement Day

Joining other groups and organisations raising awareness of the work we do in the community



#### Mayor's Civic Reception –

incoming Town Mayor Cllr Chris Slough invited volunteers from Houghton Regis Helpers to attend the event at Dunstable Rugby Club

#### Cheering Volunteering Awards

At the Grove Theatre Dunstable, we were presented with the **Volunteer Group of the Year 2016 Award!**



### JULY 2016

**Houghton Regis Carnival –** best stall winners! This year the theme was 'Royalty'



#### Volunteer Event and General meeting



Guest speaker Laraine Rason from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service gave a talk on Fire Safety in the Home.

## JULY 2016

Tree Planting to commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday –



Volunteers helped tenants from Habinteg Housing in Clarke's Way to plant trees and re-plant flower planters around the estate



## SEPTEMBER 2016

Asda Dunstable Green Token Scheme



## THANK YOU ASDA



## OCTOBER 2016



### Nominated for Pride of Houghton Award!

Volunteers enjoyed the evening out – not a winner but thank you to those who nominated us!

### Festival For Older People

Annual event held in the Rufus Centre, Flitwick, organised by Healthwatch and CBC. Several volunteers attended.



**Nominated for a Community Award!** – the Chair and Secretary attended the dinner at Dunstable Conference Centre.

## NOVEMBER 2016



**Celebration of Christmas** event at Grove Theatre – for the 4<sup>th</sup> year Houghton Regis Helpers volunteers were pleased to help at the event, hosted by the Town Mayor. Four volunteers were runners backstage and five volunteers came along to sell programmes to theatre-goers.

## Christmas Craft Fair



Great support from the team of volunteers who helped on the Helpers stand and with serving refreshments at the Christmas Fair in Bedford Square. Supporting the community and other groups in the town, including Houghton Regis Craft and Coffee, is something we enjoy doing!

## DECEMBER 2016

**Mayor's Carol Service** – several representatives from Houghton Regis Helpers attended

**Santa's Grotto** – volunteers in attendance at Santa's Grotto in the Library!

**Networking** – two volunteers attended 'Volunteers and the Law' training with Voluntary Community Action and we also attended South Beds Good Neighbour network meeting

### Afternoon Tea - a special Christmas event for our residents!



### Live entertainment from Roger!

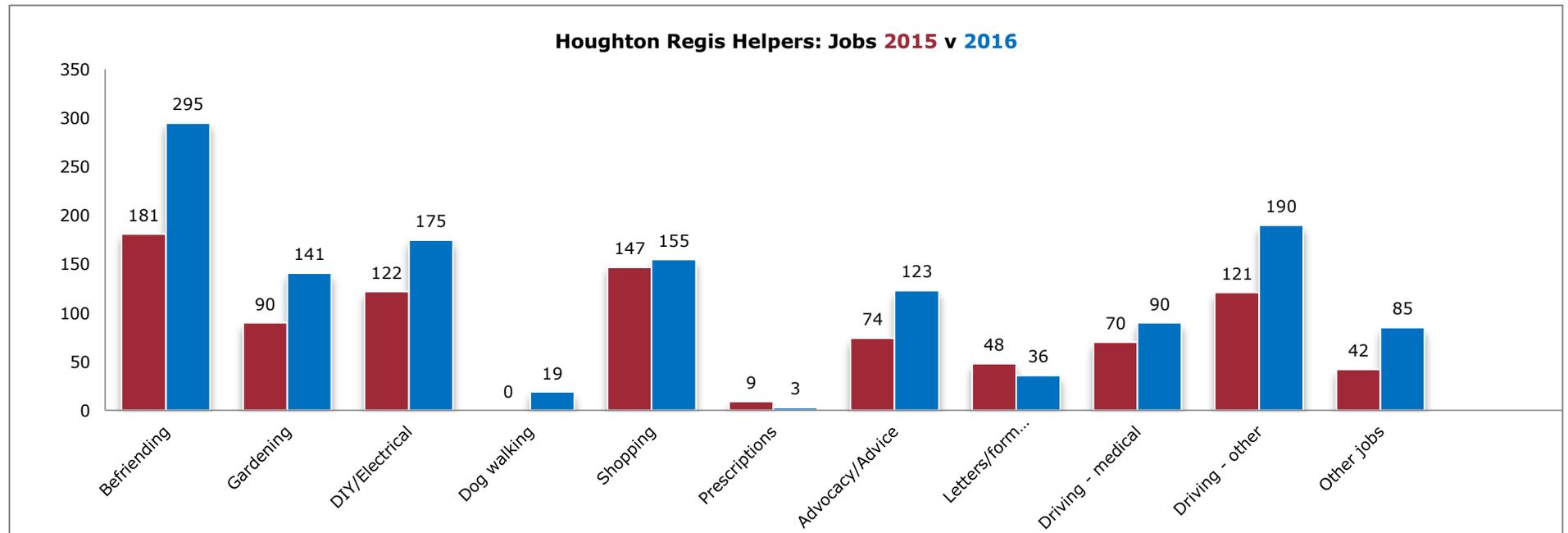


Thank you to Asda and Morrisons for their donations towards the event

## VOLUNTEERS AND CLIENTS 2016

**Volunteers** – during 2016 we welcomed Philip, Elizabeth, Alan and Sandie as new volunteers bringing the total number of volunteers to 35. Several volunteers regularly visit local residents as befrienders, calling in for a cup of tea and a chat; going for walks; shopping and on outings; make phone calls and help with making appointments; help with bills and paperwork; being a good neighbour. Our volunteers completed **1312 jobs in 2016** compared to just over 900 jobs in 2015.

**Clients** – during 2016 we helped 115 local residents in Houghton Regis, and gave advice and guidance to a good number of callers from out of the area. Our clients vary in age, at least one third of those we help are under the age of 60. We regularly respond to requests from other organisations and statutory bodies, including Houghton Regis Town Council, CBC Social Care & Housing, Family Support Workers and the L&D Hospital. In 2016 we received requests for help from 41 residents who had not called before. Our phoneholders handle an average of 25 to 30 calls each week and we also receive requests for help via email, text and by word-of-mouth.



❖ Facts and figures based on our quarterly returns to BRCC (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity)

## SOME OF THE HELP WE OFFER

**Gardening** - 2016 saw an increase in gardening jobs carried out by our volunteers, often working as a team. We help local residents, when possible, to make their gardens more manageable, with the long term aim of encouraging self-sufficiency and enabling more independence.

Overgrown gardens tackled by volunteers



**BEFORE and AFTER**



**Small DIY jobs** and help in the home can range from putting up curtain rails, fitting blinds, moving furniture, putting up shelves, turning mattresses, hanging pictures, help with IT and emails, minor repairs to changing light bulbs and fluorescent tubes, clearing cupboards and helping pack up for a move!

Small DIY jobs



*Other help has included taking items to the Tidy Tip; digging out ponds; sewing curtains; watering plants while resident in hospital; giving advice on bus routes; painting inside cupboards and MORE!*

**Volunteer driving and help with transport**— since we launched in 2011 we have seen a steady increase in requests for help with transport. Our volunteer drivers do a fantastic job taking local residents to medical appointments, such as hospital out-patients; physio; chiropody and dental appointments; to the GP, medical centre and podiatry clinic. We can provide drivers to help residents to go shopping, to bereavement groups, to day centres and clubs and other social events. Occasionally volunteers will accompany residents when using a taxi or in their own car when extra assistance is needed, often when the resident uses mobility aids such as a wheelchair, rollator walker or sticks.

**Helping in the community** – our volunteers are involved in many community events, including providing the teas at May Fayre, promoting the good neighbour scheme at Carnival on the Green and even helping out at Santa's Grotto! In 2016 our volunteers once again supported Houghton Regis Town Council with the delivery of the quarterly Town Crier and the Town Guide, and in July we were invited by Habinteg Housing to assist the residents of Clarke's Way to prepare and plant up their communal planters and to dig the holes for the tree planting ceremony to commemorate HM Queen Elizabeth II 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The event was attended MP Andrew Selous and staff from Habinteg Housing.

Helping the local community



## MORE ABOUT US...

Houghton Regis Helpers is a non-profit making voluntary organisation, with no political or religious affiliations. We offer practical advice, help and support to local residents in need in Houghton Regis. Apart from modest re-imbursment of petrol costs for volunteer drivers and a donation from clients who have regular maintenance of their gardens, we provide a free service.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Constitution:

The Constitution for Houghton Regis Helpers was first agreed by members at our launch in December 2011. The document has been reviewed and revised at regular intervals to ensure consistency with current legislation, policy and procedure. The most recent revisions were agreed by members in July 2016.

### Confidentiality:

When calling our help line 07587 004514 a volunteer will take the client's details and will call them back. We treat all information given to us as confidential and only share with others with the client's permission or in an emergency. Data retained electronically complies with the Data Protection Act.

### Safeguarding:

Our policy is reviewed biennially unless there are changes to legislation. The policy was revised in November 2015 to comply with the Care Act 2014.

Houghton Regis Helpers is committed to ensuring that all vulnerable users of our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. Our policy and procedures safeguard both clients and volunteers and we have a Nominated Designated Person to act in cases of actual or suspected abuse. Our volunteers receive regular Safeguarding Awareness training.

### Equality & Diversity:

Our policy was reviewed in November 2015 and will be reviewed again in 2017. Houghton Regis Helpers good neighbour scheme is committed to achieving equal opportunities in the services it provides. By complying with the Equality Act 2010 this organisation ensures that volunteers and clients are protected from discrimination and are treated fairly.

### Complaints:

Our policy was reviewed in November 2015 and will be reviewed again in 2017. Houghton Regis Helpers aim to provide a good quality voluntary service which meets the needs of the local community.

### Risk Assessment:

In May 2016 the organising committee carried out a detailed Risk Assessment of the activities of Houghton Regis Helpers. This covers possible risks for both clients and volunteers and is available on the website.

**Copies of all our policies and procedures can be found on the website**

## HOW TO CONTACT US...

Phone: **07587 004514**

Email: [houghtonregishelpers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:houghtonregishelpers@hotmail.co.uk)

Website: [www.houghtonregishelpers.co.uk](http://www.houghtonregishelpers.co.uk)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/316615075047027/>

Houghton Regis Helpers group page

Post: Houghton Regis Helpers, c/o Houghton Regis Town Council,  
Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Beds, LU5 5EY

### KEEPING YOU INFORMED...

*E-News* is our bi-monthly electronic newsletter, circulated by email to over 80 volunteers, friends and supporters of Houghton Regis Helpers. The newsletter can be downloaded via the website and paper copies are available on request!



**INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?** Ask us for a Volunteer Welcome Pack!

## EVENTS COMING UP IN 2017...

Some of the events coming up in 2017 when you are welcome to come along and say Hello!

### February 2017

28 Feb - Pancake Race Day 11 a.m. on the Green. Our volunteers will be serving refreshments to participants and spectators in the Pavilion – and entering a race team!

### March 2017

24 March 2-4 p.m. South Beds Good Neighbour Network meeting in Caddington

### April 2017

15 April - Easter Egg Hunt and Information Stalls in Bedford Square & Library area – come and find out more about volunteering with Houghton Regis Helpers

### May 2017

6 May - May Fayre on the Green. Visit the Pavilion for your Afternoon Tea, provided by Houghton Regis Helpers

### June 2017

6 June - Cheering Volunteering Awards at the Grove Theatre, Dunstable – annual Central Beds Council event celebrating Volunteers Week. Nominations for awards now open until 31 March 2017. <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council/stronger-communities/awards-event.aspx>

### July 2017

8 July Carnival – theme 'From Hollywood to Bollywood'. Come and visit our stall on the Green.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

**Thank you** to **Houghton Regis Town Council** for your continued support of our group, for the use of the Council Chamber for meetings and for inviting our volunteers to be involved in the many community events during 2016.



**Thank you** to **Asda Dunstable** and **Morrisons Houghton Regis** for your kind donations in 2016

Annual Report edited by the Secretary February 2017

#### Acknowledgements and thanks to:

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