



Community comes together for successful litter pick

Sunday 24th March was a bright, sunny day and many residents of the Parish arrived at two centres for the annual litter pick.

FBC had an early start at 9.30am and there was a steady stream of families with enthusiastic youngsters, couples and a good number of seniors arriving to take part. All participants were assigned their road /area and once their bags were filled and returned to the centre gates there was coffee, bacon butties and cookies waiting, provided by the Parish.

At 10.30am a group met at The Greyhound Pub and many councillors joined this group, who collected between them the rubbish shown in the bottom picture. Their reward was coffee and pastries!

The Parish would like to thank all those who took part and the FBC church who organised the event at the FBC centre.



Official Opening of Gorse Ride Schools' new playground equipment.



On 20th March the Chairman of the Parish Council and two councillors were invited to the opening of the new play equipment at the schools. This was provided by the Parish Council with a grant from the CIL fund to help enhance their playgrounds, creating a more enjoyable and enriched environment for the children.



The standout equipment was a state of the art climbing and activity frame on their playing field and also the replacement of the ageing infant trim trail. A spacious canopy was constructed off the back of a classroom to provide an outdoor classroom for the Junior playground.

The children are delighted with the equipment and looking forward to the summer months when the canopy /outside classroom will offer up some essential shade.





Bespoke homes making progress at Gorse Ride



A family set to move into a bespoke property at Gorse Ride in Finchampstead have laid a brick to mark the progress of the construction of their new home.

The Gorse Ride regeneration is one of WBC's flagship housing projects which will see 249 new modern homes built on site, the majority of which will be affordable homes to meet growing, local demand.

Four properties have been designed to accommodate the specific needs of people moving into the regenerated new homes including two three-bedroom bungalows, a one-bedroom apartment and a three-bedroom house.

The properties are fully wheelchair accessible, have height-adjustable kitchen worktops, level access shower facilities and can have hoists fitted if needed. The family visited their new home to view at first hand progress being made.

As well as the accessible features that all the properties have, their home will also have a through floor lift and a good amount of space for storage. They are set to move in towards the end of 2024.

The ArborFinch Bike Bus!

This is an organised group cycle from Arborfield to Finchampstead via the California Greenway.

It has timetabled stops along the way and is mostly aimed at families with children at Gorse Ride and Nine Mile Ride primary schools in Finchampstead.

However, all families are welcome to take part. By moving as one large group, the "bus" provides a safe and easy environment for people to cycle - and keeps everyone clearly visible to other road users.

This is particularly important at busy commuting times, when people may feel less confident cycling. It's also a great chance to get some fresh air and travel alongside friends while travelling actively to and from school.

More details can be found on their Facebook page:



REMINDER

Basic First Aid and Defibrillator Free Training Tuesday 23rd April at 7pm The FBC Centre

This 2 hour training course includes incident management, assessing the unresponsive casualty, the recovery position, resuscitation and the use of the defibrillators. Choking, bleeding, head injuries and seizures will also be covered.



Places still available on this course for residents of the parish

If you wish to attend call
0118 908 8164

or email

planning@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk



ELECTIONS

Elections are being held on **Thursday 2 May**

This year we have all-out borough elections, which means all 54 seats on the council are being contested. There is also a Police and Crime Commissioner election for the Thames

Valley on the same day but there are no Parish Council elections — all seats were uncontested.

Poll cards have been dispatched across Wokingham Borough and It is important to read your poll card carefully when it arrives, as it will tell you where to vote . The following information may help you be prepared.

Important dates for your diary

- Deadline to register to vote – Midnight, Tuesday 16 April
- Deadline to apply for a postal vote or postal proxy – 5pm, Wednesday 17 April
- Deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate – 5pm, Wednesday 24 April
- Deadline to apply for a proxy vote – 5pm, Wednesday 24 April
- Polling day – 7am to 10pm, Thursday 2 May

As with the elections last year, photo ID is now a requirement to vote at your polling station, so please make sure you have suitable ID.



Accepted forms of ID include:

- Passport
- Full or provisional driving licence
- Blue badge
- Certain concessionary travel cards, such as an older person's buss pass or an Oyster 60+ card
- Identity card with Proof of Age Standards Scheme mark
- Biometric Immigration document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards



You can also apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate (VAC). If you applied for a VAC last year, you do not need to apply again this year. Remember, the deadline to apply is 5pm on Wednesday 24 April.

For further info on ID see link below:

[Electoral Commission's website.](#)

Expired ID will also be accepted, as long as the photograph on the document still resembles a likeness to the elector. If you turn up at a polling station without suitable photo ID, you will not be issued with a ballot paper. Bringing your poll card alone will not entitle you to vote.

There is lots of helpful information on the WBC website:

[Changes to elections and voting \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

We know that the current works on California Cross may impact how people get to the polling station to cast their vote and want to help you be prepared. On polling day, the current road closures and traffic management will remain in place, which most will be aware of.

Citizens Advice will be at:

FBC Centre
Tuesday 7th May
9.30am — 12noon

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

WBC will be putting in additional measures on the day, such as extra signs, to help people navigate to the polling station.



**SALLY GURNEY,
FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCILLOR
AND WOKINGHAM TOWN MAYOR
BREWS BEER FOR CHARITY**

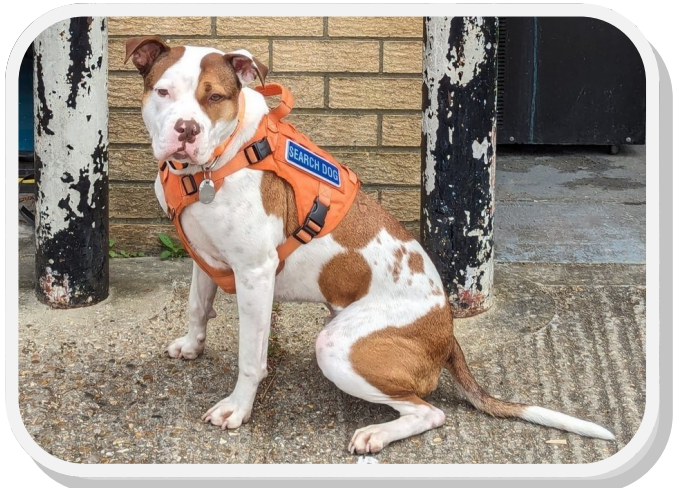
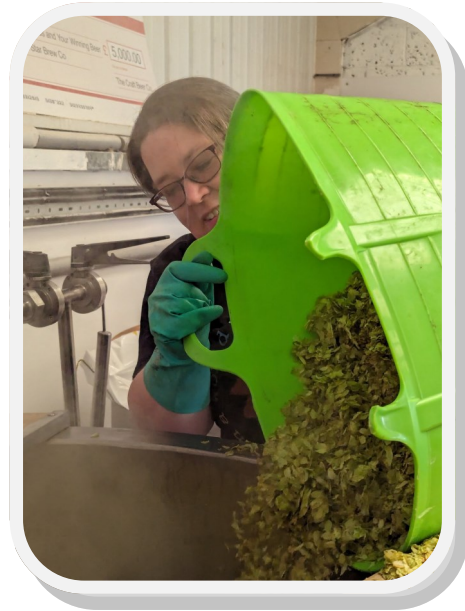
Sally visited Elusive Brewing on 8th April to brew a special beer to help raise proceeds for her chosen charity, Berkshire Search & Rescue Dogs.

The beer will be launched at Wokingham Market on Saturday 27th April and for further information visit the Elusive Brewing Facebook page or their website:

[Elusive Brewing](#)

Sally was joined by the amazing Boomer who is trained to seek out missing people in tough terrains such as dense woodland. Boomer's specialised training is funded by this important local charity.

Elusive Brewing, is a local brewery based at Hogwood Industrial Estate, Finchampstead and they will be donating the proceeds from this beer to help train more dogs like Boomer.





RECYCLING UPDATES

Handy recycling hints on your doorstep

A WBC recycling engagement team are now knocking on doors for a chat and giving out helpful tips in the run-up to the waste collection changes that are coming in mid-August.

These changes can make essential savings and hugely reduce our environmental impact – but we need you to help us by recycling all you can. Our team are giving out useful leaflets and explaining how to use your green bags and food waste bin to their fullest.

We know change can be hard, but they're here to show how easy it is to make a few simple changes to your daily routine.

At the moment, we recycle 57 per cent of all the borough's waste – which is fantastic, but it would be 70 per cent if everyone recycled everything they could.



Food waste: an ap-peel for support

Household waste collections are changing in August, with rubbish and recycling emptied every two weeks, **but the food waste collections are staying weekly.**

Since we started collecting food waste in 2019, the amount that we recycle has been going up every year. However, a recent look at some blue bags put out for collection showed that more than half the contents were recyclable – and food waste made up 20 per cent of the contents.

If you aren't already using a free food bin and optional indoor caddy, please pick one up from our hubs as it's the easiest way to make a positive difference. By recycling your food waste every week, you

also won't have to worry about having enough space in your wheeled rubbish bin when collections change.

Sign up for garden waste collections

Sign up or renew your garden waste collection service, ahead of the changes that are coming this summer.

Using this optional, subscription-based service helps reduce waste and benefits the environment.

Your garden clippings, grass cuttings, leaves and weeds are collected from the kerbside every fortnight, and then sent to a composting facility where they're turned into high quality, peat-free compost for growing other plants.

The price of the 12-month service from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 is £86. For those signing up for the first time, the price includes a 240-litre brown wheeled bin for storing garden waste.

New charge for replacement bins

From 1 April, a new charge of £40 per bin will be introduced for replacement of broken or missing bins to cover the cost of purchase and delivery. However, it'll be free if the bin is damaged during collections and reported by our crews.

To make your bin last longer, don't overfill it as compacted waste can damage it during the emptying process. Also, label the house name or number clearly on your bin, so it can be identified if lost.





HAPPY EASTER

Aluminum is endlessly recyclable, and Easter is the perfect opportunity to put this into practice! Remember to recycle all foil chocolate wrapping as well as trays. Always roll foil up into the size of a tennis ball before popping it into the recycling bin.

SCAN & RECYCLE - TRY THE NEW RECYCLING APP

We are very excited to launch the new free recycling app – Scrapp! The app is user-friendly and is full of exciting features to help you recycle more. The app allows you to:

- ✓ Scan – scan a barcode of your waste packaging, and it will instantly tell you how to dispose of it correctly.
- ✓ Recycle – the app will help you sort each packaging part into the right bin
- ✓ Track – you can monitor your progress in recycling on the dashboard

The app has been personalised for residents of Bracknell Forest, Reading, and Wokingham Boroughs, enabling access to all local waste services so you can quickly book a visit to the Recycling Centre or check your collection dates. This is just the beginning – soon we plan to introduce other exciting features like bin notifications!

HELPING YOU WASTE LESS AND RECYCLE MORE

Scrapp | re3
See how to sort your waste the right way!





COMMEMORATE

D-DAY 80

TIME FOR
CELEBRATION
AND
GRATITUDE



BAND



ON 6 TH JUNE

AT

ST JAMES'S CHURCH

7PM ONWARDS

BEACON LIGHTING



BUBBLY AND CAKE

Bring a chair and a picnic and join in the
celebrations to mark this momentous anniversary.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

If you have any memories of D-day, pictorial or otherwise, that have been passed down through the generations please would you send them to Christine Driver at mandcm@btinternet.com



Notices from the Parish Council

Maintenance work on allotments

Work on phase 1 is well underway but not yet complete due to the weather; too much rain has caused delays and therefore it will not be finished for a few weeks yet. However Councillors were delighted that John Dagnall was happy to visit the allotments to add the final spade of soil to the base of the liquidambar tree, planted by the Parish Council in memory of our late parish clerk, Katy Dagnall. Katy loved the allotments and was a valued member of the allotment association.



Volunteers required for Community Speedwatch



We aim to run a roadside speed watch session each week, needing two volunteers per session. 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.

Please get in touch with the Parish Office, details below, if you would like to find out more.

Crossroads Updates

Wokingham Borough Council send out regular crossroads updates, progress reports and notifications of upcoming traffic management changes. You can sign up at www.wokingham.gov.uk/newsletter and select "California Cross Project Update."

Regular Events and Activities around and about

ASD Family Help Multi-Sports sessions

April 15 & 29, then fortnightly Mondays at 6pm

<https://asdfamilyhelp.org/index.php/events/multi-sports/>

Finch Coasters Running Club

Wednesdays & Thursdays 7pm, Fridays 6:15am

<https://finchcoasters.org.uk/club-runs/>

California Country Parkrun

Every Saturday at 9am

<https://www.parkrun.org.uk/californiacountry/>

Finchampstead Cricket Club

5 adult teams and 150 juniors age 6-17, new players welcome

<https://www.finchampsteadcc.co.uk>

Sing for your Self

Tuesday 12.30pm Arborfield; Thursdays 8pm Finchampstead

<https://www.singforyourself.co.uk/>

Arborfield Grooves

Public drum & percussion circle, alternate Sats 10.30am Arborfield Village Hall

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/berkshire-wellness-circle>

Classes at The Cake College, Arborfield

<https://www.facebook.com/TheCakeCollege/events>

Art Workshops at Artist Forrest Art Studio, Wokingham

<https://www.facebook.com/ArtistForrest/events>

Friendship Tables – Tea & Chat

<https://www.linkvisiting.org/friendship-alliance>

Tuesdays 10am-12pm – FBC

April 24, May 14, May 28 2-3:30pm – St Mary & St John Parish Center, Vicarage Close

April 18, May 16 2:30pm – Friendly Finches at Finchampstead Memorial Hall and many more all around the local area



Events and activities continued

MyJourney Cycle Training & Activities

- Bikeability Learn to Ride sessions (£10) for school children from 5+ at FBC in Finchampstead (4pm Wednesdays)
- Balance Bike Club (free) for 2-4 year olds at FBC (2:15pm Wednesdays)
- Woky Wheels 4 All (free) at FBC (10am & 11am Thursdays) – try out recumbent tricycles and regular bicycles

Further information and how to book: <https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/events/>

Wokingham Bikeathon, booking now open

The event takes place on the **23 June** and four routes are available from 15 miles to 51 miles, so you can pick the challenge that suits you and your family best. To find out more and book your place

[visit the Wokingham Bikeathon website](#)

Wokingham Walk

April 28 Elm's Field, Wokingham — a charity walk with three routes 5, 10 and 15 miles. All the routes start and finish in Elms Field, Wokingham, RG40 2AU. More information & register: <https://www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk/>

Wokingham May Fayre **May 6** 10am-5pm, Wokingham town centre

The May Fayre is Wokingham Lions' biggest annual fundraising event, with all funds going to support local charities – it's also a great family day out, with lots of activities. Alongside two stages of entertainment in Market Place & in Elms Field, we have lots of other entertainment for you, including a children's funfair, street entertainment, Morris dancers, over 120 market stalls, numerous food & drink vendors, & a picnic area in Elms Field. Download our programme here: <https://tinyurl.com/woky24>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/707621534398845>

SHARE in Finchampstead

Each week SHARE helps over 2000 people across the borough who need support food-wise by redistributing an incredible 40 tonnes of food from local supermarkets and food suppliers that would otherwise go to waste. No referral is required and the food is free. Our food sharing is for anyone who feels they could do with some help – even if just temporarily. Everyone is welcome. No questions are asked. You will just find friendly faces and plenty of fresh produce.

FBC: Tuesdays 10am

Royal British Legion, Arborfield: April 25, May 9 & 23, 3:30pm

<https://sharewokingham.co.uk/>

ADVANCE NOTICE



FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

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

Tel: 0118 908 8164

email: deputyclerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

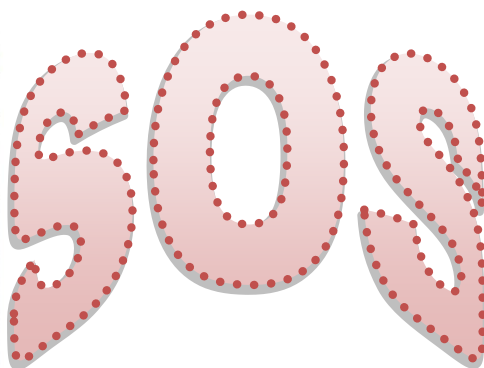
www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk

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.



Finchampstead Parish Council

The parish would like to remind all residents we need to support our local shops and businesses throughout the WBC regeneration of the crossroads. Please go and visit these happy and helpful local retailers



SUPPORT OUR SHOPS

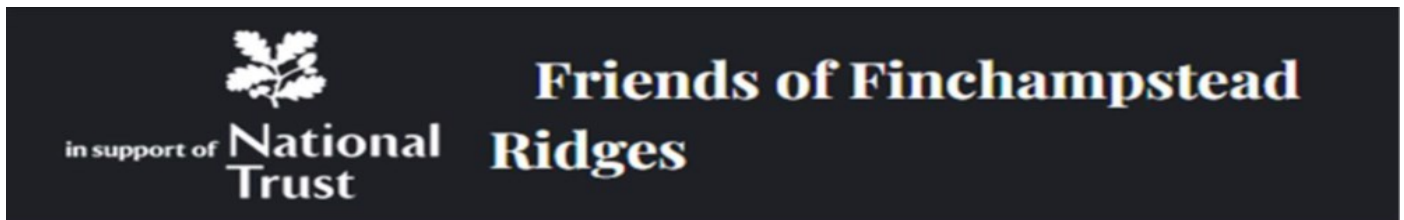


Berkshire has established a process to deliver a local nature recovery strategy with Windsor and Maidenhead leading all the other local authorities in the County. This strategy is really important for the future and will have, once complete, a major influence on planning policies, green space and countryside. You can have a real influence if you engage now.

Berkshire Nature Recovery has asked us to spread the survey across our constituents as they'd like to hear the views from as many people as possible! As a Parish Council we would encourage residents to complete the survey, which can be found at the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/tMfPws7VH>

April news from the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges



On the morning of April 1st I took a walk over at Simon's Wood to see what was in flower this early in the season and these three caught my eye.

There was a reason behind this and as all regulars will be well aware, much of the volunteer time over at Finchampstead Ridges and Simon's Wood in the last decade has been the removal of *Rhododendron Ponticum*. Now the time has come to restore the ecological balance over at the two sites and to improve the habitat for native flora and fauna.

So the ranger team were recently sowing a quantity of wild flowers suitable for the woodland environment on the sites. There are 16 species in total which will no doubt develop the sites into being far more attractive to both visitors and the insect population alike. Included in the seeds sown are some historical and charming wildflower names which include...

Wild Angelica, Meadow Buttercup, Lords-and-ladies, Hemp-agrimony, Meadowsweet and Hedge Bedstraw...

So in the years to come there will no doubt be evidence of these species and yet another reason to enjoy the woodland trails in these special places.

David Kimber

