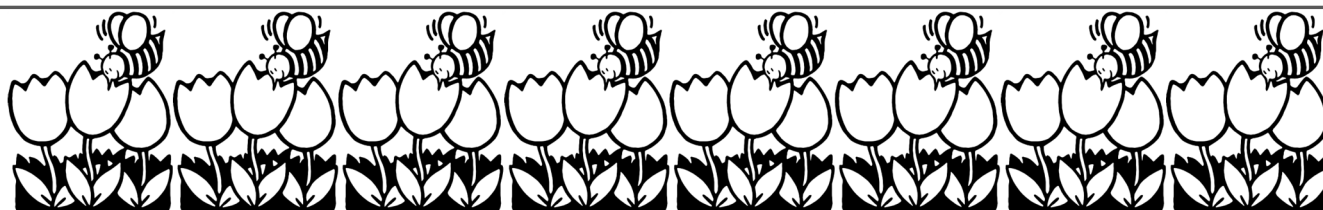


ELKSTONE NEWSLETTER



T. S. Eliot called April 'the cruellest month' because of its unpredictability. Warmth and showers, sleet and snow and easterly winds. It seems odd to say that such weather was the norm but now, often, we have weather in this month which is more like May or June. A shift in the season of two or three weeks. And while we may enjoy the onrush of flowers and birds, it marks the advance of climate change with devastating effects for our wildlife and habitats.

So — I would welcome a touch of cold and sleet to slow things down and redress the balance. Is that possible or is it too late?

Success!

Sadie passed her assessment with 75%! Many congratulations, Sadie, and so well deserved. x

Barbara and Kevin

email: editor@elkstonevillage.com

Deadline for the next newsletter - 20 April 2025

Regular Village Hall Activities		
Indoor Bowls	Every Tuesday, 7.30pm	Ronnie Bury – 870493 or Martyn Wylie – 870441
Art Club	Every Thursday, 9am - 1pm	Penny Casewell – 07775 941876
Yoga	Every Monday, 10.00 – 11.00am	Emma Lowther – 07967 215569

Other dates for your diary		
Waste & Recycling	Recycling boxes, recycling bags, refuse and garden waste	Friday 4 April Friday 18 April
	Food Caddy	Friday 4 April Friday 11 April Friday 18 April Friday 25 April

Church of St John the Evangelist, Elkstone Services in April

Mothering Sunday 11am Sunday 30 March

Please join us on Mothering Sunday to celebrate the special women in our lives with a service of reflection, gratitude, prayer and song. Everyone will receive a posy of flowers to keep or to give to someone special. This will also be Revd Janet Anderson McKenzie's final service in our Benefice, we will miss her and am sure we can share some tasty refreshments with her after the service.

Sunday 6th April 11am Morning Worship. Elkstone

Sunday 13th April 11am Benefice Service. North Cerney Church
Farewell Service of Revd David Minns, followed by a Bring and Share Lunch for him and Revd Janet Anderson McKenzie at North Cerney Village Hall. Please email Hannah, our Churn Valley Administrator, if you would like to join the Lunch at beneficeoffice.cv@gmail.com



Sunday 20th April

11am

Easter Service

Please join us and stay on afterwards for refreshments and the annual Easter Egg Hunt in the Churchyard.
Everyone Welcome!

Village Hall Committee

We are very sorry that Graham is stepping down from the Village Hall Committee and we want to thank him for all his work over the last two years.

This will leave a vacancy, so if any villager feels they would like to join the Committee, please do let us know.

Village Hall event April 6 between 3-4pm

Hi my name is Evie Macfarlane, I'm 15 and live in the village. I am going on a volunteering trip to Ghana in July to work with children in schools. On the 6th of April, I will be running an information event in the village hall, 3pm-4pm, where I will share the details of what I will be doing, along with teas, coffees and brownies. An indication of numbers would be very helpful for baking, so if you are interested in coming, please let me know on Evelyn.macfarlane@icloud.com or my mum (Sian) on 07985 804782. Thank you so much and I hope to see many of you there.

Please do come along and support Evie on the 6 April at the Village Hall at 3pm. A talk by Evie with delicious Brownies! Can you resist?

Do support one of our young people for this important project.

Rendcomb Surgery Support Group invite you to a **Coffee Morning** at **Daglingworth House, GL7 7AG** (By kind permission of Mr & Mrs David Howard) on **Tuesday 29 April 2025 10.30 - 12 noon.**
£10 to include coffee/tea and cake
Featuring: Mindsong, music for dementia (who, through music and song, support people with dementia and their carers)

Bank Holiday Monday 5 May

Please reserve the date in your diary. **Elkstone Village Celebration for VE Day and hope for Peace in the coming years.**

This will start at 3.30pm in the Church (please note it will be non-denominational and non-religious) with the lighting of the Peace Candle and Meditation for Peace. Then a walk to the Village Hall for a tea followed by extra events.

A full programme will be in the May Newsletter.

The tea will be a Bring and Share but, hopefully, quiches, salads, trifle and cakes.

Please do let us know if you can bring anything (and what!). Liz is collecting your promises.

EVERYONE is invited to make this a real VE Celebration for the Village.

On the celebration suggestions online for the VE Celebration is 'I vow to thee my Country..... etc. However, we thought it would be a really nice idea if one (or two or more) younger villagers could write, or have ideas about, some new words to be sung to that tune, making it more of an Elkstone song for peace. Please do get in touch with either Liz or myself, either with your suggestions or a complete set of words. Please do think about it, as we would really appreciate your input.

The Parish Council are seeking a **Parish Council Clerk** as Belinda has now retired. It would be good to have a volunteer from the Village. The duties are not onerous (we are a small Parish) and it is an excellent way of involving yourself with Parish business.

Please do let one of the Councillors know if you feel you could help. Matt, David K. David C. Barbara.

Cheltenham Almshouses and Aid

I chair this organisation. We are a registered Charity and have 39 properties in Cheltenham on 5 different sites. We provide accommodation for people over 65 who are not able to afford commercial rents. Three years ago, we built four new almshouses and there is a possibility that we may be able to build more. The Trustees are all volunteers and commit around one or two days a month to the charity. We have a pretty wide range of skills on the Trustee Board of 8 but we lack an individual with an accountancy background. It would be great if we can find such a person who would be able to help. If you, or someone you know, might have an interest in this please contact me and I'll be very happy to have a no obligation discussion about what we need and what is required. Martyn Wylie 07788912645

New measures announced to reduce fatalities on county roads

Gloucestershire County Council is introducing new road safety measures to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on the county's roads.

Average speed cameras will be installed on the A436 between Seven Springs and Shipton, where the highest number of collisions involving KSIs (Killed or Seriously Injured) have occurred - 13 in the last 5 years. They will enforce the existing 50mph limit. This kind of measure will typically ensure up to 99% compliance with speed limits.

The work to install these measures will begin in April 2025. Installation of cameras will be coordinated by the county council with ongoing operation by Gloucestershire Constabulary.

I'm worried about my debt and rising bills, and I want to know what support is available. Do you have any advice on managing bills and what to do if you fall into debt?

With energy, water and broadband bills rising, it's getting increasingly difficult for many people to cover their expenses. It's important to know you're not alone in finding things difficult and that financial support might be available to help ease the burden.

Checking benefits eligibility

Many eligible people don't claim the benefits that are available to them, so it's important to understand what you're entitled to. You may be able to claim benefits if, for example, you're working age and on a low income, you're sick or disabled, are of State Pension age with a low income or no income, or if you're a carer.

You can check the Citizens Advice website (www.citizensadvice.org.uk) for information on what benefits you might be eligible for.

Reducing outgoings

If you claim benefits or are on a low income, you may be eligible for a reduction in Council Tax. Discounts can also be given to other people eg. students, those living with a carer, or people who live alone. If you have children, you may qualify for free school meals, transport to school, or support with the uniform costs.

To reduce other expenses, you may be able to switch to a cheaper broadband deal, get a water meter fitted, or access discounted travel. You can find out more about ways to get help, including advice on saving money on heating, on the Citizens Advice website.

Creating a budget and prioritising bills

If you're finding it difficult to stay on top of bills, budgeting tools like the one on the MoneyHelper website can help you understand what money you have coming in and going out each month. If you're behind on bills, you should prioritise paying rent, mortgage payments, Council Tax and energy bills, as these are known as 'priority' debts which have the most serious consequences if missed.

Once you've got priority debts under control, you should look at credit card or store card debts, missed Buy Now Pay Later payments or payday loans. Whatever debt you're dealing with, it's important to speak to the person or company you owe money to as early as you can. You could show them a copy of your budget to let them know what your financial situation is and see if there are any steps you can take to start dealing with your debt.

Just remember, there's lots of help out there and you're not alone. If you need help with debt you could get in touch with us or another organisation like StepChange. Please look at the Citizens Advice website first if you can. If you need further help please call us on 0808 800 0510 (Monday and Tuesday 10am to 4pm; Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 12.30pm). You can use our local website (www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk) to complete our email form.

Nature notes

Spring ushers in new growth with a burst of colour and activity. Birds begin to build their nests, frogs and toads migrate to spawn, insects and mammals emerge from hibernation and plants go through a growth spurt while others are flowering.

From badgers doing some spring cleaning and replacing their bedding, to peacock butterflies unfurling their wings for the year. In spring and summer, we see migratory birds return to the UK. Look out for handsome wheatears in heathland, pastures and open country and listen out for the calls of cuckoos in April as they start the look for a mate.

Hedgehogs emerge fully from hibernation. Look out on warm evenings for bats swooping through the air hunting the insects that start to fill the air as the weather warms.