



## Local events and activities

- **Finchampstead Society Local History Archive: 5 December**

The Finchampstead Archive is open on the first Thursday of each month from 2 - 4pm at the Finchampstead Library. Drop in and browse old maps and photographs, read about the early history of Finchampstead and its people or research your family history. For more information email [thegrahams2@btinternet.com](mailto:thegrahams2@btinternet.com) or telephone 0118 9736569

You can find out about the Finchampstead Society at [www.finchampsteadsociety.org](http://www.finchampsteadsociety.org)

- **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Action Group: 10 December**

The NAG includes representatives from the Parish and Borough Councils, Thames Valley Police and local organisations as well as a number of residents. The Group works to address local concerns and to make Finchampstead an even better place to live and grow up in. The next meeting is on 10 December at 7.45pm at the FBC Centre. Residents are welcome to attend to raise any issues and to see how they can get involved.

Contact [secretary@finchnag.co.uk](mailto:secretary@finchnag.co.uk) or visit [www.finchnag.co.uk](http://www.finchnag.co.uk) for more information

- **Christmas at the FBC**

Tuesday 17 December at 5pm: Kids Christmas Panto 'Beauty and the Beast'

Wednesday 18 December at 10am: Toddler Carols

Tuesday 24 December at 4pm and 6pm: Community Christmas Carols

Please visit [www.finchampstead.com](http://www.finchampstead.com) for more information.

- **Nine Lessons and Carols: Sunday 15 December**

The Parish Church of St. James presents this event at Wellington College at 4pm on 15 December. For more information contact [office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk](mailto:office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk) or telephone 0118 9730133.

- **South East Water Works on Nine Mile Ride**

Nine Mile Ride will re-open at 7am on Saturday 21 December for the Christmas period only. It will close again at 9am on Monday 6 January so that work can continue.

- **2020 Community Litter Pick!**

We know how popular this annual event is so please put the date in your diary now - 29 March 2020. Details will follow nearer the time.

## Christmas opening hours

The Parish Council Office at the FBC Centre will be closed from Monday 23 December to Wednesday 1 January inclusive, re-opening on Thursday 2 January. The FBC Centre including the café will also be closed during this period but the Library will be open from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday 21 December.

## Finchampstead & Barkham Relief in Sickness Fund

This Fund provides financial help to those who live in Finchampstead or Barkham Parishes and who have disabilities. One off grants of £100 to £1000 can help with a variety of needs such as electrical goods, clothing, household bills, travel expenses, nursing fees or medical equipment.

All enquiries will be treated in complete confidence. Please contact Miss G. Poppelstone, the Chairperson, on 0118 9736855 or email [gaynorpoppelstone@doctors.org.uk](mailto:gaynorpoppelstone@doctors.org.uk)



## **California Country Park**

If you haven't visited the Park recently you will see a few changes.

The new car park is already in use and the other improvements at the Park are due to be completed by 20 December 2019 including the paths, tree and shrub planting and other work around the café area.

The bridge on the new greenway leading to Nine Mile Ride will finally be linked up, and the links from Heather Close, Carolina Place and the lakeside path to the California greenway will be completed. Signs are currently being installed on the California greenway, with seats to follow.

The Park has something for everyone - short or longer walks, lots of wildlife to see, a childrens' play area and a great café. Parking is £1.50 per hour but regular visitors can purchase a season ticket. All of the funds raised are put towards the maintenance of the Park.

## **Simon's Wood and Finchampstead Ridges**

This is another great area for walking, the National Trust owned sites include a Centenary Trail, and a new 'Ridges Ramble' will shortly be launched. You can find out more at <https://fofr.btck.co.uk/> including information on how to get involved as a volunteer.

The Parish Council has developed a circular walk starting at Simon's Wood. Visit our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) and search for 'simons wood'.

## **Help keep our roads and pavements safe for users**

Overgrown or untidy hedges and low branches can be a real hazard to pedestrians walking on pavements or footways. Overgrown vegetation can narrow the footway and force pedestrians to step on to the road which is particularly dangerous for those with a pram or buggy, the less mobile, the visually impaired and those in wheelchairs.

It is also important for road safety and to prevent accidents that sightlines are kept clear at bends, junctions and the access point to your property, and that traffic signs are clearly visible.

The effectiveness of street lights can be seriously reduced by overgrowing vegetation, especially trees, causing the road and footway to be darker than necessary.

If you are responsible for a property that has vegetation growing on or near to the boundary with a highway - a road or footway/pavement - you need to manage the vegetation so as not to cause a danger, obstruction or interference.

Please do your bit on your property to help keep the Finchampstead roads and footways safe for users. We continue to press the Borough Council to improve the standard of maintenance on roadside areas it is responsible for.

## **Road gulleys**

This is the time of year when road gulleys can easily get blocked by fallen leaves - leading to drainage problems on our roads. Remember that if you blow or sweep leaves from your property on to the road this makes the problem even worse.

Please keep an eye on any gulleys near your property - if they get blocked please report this to the Borough Council by visiting [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and searching for 'flooding and drainage'.



## Gravel extraction sites at Fleet Hill Farm and Manor Farm

Gravel has been extracted from these two sites on the east and west of Longwater Road in the south of the Parish. As a condition of the planning permission the sites are due to be restored to nature reserves, with features to attract wildlife and lots of new footpaths and bridleways connecting to the existing paths around the sites.

The work on the sites has taken longer than originally expected, even though the original deadline was extended by 5 years to 31 December 2018. We are very keen to see the nature reserves completed and opened to the public as soon as possible. We will continue to push Wokingham Borough Council to ensure the landowner Cemex UK Ltd finishes the work so that both wildlife and residents can enjoy these new open spaces.

## The future of Finchampstead

Thank you to everyone who completed the **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan** questionnaire which was delivered to all households in the Parish in October. Well over 900 questionnaires were completed. The responses are now being analysed and will be reported in a future newsletter.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will map out the future of Finchampstead Parish over the next ten or more years. Finchampstead is a great place to live and work now but what do you want it to be like in 5, 10 or 15 years time? Development places constant pressure on our green spaces and infrastructure and an NDP is a way in which we can have some direct control over the future of our community, having a real say in shaping the future of housing, roads, schools, amenities and our environment.

To find out more about the NDP and / or how you can get involved please contact us at [ndp@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ndp@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) or visit our website <http://finchampsteadfuture.co.uk/>

## Local development

### • **Land at the rear of Johnson Drive**

A Public Inquiry was held on 29 October in relation to the Borough Council's refusal of planning permission for the development of 25 dwellings on this site. We are pleased to confirm that the Appeal has been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

### • **Land off Finchampstead Road, Wokingham**

Gladman Land has lodged an Appeal against the refusal by the Borough Council of permission for the development of up to 216 dwellings on land near Woodcray, off the Finchampstead Road, Wokingham. A Public Inquiry was due to take place this month but we understand this has been deferred until Spring 2020.

## Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL)

Work on the development at Arborfield Green and Finchwood park continues and we will keep you updated on progress. The interactive maps at the following link give a useful overview of how the development is moving forward. [www.wokingham.gov.uk/major-developments/arborfield-garrison/](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/major-developments/arborfield-garrison/)

You can also sign up for a regular newsletter - visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'major developments'.



## Library events and information

This year, our young readers can join in the **Winter Reading Mini Challenge** with a virtual badge to unlock, lots of online activities and books to enjoy. The challenge has been inspired by 'Pugs of the Frozen North', a frosty adventure which features lots of pugs, written by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre.

The Winter Mini Challenge starts on Monday 2 December 2019 and finishes on Monday 13 January 2020. To take part you need just to visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'reading challenge' to sign in or register. Just choose 3 books (audio books, e books and e comics count too) to read from the library and leave your rating and reviews online, this will unlock a virtual badge and a special Pugs of the Frozen North certificate to print off and keep.

All libraries will have some Pugs of the Frozen North activity sheets for children to do from 2 December 2019.

For more information about events and activities, and the online catalogue, go to [www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries) or telephone Finchampstead Library on 0118 9088176

## Recycling update

Wokingham Borough Council has launched a 'Stamp out the damp' campaign, encouraging residents to keep their card and paper recycling dry.

Due to global economic changes, recycling plants are no longer accepting wet paper and card and recent batches sent from Wokingham Borough have been rejected for being too damp - meaning they have ended up not being recycled.

The Borough Council is looking at the best options to overcome the problem, but in the short term is asking residents to keep their paper and card recycling dry by covering their box, keeping recycling inside or putting boxes out as late as possible.

**'Tis the season to recycle** - most of us recycle lots during and after Christmas - from boxes and wrapping paper to sweet tins and foil mince pie trays, not forgetting bottles and jars.

Download the useful **Re3cyclopedia app** from the app store or google play store to find out what you can recycle and where.

You can take broken Christmas lights and other electrical items to the Recycling Centres, or if you have unwanted Christmas decorations or toys in good condition take them to the reuse area at the Recycling Centre.

## **FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

PARISH OFFICE, FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 4ES  
Tel: 0118 908 8164 email: [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



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