



Thank you so much to the four people who have come forward to find out more about volunteering for community speed watch following the item in our last e newsletter.

More volunteers are welcome - do get in touch if you are interested.

First aid / defibrillator training

The session we arranged on 24 April went really well, proving a fantastic opportunity for participants to brush up on their basic first aid training skills and learn how to use one of our community accessible defibrillators.

The two hour session was free to participants, with the cost covered by the Parish Council. Places are limited and we were disappointed that 3 people gave very late notice that they could not attend, leaving not enough time for us to contact others who might have been interested in attending. For this reason we may have to introduce a refundable booking fee for future events.

We hope to run a further session in the autumn - please get in touch if you are interested. planning@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk or telephone 0118 9088164



The big picnic lunch held on 7 May at the St. James' Church Centre was a huge success, with well over 150 people attending. Well done to the organisers!

The Parish Council is pleased to have been able to cover the cost of the band - and the cake - for the event .



Thank you too to the Barkham Hookers for their wonderful Coronation post box toppers created for 40 post boxes in and around Wokingham - including five in Finchampstead. The one pictured was on Gorse Ride North near the junction with Barkham Ride.

<https://www.facebook.com/thebarkhamhookers>

The Hookers are using the toppers to raise funds for the First Days children's charity which aims to reduce the impact of poverty on children by providing the essentials they need for their early years and at school.

www.firstdays.net



Parish Councillors

Just in case you think you missed it - we did not have an election this year! Some of the Town and Parish Councils did have elections, but our next election is in May 2024.

However, we do have a vacancy on the Council following the resignation of Andy Pearce, and are currently looking for people interested in joining the Parish Council. If you would like to find out more about the role do get in touch for an informal chat.

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

Our Annual Report for 2022/23

A copy of our Annual Report for 2022/23 was circulated with our last e newsletter and has also been distributed to households and businesses in the Parish. If you have missed the Report please get in touch and we'll be happy to send you a copy.

Finchampstead Village Fete: 1 July 2023 at the Memorial Park

Please put the date of this popular local event in your diary - the event is being arranged by the Church this year so please contact office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk if you would like more details.

We hope to be able to provide more information in our next e newsletter.



BIKE MONTH CHALLENGE WOKINGHAM

FREE BIKE CHECKS
SUNDAY, 21 MAY BETWEEN 10AM-12PM

**AT THE QUEEN'S OAK PUBLIC HOUSE, CHURCH LANE,
FINCHAMPSTEAD, RG40 4LS**



It's time to dust off our bikes and ride into spring!

This event runs from 1 - 31 May and aims to get more people riding than ever before. Its free to take part and everyone is invited to join in - just ride your bike for 10 minutes or more.

The more times you ride, the more entries you get into the rider prize draws. There are cash prizes plus other prizes including bikes, bike gear, vouchers and more.

You can enter your work team too! More information at www.lovetoride.net/wokingham

My Journey is a borough-wide active and sustainable travel behaviour change campaign that aims to help and inspire Wokingham residents, employees and visitors of all ages to walk, scoot, cycle or use public transport. <https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/>

Free bike checks in Finchampstead!

See the poster on the left for details - but please remember to book your place!

The Finchampstead Magazine

This is your local Magazine, produced independently and keeping you in touch with local events, issues and information. It supports local charities, organisations and businesses.

You can subscribe for only £1 per issue, delivered to your door free.

To subscribe:

- Telephone 0118 983 1009
- Email Richard@finchmag.co.uk
- Send your subscription of £10 by bank transfer, using your surname as the reference, to The Finchampstead Magazine, Starling Bank
Sort code 60-83-71 Account no. 32717687
- Remember you will need to let Richard know where you live! Richard@finchmag.co.uk

Thank you for supporting your local magazine.



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.

The hub includes information on the **Household Support Fund** which is now open for applications for help with food, energy bills and other essential costs. If you applied for a grant in the previous round you can apply again during the new round which started in April.

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 by providing free confidential advice and information.

Call 0808 278 7958, Monday to Friday
or visit

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

The **Citizens Advice mobile unit** will be at the FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North, on Tuesday 16 May from 9am to 12 noon. Just drop in, no appointment is needed.



Citizens Advice will be at:
FBC
Tuesday 16th May
between 9:00 and 12:00

with our Mobile Advice Unit.
Providing free, confidential
advice, information and support.



RESPOND NOW: **Impact of cost** **of living crisis**

Take the survey and shape
future support on offer



How has the cost of living crisis impacted you?

The Hardship Alliance is asking residents how they have been impacted by the cost of living crisis.

The partnership between Age UK Berkshire, Citizens Advice Wokingham, First Days Children's Charity, Wokingham Foodbank, Wokingham United Charities and Wokingham Borough Council wants to hear your views.

It will help shape future support offered across the area and takes about five minutes to complete.

<https://engage.wokingham.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/responding-to-the-cost-of-living-crisis-1>





News from the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges

There have been significant improvements to the car park at Simon's Wood on recent volunteer days. This has been a phased programme to not only improve the surface but also to increase capacity.

At the end of last year areas were identified that would benefit from removal of accumulated autumn debris and then improve levels by the addition and compaction of suitable hardcore.



The surrounding fence had also deteriorated and plans were put in place to carry out the improvements in the Spring of this year. Suitable chestnuts were identified adjacent to the car park and new posts were cut to size. The rails were pre-cut and then delivered to site.

Additional work was also undertaken on the supplementary entry barrier so this will now be fully lockable as and when required. New chestnut uprights were also put in place either side of the drive.



www.finchridges.co.uk

Bird nesting season has begun

We're now well into the annual bird nesting season, which runs from March to August for most species.

During this time, you may find birds nesting in your trees, shrubs, hedges, ivy, boxes, under your eaves or on the roof. It's important that you don't cut back any vegetation during this time in case you disturb nests, which can be well hidden.



You should trim your hedges once a year, during the winter, if needed, as this gives wildlife the chance to eat any berries. All wild birds, including their nests and eggs, are protected by law.



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; a Planning Committee meeting and a Finance & General Management Committee meeting, plus a meeting of our HR Sub Committee.
- Attended meetings of the Gorse Ride Steering Group - Cllrs George Evans and Becky Eytle represent us; and the Finchampstead Park Management Committee - Cllr Simon Weeks represents us.
- Distributed our Annual Report for 2022/23.
- Completed our year end closedown of accounts. The next stage is to have a further visit from the Internal Auditor before the Council considers the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - which is then submitted to the external auditor PKF Littlejohn.
- Met WBC officers to discuss the next stages with the lakeside improvement project at the California Country Park - a priority for us this year.
- Let an allotment plot. Completed essential tree works on the allotment site.
- Met the 1st Finchampstead Scout Group to discuss various matters including the Village Club which they use for storage. The Parish Council is the sole trustee of the Club.
- Reviewed and updated several essential policies - from HR policies to web accessibility
- Logged 20 vehicles exceeding the speed limit during a one hour community speed watch session on Nine Mile Ride (east). All have been reported to Thames Valley Police.



The Finchampstead Future Group, made up of Parish Councillors and local volunteers, has produced a
Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan
The report from the independent examination of the Plan has been received and the next stages are being considered by Finchampstead Future and the Borough Council.



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

Staff are 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.

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



To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter and other Parish Council information please contact us at the address above or follow the link on our website.



Are you my friend?

Useful information and advice from the Wokingham Borough Council Anti Social Behaviour Team

- Rogue traders come in many shapes and sizes, but they all have one thing in common, they are not your friend. Why do I say this? Because they work on trust, we used to call them confidence tricksters, but that now has been replaced by a new modern terminology, but it still amounts to the same thing. They want your trust, they want your confidence and they want your money, but they don't want to be your friend.
- It might well be that they knock on your door, "Good morning, we are doing some work for your neighbours and..." again, they are trying to get your confidence by pretending to be friends with your neighbour.
- It might be that they are advertising in a local or parish magazine, and look like they are a local company. Many times they try and make themselves appear important by having multiple phone numbers and have a "head office" in the next town, again to try and gain your confidence.
- A leaflet dropped through the door, nice and glossy, probably with all sorts of testimonials on it, again trying to gain your confidence.

So, what do you do? You need to have a repair done or some work around your house, you need to sort the good from the bad.

- Get quotes for the work. If possible, at least three. A good trades person may be busy during the day and will arrange to pop over after work or during the evening. This is normal. They will introduce themselves and provide a business card or some form of identification. They will take the time to offer advice and listen to what you require. They may offer a "ball park" figure but will want time to prepare a quotation for the work, good trades people are popular and will be busy, if someone says they can do the work the next day then beware!
- Traders should provide a written quotation for their work. If they come to your home to do the quotation then by law they need to give you a minimum 14 day cooling off period, check their terms and conditions, yes they should also provide these with the quotation! Make sure you check them, a good trader will never have a problem with this. It's good to have a friend or relative with you as well, even if it's just in the background.
- If you are uncertain, then speak to Citizens Advice, they are there to help.
Call 0808 278 7958, Monday to Friday or visit www.citizensadvicewokingham.gov.uk
- A good way to check if a trader is genuine is to check that they have a waste carriers license or they have waste transfer notes for work done, skip or waste removal invoices or notes. Good traders will not mind you seeing these. Wokingham and the surrounding areas are plagued with fly tipping, people often say this is due to the cost of taking stuff to the dump.
- Most of the fly tips Wokingham Borough Council investigates are from rogue traders, roofing repair, builders and tree and hedge cutting services, man in a van waste removal. These are the very same people who have knocked on your door pretending to be your friend, believe me they are not.

asb@wokingham.gov.uk