



# Houghton Regis Helpers



A large blue circle contains a graphic of two hands shaking. One hand is wearing a dark blue sleeve and the other is wearing a dark red sleeve. Overlaid on the hands is the text "Annual Report 2018" in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Annual Report 2018**

Your local Good Neighbour Scheme, helping others in need  
As a **Volunteer** you can help make a difference!



# Annual Report 2018

## Houghton Regis Helpers

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Teamwork!



DIY; Gardening; Shopping;  
Driving; Befriending; Advising



**Houghton Regis Helpers** is your local Good Neighbour Scheme, a voluntary organisation now entering our eighth year. Set up in 2011, under the guidance of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and support from Houghton Regis Town Council, our volunteers give occasional help to residents in who are in need. We offer a range of services from gardening to befriending; from light DIY (indoors and outdoors) to giving residents lifts to appointments; from shopping to form-filling and letter writing; from collecting prescriptions to accompanying residents to social events. We organise monthly coffee mornings 'Mainly for Men' and occasional Afternoon teas as well as volunteer events, training and guest speakers. We offer advice and act as advocates if family or friends are unavailable and we can often be seen at community events. **Our volunteers** are covered by Public Liability Insurance and those who work directly with vulnerable adults have enhanced DBS checks.



## Welcome from the Chair

AGM 20 February 2019

I welcome you to the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Houghton Regis Helpers.

In 2018 we continued to see a rise in the number of individual residents, their families and other professionals requesting and receiving help and it has been a pleasure to recruit more volunteers during the year. I cannot thank our volunteers enough for their hard work and support, willingly giving up their time to help our local residents and the community.

Highlights for me during 2018 include sharing opportunities for Intergenerational events with our Town's Youth Council and other young people, especially the Christmas Afternoon Tea and Talent Show in December. In March I was delighted to be presented, on behalf of Houghton Regis Helpers, with a Citizenship Certificate '*In recognition of great and valuable services to the Community*' by the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, and in October we were pleased to be nominated once again for 'Pride of Houghton' and our volunteers enjoyed the opportunity to get together at the awards evening. The Remembrance Service and WW1 Commemoration event in November was inspiring and brought all age-groups in our community together for this special occasion.

Houghton Regis Helpers continue to work in partnership with several other groups and professionals for the benefit of vulnerable residents, many of whom need support to continue living independently. Befriending, help with indoor and outdoor DIY jobs, advice and advocacy work, and help with form-filling and paperwork have been key areas of help given by our volunteers during 2018.

Looking ahead to the coming year, Social Prescribing will become a more important role for our group and we are looking forward to working in even closer liaison with the Community Well-Being Champion. Our volunteer drivers frequently accompany residents to social meetings and events, contributing to the improvement of the social well-being of those who would not otherwise be able to get out and about. Our Mainly for Men coffee mornings are also proving a success in building friendships and meeting the social needs of the gentlemen who attend. A varied programme of quizzes, board game challenges, guest speakers, and charity fund-raising events - including Cancer Research UK and Macmillan – has been enjoyed by all this year.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work during 2018 in this Annual Report. Regular updates and news of Houghton Regis Helpers can be found on our website, our Facebook page and via our bi-monthly electronic newsletter *E-News*.

Warm regards to you all,

Eric Gallucci (Chair)

Honorary Officers 2018				Committee members 2018			
Chair	Eric Gallucci (2018 to 2020)	Secretary	Jenny Gallucci (2017 to 2019)	Rae Bird	Carol Butler	Yvonne Farrell	Susan Goodchild
Vice-Chair	Terry Jones (2017 to 2019)	Treasurer	Sheila North (2018 to 2019)	Ange Kings	Sue Thorne	Betty Todd	Peter Todd

**Volunteers 2018** – at the start of 2018 we had 36 volunteers and we have been pleased to welcome James, Sarah, Donna, John, Christine and Bryan during the year. Three volunteers left us due to work commitments and for personal reasons but we are delighted to welcome back Lucy. We have been encouraged by the commitment of younger volunteers and 2019 will see the continuation of our Intergenerational Project, which started in the summer of 2017 when Houghton Regis Helpers were awarded a Cheering Volunteering ‘*Inspiring Volunteering*’ Grant by Central Bedfordshire Together.

### **Volunteering with Houghton Regis Helpers**

We continue to strive to recruit volunteers of all ages and our members are looking ahead to succession planning during the coming year to ensure the sustainability of the group. As a volunteer with our good neighbour scheme you CAN help make a difference! With any time to spare to help others, no matter how little, we welcome applications from anyone over the age of 18 to join us. If you are under the age of 18 you are still welcome to join the group as a volunteer helping at community events or helping residents under the supervision of a DBS-checked volunteer.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life! Where else will you find friendship with a retired legal secretary or teacher, a health care assistant or a nursery nurse, an HGV driver or a local Councillor, former shop assistants or engineer, an off-shore rig worker, a bookmaker or a butcher!

### **Roles:**

The roles of a volunteer are varied and may well depend on your talents and skills. The help we give can range from befriending to outdoor work such as gardening and light DIY; from helping with form-filling to shopping for a resident; from changing a light bulb or collecting a prescription to being a volunteer driver and accompanying a resident to a hospital appointment or social activity.

An important role is Phoneholder: responsible for the managing of the mobile phone, on a rota basis, to receive calls, arrange ‘jobs’, keeping contact with clients and volunteers. All calls are written up in a log and the phoneholder manages the diary – a role for anyone who likes to chat and enjoys record-keeping!

The Organising Committee consists of Honorary Officers, who are elected for two years – Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer - and other committee members who are elected annually at each AGM.

Chair: chairs all meetings / can call special meetings / has casting vote if votes are equal / responsible for leadership of the group / ensures policies and procedures are followed and reviewed / external representative of group / responds to complaints and other issues

Vice-Chair: undertakes the duties of the Chair in his/her absence / supports the Chair in decision-making

Secretary: administration of meetings / takes minutes of meetings / record-keeping, including volunteer and client records / GDPR processor / maintains log of jobs and writes reports / handles correspondence / manages volunteers / recruitment of new volunteers and DBS checks / shares information, arranges events, guest speakers and so on

Treasurer: maintains accounts and banking / oversees financial transactions / presents up-to-date statement of accounts at meetings / presents annual statement of accounts at AGM

Committee member: attends meetings (at least 4 per year) / shared governance of group with Honorary Officers / contributes to decision-making / may represent group at external events

Volunteers: helping others, individually or as part of a team.

Fancy getting involved? Interested in Volunteering?

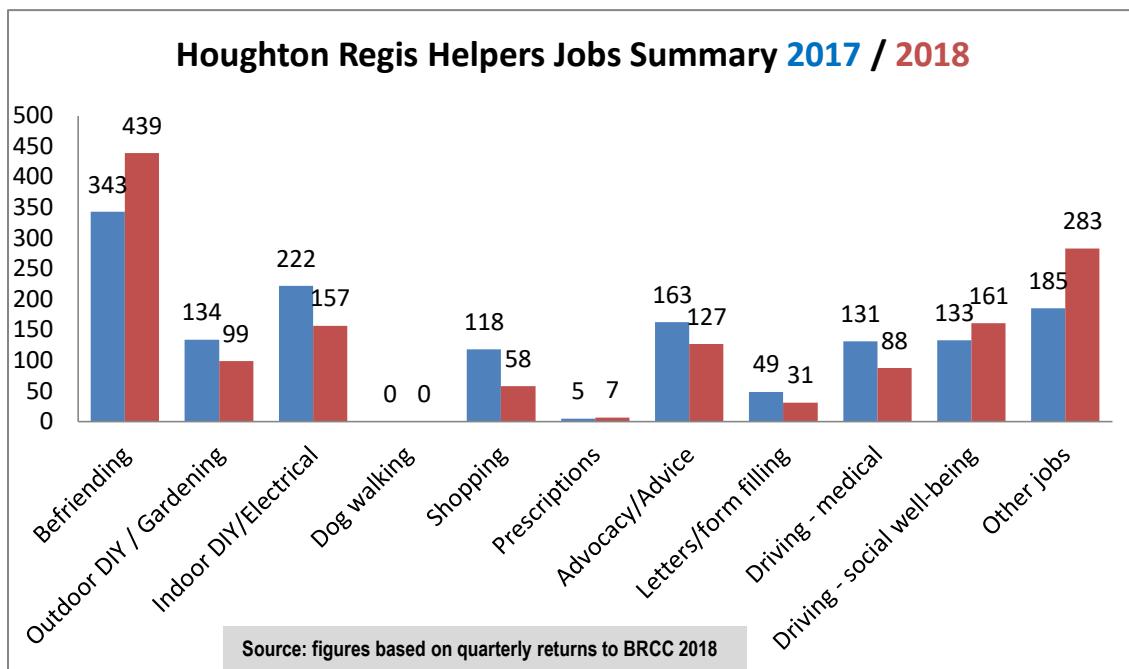
Contact the Secretary and ask for a Volunteer Welcome Pack!



**The Honorary Officers and Committee thank all our volunteers for your dedication to helping others, your commitment and goodwill, your care and compassion.**

**THANK YOU**

**Clients 2018** – our volunteers supported 147 individual residents during 2018, with 49 individuals requesting help for the first time. In addition to the help given to individual residents in Houghton Regis we have responded to requests for assistance, advice and information from a range of other professionals and community groups. These include professionals in the field of health and social care, such as social workers, family support workers and staff from the L&D Hospital social care team, as well as callers from the Community Mental Health team, the Disability Resource Centre, Central Bedfordshire Housing team, Beacon House, Noah Enterprise and Carers in Bedfordshire. Partnership working with Houghton Regis Town Council, Houghton Regis Heritage Society and Habinteg Housing Association continues and the ‘Helpers’ have been involved in a variety of community events during the year – some of these are highlighted in this report.

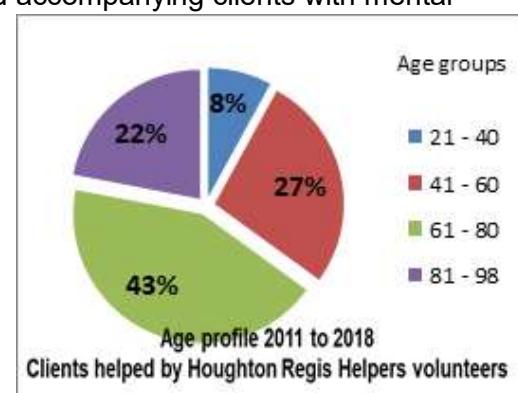


During the year our phoneholders and volunteers have signposted individuals, including callers from other areas, to a wide range of services and other sources of help and supported many relatives of our vulnerable residents. **The total number of recorded ‘jobs’ for 2018 was 1450** – a slight decrease on 2017

(1473) - however, several requests for help have been more challenging and the number of residents with mental health needs is on the increase. As a group we are fortunate to have volunteers with the compassion, skills and expertise to support the needs of those who call on us for help – including...wallpapering and painting; acting as a mediator; visiting and accompanying clients with mental health difficulties on outings, walks, to appointments or meeting up for coffee and a chat and even knitting together.

The age profile of the residents who call on Houghton Regis Helpers for help is diverse, as shown in the pie-chart (right). 33% are under the age of 60, and a growing number of clients are under the age of 40.

How did you hear about Houghton Regis Helpers?			
Word of Mouth (relative/neighbour/friend)	17%	Mental Health Team	3%
CBC / Town Council / Councillor	15%	Facebook / Website	3%
Social Services / Hospital / O.T.	14%	GP / Community Matron	3%
Carers / Housing Assn Manager	11%	Talks to groups	3%
Leaflet	8%	Other GNS	2%
Article in Town Crier	7%	Library / Shops	2%
Other organisations (DRC, Keech, Age UK)	6%	Day Centre	1%
Information Days	4%	Church / Salvation Army	1%



Publicity and promotional activities are key to keeping the local community informed. Word of mouth is the most common way individual residents hear about our service. The table (left) shows other ways in which residents self-refer or are referred to us when in need.

## **Challenges...** one of the biggest challenges of 2018 was ensuring Houghton Regis Helpers good neighbour scheme is compliant with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).

As a voluntary organisation working with volunteers, clients and other organisations, Houghton Regis Helpers handles personal information about individuals and therefore has a duty to protect that information under the Data Protection Act 1998. Under the **GDPR**, which came into force on 25 May 2018, the organisation has an obligation to comply with current law when collecting, processing and sharing personal data. The legislation allows for volunteers, service-users (clients) and other contacts to request to see the personal data held on them and it requires organisations to comply with eight principles for data protection and uphold the rights of individuals:

- the right to be informed
- the right to erasure
- the right to object
- the right of access
- the right to restrict processing
- the right not to be subject to automated decision-making including profiling
- the right to rectification
- the right to data portability

The committee worked together to write and ratify the group's Data Protection Policy; Data Protection Privacy Notice for Volunteers; and Data Protection Notice for Service-Users (clients). Consent that permission has been given to process, store and share personal data (when required under the Data Protection Policy) cannot be assumed and all volunteers, new clients and current clients have been contacted and written consent obtained. This process required new forms and, in many instances, personal contact with individuals to explain the legal requirements. Recipients of our regular newsletter and other information and updates via email have also been contacted and consent to subscribe to the email list has been received. All volunteers, clients and subscribers have been made aware that, if at any time they wish to, consent can be withdrawn.

This year the committee also reviewed and revised the following documents: Equality & Diversity Policy; Complaints Policy; Gardening Policy; and the Client Record Sheet. All the policy documents can be downloaded from our website: [www.houghtonregishelpers.co.uk](http://www.houghtonregishelpers.co.uk)

## **... and Achievements 2018 –** working with other community groups and supporting community events throughout the year brought rewards and a sense of goodwill.

**In February 2018 we held our 6<sup>th</sup> AGM on the coldest evening of the year!**



February also brought the news that Houghton Regis Helpers had been nominated for a High Sheriff of Bedfordshire's Citizenship Award. Although unsuccessful in achieving the award the group was presented, as mentioned in the Welcome from the Chair, with a Citizenship Certificate '*In recognition of great and valuable services to the Community*'.



Fundraising events at Easter Fair, Car Boot Sale at Houghton Rocks and Christmas Fair!



And in September a team of volunteers supported Habinteg Housing Community Day in Clarks Way, painting the communal planters!

## Other News of Activities in 2018...

### Mainly for Men Coffee Mornings

In November 2017 we launched our coffee mornings '**Mainly for Men**', in response to feedback from male residents who feel particularly socially isolated and in need of companionship with other men. Meeting monthly, the coffee mornings have proved to be a hit! During 2018 the gentlemen have enjoyed quizzes, board games, an outing to Houghton Hall Park, preparing poppies for the Remembrance of WW1 display in Houghton Regis and lots of chat and good humour.

In July the gentlemen held a Sponsored Silence and raised an amazing £202.50 for **Cancer Research UK**.

AND in October £128.50 was raised for **Macmillan Cancer Support** at a well-attended coffee morning, including our Town Mayor Cllr Ken Wattingham. Lots of cake, a raffle and fun and games!



At other sessions the gentlemen and our volunteers enjoyed a talk on local history from members of Houghton Regis Heritage Society and a visit by the local PCSO who spoke about Burglary Prevention.

'**Mainly for Men**' coffee mornings are held on the first Wednesday in the month from 11.00 to 12.30 in the front lounge at Red House Court, Clarkes Way, Houghton Regis. All are welcome, including ladies if accompanying a gentleman! **And it's FREE!**



**May Fair** – serving Afternoon Tea to Town Mayor Cllr Jo Hillyard, May Queen and attendants!



### Volunteer Events

Volunteers' Week – Cheering Volunteering Awards



Thank you lunch



Cyber Prevent Presentation

**Good Neighbour Scheme Network meetings**



**Christmas Afternoon Tea and Talent Show**



**PLUS!** Safeguarding Awareness Training; Talks to Carers in Bedfordshire and Noah Enterprise... and MORE!

*Want to know more about becoming a volunteer?*

### **Ask us for a Volunteer Welcome Pack!**

The pack includes an Expression of Interest Form;  
Guidelines for good practice and keeping yourself safe;  
GDPR and Data Protection Privacy Notice; Volunteer Driver declaration.

***We welcome volunteers of all ages***

- ❖ ***if under 18 you will carry out volunteering under supervision***
- ❖ ***you must be over 25 to sign up as a volunteer driver***

### **How to contact us...**

By phone: **07587 004514**

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

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

Facebook: [Houghton Regis Helpers group page](#)

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



**E-News** is our bi-monthly electronic newsletter with an email circulation to over 100 subscribers (volunteers, other professionals and supporters). The newsletter is also available to read on our website and paper copies are posted to those who cannot access the **E-News** electronically. If you wish to subscribe to the mailing list or contribute to **E-News** you are welcome to contact the editor by phone or email.

**Thank you** to **Houghton Regis Town Council** for your continued support of Houghton Regis Helpers and for the use of the Council Chamber for meetings during 2018



**Thank you** to those who generously donated to our funds during 2018, including grateful clients and local businesses including **Asda Dunstable** and **Morrisons Houghton Regis**



### **FINANCE REPORT**

**Thank you to Sheila, our Treasurer for keeping the accounts so well.  
The independently examined **end of year accounts 2018** will be presented at the AGM.**

Annual Report edited by the Secretary February 2019

Photographers: Joanna Cross Photography, Julie Clark (Habinteg Housing), Mike Fayers (BRCC), Eric Gallucci, Jenny Gallucci, Sarah Gelsthorpe