

HOUGHTON CONQUEST

Village Newsletter

October 2026

Have a Berry Nice Autumn!



Your Newsletter, for Your Village

HOUGHTON CONQUEST PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Members	Accountabilities
PCllr Liz Lovell (Chair)	Sports Field; Allotments; Orchard; Tree Warden; SIDs
PCllr Bryn Whittaker (Vice Chair)	Planning Sub-Committee:
Jo Graves (Parish Clerk)	Website; Defibrillator
PCllr Jean Ashcroft	Police Liaison/Community Safety / Village Hall
PCllr Alan Ross	Highways
PCllr Sarah Sharpe	School Liaison; Wixams and GP Surgery, V4 Defibrillator Newsletter (Newsletter Editor Lucy Spencer)
PCllr Clinton Taylor	East/West Rail and Wixams Station; Universal; Wixams and GP Surgery
PCllr Malcolm Gosling	
PCllr James Sebborn	

Parish Council Clerk: Jo Graves

T: 07563 527415

E: clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

The Parish Council meet on the second Thursday of the month in the Village Hall committee room at 7.30pm (except August and December). Parishioners are invited to attend the meetings, and time is allocated for them to address the council. If you have any matter you wish to draw to the attention of the Parish Council, you can contact any Councillor, the Parish Clerk, or attend a meeting. If you wish to attend a meeting, please notify the clerk or the chairman before the meeting, so that you can speak during the time allotted.

CENTRAL BEDS INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR: Rebecca Hares



Should you have any issues that I may be able to help with please contact me:

E: bex.hares@gmail.com

Tel: 0300 300 8505.

UCIlr Bec Hares

Parish Council Website: houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

You can register for email updates from the Houghton Conquest Parish Council by clicking on the "subscribe" button on the home page. We pride ourselves in only posting items that we believe are important to Houghton Conquest/Wixam residents.

Next Newsletter:

The closing date for any articles for the December 2026 issue of The Houghton Conquest Village Newsletter is 20 November 2026.

You can send any articles to hcvillagenews@gmail.com or via the Parish Clerk (clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk).

All contributions are welcome but are subject to the editor's discretion as to size and content.

Parish Council Updates

Chair's Report: Annual Meeting



Hi Everyone, and welcome to the Autumn edition of the newsletter.

As the weather starts to cool down and the evenings draw in we look forward to autumnal days with the leaves changing and gentle mists greeting us in the mornings.

The new football season has commenced down at the sports field with Wixams Wanderers playing regularly. It is good to see our young people enjoying sport and using our facilities. The FA grant means that we now have additional funding to put towards pitch maintenance and this should help to ensure the future of our playing field. We have also been given some funding through S106 contributions for a couple of benches to put down on the field. This work will be carried out in the next few weeks.

The project to provide some accessible swings on the play park is still waiting for final confirmation of funding from Central Beds, but as soon as this is available, we will commence works to install two new swings and some musical equipment to improve accessible play for all of our village children. We will also be upgrading some of the safety surfaces beneath existing equipment.

In an exciting development for the village, you will have noticed that our school has changed from a Lower school to a Primary, as part of the move from 3 tier to 2 tier education across Central Beds and the rest of the country. To accommodate the 2 extra classes for years 5 and 6, a new classroom block, sports pitch and multi-use games area has been proposed, which alongside a refurbishment of the main school building will significantly improve

the school's facilities. The planning application for this has been discussed and commented on by the Parish Council with a view to it being completed for September 2027.

With regard to highways matters we have received notification that Central Beds propose to 'reclose' Bedford Road in order to adjust the priority signage. As I am sure you are all aware there has been some confusion regarding priority and right of way with the give way signs contradicting the priority signage. It is to be hoped that this will be resolved alongside some of the other issues on that stretch of Bedford Road.

We also have other on-going speed calming projects. We have purchased two additional speed indicator devices. One will be put on Four-Acre Drive with the other on Meadow Road as you drive off the B530. It is hope these will reinforce the speed limits and remind drivers to watch their speed. We are also actively recruiting volunteers to join a Speed Watch Scheme. We need named volunteers before Bedfordshire Police will agree to start the necessary training. If you are concerned about vehicles speeding in your area please contact the Clerk clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk and volunteer to be part of this project. We need at least four volunteers in order to start the Scheme.

At our September meeting we also discussed the Central Beds Transport Plan. The plan contains the usual proposals for future strategies to improve public transport and increase options other than using cars. However, there was very little of substance to show how CBC intend to action any of these future plans, strategies or policies since their hands are tied by a lack of finance. Still, their intentions are good.

Looking to the near future we have agreed to donate the usual amount to Royal British Legion in support of the annual Poppy

Appeal. This year our contribution will not only buy a wreath for placing on the memorial on Remembrance Sunday on November 8th but will also provide additional lamppost poppies which Pcllrs Ross, Taylor and Sebborn have agreed to put up. We will of course include the additional poppies donated by Cherryfield Ecology last year.

Once these have been removed, we will be able to put up the Christmas lights. As in previous years we have agreed to increase the number of lamppost spirals and buy extra motifs. Unfortunately, the number of motifs we can buy is restricted by a lack of storage space. Because of their size they take up a lot of room in our storage area and thus we have a limit to the number we increase by each year. There will, however, be more lights around Four-Acre Drive, Meadow Road and Pritchard Place. We will, of course, be dressing the Christmas trees.

Well, that's about it for now but if you want any further information about what your Parish council is doing all of our minutes are available on our website <https://houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk>. You can also contact the Clerk if you have any queries or issues that you would like raised at any of our meetings.

Liz; **PCLlr Liz Lovell**

The Chair's report is intended to provide a general update. Agendas and approved minutes can be viewed on the Parish Council website www.houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

POLICE & HIGHWAYS MATTERS

In an emergency, always call 999, however anyone wishing to report any crime that does not merit a 999-emergency call, please either ring 101 or report a crime on-line by visiting www.bedfordshire.police.uk where you will be offered a variety of options for reporting.



You can also phone **CRIMESTOPPERS** on 0800 555 111, this is quick and easy to do, and you can be anonymous.

Local Community Police Team

The local community police team are now based in a new Hub in Ampthill, which will enable them to respond more quickly when they are needed.

The Chief Inspector on our community police team, C.I. Goldsmith, always urges the public to report problems, as they cannot do anything unless members of the public report their concerns! Please also note we also have a new appointment to the team, Inspector Janine Graham.

PCIr Jean Ashcroft

POTHLES

Whilst we continually report the multitude of potholes in and around the village via the CBC FixMyStreet app, it is always helpful for others to post these too, as multiple postings will draw more attention to them and potentially get them fixed more quickly.

FixMyStreet: <https://fixmystreet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk> or by downloading the app on your phone.

Houghton Conquest Crime Figures 2026

August: Total 14

Offence	Number	Date	Place
Assault with injury	6	9 Aug 11 Aug 26 Aug 29 Aug	Rowan Road Alder Street Rowan Road Four Acre Drive
Assault without injury	2	8 Aug 15 Aug	Rowan Road Mapleleaf Road
Robbery of personal property	1	11 Aug	Bellflower Road
Public fear, alarm or distress	1	31 Aug	Millbrook Road
Malicious communications	1	26 Aug	Undisclosed
Stalking	1	9 Aug	Undisclosed
Theft or unauthorised taking of motor vehicle	1	2 Aug	Pritchard Place
Other theft	1	29 Aug	Four Acre Drive

Previous 12 months

August 2025: 8	February 2026: 16
September 2025: 7	March 2026: 6
October 2025: 16	April 2026: 18
November 2025: 14	May 2026: 12
December 2025: 10	June 2026: 27
January 2026: 7	July 2026: 24

SIDs – (Bracketed figures from previous report)

9 July – 10 September 26

0046 (The Grove) 20mph zone

<i>Arriving from The Grove towards High Street:</i>		
Violations:	28.10%	(27.14%) Up
Of which:	89.28% between 21-25 10.71 Above 26+	(90.73%) (9.26%)
Average speed:	18mph	(18mph)
V85	22mph	(22mph)
Average vehicles p/day	424	(553)
Total in period:	26,814	(14,895)
Highest recorded	45mph	(40mph)

<i>Departing from High Street towards The Grove:</i>		
Violations:	36.94%	(36.61%) Up
Of which:	81.90% between 21-25 18.09% above 25+	(81.75%) (18.24%)
Average speed:	19 mph	(19mph)
V85	23mph	(23mph)
Average vehicles p/day	237	(274)
Total in period:	15,005	(7,669)
Highest recorded	47mph	(54mph)

V85 = The 85th percentile. This is the average speed of the 15th fastest vehicle per hundred vehicles in the period being assessed. This figure is one used by the police and they will not consider action unless it exceeds the level at which they would issue a ticket i.e.: 35 in a 30-mph zone.

0156 (Bedford Road) 30mph zone

Victoria Drive and Mill Lane

<i>Arriving from The Royal Oak:</i>		
Violations:	6.99%	(6.14%) Up
Of which:	83.69% between 31-35 16.30% above 35+	(86.99%) (13.00%)
Average speed:	24mph	(23mph)
V85	28mph	(28mph)
Average vehicles p/day	614	(411)
Total in period:	32,515	(11,487)
Highest recorded	69mph	(58mph)

<i>Departing to the Royal Oak:</i>		
Violations:	9.01%	(8.45%) Up
Of which:	84.62% between 31-35 15.37% above 35+	(87.15%) (12.84%)
Average speed:	24mph	(23mph)
V85	29mph	(29mph)
Average vehicles p/day	619	(437)
Total in period:	32,777	(12,222)
Highest speed:	65mph	(56mph)

0047 (Meadow Road) 30mph zone

<i>Arriving – From A530 towards Pitchfork Way</i>		
Violations:	3.31%	(4.36%) Down
Of which:	82.76% between 31-35 17.23% above 35+	(83.70%) (16.29%)
Average speed:	22mph	(22mph)
V85	27mph	(27mph)
Average vehicles p/day	540	(540)

Total in period:	18,907	(18,907)
Highest recorded	63mph	(60mph)

<i>Departing – Pitchfork Way towards A530</i>		
Violations:	3.32%	(5.24%) Down
Of which:	85.47% between 31-35 14.52% above 35+	(84.50%) (15.41%)
Average speed:	21mph	(22mph)
V85	27mph	(28mph)
Average vehicles p/day	327	(320)
Total in period:	23,071	(11,202)
Highest speed:	68mph	(57mph)

New benefice arrangements are in place from September. All Saints, Houghton and All Saints, Wilstead are now part of a 3 church, Elstow Team ministry under Fr Paul Messam with a Non-Stipendiary Minister and two Readers. This will, together form a Wixams group.



Our new Ministry Team:

Fr Paul Messam: Team Rector

John Hinson: Reader

Helen Harbron Applegarth:

Reader

Rev'd Crispen Nyatsuro:

Associate Priest.

Rev'd Crispen was licensed at a service in Elstow on 17 Sept and we welcome him to preside at Communion service on 27 September. Our retiring Reader, Robert Heley was thanked for his 40 years of service and made 'Reader Emeritus'.

Any contact for the 3 churches re. services, Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals etc. should be made to:

Team Rector: Rev'd Fr Paul Messam SCP, Tel: (01234) 261477.
email: vicar@elstow-abbey.org.uk

Team Ministry Website: www.elstowteamministry.org.uk

Church Services October / November

4 October	09:30: HARVEST – Morning Praise – John Hinson. Followed by Coffee and Cake
11 October	09.30: Holy Communion, Rev'd Crispen Nyatsuro
18 October	09.30: Morning Praise, John Hinson
25 October	09.30: Holy Communion, Rev'd Crispen Nyatsuro
1 November	09.30: Holy Communion – Fr. Paul Messam 18:30: All Souls Service – Elstow Abbey – Fr. Paul Messam
8 November	10.50am for 11.00am . at war memorial. Remembrance Service followed by Holy Communion – Rev'd Crispen Nyatsuro
15 November	9.30am – Morning Praise – John Henry Food donations please to Bedford Food Bank
22 November	09.30: Holy Communion, Rev'd Crispen Nyatsuro
28 November	10:00 – 16:00:Elstow Abbey – Festival of Carols
29 November	10.00: ADVENT SUNDAY – ELSTOW ABBEY Service of Confirmation and Holy Communion. _ Bishop Stephen Venner <i>Note: No morning services at Wilstead and Houghton Conquest.</i>

Church Wardens: Gary Mudd (01234 741871) and Chris Robertson (01234 741964). Let us know of any concerns. We'd love to hear from local Christians who'd like to be involved in taking our church forward with ideas for worship and events.

We always need more volunteers/helpers to run events, sort recycling etc. If you can give some time to help at Teas, Lunches, Jumble Sales, Concerts etc. Please let **Sarah Hannant** know on **07900 927050** with your details. It would be good to increase data base of those we can call on. Sarah now has a WhatsApp group set up for this (HC Church Volunteers & Bakers) if you can participate there!

Looking at Fundraising: We now have postcards in church which have a QR/ telephone link for the Church Giving scheme. I am pleased to say that we now have a functioning card/phone reader in church and at events for your donations/purchases. This gives your donation back to the church and can be Gift-Aided, increasing its value by 25% If you would like to support the work of the church/upkeep of this 'at risk', Grade 1 listed building do let me know and I can pop one through your door. This doesn't mean that you have to attend church services, though we'd love to see you there.

Events and Dates for your diary:

Our thanks to all who again supported our **Church Beer Fest!**

Particular thanks to our Sponsors: Bedford Fuels, Mark 1 Heating & Plumbing; Rushton Electrical; Dave Thomas and others. To our supportive pubs and brewers: Homes, Towcester Mill, Potbelly and The Stone Jug. To Revd Mike for the potato oven and Clay for the excellent Pizzas and to the stalwart small team that got us through the weekend relatively unscathed! If you'd like it to happen next year do contact Gary Some more hands to set up/serve and take down would help a lot. We raised an estimated £1,450.97 this year so again, thank you.

2027 date for your diary: 10 - 12 September.

HARVEST: 4 October:

Please give to our harvest collection of food items for Bedford Food Bank. We have no Harvest Lunch this year, sadly but come along to the celebration service and help eat lots of cake!

Here is the present list of things the Food Bank require – Note that they do not want fresh produce: *Jars of Cooking Sauces; Cup A Soup; Long Life Sponge Puddings; Tinned Vegetarian Meals; Bars of Chocolate; Tinned Vegetables; Jars of Jam; Cereal Bars; Bottles of Squash 750ml; Washing Up Liquid*

ALL SOULS: 1 November – 18:30

A special service to remember the departed at Elstow Abbey.

REMEMBRANCE: Usual service at the war memorial at 11am followed by Holy Communion in church.

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL: 11 - 13 December:

Our usual festival to light up the church and look forward to the Christmas Season! Contact Gary to book a tree to decorate for your business, club or family. Children sing at the outside tree on Friday followed by mulled wine and nibbles in church to see the trees. On 12 December join us for a service of 9 lessons and Carols in church with the Cantamus Choir.

Christmas Eve:

15:00 Christingle, 21:30 Christmas Eve Mass. Midnight mass at Elstow Abbey 11.30pm.

Please check posters and Facebook page for further information and events.

Please contact me should you be interested:

07762 589743. garymudd@tiscali.co.uk

100 Club:

August: £10: Chris & Laura; Mark Stanbridge; Andy Tayler.

September: £10: Alex Juffs; Jean Phillips; Steve Circuit.

If you would like to join, please contact:

Carol Juffs (01234 381393) or Jackie Davis (01234 740635)

Best Wishes, Gary Mudd

HOUGHTON CONQUEST CHARITIES

Incorporating

The Clerke & Wilde Educational Foundation

££££

Does this concern ME???

££££

- **Yes**, if you live within the Parish and would like help with the cost of anything “educational” 😊
- Age is no barrier
- “Educational” is interpreted broadly, and can include school, College, University, Apprenticeships and so much more!!

We are only a small charity, but can help with grants towards the cost of: Books, equipment, field study trips, Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions, Outward Bound activities, Coaching Fees, etc, etc...

SO, why not head to the Parish Council website for more info on our history and aims using the following link:

[houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk/the-parish/Houghton conquest charities](http://houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk/the-parish/Houghton-conquest-charities)

where there is also a link to a PDF of our application form and instructions on where to send it?

If other charities cannot help, we might just be able to make the difference for you or a member of your family living here. Our next formal meeting of the Trustees is in November, but any applications needing more urgent consideration can be shared and discussed earlier.

Helen Mudd (Hon secretary to the Trustees)



10 October 2026 (Evening): Dead Of Winter

A widowed fisherwoman, travelling alone through snowbound northern Minnesota, interrupts the kidnapping of a teenage girl. Hours from the nearest town and with no phone service, she realizes that she is the young girl's only hope. With Emma Thompson.

7 November 2026 (Evening): The Last Bus

Returning to the past, he found his future.

Widower Tom, on the recent passing of his wife Mary, uses his free bus pass to travel the length of Britain from John O'Groats in Caithness to Land's End in Cornwall, their shared birthplace, using only local buses. It's an incident-fuelled nostalgia trip and his encounters with local people make him a media phenomenon. Tom is totally unaware and to his surprise on arrival at Land's End he's greeted as a celebrity. With Timothy Spall.

5 December 2026 (Evening): Song Sung Blue

Inspired by a legend. Bound by a dream.

Based on a true story, two down-on-their-luck musicians form a joyous Neil Diamond tribute band, proving it's never too late to find love and follow your dreams

As ever, our bar and kiosk will be open before the films and during the interval. Doors open at Parkside Hall in Ampthill at 6.45pm with the film commencing at 7.30pm. Tickets (£5 for adults, Under-18s free) and tables can be reserved in advance, with all payments taken at the door on the night (card and cash). Trailers for all this season's films can be viewed on our website

We are always looking for new volunteers, and all help with tidying away glasses and rubbish and stacking chairs at the end of the evening is appreciated. Please get in touch if you can help in any way.

Finally, don't forget that we also have **Zonita Mobile**, which can screen films for local community groups with younger, older and all members of our local communities. We have already provided screenings to local school PTAs, carer groups and scout groups. Do get in touch if you are involved with a group who might like to book Zonita Mobile or would like to organise a private screening.

We look forward to welcoming you to Zonita this winter.

Trevor Blevins & the ZONITA Team.

<http://zonita.org.uk>

email: zonitacinema@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/zonita.cinema

[@ZonitaAmphill](#)

WE HAVE A BRA BANK!

Please keep us in mind for any of your wearable but unwanted Bras.



Let's keep them away from landfills and fundraise vital money for our organisation.



THIS BRA RECYCLING BANK HAS BEEN PROVIDED
FREE OF CHARGE BY FUNDRAISE AND RECYCLE

**Drop off to Houghton Conquest Church porch on Sundays
9.30-2pm. (Service is 9.30-10.30am so please be quiet)**

The **Amphill Singers**

MUSICAL MAGIC



**WITH ALL THE BEST OF THE
WEST END & BROADWAY!**

October 16th & 17th

**Amphill Methodist Church
Dunstable Street MK45 2JS**

Adults £12.00
Concessions £10.00
Under 16/Over 65/Disabled
Family Ticket £30.00
2 Adults & 2 Under 16

Friday 16th 7:30pm
Saturday 17th 3:00pm

BOX OFFICE
Tel. 07787 598751

TO BOOK ONLINE VISIT
**[www.ticketsource.co.uk/
the-amphill-singers](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/the-amphill-singers)**
(Nominal booking fee applies)



Houghton Conquest Village Hall

Over 18's Only

BINGO NIGHT

Date: Friday 16th October

£15.00 for
10 Games

Cash Prizes
Novelty Prizes
Raffle

Over 18's Only

Doors Open 6.30pm

Game Start 7.30pm

Please feel free to bring

★ Your own food snacks ★

Chapel End Farm, Houghton Conquest



SPOOKTACULAR FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!

FARM FUN & ACTIVITIES

THIS OCTOBER HALF TERM!

MEET THE FARM ANIMALS!

MAKING MEMORIES ON THE FARM!

PUMPKIN CARVING!

HALLOWEEN THEMED CRAFTS!

TRACTOR RIDES!

COME & MEET OUR FARM ANIMALS!

THURSDAY 29TH – FRIDAY 30TH – SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER

OPENING TIMES: 10.30 – 3PM

CHILD £12.95 EACH

ADULT £6.00 EACH

TICKET / ADMISSION
ADMISSION BETWEEN 10.30AM – 3PM
LAST ADMISSION 2PM

ALL ACTIVITIES INCLUDED!
ONE TICKET, ALL THE HALLOWEEN FARM FUN!

FUN FAMILY FARM

BOOK YOUR TICKETS HERE:
<https://app.tickettailor.com/events/chapelendfarm/2410551>

LOTS OF FUN • FRESH AIR • GREAT MEMORIES
WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!

SCAN ME!

Houghton Conquest Village Hall



QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 21st November

7.00pm for 7.30 Start

Teams of 6 (Can be arranged on the night)

Bar! Real Ales! Raffle!

Ticket £10.00 including Supper

To book your tickets Please ring

Karoline on: 07969 491 965

Ros on: 07704 659 130

or email: hcvillagehall@gmail.com





JOIN AMPTHILL ARMY CADETS!



Parade Nights:
Monday evenings



Time:
19:00 – 21:30

LEARN • ACHIEVE • HAVE FUN

Want to try something different and make new friends?

At Army Cadets, you can:



Take part in exciting **training & weekend activities**



Learn **new skills** and build **confidence**



Work towards **qualifications, awards** and **achievements**



Make **new friends** and be part of a **team**



Challenge yourself and discover what you can do



GREAT VALUE

Sessions are subsidised — around **50p a week!**



Weekend training is currently just **£10, inclusive.**

**READY FOR YOUR
NEXT ADVENTURE?**



Find out more and locate your nearest detachment:
armycadets.com/find-a-detachment/

**ARMY
CADETS** >>>

DISCIPLINE | TEAMWORK | ADVENTURE

October Half Term with The Greensand Trust

The Greensand Trust will be celebrating the natural world and autumn during the October Half Term with events at Rushmere Country Park near Leighton Buzzard and Clophill Lakes Nature Reserve.

At **Rushmere Country Park** we will have our Autumn Trail available. Pick up your trail sheet from visitor services (£4 includes the trail and a treat!) head off out to follow the clues on the pumpkins and solve the puzzle.



Also from October half term to the end of November, Rushmere visitor centre will host 'Wild Birds', a group art exhibition by three Bedfordshire-based artists, each inspired by their love for birds and nature - Marisa Straccia, Mique Moriuchi and Eleanor Archer.



By presenting an art exhibition away from the traditional gallery space and into the environment which inspired its creation, the artists aim to reach a diverse range of visitors just as we enter the bird feeding season. The art on display will be a celebration of our relationship with birds and the appreciation of their beauty.

On Sunday 25 October our annual family-fun event Feed the Birds takes place. Come and learn more about our feathered friends and how we can help them thrive. Free to take part, though there may be a small charge for some activities - parking fees apply.

Join our Education Team on Thursday 29 October for our Autumn Animal Detectives Walk in the woods to discover how animals and

insects survive the winter. You'll have fun creating a hedgehog den in the woods and make an insect house to take home. Places are limited and will sell out quickly – just £5 per child (must be accompanied by an adult).

At **Clophill Lakes** you can follow the Spider Trail. Be fascinated, not afraid of spiders!



Autumn is a great time to spot spider webs. Pick up our self-led Spider Trail sheet at the Riverside Cafe available every day during Half Term week and discover some amazing facts about these important creatures on our spider web trail around the reserve. Price £4 (includes trail and treat) - all proceeds are reinvested into the nature reserve which is run not for profit.

For more information, please visit our website:



Village Hall Regular Events

To Book Contact:

Mrs Christine Dean; Tel: 01234 741182, Cjdean5@aol.com

IF YOU ARE PLANNING A ONE-OFF EVENT OR REGULAR MEETING. DON'T DELAY AND BOOK TODAY.

- Run by volunteers for the benefit of the village. Hire charges are very reasonable with varying rates for day, evening and weekend, residents get preferential rates.
- Fully equipped kitchen
- Licensed bar with air conditioning at £50 hire charge
- Large hall including stage area with curtains. Small committee room and lounge area
- Large car park

<u>WEEKLY</u>		
Day	Activity	Time
Monday	Indoor Bowls	14:00 – 16:00
	Qi Kwan Do Martial Arts	18:30 – 19:30
	Whist	19:45
Tuesday	Line Dancers	10:00 – 12:30
Wednesday	Line Dancers	10:00 – 12:30
Thursday	Line Dancers	10:00 – 12:30
Friday (term only)	Toddlers Group	09:30 – 11:30

<u>MONTHLY</u>		
Day	Activity	Time
1 st Wednesday	Art Society	19:30 – 21:30
1 st Thursday	WI	19:30 – 22:00
2 nd Tuesday	Garden Club	19:00 – 21:00
2 nd Thursday	Parish Council	19:30
3 rd Wednesday	Art Society	19:30 – 21:30
3 rd Thursday	Village Hall Management Committee	19:30

Village Notice Boards

If you would like to put notices in our boards:

For the **main village and the Robinson Avenue** development: please hand them in to Houghton Conquest village shop.

- We have 6 noticeboards in these areas, so please provide 6 x A5 copies to ensure a copy goes in each board. Regrettably, we cannot accept larger than A5 due to limited space.
- If you provide only one copy it will only go in one board. The choice of board will be at the discretion of the Parish Councils representative.
- If you are advertising an event, please allow plenty of time, as our noticeboards are only updated once a week.
- We do not accept commercial advertising, unless it is for community activities, such as local classes.
- Space is limited, so priority will be given to local community events, & is at the discretion of the Parish Council's representative, who kindly keeps all the noticeboards up to date.

For **Wixams Village 4** noticeboard please email the clerk with notices and mark for attention of Cllr Sharpe.

Any queries please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council at clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

Houghton Conquest Lower School



Dear Villagers....

Welcome to the new term! It is great to see all the children and staff settling back into school; the school has a lively and engaging atmosphere, and the children are certainly enjoying getting to know their new teachers and classmates. It was also fantastic to see so many children looking smart in their school uniforms; it really helps them to feel part of the Houghton Conquest school family.

Primary Expansion: We are delighted to share that our expansion to a primary school is officially underway! We were thrilled to welcome our very first Year 5 class this September, a massive milestone for our school family. The momentum continues as we continue our primary journey, bringing further facility upgrades to support our growing pupils.

This term, our children have jumped headfirst into their new topics with fantastic enthusiasm. They've already produced some truly beautiful crafts and artwork that brightened up our classrooms and corridors!



Open Days

Finally, we have planned some open day events for parents of children ***starting school in September '27***. We welcome new parents to the school to have a look around and to ask all of your questions;

- **Tuesday 6th October** 3:30pm – 4:30pm
- **Wednesday 21st October** 1:30pm – 2:30pm
- **Tuesday 17th November** 3:30pm – 4:30pm

Please book your slot by calling the school office, 01234 740202. We look forward to welcoming you all.

Take Care

The Team at HCLS

Houghton Conquest Garden Club



Thank you everyone who entered the summer show. The fruit and vegetable entries were certainly lower than usual because of the exceptional heat, but the hall was full of flowers, handicraft and home produce.

Unfortunately, the speaker booked for September had to cancel due to illness, so at the last-minute Julie Hayes from Hedgehog Rescue came and told us about the work she does with sick and injured animals. She said that if a hedgehog is seen during daylight hours it is usually very ill and should be taken to a vet as soon as possible.

Our AGM is on 13 October when there will be cheese and wine and a quiz afterwards. On 10 November there will be a talk by Nikki Blagg about Horatio's garden, which has been made at Stoke Mandeville Hospital for patients.

Now is the time to take cuttings from plants which are not totally hardy. A cutting without a flower can be taken from plants such as Pelargoniums, some Salvias and Penstemons, potted up and kept in a frost-free place, and you should have plenty of new plants for next year.

Margaret Whalley 07419 736604



At our annual garden party in a member's garden we had a lovely day which was not too hot, when we had plenty of food, drink and lots of chat.

In September David Tomkins entertained us with magic tricks, ventriloquism and songs. He got many of us participating with his tricks and his puppets and kept us laughing all evening.

On 1 October Nilani Young will be talking about being a filigree jeweller, and then on 5 November there will be a dabble evening when we will all be making something (yet undecided).

There will be a **coffee morning on Saturday 7 November** with homemade cakes, and there will be a tombola. So why not come and join us for a relaxing morning from 10:30 – 12:30.

If you would like any more details about meetings or anything about WI, please give me a call.

Shirley Johnson 07951 024876

Houghton Conquest Art Society



We started back on the first Wednesday evening in September, after our summer break.

It was lovely to welcome David Lewry again, a local professional coloured pencil artist. This time we asked for a demonstration and advice on using watercolour pencils, rather than using the dry version.

These pencils are basically a core of normal pigment watercolour paint surrounded by wood. They can be sharpened like a normal graphite or coloured pencil. When sharpening pencils always remember to turn the sharpener not the pencil because the core will break inside otherwise, rotary desk sharpeners do this automatically. The watercolour pencils can still be used dry, but the beauty is that you can make a little scribble on paper and touch it with water on a brush and create lovely effects. Think of five big, coloured dots, in a small circle, all the same colour. Then brush each one separately with some water, wet but not dripping. sweep the colour out to a petal shape. The outer petals will be almost see through, towards the centre the colour will be more intense. When that's dry, or you've dried it with a hairdryer, you can put another dot a different shade of the same colour in between the petals and wet and sweep the same. You will be building up a flower which is not a flat shape but

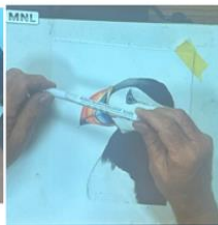
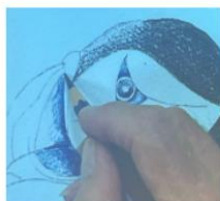


layers of petals or 3D. Here's a little lesson to try!

David's demonstration showed us not one but two paintings to try. Firstly, a cottage with a stone wall then a puffin.



By contrast the puffin was vibrant and the landscape cottage softer colours e.g. less pigment scribbled for a quieter effect. Each painting had been drawn in pencil first, then pen over the pencil before using watercolour.



The pen must contain waterproof ink, or you will end up with a grey mess when water is added! Sigma Micron are good pens they have different size nibs one fine one thicker is all that's needed. The watercolour pencils can be purchased very cheaply in sets to have a go, but as you improve you will see the difference with better quality pencils. Also, the quality pencils can be purchased in singles of whatever colours you need. Good brands are Derwent and Faber Castell. The paper is normal watercolour

paper, a heavier paper works best, brands like Bockingford, Arches or Windsor and Newton.



You can see David's demonstration in stages from the pictures, on his projector screen. This set up in the village hall on the stage was great so we could all clearly see each stage on the large screen. David Lewry runs lots of classes and workshops

online search the web for 'Learn Art with David'. They are interactive so you can ask questions as you go along.

Come and try our Wednesday evenings in the village hall, at the new time of 19:00 – 21:00, you are most welcome

Barbara Boxshall

www.Houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk

Facebook, Instagram



Houghton Conquest Care

We are holding our Annual General Meeting on Saturday 31 October at 14:00 in the Village Hall. Why not come along and hear about the Care Group's work for those who live in the Parish of Houghton Conquest. Tea and delicious homemade cakes will be served. If you would like a lift to the Hall, please call 01234 740522.

By the time you read this our quiz in conjunction with the Jigsaw Club will probably be over. This is our only fundraising event, and we hope to have equalled last year's income of about £400.

Despite gaining five new drivers this year we would like to hear from anyone interested in joining the group. Most requests are to take people from the village to doctors' surgeries and hospital appointments. It is not a big commitment – just the offer to help occasionally would be fine. Journeys are booked in advance, and you can say which days you are available to help.

To contact Houghton Conquest Care please phone **07969 982 970** and leave a message. One of our volunteers will return your call.

If you need transport please try to give us at least 24 hours' notice although we will always try to help at short notice. We ask for a donation of £5.00 per round trip for journeys under 10 miles as a contribution to the driver's fuel costs. For journeys over 10 miles a contribution of 55p per mile is requested e.g. a return journey to Luton & Dunstable Hospital is about 30 miles so drivers are entitled to ask for £17.00.

Do you know about **The Priority Services Register**?



PSR is a free UK wide service which provides extra advice and support, including when there's an interruption to electricity, gas or water supplies. It is simple and free to join. Use the QR code below. Or go to the website at: <https://thepsr.co.uk/>



It helps utility companies to look after customers who have extra communication, access or safety needs. It helps tailor services to support households who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills, and also in the unlikely event of a power cut, gas or water supply interruption.

By telling the Priority Services Register it updates your PSR request with your energy supplier (the company you pay your bills to) and also your regional network companies including electricity, gas and water. This applies to all participating energy companies in England, Wales and Scotland. They will always follow privacy laws and your PSR information will never be used for marketing. If you already know which company delivers your electricity or gas, just call them and they will advise how to register.



SHARE:

Flitwick and Ampthill

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**We're open every Saturday morning from 10-12
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Wixams Lego Club



**Held every Saturday (term time) at
Lakeview Village Hall.**

Session 1: 9:30am – 10am (Ages 3 – 7)

Session 2: 10:15am – 11:45 (Ages 7-18)

Annual Membership £5.

Weekly attendance fee £2 for members; £2.50 for non-members.

For more information please email: legoatwixams@gmail.com

Wixams: Summer Fun Camps

215 young people enjoyed football, cricket, free running, graffiti art, inflatable assault courses and musical instruments at Wixams Summer Fun Camps this summer.

The four-week programme, delivered by Blues Foundation with support from Urban&Civic and Bedford Giving, gave the 215 young people from both primary and secondary schools in the area a huge range of activities to enjoy during the summer holidays.



Running from Tuesday to Friday throughout August, programme brought together a variety of sports, creative activities and new experiences. External providers including Cricket East, Real Bedford, Educreate, Rocksteady and Spiral Freerun helped deliver a programme designed to challenge and inspire young people both physically and creatively.

The camps aimed to help address the root causes of antisocial behaviour in Wixams, while giving participants opportunities to build their confidence, independence and interpersonal skills. The programme forms part of the wider work taking place to support Wixams as a thriving and connected community, ensuring that children and young people have opportunities to meet, get active and learn new skills close to home.

Jordan Payne, Communications & Partnerships Manager at Urban&Civic, said: *"We were very glad to be able to support such a dynamic summer programme for the 215 young people of Wixams that came along. The success of Wixams Summer Fun Camps highlights the role that sport and community programmes can play in supporting young people while strengthening the wider community."*

Open Space 3 Coming soon!

A new play park is on its way

We're delighted to let you know that Urban&Civic will begin work on Open Space 3 (OS3) on Monday 14 September, delivering a brand-new play park and landscaped green space for the neighbourhood. It'll take some time to grow into the space you'll see below so here's what to expect, and when.

Timeline of works



Any questions?

For general queries, contact the Urban&Civic team below.

Questions about the works?

Get in touch with the Urban&Civic team at wixamsinfo@urbanandcivic.com



Wixams | Urban&Civic

Ramblings

As summer now comes to an end, it is time to reflect on what has happened around the village. I am always looking for good news stories, so continue to send them in!!

If you would like to shout out about an event that is happening soon please email: **hcvillagenews@gmail.com**.

Thanks

Lucy Spencer, Editor

Houghton win the 20th Houghton Wilstead Golf Cup!

What an incredible day! On Friday 7th August, 116 golfers from the local community competed for the infamous Houghton Wilstead Golf Cup.

The 20th anniversary took place at Cainhoe Wood Golf Club and Houghton were the winners with a score of 15.5 - 13.5. We're absolutely delighted to announce that this year we raised an amazing **£13,501.62** for Sue Ryder St John's Hospice in Moggerhanger. A huge thank you to everyone who helped make that possible.



This year, the after party continued at the golf club and we'd like to give a massive shout-out to the whole team there for looking after us so brilliantly and helping us celebrate in style.

We'd also like to say a huge thank you to Premier Solicitors, our headline sponsor, and to every one of our fantastic hole sponsors:

Sineways Services, Loxley Services, Salvus Security, Lall Engineering, Willie Peck, Elstow Cricket Club, Sureflow Plumbing, PD Izzard Haulage, Sunset Commercial Finance, Red Lion Wilstead, JW Admin Services, JWL Windows, Nisa Houghton,

Poplars Construction, Taylor Cooling Solutions, Beautique 22 and The Albion.

We're incredibly grateful for your support. Please consider these local businesses if you're ever in need of the services they provide. All details can be found on our new instagram page @houghtonwilsteadgolfcup

And finally, a heartfelt thank you to every single player and volunteer who gave up their time, dug deep into their pockets and helped make the day such a success. Without your generosity and support, none of this would be possible.

It's an absolute privilege for our family to organise this event every year. What started 20 years ago as a bit of fun between two brothers and their friends has grown into a wonderful community-wide celebration that reaches far beyond our two great villages.

Nearest the pin winners:

3rd: Reece Somaiya

13th: Ryan Mahami

15th: Laurence Bentham

18th: Graeme Wise

Longest Drive: Ranvir Thiarra

High Handicap Runner Up: Nigel Patrickson 43 points

High Handicap Winner: Linda Conway 43 points (count back)

Low Handicap Runner Up: Sam Kelly 38 points (lowest gross +2)

Low Handicap Winner: Ben Dashwood 39 points

Wooden Spoon: Om Bhikadiya 12 points

As all our students head back to university, can you help Tara, a final year university student with her dissertation?



Hi everyone, my name is Tara, I'm 26 and I am currently working while studying Architecture on the RIBA Studio Diploma course at Oxford Brookes University.

I bought my first house in Houghton Conquest late last year, and the experience of owning and understanding an older home has been one of the inspirations behind my Master's dissertation. As part of this research, I have chosen to focus on my immediate locality of Houghton Conquest, exploring local knowledge and perceptions of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs).

Houghton Conquest provides an interesting area for this research due to its strong sense of community, varied housing typologies, range of property ages, and the adoption of renewable energy technologies within the local area. These characteristics provide an opportunity to understand how people with different types of homes perceive EPCs and energy efficiency improvements.

EPCs are commonly used when buying, selling or renting a property. However, there is growing debate about whether the current system provides enough useful information to help householders make informed decisions about improving their homes. The Government is also proposing changes to the way the energy performance of homes is assessed. This research aims to understand what people locally know about EPCs, how useful and trustworthy they consider them to be, and what information or incentives could make them more effective in encouraging household retrofit.

Your views are important because successful home retrofit is not only dependent on government policy and funding, but also on

whether householders understand the benefits of making improvements and feel confident in making decisions about their homes. The questionnaire will therefore help identify gaps in local knowledge and attitudes towards EPCs, as well as explore what could be changed to make them a more useful tool for encouraging energy efficiency and retrofit.

The questionnaire should take approximately **10 minutes** to complete. All responses will be anonymous and will be used for academic research purposes only.

I am hoping to close the survey on **30 November 2026**, so I would really appreciate your participation before then.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate in my research.



We've Updated
Our Website!



www.houghtonclosesurgery.co.uk

The team at Houghton Close Surgery have been working hard to create a new website for our patients and are pleased to announce it has now been launched.

The new design makes information simpler to find and clearer to understand. There are also many links detailing external services and advice services available.

One of the main features we've added is the **"Who Do I See?"** section. This handy tool helps you work out the best person or service to contact for your needs. Checking here first could save you time, as you may be directed to the right service more quickly than waiting for an appointment at the practice.

Another highly successful feature is the online triage service enabling you to send non urgent medical and admin requests to us via the website (between 8am – 6.30pm Monday – Friday) rather than having to phone the surgery.

Our new website also meets the latest **NHS ENGLAND STANDARDS**, ensuring it's not only user friendly but also fully up to date.

We would love for you to take a look and explore our new features!

Call us today on

020 4572 3116 / 07368625128

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E:stephaniemuncey36@gmail.com

Facebook: /astonhairdresser

Instagram: hairathomebystephmuncey

Salon address: 17 homestead way, MK453GN



A note from your Editor...

We are always happy to receive your articles, comments, concerns, reports and hopefully I have included as many of these as I can.

Contact details are as follows:

Email: hcvillagenews@gmail.com

The Newsletter is also posted to the 4 Village Facebook pages and can be found on the Parish Council website under News:

<https://houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk/category/news/>

Please note:

Editorial comments are completely independent of and not a reflection of the views of the Parish Council. Letters and articles for inclusion are welcomed, subject to the standard appropriate editorial control.

Any questions for the Parish Council should be directed at the Clerk to the Parish Council.

USEFUL CONTACTS:

Inside the Village

ART SOCIETY	Karen Moynihan	Email: houghtonconquestartsociety@outlook.com
CARE GROUP	Sue Derrick	07886 459225
FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH	Carol Juffs	01234 381393
GARDEN CLUB	Margaret Whalley	07419 736604
INDOOR BOWLS	David and Jean Ashcroft	07969 513951
JIGSAW CLUB	Sue Derrick	07886 459225
VILLAGE HALL	Christine Dean	01234 741182
WOMENS' INSTITUTE	Shirley Johnson	07951 024876

Help Lines

SAMARITANS	Call 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org
CRISIS TEXT LINE	Text "SHOUT" to 85258

Contacts outside the Village

BEDFORD HOSPITAL	01234 355122
BUSES (Grant Palmer)	01525 719719
CHURCHES	
C of E Team Rector - Rev'd Fr Paul Messam SCP	01234 261477
Methodist - Rev. Silas Wood	01525 571392
D.H.S.S. - (Bedford)	01234 365155
SCHOOLS	
Lower School - Houghton Conquest	01234 740202
Middle - Stewartby	01234 768224
Senior - Wootton	01234 767123
Holywell School - Cranfield	01234 750381
LIBRARIES	
Bedford	01234 718178
Amphill	0300 300 8053
Flitwick	0300 300 8057
UTILITY SERVICES	
ELECTRICITY (UK Power Networks) General Enquiries	0800 029 4285

ELECTRICITY (UK Power Networks)	0800 316 3105 or just 105
ANGLIAN WATER	0845 714 5145
HIGHWAYS Dept. (Helpline)	0300 300 8049
Forest of Marston Vale	01234 767037
Central Beds Council	0300 300 8000
POLICE County H.Q.	01234 841212
Non-urgent / Anti-Social behaviour	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111

RAILWAY - Travel Enquiries	0345 748 4950
Silverline	01923 207258
Bedford / Flitwick station	0345 748 4950
DOCTORS	
Ampthill: Houghton Close Surgery Oliver Street Surgery Greensands Surgery	01525 300898 01525 631395 01525 631390
Kempston	01234 852222