

# ELKSTONE NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to this new format for our monthly village newsletter, which I hope you like and marks the changeover of editor. The issue must start with a huge call out to Laure Filho for her excellent editorship over the past three years, and my thanks to her and Jeremy Davies for the smooth handover.

As I prepare this longer than usual newsletter, the weather outside is cold and wet and the daily news on the COVID-19 pandemic doesn't help much to lift anyone's mood. And yet, living here in Elkstone, we do have a lot to be thankful for, not least the community spirit which has been so apparent over the past 11 months, and the beautiful walks to enjoy in our local area.

Jenny, [editor@elkstonevillage.com](mailto:editor@elkstonevillage.com)

Deadline for next newsletter: 20th February

## Features

- Elkstone Parish Church: Services during February
- Welcome to New Neighbours
- Keeping in Touch
- Second Auction of Joyce Haslam Paintings
- Elkstone Open Gardens
- A417 'Missing Link'
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- Star count 6<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> February
- News from Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Support during Lockdown
- Mental Health Signposting (Cotswold District Council)

## Waste & Recycling

Waste & Recycling	Food Waste	Every Tuesday
Waste & Recycling	All bags, bins and boxes	9th and 23rd February

## Regular Village Hall Activities (unfortunately all currently suspended due to lockdown)

Indoor Bowls	Every Tuesday	Ronnie – 870493
Art Club	Every Thursday from 9am	Penny – 03330 119663
Relaxation Classes	Details to follow	Alison – <a href="mailto:info@alisonfernandes.co.uk">info@alisonfernandes.co.uk</a>

## Other Dates for your Diary

Cuppa and Chinwag – online get-together	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb 7pm-8pm	Graham – 07931 124165 for more details
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## Elkstone Parish Church: services during February

With the government lockdown in full effect, Sunday worship has for now largely moved online: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8tFvSwMNjxmX1IK5sb59UA> For more information about how to join, please visit the website <https://www.churnvalley.org.uk>

In addition, for those who would prefer to continue meeting with others in a Covid-secure way for Sunday worship, we are planning to hold one service in the Benefice each week. However, given how quickly social distancing regulations are changing at present, the situation is constantly under review and you are advised to check before venturing out. These services will be held at 11.00am in All Saints Church, North Cerney, which is large enough to allow us the space we need.

*For more information, please contact Revd Arthur Champion, Tel: 01242 870402*

## Welcome

A warm welcome to families who have recently moved to Elkstone. These are:

**Jean and Stuart Pearson** at Bay Tree Barn

**Caroline and Roger Carne** at Hillclose House (formerly Chestnuts)

**Laura Howard and Kes Crockett** at The Old Farmhouse, Ivy Cottage Farm

**Nic and Tim Ricketts** with daughters **Maisie** (9) and **Tallie** (4) at Springfield House

Nearby neighbours may have already said hello. Those of us who have yet to meet you can look forward to doing so over the coming weeks. We hope you will be very happy here.

## Keeping in touch

A couple of weeks ago, a villager used one of the Elkstone Good Neighbours (EGN) WhatsApp groups to ask if anyone had a wooden pallet they didn't need. Within a few minutes, a yes came back from another villager who, by coincidence, wanted rid of a pallet cluttering his garage. From the moment the request went out, to when the pallet was picked up, took less than an hour. A good result for both parties. That little story illustrates one of the positive things to have come out of the COVID-19 pandemic in the village: we have found different ways to connect with each other. So, in case you haven't caught on yet, but would like to, here are some ways to get in touch and stay in touch with lots of other villagers at once.

### **Elkstone Village website ([www.elkstonevillage.com](http://www.elkstonevillage.com))**

An excellent source of information for all things Elkstone and worth bookmarking as a favourite. *Penny Casewell (03330 119663) has recently taken over from Jeremy Davies in managing the website.*

### **Cuppa and Chinwag Online Meet-up – first Thursday of the month, 7pm-8pm (via Zoom)**

Once a month, a relaxing way to catch up with each other's news, share a joke, and in general pass a convivial hour with other villagers. Everyone is welcome and feel free to drop in just for a few minutes. You can also swap the cuppa with a glass of wine or beer, we won't judge you. ☺

*For more details (and how to set up Zoom if you're not sure), call or text Graham Hopkins on 07931 124165*

## **Elkstone Good Neighbours ([goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com](mailto:goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com))**

Originally set up last March as a village initiative to match volunteers with people who needed support during lockdown, Elkstone Good Neighbours has become a useful tool for sharing information via email. If you would like your name added to the Elkstone Good Neighbours bulletin list, please email [goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com](mailto:goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com), giving your name, house name and email contact address.

## **Village WhatsApp**

The Elkstone Good Neighbours (EGN) Village WhatsApp Group is ideal for sharing short messages with lots of neighbours at once, particularly when looking for a quick response. It is used most successfully to let people know about lost items, to put out requests, and most recently to alert villagers to local flooding. *If you would like your name added to the group, please call or text Graham Hopkins with your name and mobile number on 07931 124165.*

## **Gardeners WhatsApp**

A special group for the many keen gardeners and allotment owners in the village. Interest is more important than skill. Use this platform to ask for and share garden-related tips. *If you would like your name added to the group, please call or text Graham Hopkins with your name and mobile number on 07931 124165*

## **Second auction of Joyce Haslam paintings**

There are still a few paintings of the local area by the late Joyce Haslam, which you can now bid for online through the Elkstone Village website. Visit [www.elkstonevillage.com/?page\\_id=4884](http://www.elkstonevillage.com/?page_id=4884). The reserve price is £10.

For those of you who have more recently arrived in our village, Joyce and her husband Ken lived in Elkstone for many years and contributed much to our community. Joyce was a keen amateur artist and some of her paintings featuring the local landscape were kindly donated by her family to help raise money for the village. All proceeds from sales will go to support St John's Church, Elkstone, so it's all in a good cause if you choose to bid.

## **Elkstone 'Open Gardens'**

Will we be able to hold an Elkstone Open Gardens event this summer? Well, we can but hope. And plan. The date to put in your diaries is Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June and to those who have already kindly stepped forward to help, we'll be in touch shortly to schedule our first online meeting. If you are a new villager, we particularly welcome any input you would like to offer, and you don't have to be a keen gardener. We are always looking for volunteers to help for an hour or two with admin tasks, man the car park, bake cakes, serve teas and run stalls. The more widely we can share responsibilities, the more enjoyment for everyone. Elkstone Open Gardens is the highlight of the village calendar, providing a lovely opportunity to come together as a community in the sharing of our lovely gardens with visitors. It couldn't go ahead in the normal way in 2020, so let's see if we can make 2021 special.

*To find out more, phone Martyn Wylie on 870441.*

## A417 'Missing Link'

The date for the final submission of the development consent order for the A417 'Missing Link' is due at the end of June 2021. The Cotswold National Landscape, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the National Trust responded to the consultation on the latest design for this scheme and if you would like to read the joint press release, please visit <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/a417-missing-link-statutory-consultation/>

Key points included:

- General support for the new scheme and its route.
- Continuing concern over the functionality and design of some of the crossings and overbridges, specifically in connecting habitats via wildlife corridors
- Continuing concern about the impact on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- With careful design, the above points can be resolved.

Further information about the A417 'Missing Link' scheme can be found on the Highways England's website. <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/site-search/?q=A417>

*Graham Hopkins, Board Member, Cotswold National Landscape*

## Stone stiles project

You may have seen on the local news recently about a project on stone stiles in the county. It turns out that most are completely unprotected in law, so the idea is to record them and raise enough interest to enable their protection before they slowly start to disappear. David Collins tells us that Elkstone has at least four stone stiles, 3 on Coffin Path and 1 next to Ward Hay. Also, that it's surprising how often you cross one when out on walks in the area. If you do find one, please photograph it and, if possible, email details of its location with OS grid reference to [peter.wilson@woodchestervalleyvillage.co.uk](mailto:peter.wilson@woodchestervalleyvillage.co.uk) If you can also add whether the stone stile is on a public right of way, that would be helpful.

## Star count: 6th-14<sup>th</sup> February

A dark, starry sky is one of the most magical sights imaginable. Especially in gloomy times such as these, it can truly lift the spirits. So, here's a safe, outside activity to do as a family or household, from your garden or house window.

The annual Star Count, organised by CPRE is back and they are looking for as many people as possible to help map the nation's view of the night sky – this year, from home.

It's easy to be part of Star Count: just look to the heavens between 6<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> February and count the number of stars you see in the constellation of Orion. CPRE offer plenty of support on how to do this. Once you've done your star-spotting, you simply complete a form to send in your county – and then they get busy with their number-crunching. For more information and to sign up to take part, visit [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)

## News from Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The key message from Trust's Medical Director is that around 1 in 3 people may have COVID without showing symptoms so please follow the rules and always remember hands, face, space. *'If you do your bit, we'll do ours and we will get through this together.'*

There has been a huge COVID surge within the trust with patient numbers up by around 60% compared to the previous surge. The numbers peaked at 236 in January and, whilst the proportion of those needing critical care remains lower than in the first wave, there are more from a younger age cohort. A further 500+ non-COVID patients are also being treated. In addition, the trust is still providing urgent treatment for patients in the emergency departments (ED). Of these, about a third will require admission or further treatment on our wards. Outpatient appointments are continuing with notification of appointments by letter and of any cancellations by phone. All of this is happening in the face of increasing staff shortages due to illness and the need for self-isolating. Bed capacity is reduced because of increased spacing for patient safety. Also because of the increasing number of patients who, although ready for discharge, cannot be discharged due to already overloaded community health care resources unable to provide support in the home. The toll on staff is both physical and mental, and some are at breaking point. The Trust is doing all it can to support them.

However, there are two positive non-COVID stories to pass on. Prue Leith visited the catering department as part of her review into hospital food. In contrast to many trusts, who outsource their catering, she was delighted to find that 90% of the food was cooked from scratch using fresh ingredients from local sources and that the staff had been trained in nutrition. Recently the catering team have been singled out to be a case study exemplar by the Hospitals Caterers Association. A second standout achievement for our patients is that in 2020 the trust emerged as the Regional and National best performer in respect of national cancer waiting times.

*Anne Davies (Public Elected Governor, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)*

## Support during lockdown

Cotswold District Council are keen to ensure that support continues to be available to clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people, as it was during earlier lockdowns. If you haven't registered for support for yourself, or on behalf of a vulnerable family member or neighbour, you are encouraged to do so by visiting the National Shielding Service System website (NSSS) at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support). Also, if you have previously registered, you are advised to login to update your support needs. For local information and advice, it is worth also visiting <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/news-items/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/>

Please remember too that the Elkstone Good Neighbours scheme remains in operation and can be contacted by email at [goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com](mailto:goodneighbours@elkstonevillage.com), or you can call Martyn Wylie on 870441.

## Mental health signposting

Cotswold District Council has also provided information where you can find mental health support. If you are feeling low or in crisis during what is a difficult time, please do reach out. The back of this newsletter shows where you can find confidential help at both national and local level.

## The following Mental Health signposting information is shared courtesy of Cotswold District Council

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### *For individuals in a high level of emotional distress or mental health crisis*

**Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team**  
Tel: 0800 169 0398

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### *For individuals seeking help with anxiety, low mood or depression*

**Community Wellbeing Service**  
Cotswold - 01452 528491

**IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) – Let's Talk**  
Tel: 0800 073 2200 | [www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/letstalk/](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/letstalk/)

**Mental Health Matters**  
Tel: 0808 145 4507

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### *For carers seeking support in their community to support their wellbeing*

**Gloucestershire Carers Hub**  
Tel: 0300 111 9000 | Email: [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk) | [www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk/](http://www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk/)  
Offering information, advice and guidance to carers 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

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### *For individuals seeking basic self-care tools and resources for emotional wellbeing*

**Every Mind Matters**  
[www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/)  
Expert advice and practical tips to help people look after their mental health and wellbeing

**Five Ways to Wellbeing - NHS**  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/)  
A wide variety of useful links about mental health

**Mental Health Foundation**  
[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)  
Information includes how to look after mental health during the Coronavirus outbreak

**Mind**  
[www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)  
Wide range of information and resources to support problems people are facing at this time

**Rethink Mental Illness**  
[www.rethink.org/](http://www.rethink.org/)  
Online hub to provide practical support information during Coronavirus outbreak

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### **Generally useful for all kinds of information**

**Your Circle** - [www.yourcircle.org.uk/](http://www.yourcircle.org.uk/)

**Glosfamilies Directory** - [www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/gloucs/glosfamilies/home.page](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/gloucs/glosfamilies/home.page)

**Gloucestershire Community Help Hub** - [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/)