



For the latest Covid-19 updates visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and sign up for the Covid-19 newsletter.

You can find the latest information on local cases and statistics on the Covid-19 dashboard at [www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk](http://www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk)

## Wokingham Borough Community Response

### Does going out again make you feel anxious?

You're not alone. We're continuing to support our residents during the easing of lockdown restrictions and connecting them with the help they need. If you're struggling, please contact One Front Door:

0808 278 7958

[citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk/coronavirus](http://citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk/coronavirus)



#InItTogether

One Front Door is run by Citizens Advice Wokingham, supported by Wokingham Borough Council.

Citizens Advice Wokingham provides free, confidential, impartial advice and information to help people to find a way forward with their problems.

Support can be provided with issues around welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment law and much more.

Tel: 0808 278 7958

[www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk)

Even if you've had your Covid-19 vaccine, you should continue to get tested when necessary.

One in three people who have Covid-19 won't show any symptoms!

Got symptoms? Book a PCR test through the national website: <https://cutt.ly/mvVjJNg>

No symptoms? Take regular rapid tests to check you aren't infected: <https://cutt.ly/1vVxRY>

Let's keep going with all the right behaviours so we can keep infection rates down.

### Choosing the right Covid-19 test

Please continue to test, regardless of whether you've had your vaccine or not

If you HAVE Covid-19 symptoms\*

Book a PCR test through Gov.uk or by calling 119

\*Covid-19 symptoms include:  
- a high temperature  
- a new, continuous cough  
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste



If you DON'T HAVE Covid-19 symptoms

All adults

Secondary school children, college students, or staff

Nursery or primary school pupils

Twice weekly lateral flow tests

No test required

- Workplace testing
- Rapid testing centre
- Community Collect
- Pharmacy Collect
- Home delivery via Gov.uk
- Home kits provided by school or college



## Changes at the Parish Council

The Council was due to have an election in 2020 but this was deferred until this year due to the pandemic. The election due to take place on 6 May 2021 was uncontested but there have been some changes.

Longstanding Councillors Mrs Nancy Jennings - Frisby and Richard Rampton have stood down from the Parish Council after 13 and 11 years respectively. We are grateful to both former Councillors for their commitment to the Council and the Parish during their term of office.

We have welcomed Councillors Emily Biskup and Sally Gurney to the Parish Council and look forward to working with them in the coming years.

We have also said good bye to Anna Kent, our Planning Committee Clerk, who has left the Council after almost 16 years. We appreciate Anna's work for the Council over these years and wish her well for the future.

We are currently in the process of recruiting new staff and there will also be some changes to Councillor roles following our Annual Meeting on 19 May. We will provide an update in our next newsletter.

## Library services and activities

The Libraries continue to offer resources for all ages, from story time to read of the day, teen challenges to quizzes and competitions. There are virtual talks, audio books and much more.

Wokingham, Woodley and Lower Earley Libraries are now open for limited browsing, and you can also ask staff to pick your next set of books and you can collect these contactless from the three Libraries.

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH  
LIBRARIES PRESENTS

### VIRTUAL STORYTIME

JOIN US FOR SOME STORIES  
FEATURING SPRINGTIME TALES

**Tuesday 25 May**  
**at 11am**

Email: [libraries@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:libraries@wokingham.gov.uk)  
to sign up!

WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wokingham  
Borough  
Libraries

Virtual Storytime is suitable for families with children aged 7 and under. As well as the 25 May session there will be another session on Friday 28 May - Elmer Storytime at 11am to 11.15am. Elmer stories will be shared along with a downloadable activity pack.

Others may prefer a virtual talk such as 'Lifting the Sky' on 24 May.

## LIFTING THE SKY

Inspiration: from Debussy to Rothko and more....  
an illustrated virtual talk by artist Chris Holley.



The Great Wave Off Kanagawa  
by Hokusai

**Monday May 24 at 2pm**

To book a place email [libraries@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:libraries@wokingham.gov.uk)





## Defibrillators

The Parish Council is pleased to have been able to donate a defibrillator to the Gorse Ride Schools and to Finchampstead Primary School. Nine Mile Ride Primary School already has a unit.

The Council has also provided the community accessible defibrillators located at the FBC Centre, the Memorial Hall, the St. James' Church Centre, the California Ratepayers Hall and the California Crossroads shops.

While we hope that the units will never have to be used, when cardiac arrest strikes, CPR and defibrillation can help double someone's chances of survival.

We have arranged several first aid and defibrillator training sessions previously, and hope to be able to arrange a session for later this year - do get in touch if you are interested.

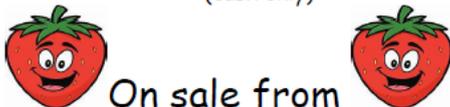


**Delicious, fresh**

**Strawberries £2 per punnet**

from Manor Farm Finchampstead

(cash only)



On sale from

**the Sports Club veranda at  
Finchampstead Memorial Park**

From Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May onwards

Tues-Fri 9am- 12 noon

(closing earlier if all sold)

Profits in aid of

Finchampstead Memorial Park  
(charity no 300152)

Tennis Courts

refencing & refurbishment.



Please see our justgiving page



[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/finchampsteadparktennis courts?utm\\_term=wrv6P9e2x](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/finchampsteadparktennis courts?utm_term=wrv6P9e2x)

**Manor Farm strawberries** are also available from:

- Red Oak Stores at the California Crossroads.
- The Farm gate at the end of Dell Road from 2-4pm on Wednesday and 2-6pm on Saturday.



## Are you enjoying this newsletter?

If so please share it with friends and family who live locally.

They can sign up for their own copy by visiting our website

[www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

or contacting us at

[clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

Comments and suggestions on newsletter content are always welcome.



## Nervous anticipation

Sarah Bunce looks forward to summer on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, but the stakes are high! There are more than 30 heaths and heathland plantations, including Bramshill Forest, Heath Warren Wood, Wildmoor Heath and Yateley Common County Park...

I always approach spring and summer on the heaths with a mixture of excitement and trepidation!



Excitement because there's so much to look forward to. The return of nightjars from Africa, tantalising glimpses of reptiles and an explosion of butterflies and dragonflies.

Trepidation because dry weather can bring wildfires. If we have another long, hot, dry summer, I'll be worried about seeing heathland fires in the headlines again, like the terrible incident at Chobham Common last year.

All the legal protection in the world won't stop accidents or acts of deliberate vandalism. Local planning departments can protect the heaths with a robust planning strategy, land managers can work hard keeping habitats in great condition and our wardens can ask everyone to give nature space. But it only takes one carelessly discarded cigarette, or one thoughtless BBQ, for all that work to go up in smoke. Wildlife will suffer, people will be put in danger and homes in jeopardy. It's with good reason that lighting fires is illegal, except in designated areas.

The heaths come alive in summer, as the different heathers start to bloom. My personal highlight is the end of July when huge swathes of common heather, or ling, come into flower, turning the heaths purple. It must surely be one of Nature's must see spectacles.

Heather is beautiful, but it's also highly flammable. To avoid more horrific incidents, we must all take this issue seriously and do our bit to prevent fires.

Remember the code: **No BBQs or fires, ensure cigarettes are out and take all litter home. And if you see a fire, however small, report it via 999 immediately.**

Never assume someone else has reported it. Your swift action could make all the difference...to people, wildlife and our local environment.

Enjoy the heaths, keep safe and please spread the word.

Thames Basin Heaths Partnership  
[www.tbhpartnership.org.uk](http://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk)





## National Walking Month is Here!

National Walking Month, organised by the charity Living Streets, asks people to try to walk for at least 20 minutes every day of May.

It could be to the shops, with their dog, or just to get away from their desk for a little while.

Walking is good for our minds, our bodies and our neighbourhoods and has been a lifeline during the past year, helping people stay active and connected. That's why we want everyone to keep going and pledge to **#WalkThisMay!**

Let Living Streets know how many short journeys you plan to walk each week during National Walking Month (for the purpose of this pledge, we're counting a short walk as around one mile or 15-20 minutes).

They will then show you how many miles you'll walk, how many calories you'll burn and how much CO2 you'll save across the month compared to if you were driving those trips.

**Everyone who pledges will be entered into a prize draw** to win either **£200** or **£50** worth of outdoor clothing shopping vouchers, so you're ready and raring to go - whatever the weather!

<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/national-walking-month>

The sixth annual **Wokingham Walk** is on Sunday 23 May.

Walkers have a choice of 3 routes: 5, 10 or 15 miles, all starting and finishing at Elms Field (next to Aldi in Wokingham).

Registration on the day is from 9 to 10.30am and walkers need to begin the walk immediately after registering. Check in at the end of the walk will close at 5pm.



The walk costs £15 for adults, £5 for 12– 17 year olds and is free for 11's and under. There will be a free nature trail for children. All proceeds will be used to support local charitable causes.

You can register at [www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk](http://www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk)

## **Parish Council grants**

In 2020/21 the Council awarded over £35,000 to organisations providing support or services to its residents. This included larger grants to organisations such as Citizens Advice Wokingham, and smaller grants for various community projects. We are now accepting applications for 2021/22 - please visit our website for an application form, or get in touch if you would like to discuss if your organisation or project is eligible for a grant.



## Jones VC Trophy

The Parish Council was delighted to hear that the Finchampstead Society has decided to award the Jones VC Trophy for 2021 to Roland Cundy in recognition of the many contributions he has made to so many aspects of Village life over the past 25+ years.

The Society will be presenting the Trophy to Roland at its Annual General Meeting on July 1st 2021.

Roland Cundy joined the Parish Council in 1996 and is still an active member of the Council. He chaired the Council from 2004 to 2020.

Colonel Alfred Stowell Jones was awarded the Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria in 1858 for his part in capturing a nine-pound fieldpiece, in heroic circumstances, during one of the battles of The Indian Mutiny. Colonel Jones fought bravely in many other engagements, during The Mutiny and was so badly wounded on one occasion that he was almost left for dead.

In later life Colonel and Mrs Jones came to live in Ridge Cottage Finchampstead. In June 1913 the couple celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary and, being held in high esteem locally, the villagers clubbed together to buy them the gift of a silver-gilt lidded bowl supported by three dolphins.

In 1984 the couple's granddaughter, Mrs Ruth de Courcey-Ireland, then 80 years old, gave the bowl to The Finchampstead Society, as a trophy to be presented each year to a person or persons who had made a significant voluntary contribution to the local community.

For more information about the Jones VC Trophy and the Finchampstead Society please visit [www.finchampsteadsociety.org](http://www.finchampsteadsociety.org)

Membership of The Finchampstead Society is open to all with an interest in Finchampstead and the surrounding area.



### **Keep your shed or garage safe and secure**

Thames Valley Police are receiving increasing reports of sheds, integral and detached garages being broken into. Please take some time to ensure your shed, garage and other garden buildings are safe and secure and check that your insurance covers the contents from theft.

The top five most common items stolen from sheds are:

1. Bikes
2. Mowers
3. Sports equipment
4. Power tools
5. Garden tools

Consider installing a battery-operated alarm, or security marking and registering tools and other items that you store in your garage or shed so they can be identified at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

You can find further crime prevention advice at <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk>



## California Country Park

How amazing does the new California Country Park play area look?

Have you managed to pay a visit yet? It's fully booked at peak times, so its best to visit off-peak.

For more information, to plan and book your visit see <https://cutt.ly/9v7tiBc>

Wokingham Borough Council will review the need to continue the booking system from 17 May in line with government restrictions lifting.



## Dam improvements at the Park

Improvements to the Longmoor Lake dam at California Country Park began on 19 April.

Wokingham Borough Council is rebuilding the spillway, which controls the release of water from the dam, to better control flooding during heavy rainfall.

Work will take about 10 weeks to complete. As well as the improvements to the dam, there will also be some footpath improvements to allow easier access to the site of special scientific interest (SSSI) at Longmoor Bog.

The circular route around Longmoor Lake will remain in place as a floating pontoon path will be installed to ensure visitors can still enjoy walking in the area. At times there will be some disruption for those visiting while vehicles and materials are moved through the park to the work area.

Natural England and the Environment Agency have approved the work, which will have no detrimental impact on wildlife in the area. Work is being carried out by Sanctus Limited, while the council is being supported through the project by Jacobs, the appointed reservoir engineer for the council.



## Please take your litter home

Its great to see so many people out enjoying the California Country Park and other open spaces, but unfortunately this has also brought an increase in litter. Disposable drink cups are a big part of the problem.

The Borough Council has increased its litter collections but all visitors can help by taking their litter home with them.

The Parish Council Litter Wardens and our wonderful team of '**Adopt a Street**' volunteers do a brilliant job helping to keep the Parish clean.

If you are interested in helping out do get in touch - we can supply the kit and you can do as little or as much as you want, it all helps.



## Some of our recent activities

Here are just a few of the things we have been up to over the last month. We have:

- Held meetings including Main Council and the Planning Committee
- Completed the Councils draft accounts for 2020/21 and commenced the internal audit
- Attended the Borough Parish Liaison Forum (Cllr Cundy is Vice Chair), and meetings of the Gorse Ride Steering Group (Cllr Bowers is Chair of the Group) and the Berkshire Association of Local Councils Executive Committee (Cllr Cundy is a member)
- Attended the Wokingham Town and Parish Clerks Forum (our Clerk, Katy Dagnall, is the Chair of the Forum)
- Met WBC and landowners to discuss potential cycle routes
- Met WBC to discuss developing partnership working
- Met WBC to discuss joint working on climate change related projects
- Continued using our post mounted speed indicator devices to remind drivers of the speed limit
- Donated defibrillators to two local schools
- Reviewed and updated our Standing Orders
- Distributed our Annual Report for 2020/21 to households and businesses in the Parish
- Shortlisted applicants for our two vacant posts and planned interviews for candidates
- Received four allotment plot applications (all added to our waiting list)
- Continued to liaise with Wokingham Community Response
- Published 20 news posts on our website
- Had 1496 users on our website and 3525 page views



The consultation on the draft **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan** has now closed and the responses are being considered by the Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers.



*The office may still be closed but we are still working - so please get in touch if you wish. We are now meeting using video conferencing and members of the public are welcome to attend a Main Council or Committee meeting - please contact us if you would like to do so.*

## **FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

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