



Annual grants and donations

Each year the Parish Council sets a budget for grants and donations for local organisations and projects which provide valuable services or facilities for the Parish and its residents.

In our October newsletter we updated you on the grants awarded this year, and on the donations given to our local community halls, the St. James' Churchyard and our local primary schools.

Since then additional grants have been awarded as follows:

Wokingham Poppy Appeal	£400
Keep Mobile	£4000
Bohunt School Wokingham	£1000

Further applications will be considered by the Council at its meeting this month.

Applications can be submitted at any time and will be considered by the Council at the earliest opportunity, we are now accepting applications for 2023/24. If you would like to discuss whether your organisation or project would be eligible please get in touch.

The Parish Council is always happy to discuss larger capital projects which it may be able to support - please get in touch for more details at clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

A date for your diary - our Annual Gathering 2023



Finchampstead

Parish Council

is pleased to invite you to the 2023

ANNUAL GATHERING

for Parishioners and others involved with the Parish
on **Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 7pm at the FBC Centre**

Please come along and hear about our work over the last year. There will be an opportunity to chat to Parish Councillors over refreshments after the meeting.
The event will include a talk from a local voluntary sector organisation - details to be confirmed.

FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North, Finchampstead RG40 4ES
Tel: 0118 908 8164 email clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

Volunteer recruitment Fair - Saturday 28 January 10am to 1pm at Wokingham Town Hall



Residents searching for ways to help their local communities across Wokingham Borough will be able to see options at a Volunteer Recruitment Fair later this month. Dozens of charities and voluntary groups will be there to talk about what they do, all looking for new volunteers. The charities attending are very varied, as are the roles, which can fit around work, family and other commitments.

The event is free and open for people to drop in at any time to have an informal chat and discover how they can help locally. www.volunteerwokinghamborough.org.uk



Library events - highlights for children and young people



Igniting Writing is a creative writing club for 11 to 18 year-olds, which aims to develop their storytelling and writing skills in a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

Writing can be seen as a solitary activity, so it is a great opportunity for teens to come together and write as a group, share their imaginative ideas with others and build friendships with other young aspiring writers.

Booking is required and sessions are held every Saturday during term-time at Wokingham Library: **Year 6 to 8:** 9.45am to 11.15am. **Year 9 to 13:** 11.45am to 1.15pm

Email libraries@wokingham.gov.uk if you are interested in attending these sessions.

Do you love LEGO? So do we! Join us for LEGO Club at Finchampstead Library, which is held on the first Thursday of each month from 3.30pm to 4.15pm. This club is open to children aged 7 to 12 years.



Booking is required to attend this club and parents are required to remain on site. You can book by visiting www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries



Bookstart Baby is a universal book gifting programme in England and Wales provided by BookTrust. Every child aged up to 12 months is eligible for a free pack of books and resources, designed to support and encourage families to read with their child as early as possible. Bookstart Baby is gifted by libraries, health professionals and children's centres in Wokingham Borough.

You can pick up a free pack at Finchampstead Library on 1 March between 10am and 12 noon.

Visit www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries for more information on events and activities - there is plenty for adults too!

Finchampstead Community Litter Pick

A date for your diary - the **Finchampstead Community Litter Pick** will be held on **Sunday 26 March 2023**. Larger groups will be working from the FBC Centre and The Village with smaller groups in various parts of the Parish. More information will follow!

In the interim if you want a bit of practice do consider joining our **Adopt a Street Scheme**. We'll provide the kit and you can do as much or as little litter picking as you want, when you want. We are really grateful to our Adopt a Street volunteers for helping to keep the Parish clean and tidy. If you would like to get involved please contact us at clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk





COST OF LIVING HELP

Visit the Hardship Alliance's cost of living help hub for the latest advice for you and your family.

<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/cost-of-living/>

Visit the hub for information on how you can get support with food and fuel, your health, household bills, household essentials and more. This includes:

£120 grants for food or energy costs

The Household Support Fund is offering £120 grants for anyone who is struggling to pay bills or buy food. Funding for this comes from the Government via the council and its partners Age UK Berkshire and Citizens Advice Wokingham.

Other support

- If your child gets means-tested free school meals you are entitled to financial support this winter. Wokingham Borough Council and First Days Children's Charity are working together to provide payments to help during school holidays. But you can apply at any time. You can get £15 per week, per eligible child, during school holidays - including half-term breaks.
- Get help with essentials like food or warm clothes
- Get help with household bills like energy, water or broadband
- Apply for financial support like Council Tax reductions, help with mortgage interest or accessing money in an emergency
- You could access funding to help improve your home, which will pay most of the cost for improvements which reduce energy bills
 - Sustainable Warmth Scheme
 - Help to Heat grants
- View the map of warm spaces open across the borough



Talk to someone if you need help



Contact One Front Door, a service led by Citizens Advice, Wokingham, that helps residents find the most appropriate support.

Call 0808 278 7958, Monday to Friday or visit

<https://citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk/onefrontdoor/>

The **Citizens Advice Mobile Advice Unit** will be at the FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North between 9am and 12 noon on 31 January 2023, providing free, confidential advice, information and support. Just drop in - no appointment needed.



CALLING ALL COMMUNITY HEROES



Finchampstead Parish Council

NEEDS YOU!

MAKE A CHANGE
BECOME A COUNCILLOR

TO FIND OUT MORE, CONTACT:

clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk or call 0118 9088164



Do you want to make a difference?

Finchampstead Parish Council is the first tier of local government, at the heart of the community. Our Parish Council depends upon volunteers who want to contribute a little time to make a lot of difference, and we need more people to get involved!

As a local councillor you can become a voice for the community. We currently have two vacancies and our existing Councillors are looking for people to join them to invest time in local projects and issues for the benefit of residents and the Parish. This is not an election, the Councillors select who will join them.

Finchampstead Parish Council is about people, not party politics. Members of our Council work together as one team on behalf of everyone in the Parish.

What does Finchampstead Parish Council do?

These are some of the areas we cover:

- Working with partners to deliver services and provide facilities to meet local needs
- Commenting on local planning applications
- Improving our network of footpaths and bridleways
- Using developer-based funding to improve infrastructure around the Parish
- Looking after key local amenities
- Working with the Police and the Borough Council to improve road safety
- Providing grants and donations for organisations providing facilities or services for residents

If you want to find out more about joining the Council please contact Katy Dagnall, our Clerk, on 0118 9088164 or clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

We are very proud of Finchampstead as a great place to live. Whether you have lived here for a long time, or are one of our new residents, come and help us make it even better!
www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

Water main improvements on NMR

As part of an ongoing programme to improve our water supply network, South East Water is planning an £85,000 project to replace approximately 200 metres of burst-prone pipe in Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead, between the junctions of Johnson Drive and Range Road.

In order to minimise disruption, construction will be carried out in phases. When one section completes the road will be returned to its original state before we move along to the next stage.

As a safety precaution for pedestrians, motorists and our team, temporary traffic lights will be in operation for the duration of the work. We are very sorry for any disruption this may cause.

Access to homes and businesses will always be maintained although there may be a short wait at times if our team is working directly outside a property entrance.

Construction is planned to start on Monday 23 January and the project is expected to take approximately eight weeks to complete.

Contact South East Water at Community@Southeastwater.co.uk or visit www.southeastwater.co.uk

Pot holes and more

Our roads have taken a battering in recent months with freezing temperatures and lots of rain.

You can report issues such as pot holes, other road surface damage, blocked gullies and flooding on the Wokingham Borough Council website. You can also report damaged or obscured signs and other problems on the roads. The map based system lets you check if a problem has already been reported, and you can request updates if you want.

Visit www.wokingham.gov.uk/report-problems/



Quiz and Supper Night

St James' Church Centre, RG40 4LU

Sat 21st Jan

7pm

£15 per ticket



Get your tickets now!!!

pfc-church.uk/event/quizandsupper

In aid of Special Projects Fund

Get your tickets online
or after most Sunday services

Come along for fun!!

Everyone is welcome
Enjoy a two course meal
Test your knowledge

Come as a team of 6 or just come along
and join with others on the night
For more information please call 0118 973 0133
or point your phone camera at the QR code



pfc +





Queen's Green Canopy

We are delighted that the trees we planted in 2022 at Burnmoor Meadow and the FBC Centre have been registered under the Queen's Green Canopy scheme.

Through supporting this we are creating a greener UK and a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the nation, which will benefit future generations.

We have planted over 30 trees in the Parish in recent years and are always keen to receive suggestions for where trees could be planted. If the land is owned by the Borough Council or is in private ownership we will try and seek permission for the planting.

The RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch 27 - 29 January 2023

Big Garden Birdwatch is fun, free and for everyone. And you don't need a garden to take part! Counting birds from your balcony, or your local park will play a vital role in helping the RSPB understand how UK birds are doing. Sign up for your free guide and let's look out for birds together on 27-29 January.



The fact that we've lost 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 50 years underlines that nature is in crisis. We see it in our own back gardens with house sparrows struggling and starlings undergoing a severe decline. As a conservation charity, your Birdwatch results help the RSPB monitor how our UK birds are faring in the face of the nature and climate emergency. But we can't do it without your support.

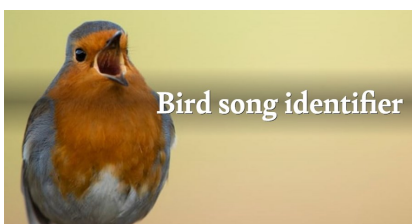
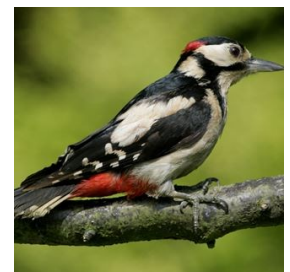
By taking part in Big Garden Birdwatch you, and hundreds of thousands of other like-minded nature lovers, will be taking action to protect our birds for generations to come.

You don't need to be an RSPB member to take part and if you're a teacher, you can inspire your students with **Big Schools' Birdwatch**.

Its easy to take part in Big Garden Birdwatch:

1. Watch the birds around you for one hour
2. Count how many of each species of bird lands on your patch
3. Go online and tell the RSPB what you saw

Visit www.rspb.org.uk for more information and to sign up for your free pack



Bird song identifier

The RSPB website has loads of useful and interesting information, from how to identify birds, how you can help birds and garden for wildlife, and even a bird song identifier!

There are challenges and activities for families and kids too.



The Finchampstead Society

The Fascinating History of Reading Abbey

A presentation by Graham Horn

Friday 10th February

7pm start

at Finchampstead Memorial Hall

All are welcome

Tea & Coffee available

For more information: 0118 9734123

The Finchampstead Society aims to benefit people living or working in Finchampstead Parish. Its aims are to support residents' interests; to oppose undesirable development; to preserve our past and to secure our future.

The Society also holds and maintains an extensive archive on the history of Finchampstead.

The Society runs a variety of events throughout the year.

www.finchampsteadsociety.org



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 a Main Council meeting and meetings of the Finance & General Management Committee and the Roads & Road Safety Committee.
- Started looking at the draft Wokingham Tree Strategy - we'll be submitting a response to the consultation by the deadline of 22 January.
- Finalised our draft budget for 2023/24 - this will be considered by the Council at its January meeting.
- Attended a Borough Council Planning Committee meeting to express the Parish Council's views on two local planning applications.
- Received confirmation that our tree planting is registered under the Queens Green Canopy scheme (see page 6 of this newsletter).
- Met FBC representatives to discuss our support for local youth activities.
- Saw our Litter Warden collect 32 sacks of rubbish from our roadsides
- Let an allotment plot, and received more applications to be added to the waiting list.
- Started planning our Annual Gathering to take place on 8 March (see the invitation on the front page of this newsletter) and the Finchampstead Community Litter Pick to be held on 26 March (see page 2).



The Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers, has submitted the **Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan** to the Borough Council.



The Regulation 16 consultation has taken place and the next stage - the independent examination of the Plan - is underway.

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

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.

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 www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk



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