



## ARBORFIELD GARRISON STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT LOCATION (SDL)

Following the public exhibition on 28 March 2018 Legal and General are now refining the plans for the land at Hogwood Farm, the southern part of the SDL. Revised plans are expected to come forward in May and plans for the first phase of development of 178 dwellings on the site will follow after this.

Wessex Archaeology will shortly be starting a geo-physical survey of the Hogwood Farm site, this is expected to take around 5 weeks.

The interactive maps at the following link give a useful overview of how the development is moving forward. [www.wokingham.gov.uk/major-developments/arborfield-progress-map/](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/major-developments/arborfield-progress-map/)

### Council news

#### **About the precept**

Finchampstead Parish Council is one of 17 Parish and Town Councils in Wokingham Borough. Each Town and Parish Council decides on its budget, this is charged to the Borough Council and added to the Council Tax bill. Each Town and Parish spends different amounts depending on the size of the Parish, its facilities and services provided. The smallest Parish has a budget of less than £20,000, the largest is over £1m. Our budget for 2018/19 is somewhere in between at just under £140,000.

When broken down to the charge for a Band D property, the average amount of the 2018/19 Council Tax which goes to the local Town or Parish Council is £60.50. In Finchampstead the figure for 2018/19 is £24.20 (compared with £22.17 in the previous year). Apart from two very small Parishes this is the lowest Band D rate in the Borough.

For this annual charge of £24.20 (for a Band D property - it will vary slightly for properties in different bands) we undertake a wide range of work on behalf of our residents. Our Annual Report for 2017/18 summarises our activities over the past year and has already been circulated.

We have increased our budget for 2018/19 as we do have a number of plans for the coming year which will involve additional expenditure. The household consultation in November 2017 has helped us to identify our residents priorities for expenditure and action, and from this we are developing a strategic plan for the next 5 years. Some projects have already been identified and we have made provision for these in the budget, along with some capacity for additional projects.

#### **General Data Protection Regulations**

We are aware of the changes coming in later this month and are working towards compliance across all of our areas of work.

As part of this we will be contacting all those on our e distribution list in due course to confirm that you wish to remain on the list and so to continue to receive our e newsletters and relevant Parish Council information. We do not and will not use your details for any other purpose, nor do we share these details with any other organisation.

#### **New Councillor**

We have recently welcomed Sylvia McDonald to the Council and are pleased that we once again have our full complement of 17 Councillors.



## Local information

- **Litter Warden**

Unfortunately our Litter Warden is unwell and is not working at the moment. He normally collects around 100 sacks of litter from our roadsides each month so you may well notice more litter around. If you would like to help keep your local area tidy you can join our Adopt a Street scheme - we can supply bags and litter pickers and any rubbish you collect can be put out with your normal blue bag collection. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

- **Avery Corner Car Park**

The improvements to the Car Park were implemented over the Easter school holiday and we are delighted to see the new School Drop Off Zone being well used. This should ease congestion in the car park at busy times. The work was funded by the Parish Council.

- **California Crossroads**

The yellow railings were finally repaired on 22 April 2018.

Many of you will have noticed the large number of cameras installed around the Crossroads recently. These are gathering information on traffic movements to assist with the development of proposals for large scale improvements to the Crossroads, due to be implemented in 2020/2021. This project has been on hold for some time but work has once again started - the Parish Council has representatives on the Steering Group and we will try to keep you informed. There will also be public consultation at various stages of the project.

Unfortunately we had to cancel the tidy up session we planned at the Crossroads for Sunday 22 April as we simply did not have enough volunteers. We will be arranging another date.

- **Bus stops**

Sadly the seat has been stolen from our bus shelter outside the California Ratepayers Hall, along with one from a Borough Council owned shelter on Barkham Ride. We are working with the Borough Council to get the seats replaced as soon as possible.

## Local events

- **Lapwings, Loons and Lousy Jacks - 10 May**

The local branch of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is holding a talk on the science and history of bird names at the Memorial Hall on Thursday 10 May at 7.45pm. [www.rspb.org.uk/groups/wokinghamandbracknell/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/wokinghamandbracknell/)

- **The Wokingham Walk - 13 May**

This annual charity walk takes place on 13 May with distances of 5, 10 and 15 miles. The longer route passes through Finchampstead. [www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk](http://www.wokinghamwalk.co.uk)

- **Lunch time music at St Eligius Church, Arborfield Green - 16 May**

Free concerts take place each month, and include a buffet lunch. The next concert is on 16 May starting at 12.30pm. To book your lunch contact Rita Le Var - telephone 01252 372320 or email [rita\\_le\\_var@ntlworld.com](mailto:rita_le_var@ntlworld.com)

- **The Big Quiz - 18 May**

The Finches Pre School is holding a quiz at the Memorial Hall on 18 May from 7.30pm. Tickets can be purchased from the Pre School or telephone Nadia Finn on 07776 147471



## More local events and information

- **Finchampstead Ridges - a ramble on the ridges - 20 May**  
The National Trust is holding a guided walk from 11am to 12.30pm on 20 May. To book telephone 03442 491895 or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/runnymede](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/runnymede)
- **Fashion Show - 24 May**  
The Finchampstead Support Group for the Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice in Reading is holding a fashion show at the Memorial Hall on 24 May at 6pm for 6.30pm.  
High Street clothes - bargains galore! Entry is by ticket only - please ring 0118 9737676
- **Finchampstead Village Fete - 16 June**  
The popular village fete will be held on 16 June from 11am to 4pm at the Memorial Park. There will be a dog show and lots of stalls and activities.

The organisers are running a free photographic competition with the theme of 'Finchampstead nature and wildlife' - details will be circulated with this newsletter. Entries will be displayed and the winners announced at the Fete.

## Regular events

### **Finchampstead Archives**

The Finchampstead Society Local History Archive is open on the first Thursday of every month from 2pm to 4pm at the Finchampstead Library in the FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North. Find out about the early history of Finchampstead, its people and buildings by browsing old maps and photographs. The next session is on Thursday 3 May. Enquiries to Wendy Graham on 0118 9736569 or email [thegrahams2@btinternet.com](mailto:thegrahams2@btinternet.com)

### **Friendly Finches**

The Group meets on the third Thursday of each month from 2.30pm to 4pm at the Memorial Hall. A warm welcome will be shared with anyone who would like a cup of tea, a chat and an opportunity to meet new people. This year's theme is 'historical events and the next meeting will be on 17 May. Telephone Bev on 0118 9731833 or Kate on 0118 9733114 for more information.

### **Simple Lunch**

Join your friends and neighbours for lunch. The Simple Lunch takes place from 12 noon to 1.30pm on the first and third Tuesday of the month at St Mary & St John's Parish Centre, Vicarage Close, Finchampstead RG40 4JW. May lunches are on 1 May and 15 May.

### **Tea and Chat**

Again at St Mary & St John's Parish Centre, Tea and Chat takes place on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 2pm to 3.30pm. The next event is on 8 May. All are welcome.

### **Gorse Ride regeneration surgeries**

Keep up to date with plans for the regeneration of the Gorse Ride Estate at these regular surgeries held at the Community House, Billing Avenue, Finchampstead from 10am to 11.30am on Tuesday mornings. Surgeries this month are on 1 May, 15 May and 29 May.

There will also be a public drop in session on 23 May from 4pm to 7.30pm at St Mary & St John's Parish Centre, Vicarage Close, Finchampstead.



## Warren Wood Country Park and Bell Barrow

The Country Park is a lovely area to walk with its secondary birch, oak and pine woodland and a large meadow. There is no car park but the site can be accessed from Nine Mile Ride or Warren Lane, and is a short walk from the California Country Park.

The large mound in Warren Wood was designated by English Heritage as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1977, and is believed to be a Bronze Age Bell Barrow.

Bell Barrows, the most impressive form of round barrow, are funerary monuments belonging to the period 1500-1100 BC, and are rare, with only around 250 nationally, most of which are in Wessex. They can be a rich source of archaeological material, as artefacts would have been buried with the bodies of (usually) rich people.

The Warren Wood Barrow has a diameter of approximately 30 metres and a height of around 3 metres. It is surrounded by a berm and ditch on all sides. The mound and ditch together have a diameter of 72 metres. There is an outer bank on the north and south sides of the site, and there may have been a further smaller barrow, which seems to be lost.

The site was partially excavated in 1967 and 1968 by Mr T.S. Turner, Head of History at Bulmershe College, (now part of Reading University) and a group of students. Various trenches were dug into the mound and a shard of Medieval pottery was found, but little else of significance to allow the mound to be accurately dated.

The Warren Wood Barrow is important in that it has survived well, despite the encroachment of trees and their roots and the burrowing of rabbits and foxes. Until recently the site was unfenced and proved to be very attractive to young people on bicycles!

The Wood and the Barrow are now in the ownership of Wokingham Borough Council, which has fenced the site to protect it, and manages the Barrow in conjunction with Historic England.

In 2017 Finchampstead Parish Council contacted Reading University and asked about the possibility of their using new coring techniques to further explore the Barrow. Unfortunately, it would appear that the excavation in the 1960s has meant that any results from core samples may be contaminated, and potentially inaccurate. It was also extremely expensive to have this work done!

The Parish Council remains committed to protecting the Bell Barrow, and will keep residents informed of any future plans or new information which comes forward about the site.

You can find out more about the Country Park and the Bell Barrow at:

[www.wokingham.gov.uk/countryside-parks-and-conservation/country-parks/warren-wood/](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/countryside-parks-and-conservation/country-parks/warren-wood/)

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1013244>

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

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