



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)

### **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. You can also collect Lateral Flow Test kits at these sessions

Testing 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.

Sessions are held at various locations including at the FBC Centre in Finchampstead. 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)



**Let's get vaccinated**

Walk-in and get your vaccine at Wokingham Library on:

- Fridays (2pm-7pm)
- Saturdays (11am- 4.45pm)
- Sundays (11am-4.45pm)

First, second, and booster doses of the Pfizer vaccine available to all eligible people over 12.

**NHS** 

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.

A walk-in vaccination centre is opening at the Wokingham Library and will be open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, from Saturday 19 February (subject to weather conditions).

For Finchampstead residents there will be a pop up vaccination event at the FBC Centre on 28 February and 1 March from 10am to 5.15pm. Just walk in!

**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)

**citizens  
advice**

### **Wokingham Charity and Community Hub**

This new Hub provides a home for 11 organisations under one roof and can provide high-quality information, advice and support to enable people to access the right services to meet their individual needs and circumstances at the right time.

The Hub is located at Waterford House and is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. It's now open for drop-ins for the public to seek advice, help and support, while appointments can be booked by calling (0118) 228 0480 or emailing [reception@vcshub.co.uk](mailto:reception@vcshub.co.uk)



## Defibrillators

Community accessible defibrillators, provided by the Parish Council, can be found at the following locations:

- Finchampstead Memorial Hall, The Village
- St. James' Church Centre, Church Lane
- California Ratepayers Hall, Finchampstead Road
- California Crossroads, by Jats Pharmacy, Finchampstead Road
- FBC Centre reception, Gorse Ride North (available when the Centre is open).

There is also a unit at Jacksons Café in the California Country Park.

We are hoping to run a short first aid / defibrillator training session in May or June 2022. More details to follow but if you are interested please get in touch. Some basic first aid skills, and the confidence to use a defibrillator, can save a life!

## Diary dates

- Our Annual Meeting for Parishioners will be held on Tuesday 31 May at 7pm at the FBC Centre. Please put this date in your diary. The event was due to take place on 9 March but the Parish Council decided it was best to defer this for a couple of months.
- The Finchampstead Village Fete will take place at the Memorial Park on Saturday 18 June. This year the event is being organised by Finchampstead Primary School.

## Platinum Jubilee

Plans are being put in place for local celebrations to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

On Thursday 2 June events will include:

- **Picnic in the Park at Finchampstead Memorial Park**, The Village. Approximately 6.30pm to 8.30pm. A free event including a Brass Band concert. Bring your own picnic.

Those taking part can then walk up to St. James' Church, or drive to the Church if necessary.

- **Beacon lighting at St. James' Church**. At approximately 9.00pm, people will assemble at St James Church for the lighting of the Beacon on the Church Tower, linked to the National celebrations for the Jubilee. There will be a Piper, and potentially the Church Choir.

Complimentary bubbly and cake for all will be provided by St James Church.

## Finchampstead Parish Platinum Jubilee Awards



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



We are still accepting nominations for our Awards. Please visit our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) or email [deputy-clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputy-clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



## MAKE A CHANGE BECOME A COUNCILLOR

Following the resignation of Jim May at the end of January, after 15 years on the Parish Council, we have a vacancy on the Council.

Parish Councils and Councillors make a massive difference to local people's quality of life. They are passionate about their communities and seek to make a change to help improve their residents' lives.

If you are interested in joining our capable and enthusiastic team of Councillors please get in touch with Katy Dagnall, Clerk, for an informal chat. Telephone 118 9088164 or email [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

### News from the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges

It was with great enthusiasm that we turned up at Simon's Wood on the most recent volunteer day. The reason being that we were to plant 750 Hazel saplings (*Corylus avellana*) in two key areas of the woods. Both areas had been home to the invasive *Rhododendron ponticum* and after many years of removal now was the chance to introduce additional species.

There are no Hazel plantations on the site so we were introducing a native species to the site and of course the long term benefit is to increase bio-diversity and create habitat enrichment.

The regular volunteer team were joined by the Salesforce team and this enabled us to plant 750 on the day. These plants are in the form of 'whips' and using a spade to create a slit trench the root is inserted and then back filled and protected and supported to stop the deer from grazing the new shoots, and to create a micro climate around the sapling to encourage growth.

So come back in ??? years and you can pick your cobnuts !!



[www.finchridges.co.uk](http://www.finchridges.co.uk)

Finchampstead Ridges is a group of small countryside sites nestled in southern Berkshire near to the borders of Hampshire and Surrey. The Ridges itself, with beautiful views as far as the Hog's Back ridge in Surrey, is one of the National Trust's oldest acquisitions, having been in their care for over 100 years.

Why not explore the outdoors and enjoy the landscape by taking a walk at Finchampstead Ridges or Simon's Wood. You can find details of the Centenary Trail at [www.finchridges.co.uk](http://www.finchridges.co.uk) or try the Parish Council's circular walk from Simon's Wood to Moor Green Lakes.

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/local-facilities/local-walks>



## NEW CHARITY AND COMMUNITY HUB OPENS ITS DOORS

The Wokingham Charity and Community Hub was officially opened on 28 January. The Hub is the new home for 10 charities and organisations, joining Citizens Advice Wokingham who were already located at Waterford House.

The Hub is located at Waterford House and is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. It's now open for drop-ins for the public to seek advice, help and support, while appointments can be booked by calling (0118) 228 0480 or emailing [reception@vcshub.co.uk](mailto:reception@vcshub.co.uk)

As well as contacting the Hub directly, you can also continue to contact the charities in the usual way.

The charities now calling the hub home are:

- **Involve** (which is managing the hub) <https://involve.community/contact-us/>  
Offers support to other charities and community groups throughout the Borough
- **Cranstoun Wokingham** <https://www.cranstoun.org/services/domestic-abuse/dass/>  
An integrated domestic abuse service that supports victims and children.
- **Home Start Wokingham District** [www.home-startwd.org.uk](http://www.home-startwd.org.uk)  
Helps families with young children through their challenging times
- **Health Watch Wokingham Borough** [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk/](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk/)  
The independent champion for people who use health and social care services
- **The Link Visiting Scheme** [www.linkvisiting.org/](http://www.linkvisiting.org/)  
A charity dedicated to reducing loneliness in Wokingham Borough
- **Mind in Berkshire** <https://services.thejoyapp.com/en/listings/489>  
Helps residents suffering from mental health issues, including anxiety, isolation and stress
- **CLASP** [www.wokinghamclasp.org.uk](http://www.wokinghamclasp.org.uk)  
A self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities
- **Promise Inclusion** (Pinc) <https://promiseinclusion.org>  
Supports people with learning disabilities and/or autism, their carers and families
- **Wokingham Volunteer Centre** <https://wokinghamvolunteercentre.org.uk/>  
Offers a free volunteer recruitment and matching service, and community schemes
- **Wokingham Foodbank** (moving in soon) <https://wokingham.foodbank.org.uk/>  
Provides help to those in need including the supply of food, and in some cases helps with heating and lighting
- **Citizen's Advice Wokingham** <https://citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk/>  
Free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information on a range of issues



## Half term cycle quest trail from the FBC Centre to Observer Way bridge, Arborfield

Cycle the trail between 19 and 27 February and answer the 12 questions to be in with the chance of winning a prize. [www.myjourneywokingham.com/events](http://www.myjourneywokingham.com/events)

Starting at FBC, Finchampstead follow the map to find 12 clues along the route to Observer Way Bridge at Arborfield (Approx. 6.6 miles).

The link to the map can be found on our website:  
[myjourneywokingham.com/events](http://myjourneywokingham.com/events)

### Clues

1. On the greenway from FBC, between lampposts nos. 19 and 20 – How far is it to the café and toilets?
2. After turning right at the sign towards Bohunt School, there is a wooden bench on the right. Whose life does it commemorate?
3. Before crossing Commonfield Lane – What is the name of the farm, which is also a Caravan Club certified location?
4. Passing the lake at Waterman's View – What does the sign say you are not allowed to do?
5. On the fence along Biggs Lane cycleway – Which Nursery/Pre-school is being advertised?
6. How many statues of horses are there at Biggs Lane and what do they represent?
7. Outside the new Co-Op store – Which charity has a collection point for donations of clothing & shoes?
8. On the sandy path before you cross the A327 to Observer Way – How far does the sign say it is to Twyford?
9. At the memorial to the Royal Observer Corps – In which year did the Observation Post start operating and when did the post finally close?
10. What is the name of the Rector at St Eligius Church?
11. How many tennis courts with nets are there by the junction of Baird Road and Princess Marina Drive?
12. On the path round the lake at California Country Park – Find the bench on the opposite side of the lake facing the play area & paddling pool – Which small animal is carved on the bench? Maybe children could draw a picture of the animal?

Send your answers to us at: [myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk)  
by 27 February 2022 to be entered into a prize draw!



**WOKINGHAM**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



## **War Memorial relocation project**

The project took an important step forward on 9 February when the Wokingham Borough Council Planning Committee approved the planning application for the relocation of the War Memorial to land in The Village adjacent to the Memorial Park.



Residents will recall that the Parish Council undertook a full household consultation across the Parish in June / July 2021 on the potential relocation of the Memorial to the site in The Village. We received a high level of response from residents, with a clear majority in support of the relocation to the Park, and are grateful to our residents for their interest in this significant project.

The more recent planning application process provided a further opportunity for residents to make their views known.

We are now moving forward to the next stages of the relocation project, with an anticipated completion date of June this year. The cost of the project is being covered through Community Infrastructure Levy funds, or developer contributions.

You can find a report on the consultation carried out, and the latest updates on the project, on our website at <https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/history/war-memorial/war-memorial-relocation>



The relocation of the Memorial will open up opportunities for improvements to the unpopular junction and we are currently in discussion with the Borough Council, the Highway Authority, to move this forward.

We did ask the Borough Council to look at the junction a couple of years ago to see if any meaningful improvement could be made with the Memorial in situ, and a few options were drawn up. However, the view of the professionals, which we as a Parish Council shared, was that none of the options made a significant difference to the junction. Some in fact put the Memorial itself at greater potential risk, and none could overcome the issue of safety for people wanting to visit the Memorial either for individual visits or for Remembrance.

The professional highway engineers will survey the junction, consider all options and will come up with appropriate design proposals. Any plans will of course be shared with Parish residents, but there is unlikely to be any consultation on this as, with all due respect to our residents, neither they nor we at the Parish Council are experts in highway design matters.

The timescale and funding for this work and any actual improvements to the junction is yet to be confirmed, but we will continue to do all that we can to move this forward.



## Upcoming roadworks

- **2-way lights – Barkham Ride**

The lights will be in place between Finchampstead Road and Nash Grove Lane from 21 to 25 February. This is to allow SGN to create new customer connections.

<https://one.network/?GB126875554>

- **Road Closure – Nine Mile Ride**

The closure will be in place between Park Lane and White Horse Lane from 24 February to 18 March. This is to allow works on the new Nine Mile Ride Extension.

<https://one.network/?GB121381850>

- **Road closure – Nine Mile Ride / Park Lane junction**

Monday 21st February 2022 to late April 2022 – 24/7 Closure. This is the last planned closure in this area for the Nine Mile Ride Extension project. Once works have been completed, the newly constructed road will link Hogwood Lane into the Nine Mile Ride/Park Lane junction.

Access for pedestrians will be maintained-via existing footways.



## **Temporary Shuttle Bus Service**

A temporary Shuttle Bus Service will commence on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 and will operate from 07:30am till 18:30pm Monday – Friday and from 08:00am till 14:00pm on Saturdays.

The shuttle service will start at 07:30 picking up residents at Robinson Crusoe bus stops and drop them to the Biggs Lane stop where the Leopard 3 bus is still operational. The shuttle will then make its way along the route to the closure at Nine Mile Ride, from here, it'll turn around and then complete the shuttle route for this section, dropping users at either the Barkham Ride East stop (if heading towards Wokingham) and the Barkham Stores stop (if heading towards Reading).



## **Are you a Tenant of Wokingham Borough Council, Berry Brook Homes or Loddon Homes?**

Are you interested in volunteering some of your time to help us improve services to you? Are you interested in improving your neighbourhood and community?

**If you are interested, please contact us using the details below:**

We are always looking for new people to join our friendly team of Tenant Volunteers. If you or anyone you know is interested in getting involved, attending regular or one off meetings or if you would simply like to know what it is all about, we would love to hear from you.

Whether you have an hour a month, a week or more, we would love for you to volunteer with us.

Please contact the Tenant Involvement Team on (0118) 9746000

or email [tenantinvolvement@wbcinvolved.com](mailto:tenantinvolvement@wbcinvolved.com)



## 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 meetings of the Amenities, Planning and Roads & Road Safety Committees.
- Attended meetings of the Gorse Ride Steering Group (Cllr Steve Bowers chairs the Group), the Borough Parish Liaison Forum (Cllr Roland Cundy is the vice chair) and the Finchampstead Park Management Committee (Cllr Simon Weeks is our representative).
- Had a presentation from Boyer Planning and Cala Homes on the latest developments coming forward at Finchwood Park, including homes, open space, sports facilities and allotments.
- Were granted planning permission for the War Memorial relocation project
- Published new maps for our 3 circular walks
- Installed a new noticeboard near St. James' Church
- Submitted our Precept Demand to the Borough Council
- Planted a tree at the FBC Centre
- Published 26 news posts on our website, over 30 posts on Facebook Page, and reached 505 'Likes' on our Facebook page!
- Submitted an application to the Borough Council for the renewal of the listing of the Queen's Oak pub as an Asset of Community Value
- Had meetings with WBC Officers regarding their Mental Health Strategy; Climate Change activities; partnership working and supporting measures to combat fly tipping.
- Published information on some local heritage features on our website  
<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/history/heritage-features>



The Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers, has now submitted an interim draft of the **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan** to WBC for review before it is finalised and goes forward to the final stages of consultation.



*Staff are now working in our office at the FBC Centre on certain 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**

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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