



At the time of our March newsletter the Coronavirus situation was in our minds but of course this has now escalated to become a major concern for all of us, and one which is having an impact on all of our daily lives. We are sharing information and all the latest updates through our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) and Facebook Page.

The **Wokingham Borough Community Response** is the borough wide one stop shop for helping those in need at this difficult time. **Citizens Advice Wokingham** is the 'front door' for our community response. They are taking calls and emails from residents and putting them in contact with the people and organisations they need, for example:

- The Wokingham Volunteer Centre can help collect prescriptions
- First Days is running a food distribution hub to deliver food parcels and essential toiletries
- The LINK Visiting Scheme is making regular welfare checks

Wokingham Borough Council is working with the organisations above, as well as ourselves and other town and parish councils, Wokingham Food Bank, Home Start, Churches Together and other churches and voluntary organisations across the borough.

Involve Community Services is communicating with the many voluntary sector organisations in the borough so we have an integrated response to those most in need.

You can help by looking out for family, friends and neighbours who may need help, volunteering, or making donations to the Community Hub - either cash or food, toiletries and other essentials, or wellbeing bags (see overleaf).

Follow the link from our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) for more information on how you can help, and contact details for advice and support.



## Parish Council grants

Again this year we have a budget for grants and donations for local groups and organisations providing facilities or services which benefit our Parish or its residents. Applications can be submitted at any time - you can find the application form on our website or by emailing [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) Please get in touch if you would like to discuss a potential application.

Last year we awarded over £40,000 to a wide variety of organisations. Our largest donations were for the youth activity programme run through the FBC Centre, the Blackwater Valley Partnership, the Citizens Advice Bureau and Keep Mobile.

We awarded grants to ARC Youth Counselling, Finchampstead Community trips, the 1st Finchampstead Guides and Rangers, Gorse Ride summer holiday activities, Home Start, the Link Visiting Scheme, Me2 Club, MS Therapy, Wokingham Job Support Centre, Wokingham Poppy Appeal, the Volunteer Centre, the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges and the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association

We also made donations to our community halls, primary schools and St. James' Churchyard.



This is one of the ways you can help out at the moment:

## Wellbeing Goody Bags

We don't want anyone to feel forgotten during this crisis. So, we're keen to get together to improve the wellbeing of families and individuals in our community. In other words, we'd love to put some smiles on faces and cheer people up.

**The Goody Bag Plan:** Along the lines of the Christmas shoe-box appeal, you can support your community by putting together a bag of goodies and treats in supermarket 'bags for life'. These can be delivered to the Wokingham Borough Community Hub (in the outside bins at St Crispin's Leisure Centre, Mon - Fri, 9am-4pm). They'll be safely distributed to those who really need them.

Older people 	Families 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Handwash</li><li>• Handcream</li><li>• Puzzle books</li><li>• Jigsaws</li><li>• Magazines (uplifting ones!)</li><li>• Hand written notes / letters</li><li>• Colouring books and pencils</li><li>• Hamper style goodies</li><li>• Sweet treats</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hamper style goodies</li><li>• Pencils and colouring books</li><li>• Jazzy pens</li><li>• Magazines: adult's / children's</li><li>• Drawing paper / sketch books</li><li>• Sweet treats</li><li>• Puzzle books</li><li>• Educational books</li><li>• Little games e.g. Top Trumps</li></ul>

In partnership with...



### Grants available from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office

£100,000 is available for community and voluntary groups through this new grant round of the Police Property Act Fund, launched as an emergency response to the impact of the coronavirus situation.

The Fund, which is jointly managed by the PCC and the Chief Constable, is created from money recovered by the police and the proceeds from the sale of items that cannot be returned to identified owners, including seizures from criminals.

Applications are now invited from local voluntary and community groups who have been supporting the police in delivering the response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The closing date for applications is **12pm Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April**.

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/police-property-act-fund/>



## Please support our local businesses

Some of our local shops and businesses providing key services are still open and we owe them all a big thank you for their work to support and provide for residents at this difficult time. This includes the Finchampstead Surgery and Pharmacy, Jats Pharmacy, the Co-op, Red Oak Stores and Cresswells garage. Unfortunately Park View Village Shop, Post Office and forecourt are now closed but we are grateful for their work to support the community in recent weeks.

Many businesses are closed but are operating in different ways, for example offering takeaway food or home deliveries. At the California Crossroads Bob's Fish and Chips is still open, Jacksons at the California Country Park is offering takeaways at the weekend and the Bull at Barkham is offering takeaways. Lockey Farm Shop is offering deliveries within a 7 mile radius and the Siren Craft brewery is offering a delivery service. Wokingham Market is still open for fruit, vegetables and other food products.

**Please look up the website for the places you normally use - or give them a ring. They may still be able to provide for you and your business will help keep them going.**

A public Facebook Group has been set up **FAB List of food takeaways and deliveries (Finchampstead Arborfield and Barkham)**. This includes menus, contact details and links - so do have a look if you want to find or advertise a service.

Henry Street Garden Centre has been offering home deliveries but there has been such a demand their online store is temporarily closed. Keep checking and they will probably re-open. Homebase is offering delivery on a limited range of goods.

Wokingham Borough Council has set up a **Home Delivery Directory** covering providers of cakes, pies, glasses and contact lenses and more. Visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

## Library news

The Library is shut but as well as the virtual library there are plenty of resources and activities for all ages you can access on line.



You'd better be safe, you'd better be smart.  
Stay on the broom, but stay well apart.

Visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries) and follow the link for 'online library events and activities'

The website includes links to many leisure activities for adults from guitar or language lessons to museum tours and still life drawing sessions.

Virtual activities for children include weekly lego and origami challenges, rhymetime and storytime. There is also a childrens' virtual writing club.

A wellbeing section includes links to organisations offering help, tips for home work outs and information for carers.

*Image: 'Room on the Broom' by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler as posted on the Wokingham Libraries facebook page.*



## **Waste collections**

Collections are continuing as normal - but please follow the guidance below to help keep this service running smoothly.

You can sign up for a garden waste bin, purchase brown bags or blue bags by telephoning Wokingham Borough Council on 0118 9746000. Deliveries will take longer than usual.

For properties missed out in the blue bag deliveries and who received vouchers to collect bags, these will now be delivered instead.

Food waste bags are not available at the moment - if you have run out either leave the caddy unlined or use plastic bags or newspaper.

## WASTE COLLECTIONS



**Our priority is keeping our services running.  
You can help us by doing the following:**

- If you have a big clear out, space out any extra blue bags over a couple of weeks to help prevent additional stress on the service.
- If you are aware of a neighbour who missed their allotment of blue bags and you have extras, consider sharing some of yours to help tide them over until we can deliver their supply.
- Break down and fold large cardboard.
- Ensure your waste is out by 6.30 to help prevent missed collections. If you do have a missed collection, hang onto it until next week if possible.
- Park carefully on collection days to help allow the vehicles to get through.
- If the glass bottle banks are overflowing, don't leave glass by the side. Take the glass back home with you and try again later.

Please also note that the collection of clothing banks is currently suspended and the recycling centres in Bracknell and Reading are closed.



## **Blood donations**

Blood donors should donate regularly as normal unless advised not to do so. Visit [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk) or telephone 0300 123 2323 for more information.





## **Places for your daily exercise**

We are lucky in Finchampstead to have so many open spaces and footpaths available on our doorstep. Government advice says we can go out for exercise once a day, but should not drive anywhere to exercise and most car parks at parks and open spaces have therefore been closed.



This is a great chance to rediscover your local area - visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'country parks' to find out which are near you - perhaps the California Country Park, Rooks Nest or Warren Wood? The Memorial Park, Moor Green Lakes ([www.mglg.org.uk](http://www.mglg.org.uk)), Simon's Wood and The Ridges are open for those who can visit on foot. Please visit our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) for a footpath map and circular walks to download.

## **Some of our activities over the last month - in March we have:**

- held our Annual Gathering for Parishioners and those we work with
- published our Annual Report for 2019/20
- held a Finance & General Management Committee meeting, and a few 'informal' meetings held by video conferencing since the lockdown on 23 March
- attended the Public Inquiry relating to proposals by Gladman Land Limited for development on land at Woodcraze off the Finchampstead Road. The Inquiry has now been adjourned until further notice.
- attended an Arborfield Community Liaison Group meeting, a Finchampstead Neighbourhood Action Group meeting and a Finchampstead Allotments Association Committee meeting
- run 3 Speedwatch sessions - with the help of residents and volunteers from the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Action Group (Finch NAG). Sessions are now suspended.
- attended the opening of the 'Ridges Ramble' created at Finchampstead Ridges by the National Trust and the Friends of the Ridges
- started to survey the trees on Wellingtonia Avenue
- helped distribute leaflets about the Coronavirus situation to all households in the Parish
- cancelled the community litter pick due to take place on 29 March - Keep Britain Tidy has announced alternative dates for the campaign later this year so we hope the Finchampstead Litter Pick will take place in September

*The office may be closed but we are still around. Although some activities are on hold other work is carrying on so please get in touch if you need to - details overleaf.*

*We are now permitted to hold 'remote' meetings and members of the public will be able to attend a Council or Committee meeting virtually if they wish. Please contact us for details.*



## Information for pet owners from the RSPCA

### Pets and Coronavirus HELPING EACH OTHER

- 1 Can you safely help a vulnerable person in your community with their pet?
- 2 Can you offer remote help to your local animal charity?
- 3 Could you donate pet food to your local food bank?
- 4 All animal charities will be impacted by this crisis – please consider donating to support their work.

**Pets are family – let's look out for each other**

To find out more visit:  
[www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus)



### Pets and Coronavirus PROTECTING EACH OTHER

- 1 There is no evidence that pets can get sick from COVID-19.
- 2 Just like human hands, pet fur could carry the virus from one person to another.
- 3 Wash hands well with soap after touching any pets or their belongings and avoid pet kisses – them and you!
- 4 If your pet is sick or injured, call your vet before going to the surgery.

**Pets provide invaluable companionship, let's take care of them too**

To find out more visit: [www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus)



### Pets and Coronavirus PRACTISE SOCIAL DISTANCING

- 1 Each person in the household can walk your dog once a day, but...
- 2 Keep you and your dog at **least** two metres from others.
- 3 Avoid contact with other people's pets.
- 4 Ensure you have your pet's normal supplies for 14 days; make only essential trips to the pet shop.

**Wash your hands, follow the latest Government guidance and play your part to protect others**

To find out more visit: [www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus)



### Pets and Coronavirus IF YOU ARE SELF ISOLATING

- 1 Think about how you can provide for your pet's needs.
- 2 Dogs can be let out into your garden, or just outside your home to toilet, but keep your distance from others and minimise time outside.\*
- 3 Can anyone else care for your pet if you are sick or in hospital?
- 4 If your cat is used to staying in then keep them inside and clean their litter tray regularly. If an outdoor cat, try and minimise interactions with them.\*

**If you are sick, restrict close contact with your pets**

\*Advice on these specific points may be subject to change so please regularly check Government guidance.  
To find out more visit: [www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cfsg.org.uk/coronavirus)



## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

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