



## About the Parish Council

Parish Councils are statutory bodies and are the first tier of local government, at the heart of the community. Finchampstead Parish Council is made up of 17 Councillors, supported by the Clerk and the Assistant to the Clerk. We also have a Footpath Warden and two Litter Wardens, all working part time. The Councillors all act voluntarily, and the Council is not political. We are not accountable to Wokingham Borough Council, but try and work with the Borough Council wherever possible to benefit the Finchampstead community.

The Council's activities fall into 3 main areas; representing the local community, working with partners to deliver services to meet local needs, and striving to improve the quality of life and community well being.

The Council meets monthly, as does its Planning Committee. Our Finance & General Management Committee meets up to 5 times a year and our other Committees - Amenities, Rights of Way, and Roads & Road Safety - each meet up to 4 times a year. We have several Working Groups dealing with specific projects or activities and the Council also has representatives on a number of outside organisations from the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership and the Finchampstead Park Management Committee to the Neighbourhood Action Group and groups linked to the planning of the Arborfield Garrison development. For full details see our website. Members of the public are always welcome to attend our Council and Committee meetings. Please see the meeting schedule on our website or contact the Parish Office.

## Chairman's report

This has been another busy and interesting year. We have continued to work on your behalf to do what we can to protect the character of the Parish and to ensure it remains a great place to live and work.

We may not be responsible for the implementation of the larger projects in the Parish, but this does not mean that we cannot influence these. The large developments at the former Arborfield Garrison and Hogwood Farm, the regeneration of the Gorse Ride Estate, the proposed improvements to the California Crossroads and the ongoing work at the California Country Park are some of the schemes we have involvement with.

We continue to work closely with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), local organisations and our neighbouring Parishes, as through working together we can make best use of resources to help maintain services and facilities for our residents. The work of the Council is summarised here, along with some of our plans for the coming year.

*Roland Cundy*

## Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Are you interested in the future of Finchampstead? It is a great place to live and work now but what do you want it to be like in 5,10 or 15 years time?

Government policy encourages communities to develop a NDP to ensure that the community has a real say in where and how any development should take place. A Finchampstead NDP will be an integral part of the Wokingham Borough Local Development Plan, helping to shape the future of the Parish including its housing, roads, schools, amenities and environment.

While the Parish Council will be part of the process a NDP should be produced by the community for the community. We are pleased with the number of volunteers who have come forward to date - if you would like to get involved please contact us at [ndp@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ndp@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)



We helped fund the new boardwalk in the California Country Park



Our green spaces and heritage must be protected



## Finance & General Management

**Finchampstead Emergency Response**  
FER has been put in place to help in the first stages of a large scale emergency such as a hurricane. If you would like to get involved please get in touch.

This Committee is responsible for the financial arrangements of the Council. This includes preparing and monitoring the annual budget and setting the precept - the amount collected from residents by Wokingham Borough Council as part of the Council Tax. In 2018/19 our precept was £139,638 and our budgeted expenditure was £152,241. The balance was met from other income and reserves. Our budget and External Audit are published on our website. The Committee also leads on the overall management and direction of the Parish Council including policies, procedures, staffing matters, risk management and other areas. Communication and Consultation with parishioners continues to be a priority and this Working Group reports to the Committee.

### Grants and donations

This year we have awarded over £40,000 to organisations providing support or services to our residents. Our largest donations are for the youth activity programme run through the FBC Centre, the Blackwater Valley Partnership, the Citizens Advice Bureau and Keep Mobile. Donations have also been made to our community halls, local primary schools and St. James' Churchyard. We have awarded grants to ARC Youth Counselling, 2nd Finchampstead Scout Group, MS Therapy Centre, Home Start, Job Support Centre, Me2 Club, Wokingham Poppy Appeal, School Days by First Days, the Volunteer Centre, the Friends of Finchampstead Ridges, and the local Womens and Community Trips Groups.



### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL is the contribution paid by developers towards local infrastructure improvements - including schools, roads and community facilities. The Parish Council receives 15% of all CIL contributions related to development in the Parish. This year we have contributed CIL funds towards the replacement of the California Country Park boardwalk, improvements to the Avery Corner Car Park, the Children's Centre at the FBC Centre, the Gorse Ride North path, the Moor Green Lakes car park and the California Ratepayers Hall car park.



The school drop off zone at the Avery Corner Car Park

## Planning

**Our Planning Committee has considered 191 new planning applications in 2018/19 including some applications in adjacent Parishes which may impact on Finchampstead**

Wokingham Borough Council is the Planning Authority and makes the decisions on planning applications. However we are notified of every development application submitted within the Parish and our Planning

Committee considers and comments on all the applications - whether for a small extension or a development of several new properties. There have been 13 new Appeals this year and we have attended a number

of Appeal Hearings, presenting the views of the Parish Council. This includes the Appeal relating to development proposals on land adjacent to Sand Martins Golf Course on the Finchampstead Road.

### Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update

WBC is putting together a new Local Plan, which will guide where development can and cannot take place across the Borough in the years to 2036. In that time Central Government requires around 750 to 850 homes to be built each year. As well as housing the Plan will also guide employment, schools, roads, parks, community facilities and sport and leisure centres. Many landowners have put forward land for potential development, we have discussed all of those put forward in Finchampstead (and some in adjoining Parishes) with WBC and have also commented on other aspects of the Local Plan Update. We will continue to work with WBC to do what we can to ensure the best outcomes for our Parish.



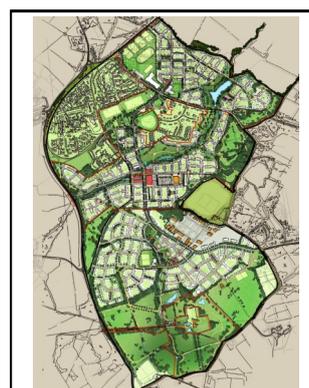
The Local Plan is not just about housing

## The Arborfield Garrison Development (SDL)

We are represented on the Steering Group and the Community Liaison Forum and continue to have meetings with the various developers involved with the SDL. We have commented on all of the planning applications which have come forward this year.

Most of the new homes constructed so far are within Barkham Parish but there are around 45 in Finchampstead. All of the southern part of the development lies within Finchampstead and the site is now owned by Legal &

General Homes. It will be known as Finchwood Park and will include up to 1500 homes, a community centre, primary school and public open space. Permission has been granted for the first 178 dwellings and work is due to start in 2019.



*There will be 3500 homes on the development. So far around 200 are occupied and many more are under construction*

## Amenities

Our activities this year have included:

- ◇ Appointing two new Litter Wardens
- ◇ Extending the allotment site car park and water supply and securing longer leases for the site

- ◇ Planting more trees at Burnmoor Meadow
- ◇ Holding our fifth tidy up session at the California Crossroads and continuing to provide

floral displays for the area

- ◇ Helping to arrange events to mark the centenary of the end of World War I
- ◇ Organising a first aid / defibrillator training session



*We have provided five community defibrillators*

## Rights of Way

Our activities this year have included:

- ◇ Continuing to help monitor the 26 miles of rights of way in the Parish, supporting WBC who is responsible for the network
- ◇ Employing a part time

- Footpath Warden to carry out regular maintenance
- ◇ Commissioning proposals to improve Footpath 33
- ◇ Advising on and monitoring the new Greenway extension to Nine Mile Ride

- ◇ Arranging resurfacing of the Gorse Ride North path
- ◇ Encouraging the completion and opening of the new nature reserves at Fleet Hill and Manor Farms and the rights of way on the sites



*The path linking Gorse Ride North to the FBC playing fields*

## Roads & Road Safety

Our activities this year have included:

- ◇ Improvements to the Avery Car Park including a school drop off zone
- ◇ Purchasing and using two pole mounted Speed Indicator Devices (SID)

- ◇ Holding weekly SID sessions and reporting speeding to Thames Valley Police
- ◇ Submitting a report to WBC on the condition of our roadsides and the need for work to

clear debris and vegetation from our pavements and road signs

- ◇ Planning more gateway signs with a speed limit reminder
- ◇ Looking at options for the War Memorial junction



*We are able to run Speedwatch thanks to residents and Neighbourhood Action Group volunteers*



## Plans for 2019/20

### We are focusing on the priorities you - the residents - identified in our consultation in November 2017:

- ◇ Footpaths, cycleways and bridleways
- ◇ Roads and road safety schemes
- ◇ Parks open spaces and play areas

### Added to this are our other priorities of:

- ◇ Communicating with residents
- ◇ Using CIL funds to provide or support local infrastructure
- ◇ Protecting our green spaces from development

### Our priorities for 2019/20 include:

- ◇ A new website
- ◇ E newsletters
- ◇ The Neighbourhood Development Plan
- ◇ The WBC Local Plan Update and 'call for sites'
- ◇ Challenging speculative proposals for development
- ◇ The developments at Arborfield Garrison and Hogwood Farm
- ◇ Gorse Ride Estate regeneration
- ◇ Provision of affordable housing
- ◇ Speedwatch
- ◇ Parish gateway signs
- ◇ The condition of our roadsides and pavements

- ◇ The California crossroads improvement scheme
- ◇ The War Memorial junction
- ◇ Greenways and cycle routes
- ◇ Improvements to Footpath 33 and Bridlepath 26
- ◇ New nature reserves and rights of way at Fleet Hill and Manor Farms
- ◇ A new footpath map
- ◇ California Country Park
- ◇ Protecting and planting trees
- ◇ Reducing litter and waste and promoting recycling

### Wokingham Borough Council - different ways of working

*We all know that WBC is having to operate with reduced resources and is therefore having to make difficult decisions over priorities.*

*We have had and will continue to have discussions with WBC over their plans for different ways of working in future, aiming to ensure that local services and facilities are not reduced.*



*Some of our lovely open spaces*

*We hope you have found this report interesting - please get in touch if you have any comments or queries. If you would like to receive our regular e newsletters please visit our website [www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk) or email [clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@finchampstead-pc.gov.uk)*

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

**Chair: Councillor Roland Cundy      Vice Chair: Councillor Steve Bromley**

### Councillors:

Steve Bowers; David Cornish; Chris Driver; Becky Eytel; Nancy Jennings-Frisby; Graham Jukes OBE; Sylvia McDonald; Rebecca Margetts; Roger Marshallsay; Jim May; Andy Pearce; Richard Rampton; Gordon Veitch; Simon Weeks; Roger Woof.

**Clerk: Katy Dagnall BSc(Hons), PSLCC. Assistant to the Clerk: Anna Kent.**



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