



The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan

An update on the current position is being circulated with this newsletter. The Plan has reached a vital stage - it has been finalised by the NDP Team and submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for a formal review. WBC will take it through the stages of further consultation and independent examination prior to a referendum taking place.

We have just heard that WBC has agreed that the Plan should be put forward for the Regulation 16 consultation and that this will take place over a 6 week period from 10 October to 21 November 2022.



The Finchampstead Future team, made up of Parish Councillors and local residents, has worked extremely hard over the last three years to get the Plan to this stage.

A huge thank you to the Finchampstead Future team, and also to you - our residents - for your contributions to the various consultations which have helped to shape the Plan and to make sure it reflects what is important to you.

Parish Council representation

As well as the work undertaken through our five committees, the Parish Council and Parish Councillors are involved with other organisations providing important facilities, services or support for our community. Currently these include:

- **Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership**
- **FBC Advisory Board**
- **Finchampstead Park Management Committee**
- **Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association**
- **Wokingham United Charities**
- **Arborfield Green / Finchwood Park Community Liaison Group**
- **Gorse Ride Regeneration Steering Group**

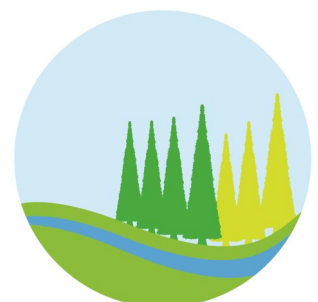
We also contribute to the development of the local council sector, through representation on the Berkshire Association of Local Councils; the Borough / Parish Liaison Forum, and the Wokingham Clerks Forum.

Changes at the Parish Council

We are delighted to welcome Chris Mortimer as a Parish Councillor. Chris joined us earlier this month and the Council now has its full complement of 17 Councillors, all of whom are volunteers.

We would like to thank all of those who expressed interest in our vacancy. Any future vacancies will be publicised in our e newsletters.

We also welcome Marion, joining David as a Litter Warden for the Parish Council. The Wardens work up to 50 hours a month between them, helping to keep our roadsides clear of litter.





Community Speed watch



Roadside speed watch sessions continue weekly – subject to volunteer availability, and suitable weather conditions.

The current volunteer team is made up of local residents and Parish Councillors (also of course local residents!). We prioritise speed watch sessions to those roads known to have the greatest issues.

A couple of examples from sessions run in August this year.

The Village 4-5pm on 23 August

This was quite a busy session. 86 vehicles passed during the hour long session with 22 vehicles exceeding the speed limit of 30mph.

There were 6 vehicles doing over 40mph and two of them were doing 46+mph. There were 2 vehicles being reported for the second time.

Nine Mile Ride East, near Kiln Ride, 2-3pm on 31 August

There were 513 (a record number) of vehicles passing in the hour. This was probably because both Sandhurst Road and The Ridges were closed at the time so this location was a “double” diversion route. The volume of traffic of course slowed down the bulk of the traffic. There were only 6 vehicles noted as exceeding the speed limit of 30mph and none of them were doing over 40mph.

Details of all vehicles found to be exceeding the speed limit in these and other sessions are forwarded to Thames Valley Police for follow up action.

Go for a scenic walk in California Country Park

California Country Park covers 40 hectares and is set within 100 acres of ancient bogland and lowland heath. There are two scenic trails ideal for a day-out with your family.



The **Longmoor Lake walk** is 0.9 miles long, with a footpath around the lake hard surfaced for improved accessibility.

The **Woodland Walk** takes in the 8,000-year-old Longmoor Bog, the Heathland, Longmoor Lake and the woodland. Now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its abundance of rare sedges and mosses, Longmoor Bog can be accessed via a specially constructed boardwalk. Did you know that lowland heath is becoming increasingly rare in Britain?

Dogs are welcome in the whole country park, except the play park area and the paddling pool. Owners are asked to keep their dog on a lead.

To find out more about the park and these routes, and to download a copy of the map shown here, visit:

www.wokinghamcountryside.co.uk/california/



The War Memorial relocation project



As many of you will have noticed, the War Memorial relocation project is progressing well. The work is due to be completed in October.

Full details of the project can be found at the link below.
<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/history/war-memorial/war-memorial-relocation>

We will be holding a re-dedication event as a mark of respect for the Memorial and those named on it. This will be a short and simple event led by Reverend Onugha and will take place in October - we will provide you with the date in due course.

Remembrance 2022

The Remembrance Parade and Service will be held at the Memorial Park on Sunday 13 November at 3pm. More details will follow in our next newsletter.



Local roads



The Ridges: The repair work is progressing according to plan and we understand the road should re-open in November, unless delayed by bad weather or anything unexpected being discovered.

Dell Road and Lower Sandhurst Road: The Borough Council has committed to undertake repair / remedial work to address any damage and additional wear and tear caused by the increased use of these roads while The Ridges has been closed. We will be doing what we can to ensure these works take place at the earliest opportunity.

White Horse Lane: Concerns have been raised that the use of this Lane as a short cut will increase once The Ridges re-opens. The Borough Council is actively looking at measures to address this although timescales for implementation are not known. Again we will be doing what we can to move this project forward.

'War Memorial junction': We are continuing to liaise with the highway professionals at the Borough Council over future improvements to the junction. We will keep you updated through these newsletters and on our website.

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/history/war-memorial/war-memorial-relocation>

Nine Mile Ride Extension: We understand this is due to open in October.

California Crossroads Improvements: This large scale improvement project is expected to go ahead in 2023. We will provide more information as soon as this is available.



How the Parish Council and its projects are funded

The Parish Council is a statutory body, forming part of local government, and is fully accountable. Our Financial Regulations are published on our website.

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/policies/financial-regulations>

Our **Finance & General Management Committee** takes the lead on all of the Council's financial affairs, as well as on many other aspects of the Council's work! The Committee meets every two months, and presents reports on the financial position of the Council to the full Parish Council at its monthly meetings.

The Parish Council prepares its own **budget** each year, making provision for staff costs; running costs (such as office accommodation and IT support); expenses (items such as insurance, audit fees, training); grants and donations; and project funding.

The budget also makes provision for items relating to the work of our various committees, from hanging baskets at the California Crossroads to tree planting; from street lighting to signs for rights of way.

The budget is funded by the **Precept**, the amount the Borough Council collects on our behalf as part of the annual Council Tax paid by residents. In 2022/23 each household in Finchampstead will pay a total of £29.32 to support the Parish Council and the services it provides. This is for the whole year - not per month!

The Council is audited annually, submitting an **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** to the external auditor appointed by the sector. The audit for the year ended 31 March 2022 has just been completed, with unqualified approval, confirming that the Parish Council is operating in accordance with Proper Practices.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Parish Council receives 15% of CIL collected by the Borough Council. CIL is the contribution paid to the Borough by local developers and is often referred to as 'developer contributions'.

The Parish Council can utilise its CIL to provide, replace, improve, maintain and / or enable the operation of local infrastructure as defined by Section 216(2) of the Planning Act 2008, and amended by Regulation 63 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

Since 2015 the Parish Council has received some £1.2m CIL. To date we have spent a relatively small amount, but have many projects in the pipeline.

In accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010, the Parish Council produces and publishes an annual **CIL Monitoring report**.

You can view our summary budget for 2022/23, AGAR for the year ended 31 March 2022 and CIL Monitoring reports on our website at the link below:

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/finance>



The Finchampstead Society

Quiz Night

Friday 7th October 2022

7pm start

at Finchampstead Memorial Hall

Our popular Quiz Night returns.

[Form a team of 8 or just come along and join a table.](#)

Open to all: Tickets £5
In aid of Ukraine Appeal

Bring your own food.

There will be a raffle and bar

Bar * Free Parking

Tickets available by e mailing bevfinchpark@hotmail.com



News from the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges



The summer has been a particularly busy period for the volunteer team over at the Ridges and in the woods. There has been a number of infrastructure repairs and replacements that needed attention. Firstly the car park perimeter fencing was showing signs of deterioration, so a two-person team took to the task, sourcing uprights from the adjacent woodland they were replaced and the rails re-fixed.



The barrier at the top of the Ridges required a stronger more appropriate and robust solution. So a team pulled together to install a new galvanised metal structure. Thirdly the barrier at the entrance to Simons Wood needed some attention so a two man team realigned and concreted the support upright in to provide a more stable structure.



Finally there have been new additional signs along the top of the Ridges to discourage horse riders and mountain bikers from riding down the slopes of the Ridges.

Access for both those activities is along the bottom bridleway / track only.

www.finchridges.co.uk

Stile replacement

The Loddon Valley Ramblers have been busy too!

Three stiles on Finchampstead Footpath 1 have been replaced with kissing gates, making the route much more accessible. One of these gates has been funded by the Parish Council.



The images show the former stile, and the new kissing gate, near Forges Lane.

Finchampstead Footpath 1 is in the Reading Road area. It runs from the bend on Forges Lane (north of New Mill Road), to Church Road, Farley Hill.





Events at Rooks Nest Wood

On 8 October

my Journey
HELPING WOKINGHAM
GET AROUND



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

THAMES
PARTNERS

FREE
activity
for kids

Nature Day

Celebrate the changing of the season!

Rooks Nest Wood
Saturday 8th October 2022
10am - 2:30pm



Info at: tbhpartnership.org.uk/event/wokingham-nature/



FREE - Suitable for all ages - Drop-in - Dogs welcome

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND MY JOURNEY EVENT

FREE BIKE CHECKS
SATURDAY, 8 OCTOBER BETWEEN 12.30-2.30PM

AT ROOKS NEST WOOD COUNTRY PARK, BARKHAM
RIDE, FINCHAMPSTEAD, RG40 4EU



BOOKING ESSENTIAL:
WWW.MYJOURNEYWOKINGHAM.COM/EVENTS





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:

- Held Planning Committee meetings in August and September, reviewing a total of 40 development applications <https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/meetings/meeting-minutes>
Our September Main Council meeting was cancelled due to the period of national mourning for Queen Elizabeth II, but we have several committee meetings and a Main Council meeting coming up in the weeks ahead.
- 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), the Finchampstead Allotment Association Committee (the Clerk attends and Cllr Gordon Veitch is our lead member for allotments) and the Finchampstead Park Management Committee (Cllr Simon Weeks represents the Parish Council)
- Co-opted a new Councillor - Chris Mortimer
- Appointed a new Litter Warden so we are again at full strength with two Wardens
- Attended a meeting with WBC and representatives from other Town and Parish Councils to discuss proposals for improving the lakeside area at the California Country Park
- Met FBC representatives to discuss the Parish Council's support for youth activities FBC provides for the community
- Held a further meeting with WBC Highways representatives to discuss the future of the 'war memorial junction'
- Received an unqualified report from the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, for our Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2021/22



The Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers, has submitted the **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan** to the Borough Council. See page 1 of this newsletter for details



www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/community-projects/neighbourhood-development-plan/documents

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

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH OFFICE, FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 4ES
Tel: 0118 908 8164 email: clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk



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