



First aid / defibrillator training session - 24 April

We have a few places left on our next training session - a fantastic opportunity to brush up on your basic first aid training skills and learn how to use one of our community accessible defibrillators.

The free 2-hour training session will include incident management, assessing the unresponsive casualty (adult and children), the recovery position, resuscitation and use of the defibrillator. Choking, bleeding, head injuries & seizures will also be covered.



The session will be held at the FBC Centre from 7pm to 9pm on 24 April. If you would like to attend please get in touch at planning@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk or telephone 0118 9088164

Finchampstead Community Litter Pick

Our **Community Litter Pick** will be held on **Sunday 26 March 2023**. Larger groups will be working from the FBC Centre between 9.30am and 12 noon, and The Village from 10.30am, with smaller groups in various parts of the Parish. See the posters below or get in touch with us for more information - email us at clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk or telephone 0118 9088164



Finchampstead Parish Council

Clean Up Day 2023

Meeting at the FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North, Finchampstead on Sunday 26 March 2023 at 9.30am

Please come along and lend a hand but remember to wear gloves, strong footwear and suitable clothing

Please bring along your own litter picker and Hi Vis if you have them otherwise they can be provided while stocks last

For further details please contact Finchampstead Parish Council on 0118 9088164 or email clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk



Finchampstead Parish Council

Clean Up Day 2023

Meeting at The Greyhound, Longwater Road, Finchampstead on Sunday 26 March 2023 at 10.30

Please come along and lend a hand but remember to wear gloves, strong footwear and suitable clothing

Please bring along your own litter picker and Hi Vis if you have them otherwise they can be provided while stocks last

For further details please contact Simon Weeks on 07825 402484 or email clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk



Adopt a Street

If you can't join in on 26 March but would like to do some litter picking 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



Changes at the Parish Council

In late February we were delighted to welcome Eric Allen and Pauline Grainger as Parish Councillors, giving us our full complement of 17 Councillors.

We also welcomed Kate Lang as our Deputy Clerk.



Annual Gathering

Thank you to those who braved the unexpectedly awful weather to attend our Annual Gathering on 8 March. The event included short presentations from our Committees on their work over the last year, and an opportunity to talk to the Councillors over refreshments.

We also heard a presentation from Jake Morrison of Citizens Advice Wokingham, covering the work of the organisation and including some surprising facts about the support the organisation provides to Finchampstead residents.

If you didn't manage to attend, you can view the presentations on our website

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/presentations-from-the-parish-councils-annual-gathering>

Plans for the coronation of King Charles III

There will be a **Big Picnic Lunch** in the St. James' Church gardens from 12.30pm on Sunday 7 May. The event is being organised by the St. James' Social Committee and will be open to everyone.

There will be a Band playing, with other entertainment to be confirmed, and probably some cake and bubbly!

Please put the date in your diary and we'll publish more information as soon as its available.



Free road closures

It's almost time for the biggest national event of the year which will see many borough residents and local communities throw street parties, decorate their homes with bunting and participate in various fun events to celebrate The Coronation of His Majesty The King.

The Borough Council is making it easy for residents living in cul-de-sacs and minor residential roads to hold street parties by waiving road closure charges during the coronation bank holiday weekend of 6, 7 and 8 May 2023. Major roads or those used as bus routes cannot be closed.

Residents and community groups normally have to pay to cover the cost of road closures (for the signs, diversion routes and admin needed) but the council is dropping this fee for the coronation weekend.

If you would like to hold a street party, **applications are open until 16 April**. We will be sharing a list of road closures nearer the time.

<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/news-and-consultation/news-and-events/apply-for-a-coronation-street-party/>

For more information about the Coronation visit <https://www.royal.uk/coronation>



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/>

The hub continues to be updated with the latest advice and support. Visit the hub for information on how you can get support with food and fuel, your health, household bills, household essentials and more.

It also provides details on how to register for priority services - extra support from utility providers for vulnerable people if we have power cuts or lose water supply locally.

Talk to someone if you need help

**citizens
advice**

Contact One Front Door, a service led by Citizens Advice, Wokingham, that helps residents find the most appropriate support by providing free confidential advice and information.

Call 0808 278 7958, Monday to Friday or visit

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



WOKINGHAM
UNITED CHARITIES

Essential Item Grants

Has your washing machine broken?

Is your cooker on its last legs?

Can't afford to replace it?

Do you need help with paying debt-related fees?

Wokingham United Charities may be able to help...

We have partnered with Citizens Advice Wokingham to provide our essential item grants. Citizens Advice offer free independent, impartial advice and support to people in need*.

We realise sometimes everyone needs a helping hand. By partnering with Citizens Advice Wokingham we can provide holistic support to help you when you need it most. Citizens Advice Wokingham can signpost you to relevant support agencies and if eligible, can apply on your behalf for an essential item grant.

We may also be able to help with transport costs, school trips, counselling and other essential items or services.



To find out how we can help, please call Citizens Advice Wokingham. Citizens Advice Wokingham will discuss your circumstances to find the best way you can be supported and if applicable, submit the Essential Item Grant Application.

Citizens Advice Wokingham

0808 278 7958




www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk

*Grants are subject to eligibility criteria and can be applied for once per calendar year for up to £500. Please contact us for further information.

Citizens Advice Wokingham can help with issues around welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment law and much more.

About Wokingham United Charities...

Wokingham United Charities is a registered charity (number 1107171) and helps local people in poverty, hardship or distress by providing charitable grants and running semi-sheltered Almshouses. We are an amalgamation of 21 local charities and have supported people in need in Wokingham since 1451.

 @unitedwokingham
 @wokingham_united_charities
 @wokinghamunitedcharitiesonline



WOKINGHAM
UNITED CHARITIES

Westende, London Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1YA
0118 403 2980
grants@wokinghamunitedcharities.org.uk



Who's digging now?

Did you know that of the more than 5,000 street works that take place in Wokingham Borough each year, about 75 per cent of them are utility companies?

Above ground, our roads and footpaths are how we move around our communities, but below the surface, they play an important role in delivering services to households and businesses.



Under a typical road in the UK run many services connecting buildings to utilities, such as:

- Water
- Sewage
- Gas
- Electricity
- Internet cables

The utility companies need to be able to maintain their existing underground equipment, as well as install new. When utility companies need to carry out work, this will either be planned or emergency work.

Planned work (such as maintenance, new customer connections or upgrades) requires the companies to apply to the Borough Council for a permit. WBC can then choose to grant or refuse the permit, or ask them to amend their request.

Emergency work, however, cannot be planned for. Utility companies do not need to apply in advance to carry out emergency works, but they do have a duty to let WBC know within two hours of the works starting.

WBC monitor's street works, but with more than 5,000 carried out each year it can't be everywhere at all times. If you are concerned with any safety of the works taking place, please call (0118) 974 6000. You can check on roadworks in your area at <https://one.network/>

Local pupils artwork unveiled at Gorse Ride

Artwork created by school children at Nine Mile Ride and Gorse Ride Schools has been unveiled at the flagship regeneration scheme at Gorse Ride in Finchampstead.

As part of an initiative to bring the community together, WBC and the contractor Wates, organised art sessions for local children to take part in. These included autumnal themed artwork of leaves and hedgehogs and self-portraits.

The artworks are mounted on boarded fences around the Gorse Ride construction site and will stay up throughout this second phase of the regeneration, transforming the community into a place where local people can be proud to live, work, grow and study

This phase of the regeneration will see 249 new modern homes built, with 75 per cent being affordable to meet growing local demand. The new homes will be energy efficient with measures to reduce emissions and make them more affordable to heat, while helping to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint. Completion is expected in 2027.

Phase I of the regeneration, 46 new homes at Arnett Avenue, was completed in 2021.





Meet SID!



This is SID - our Speed Indicator Device.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is the Highway Authority responsible for the road network and traffic management and Thames Valley Police (TVP) is responsible for enforcement of speed violations. The Parish Council itself has no jurisdiction over highway matters. However, it works closely with these organisations and is committed to help identify areas with problems and to raise awareness of traffic issues.

Our team of volunteers - made up of Councillors and residents - aims to run weekly roadside speedwatch sessions with SID. This depends on there being a suitable location (sometimes a residents driveway) and having enough volunteers - at least two and ideally three are needed to run a session.

Traffic monitoring - and previous SID sessions - identify where in the Parish there is a speeding issue, and speedwatch sessions are prioritised in these areas. Our current hotspots are Nine Mile Ride; Longwater Road and Finchampstead Road.



Sessions are run for an hour, vehicles exceeding the speed limit are recorded, and data is passed to the Police who then send a letter to offending vehicle owners. If a vehicle is caught more than once, the Police will take additional action.

Since May 2022 we have reported almost 600 vehicles to the Police for exceeding the speed limit. In the first two sessions this month alone over 70 vehicles were reported.

Can you help? We really need more volunteers to be able to continue with regular sessions. Training will be provided. If you are interested please get in touch with us for an informal chat about what is involved. Email clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk or telephone 0118 9088164.

Thousands of trees to honour borough's Covid losses

The Borough Council is set to plant a commemorative woodland at Rooks Nest Farm in Finchampstead, honouring those who lost their lives in the coronavirus pandemic, with work hopefully starting in September to finish in early 2024.

The 7.7-hectare plot at the site's south-eastern corner would become an extension of California Country Park to the south. It would be planted with about 6,600 native trees, plus additional wildflower seeding.

A sculpture or other memorial would be installed with two benches and footpaths, and the site will be within easy reach as the traffic-free greenway from Arborfield Green to Finchampstead runs along the southern edge.

The scheme would count towards goals to help the borough achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030, reach international Tree Cities of the World standards and convert 170 hectares of land to new woodland, hedgerows and orchards.





Spring into action and secure your garages, sheds and outbuildings



Occasional break-ins occur overnight but many occur during the day. 15-20 minutes spent on the school run or popping out for essentials is all a thief needs to break-in.

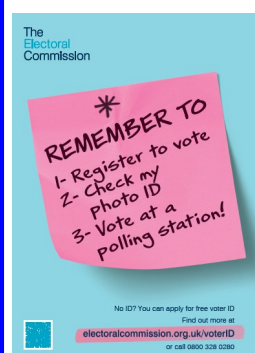
Recent items stolen from garages and sheds have included Motorbikes, Cycles, Fishing & sports equipment and gardening & power tools.

Tips to protect your garage, shed and garden buildings this Spring:

- **Never leave doors unlocked when you are not around**
- Use strong padlocks on doors with no exposed screws. Pay attention to hinges, which can be easily removed
- **Consider securing windows with wire mesh or grills**
- Alarm it - there are systems on the market for all budgets.
- **Remove valuable equipment like laptops from outbuildings used as offices.**
- Security mark and register tools and other items stored in your garage so they can be identified.
- **Lock hand tools inside a locker or box. Secure larger tools with a chain.**
- Secure cycles and motorbikes to the ground or a lockable stand and drape an old sheet or blanket over them to keep them covered from view
- **Consider installing CCTV (closed circuit television). Some systems can be accessed remotely via the internet or smart phone. Ensure you check privacy laws when installing CCTV systems**
- Thorny or prickly plants can be a deterrent in strategic positions, such as underneath windows or below walls and fences
- **Ensure hedges and shrubs are trimmed back to prevent areas intruders could hide or observe you. Crunchy gravel is also good for paths or areas around outbuildings.**
- And don't forget to ensure your home insurance covers whatever items you are storing in these outbuildings.



Please contact the Police if you have any information relating to crime in your neighbourhood. Report online at www.thamesvalley.police.uk, call 101, or call Crimestoppers anonymously on free phone 0800 555 111.



Remember to register to vote

This is a new requirement, which means registered voters will need to show suitable ID at a polling station in order to vote.

This comes into effect from the local elections in May this year - including the Wokingham Borough Council elections.

For more information visit engage.wokingham.gov.uk and look for the Voter ID project.

Or visit www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID



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 a Planning Committee meeting, and our Annual Gathering - our annual meeting for parishioners.
- Held a meeting of our Working Group looking at the future nature reserves east and west of Longwater Road - seeing these sites completed is a high priority for us this year.
- Attended meetings of the Gorse Ride Steering Group - Cllrs George Evans and Becky Eytle represent us; and the FBC Advisory Board - Roland Cundy represents us.
- Attended a 'community futures' event with WBC and its consultants, and representatives from most of the other Town and Parish Councils in Wokingham Borough.
- Attended the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership Annual General Meeting. The Parish Council supports the partnership with an annual grant. Cllr Simon Weeks is the Chair of the Partnership and Cllr Woof represents the Parish Council.
- Welcomed Pauline Grainger and Eric Allen to the Council as Parish Councillors.
- Welcomed Kate Lang to the Council as our new Deputy Clerk.
- Submitted a response to the Government consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Organised 3 community speed watch sessions, reporting vehicles found exceeding the speed limit to Thames Valley Police. We need more volunteers - see page 5 of this newsletter for details.



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

The independent examination of the Plan is now 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.

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

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