



# WBC California Crossroads Project

12th February saw the start of the project, although not all road closures went ahead until 15th February when the work on the Ridges was completed. After initial frustration a new routine is in place around the area but it is very quiet. The footfall to the shops and businesses is already falling significantly and the Parish would like to urge all residents to.....



# S O S



Don't forget for a relatively small semi-rural community we are lucky to have a wide variety of eateries, two supermarkets, two pharmacies, a barber (with a ladies section),

## SUPPORT OUR SHOPS

if we want a thriving retail centre after the works are finished!

a garage with fuel, servicing and MOT and a Post Office. Post Offices are fast disappearing and we wouldn't want to lose ours!



## The Jones VC Trophy Award



Every year a trophy, in memory of Colonel Alfred Stowell Jones, is awarded to recognise a significant voluntary contribution by a person or persons to the community in Finchampstead.

Col Jones was awarded the Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria in 1858 for his part in capturing a 9lb field piece during one of the battles of the Indian Mutiny. In later life he and his wife lived at Ridge Cottage, Finchampstead, now the site of Dell House.

In June 1913 the couple celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary and villagers clubbed together to buy them a silver-gilt lidded bowl supported by three dolphins. Col Jones died in 1920, at the age of 88, and is buried in the churchyard at St James Church.

In 1984 the couple's granddaughter, Ruth de Coursey-Ireland, gave the bowl to the Finchampstead Society as a trophy to be presented annually. With the closure of this society it has been decided that the Finchampstead Parish Council will make the award going forwards.

Nominations are now invited for the award using this link:

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/jones-vc-trophy-award>

Closing date: 26th April 2024



**Citizens Advice will be at:**

**FBC Centre**

**Tuesday 2nd April**

**9.30am — 12noon**

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



## Expansion of free childcare from April 2024



From April, free childcare is being expanded to include hundreds of extra families in Wokingham Borough.

For the first time eligible working parents of two-year-olds can get reduced costs on childcare.

[Upcoming changes to childcare support | Childcare choices](#)

If you want to get free childcare for your two-year-old in time for April,  
**you must apply before 31 March**

Visit the Government's :

[Check you're eligible for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)





**Finchampstead** Parish Council

Keeping the Parish  
clean and tidy



**Reminder**

**Annual Parish Litter Pick**

Sunday 24th March

Events at FBC Centre and Greyhound Pub

Just turn up at

9.30am FBC Centre or

10.30am Greyhound Pub

Refreshments available



Would you like to volunteer to “Adopt a Street” in the Parish.

We are very grateful to all of the volunteers who help to keep their local area clean and tidy but more are always wanted. If you would like to get involved we can supply a litter picker and bags, plus a high visibility tabard. There is no commitment - volunteers do as little or as much as they want,

when they want. Bags of waste can be put out with your blue bags (at the moment ) or with the new black wheelie bins from August, for collection by WBC.

If you are currently registered with WBC you can also register with the Parish who can supply your bags.

Please contact the Parish Office for further details.



**Wokingham Repair Café**  
The Repair Café for Wokingham at All Saints Church

A new repair café  
is coming to the borough!

Wokingham Repair café will be opening its doors on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April** at Spaceforall at All Saints Church Wokingham (RG40 1TN) and will continue to be held on the **second Saturday of every month from 10am to 1pm.**

It will be staffed by volunteers able to repair broken household items, small electrical appliances, garden tools, bicycles, chairs, garments etc – to save them being thrown away.

The **Cafe@AllSaints** will also be open so you can have a drink and a slice of cake while the repair magic is happening!

The organisers still need volunteers with different repair skills or who want to take part as a receptionist or help with other jobs on the day.

For more details, to register as a volunteer or to book a repair please go to the website [Wokingham Repair Café \(wokinghamrepaircafe.uk\)](http://Wokingham Repair Café (wokinghamrepaircafe.uk))

**Please bring along your items for repair on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April!**



Upcoming course arranged for residents, by the Parish Council.  
Please book early as spaces on this popular course are limited.

## BASIC FIRST AID & DEFIBRILLATOR



### FREE TRAINING



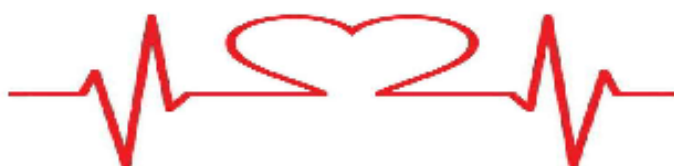
TUESDAY 23 APRIL 2024 AT 7PM

THE FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD

Fantastic opportunity to brush up on your basic first aid skills and learn how to operate one of our **5 community accessible defibrillators** for free!



Acting quickly when someone goes into cardiac arrest is vital, and a defibrillator can make all the difference between life and death. These potentially lifesaving items of equipment are designed to be used by anyone without specific training, but some knowledge is always helpful.



- The 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.



Please let us know if you would like to attend:

0118 908 8164 [planning@finchamstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:planning@finchamstead-pc.gov.uk)





# WBC Announcements

## Supermarket scheme agreed for Arborfield Green



We've approved Sainsbury's plans for a new store off Nine Mile Ride Extension in Arborfield Green, as part of a larger district centre serving this new community.

The store will be built on land near Bohunt School and Arborfield Green Leisure Centre and, if works progress well, could open near the end of 2025. The site is near a bus stop served by the Leopard 3 to Reading and Wokingham town, and there'll be covered cycle storage plus electric vehicle bays with charge points.

Sainsbury's will also offer a click-and-collect service, allowing it to stock a wider range of products, and it will be in walking and cycling distance for many residents. The area near the store will give priority to pedestrians to make it safer, which will also benefit Bohunt students and help encourage walking to and from school.

## A new heart of Finchampstead Village



California Cross needs to change if it is to become an attractive village centre that is pleasant, welcoming and safe for people to walk around. We are taking the opportunity to do this with money from housing developers in the area – at no cost to the local taxpayer.

California Cross is a key area in Finchampstead with shops, schools, dental surgery, post office, garage/filling station and community facilities. We are making it easier for pedestrians to move about in the area, improving the road structure and making the area look much better.

For motorists, the visibility will be better, with improved access to the school and while speeds will be lower, this won't create congestion.

We fully understand that there is disruption to local businesses and residents while this work takes place. This is the case with any improvement work of this kind, and we are doing what we can to help by:

- \* Making sure signage is clear and people know they can access businesses
- \* Launching a social media campaign to promote local businesses
- \* Providing advice and support directly to businesses

### Looking to the future - opening the roads in mid-July

In mid-July, we should finish phase two of the works. For phase three - the last phase due to finish in early September - all roads will be open with two way traffic lights at the junction with Avery car park to manage the final works.





# Finchampstead Parish Council

The Parish Council are pleased to advise over the last few weeks we .....

- \* have planted a Liquidambar tree at the allotments in memory of our late Parish Clerk, Katy Dagnall
- \* attended weekly meetings with the constructors and WBC on the Cross-roads Project. The Parish will continue to press for support for local shops and businesses
- \* attended a NALC webinar on “Social Media” and its relevance for councils
- \* hosted the Annual Gathering. About 25 residents attended this annual meeting and there was a wide ranging selection of questions put to councillors. A report of the meeting will be circulated to residents in due course
- \* are concerned at the rise in crime in the Parish, both house break-ins and car thefts, and would recommend people review their home security and if your car is left on a driveway, or parked outside your house on the road, consider an “old fashioned” steering wheel lock. These are not expensive and it is an added deterrent. [Keyless Car theft prevention ideas.jpg](#)
- \* are seeking nominations for “The Jones VC Trophy” award. Please see article in this newsletter and note closing date for receipt of nominations, [Friday 26th April](#)



## COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH - A call for volunteers



Community speed watch really does make a difference - in the last year well over 868 vehicles have been reported to Thames Valley Police for exceeding the speed limit in Finchampstead.

We aim to run a roadside speed watch session each week, needing two volunteers per session, but at the moment we are really short of volunteers which limits the sessions we can run. Sessions take place on weekdays during the morning or afternoon and last an hour.

After setting up the equipment, the volunteers note down the details of any speeding vehicles. Training is provided and volunteering for just one session a month would be really helpful.

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH OFFICE, FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 4ES

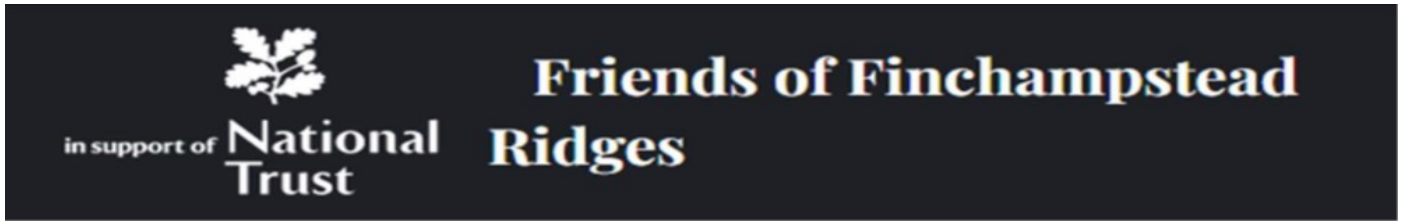
Tel: 0118 908 8164

email: [deputyclerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)

[www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://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.

The Friends of Finchampstead Ridges hope you will be interested in the work they do in order to help maintain National Trust sites locally.



### The team at 'Friends of Finchampstead Ridges' have been busy again!

Committed to promoting conservation throughout all the National Trust sites of Finchampstead Ridges, Simon's Wood and Ambarrow Hill, volunteers from all walks of life bring their unique expertise and resources into everything they do and work closely with National Trust Rangers all year round to maintain the landscape.

The focus of the second visit in February for the volunteer Ranger team was to remedy and upgrade areas of the Car Park at Simon's Wood.

A burnt-out vehicle which was dumped in the Car Park in January and set alight adjacent to the perimeter fence, necessitated replacement of the affected section. The plan was to cut on site Chestnut uprights and to attach the half round horizontal rails. This required the removal of the existing posts and resetting the new Chestnut uprights and attachment of the new rails.



While this was taking place a separate team were attending to the winter damage to the carpark surface. Using a leaf blower to remove the water from the areas requiring attention (needless to say they had rain for most of the day!), then it was a case of backfilling with onsite aggregate and smoothing and then compacting with the Wacker plate. A successful day of maintenance attending to those regular 'housekeeping tasks' in the Car Park hub.

