



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)

You can also find information at [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

### Free Covid-19 testing for everyone

All residents can now access free, regular, rapid Covid-19 tests. These are for people with no Covid-19 symptoms.

This is important for identifying cases of Covid-19 that we would otherwise not find, as 1 in 3 people who are infected with the virus won't have any symptoms, meaning they'll spread it to others without realising.

Getting into the habit of regular testing will help to keep everyone safe.

**COMMUNITY COLLECT SITES:  
LATERAL FLOW TESTS**



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Shute End (8.30am-5pm)	Shute End (8.30am-5pm)	Shute End (8.30am-5pm)	Shute End (8.30am-5pm)	Shute End (8.30am-5pm)	Shute End (8.30am-3.15pm)
Twyford Library (10am-12.30pm)	Finchampstead Library (9am-12.30pm)	Twyford Library (10am-4pm)	Finchampstead Library (9am-1pm)	Royal British Legion (10.45am-4.30pm)	Waitrose Twyford car park (9.15am-3.15pm)
Woodley Library (1.30pm-4.30pm)	Royal British Legion (10.45am-4.30pm)	Lower Earley Library (10am-4pm)			

Locations and timings change weekly. Full details available at: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-testing](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-testing)



Dates can vary so please check by visiting the Wokingham Borough Council website [www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-testing](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-testing)

You can also order Lateral Flow Tests from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or collect kits from local pharmacies.

To find a pharmacy near you visit <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>

### Its not too late!

If you've been putting off getting your first or second Covid-19 jab, it's not too late. People aged 12 and over are eligible for the vaccine – it gives you good protection against the virus

Nobody going for their first or second jab will be questioned about why they haven't had it until now. The friendly staff will just be happy to see you.

Book your vaccination appointment via the NHS website [www.nhs.co.uk](http://www.nhs.co.uk)



**One Front Door**, a service led by Citizens Advice Wokingham, can help residents find the support they need on a range of different topics from energy costs to loneliness and mental health to benefits and debt.

Visit [www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk) Telephone 0808 278 795

Email [contact@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](mailto:contact@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk)



## Last chance to have your say on new housing

There's only a few days left to give your views on potential locations for new housing and other infrastructure in the borough.

The Borough Council's Local Plan Update consultation closes at 5pm on Monday (24 January). The new local plan will manage development across the borough looking as far ahead as 2038.

It will set out how we'll delivery vital amenities like schools, shops, new roads, green spaces, community centres and sports halls or pitches alongside new housing.

Don't miss the chance to have your say - for more information about the Local Plan Update and the consultation visit [www.engage.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.engage.wokingham.gov.uk)



The Parish Council has submitted a detailed response to the consultation, supporting the housing site allocations identified in the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP). The Council has submitted strong objections to the inclusion of Rooks Nest Farm, Barkham Ride, as a potential development site.

The Parish Council is supporting the proposed designation of several sites as Local Green Spaces, including some in adjacent Parishes. Some important local spaces put forward for designation by the Parish Council and the FNDP have been rejected. We are challenging this and with the FNDP team have submitted further evidence to support their designation.

## Changes at the Parish Council

Jim May is leaving the Parish Council at the end of this month. Jim has been a Councillor since 2006 and will be missed by all of us.

The Parish Council has awarded Jim the Freedom of the Parish of Finchampstead for his services to the community and the Parish Council. This is an honorary title and does not confer any special privileges on the recipient.

We extend our thanks to Jim for all he has done during his time on the Parish Council, and our best wishes to Jim and his family for the future.



Jim May (centre) receiving the framed scroll awarding the Freedom of the Parish from the Chair of the Parish Council Councillor Simon Weeks (right) and former Chair of the Parish Council Councillor Roland Cundy.



## Vacancy on the Council

With Jim May standing down, this leaves us with a vacancy on the Council and we will be advertising this from 1 February. Anyone interested in finding out more is welcome to get in touch for an informal chat about the role - contact the Clerk, Katy Dagnall, on 0118 9088164 or email [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



## Trees for the Jubilee

Earlier this month we planted a further three trees at Burnmoor Meadow. These trees will mark the 2022 Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and will be registered with the **Queen's Green Canopy** (QGC), a unique tree planting initiative created to mark the Platinum Jubilee .

Since 2012 we have planted over 30 trees at Burnmoor Meadow, the first ones being for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

The trees are mostly English Oak, but also include River Birch and Himalayan Birch trees which are more appropriate to ground conditions on parts of the open space.

## Platinum Jubilee Awards

We are still accepting nominations for our Platinum Jubilee Awards. Either contact us for a form or use the form set up on our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

### Finchampstead Parish Platinum Jubilee Awards



To commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, we would like to award and give recognition to an individual and group that has made an outstanding contribution to the Finchampstead Community.



The awards will be presented at:  
The Annual Gathering for Parishioners  
9<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Further details and nomination forms will be available from the Finchampstead Parish Council Office or on our website:  
[www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

Parish Office, FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North, Finchampstead RG40 4ES  
Tel: 0118 908 8164 [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



## Roadworks



Commonfield Lane will be closed from 7-11 February to allow Thames Water to undertake works.

The Ridges remains closed. WBC is working on the designs for the remedial work but there is no timescale yet for implementation of the works or the re-opening of the road.

Find out about planned and emergency road works on [www.one.network](http://www.one.network)



## Take part in the one blue bag challenge

Wokingham Borough residents increased the amount they recycled last year to 35,600 tonnes. Well done!

However, we threw away more than we recycled.

Last year we threw away a massive 36,000 tonnes of rubbish. About half of this could have been recycled via your kerbside collection.

In Wokingham borough, 24% of the waste found in blue rubbish bags is food waste, contributing a further 500 tonnes per month to waste instead of recycling it and transforming it into energy for local homes. That's around 42 truckloads of food waste each month that could be prevented or recycled!

Why not set a new goal and take part in the one blue bag challenge! If we all use only one blue bag per week for each household, this would significantly reduce the amount of rubbish we dispose of.

Feed your food caddy – if you need one you can order a caddy online or pick one up. If you need more green recycling bags (these are free) for paper, card, plastics and more you can also order extra ones on our website. <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/>



**4.2 million  
electrical items  
are discarded  
after Black  
Friday and  
Christmas**



Our research showed that nearly 40% of UK adults bought electricals between Black Friday and Christmas - resulting in 2.2 million unwanted electricals hoarded away, and another 2 million thrown in the bin.

That's why it's time for Give-Back January - our annual rallying call to get the nation to gather up their old electricals for donation or recycling

So don't bin it, bag it! You can organise your own Give-Back January and find your nearest donation and recycling points on our website

<https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/>

## Parish Council Grants

The Council has now awarded all of the grants and donations available for 2021/22. The final awards made in December and this month are:

Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership	£4000
Home Start	£1000
Wokingham Poppy Appeal	£300
Keep Mobile	£4000
Wokingham Volunteer Centre	£1500
Link Visiting	£920

From April 2022 we will be accepting further applications from organisations providing services or facilities for our residents - for more information please get in touch.



## **Big Garden Birdwatch!**

This month sees the return of the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch, offering an opportunity to enjoy watching winter wildlife while also contributing to an important citizen science project.

Spend an hour counting the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park between 28th to 30th January, then share what you saw with the RSPB.

This is a great activity to take part in as a way of getting outdoors, immersing yourself in nature and supporting vital survey research that will help identify declining species that need our help.



Last year over one million people took part, counting over 17 million birds. That's a lot of birds flocking to feeders!

Visit the RSPB website to sign up and read some handy tips on how to attract birds to your garden during Big Garden Birdwatch - and throughout the year. [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

## **Do nothing for nature!**

Sometimes, doing nothing is the best thing we can do for our butterflies and moths – especially if you are a gardener. Untidy gardens can provide insects with a safe haven from cold weather and predators.

Winter is a harsh time for most insects in the UK, but they have all evolved strategies to get them through a period when food is scarce and temperatures are too low for them to be active.

Providing winter homes for insects is an easy way to get more butterflies and moths in our gardens in the summer months.



*Brimstone butterfly on frosted twig*

So, this winter we're asking you to:

**Leave the leaves:** Various caterpillars live amongst leaves, so remove them from lawns to keep the grass in good condition if you need to, but whatever you do don't burn them! Pile them in quiet corners of the garden or on flower beds. They will suppress the growth of weeds while adding nutrients to your soil.

**Create a wild space:** Have one or more areas of your garden that are completely untouched. This could be around the edges of the garden, or under trees. Having wild areas like this can help to balance having a neat garden but keeping it also wildlife friendly.

**Leave some plant stems uncut:** Insects may be using plant stems as a winter home, so it might be worth leaving some plant stems uncut.

**Start a habitat pile:** A habitat pile could be just a pile of twigs, branches and leaves where insects can retreat to in the winter.

[www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)



## **Bridging the Access Gap for People with Disabilities**

A new initiative to encourage more voluntary groups, charities and volunteers to take up sign language as an extra language and skill is now available locally.

The Signs4Life scheme is to help people to communicate and engage with vulnerable service users, members of the public, and colleagues, who may be hard of hearing.

Radiyya Jahan, Signs4Life partnerships officer, explains “There are more than nine million hard of hearing people registered in the UK. We have already worked with social workers, housing staff, teachers, the local NHS, and Royal Mail. We wanted to open our programs to the general public, who might also have an interest in learning sign language. We are offering a community 6-week BSL program, which you can enjoy and access from the comfort of your homes, delivered through Zoom”.

Signs4Life is leading efforts towards a society in which people with disabilities have full access and are working to raise the public and political awareness of disability provision.

For more details on the community programmes visit <https://signs4life.org/in-the-community/>

## **Apply today for a free tree for your garden**

The Borough Council has got thousands of trees to find homes for through its partnership with The Woodland Trust. This scheme is open to Wokingham Borough residents who own or have access to a residential garden in the borough.

Expressions of interest must be submitted by 30 January, with the outcome for these announced in March. If successful you will be able to collect your tree in the autumn ready for the planting season.

For more information and to apply for a tree visit [www.engage.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.engage.wokingham.gov.uk)



Would you like Finchampstead to be a cleaner, healthier and happier place to live? By adopting a street you can help to keep it litter-free.

## **Adopt a street**

We all need to do our bit for the environment, and what better place to start than your own road?

The area you choose to litter pick can be as small or as large as you like. The time you spend volunteering is up to you. Even a 5 minute litter pick can make a difference. We will supply the kit including litter pickers, rubbish bags, tabards and guidelines. Bags of litter will be collected by WBC, along with your weekly refuse collections.

Contact us on 0118 908 8175 or email [deputyclerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



## Some of our recent activities

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

- Held a Main Council meeting, and meetings of the Finance & General Management and Planning Committees.
- Attended a meeting of the Gorse Ride Steering Group (Cllr Steve Bowers chairs the Group and Cllrs Becky Eytley and Chris Driver also represent us).
- Continued the roadside speed watch sessions - thanks to the great team of volunteers including Parish Councillors and local residents.
- Let two allotment plots and received another application to add to the waiting list
- Adopted a new Code of Conduct
- Finalised our budget for 2022/23
- Submitted our response to the WBC Local Plan Update consultation
- Responded to the consultation on extending the catchment area and intake for Farley Hill School, expressing our concerns over the impact on our local schools
- Awarded a total of £11,720 in grants to six organisations
- Planted 3 trees at Burnmoor Meadow
- Saw our part time Litter Wardens collect 38 sacks of litter from our roadsides.
- Put 26 news posts on our website.
- Put over 30 posts on our Facebook Page



The Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers, continues to work on the **draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.**



*Staff are now working in our office at the FBC Centre on certain days, while continuing to work from home on other days. If you would like to see a member of staff please get in touch to ensure we will be in the office when you wish to visit.*

*We are still 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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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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