

ELKSTONE NEWSLETTER



I had started to write something profoundly serious this month, reflecting on the various February delights. However, the rain was tipping down, there were seven more pheasants in the garden and not a squeak of Spring apparent. I suppose it was all the water, but it reminded me that, when much younger, I and a group of friends used to swim in the local river. We would cover ourselves with the mud from the banks (why we didn't catch anything dreadful I can't imagine!) and then leap exuberantly into the waters under the false apprehension that we would emerge transformed and radiant. I have to say - it didn't happen.

However, the delights of getting messy (I won't say plastered, it has a totally different connotation) remains. I am back on the wheel, throwing clay and it's wonderful. I emerge (alright, not transformed and radiant) but with the drying substance on face, arms, clothes and shoes, totally liberated. I look disreputable! (I think it's described as releasing the inner child but that puts a damper on it straight away, so ignore it).

So instead of high-minded thoughts perhaps I should describe this month as a Month for Messiness and Having Fun. It could be your belated New Year resolution?

Barbara and Kevin

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Deadline for the next newsletter - 20 February 2026

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, food caddy and garden waste	Friday 6 February Friday 20 February
	Food Caddy only	Friday 13 February Friday 27 February

Elkstone Parish Church - February Sunday Services

Sunday 1st February	11.00am	Morning Worship	
Sunday 8 th February	11.00am	BENEFICE SERVICE	Rendcomb Church
Sunday 15 th February	11.00am	Holy Communion	



Christingle Service

Our annual Christingle Service highlighted the work of the Children's Society. Quiet, steady work behind the scenes, which helps fund projects that support young people and children.

We have sent them our Collection from the Service and the donations from the House Boxes. We will let you know the amount we collected in the March Newsletter.

We all came away with beautiful Christingle oranges, full of fruits and nuts and sweets, and a candle, reminding us of the world, the love and hope of Jesus and the good things God has made.

Villager News

Congratulations to Sadie who has gained her Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice - Neonatal Critical Care. She adds this qualification to her Bachelor of Science in Children's Nursing.

Excellent news, Sadie!

Welcome to the Village

Janet and Clive Mitchell who have moved into Manor Cross.

Nettie and Mark Ryder, who, with their four young people and Digby, the cocker spaniel, have moved into Highgate Farmhouse.

We hope you will be very happy living here.

Village Hall News

Mike Curtis has done a fantastic decorating job in the Village Hall. (His details are on the Elkstone Parish 'Village' page - Recommended Trades People section compiled by Graham. Many thanks for this, Graham).

We still have a number of things to consider but the decorating has given us all a boost.

We would ask all villagers (and hirers) to respect the space and treat it well. A lot of effort has gone into this by the Committee and a lot of money has been spent, so it would be wonderful to keep it looking good. Thank you all.

Elkstone Parish Council

There is a website named "www.elkstone.parish.uk" which appears to be official, but the object seems to be for businesses to pay for advertising; moreover, it has very out of date information.

Please only use the (new) www.elkstoneparish.gov.uk site and not this poor imitation it is nothing to do with us.

Thanks to Eric for calling attention to this.

Cotswold District Council Roundup

Cotswold District Council's recent Local Plan consultation sparked an "unprecedented" number of responses, with nearly 2000 residents, businesses, and communities submitting responses - more than twice the amount received in previous consultations.

The seven-week consultation, which closed on 2 January, asked communities for their views on high-level proposals to meet the Government's new housing target, which more than doubled the number of homes the district must plan for. The council is required to explore all options in finding suitable locations for 18,500 new homes by 2043.

During November and December, the council met with over 1,000 members of the public at exhibitions, meetings, forums with town and parish councils, and visits to local schools, answering questions and informing communities on why the Local Plan must be updated, and setting out its proposed development strategies in response to the new targets.

What happens next?

The council's planning team will now:

- Review all comments and update potential sites, policies, and supporting documents.
- Gather further evidence, including the impact on roads and infrastructure needs.
- Assess whether larger sites are deliverable.

In summer 2026, the council will publish a final draft of the Local Plan, which it intends to submit to the planning inspectorate, reflecting the feedback received during this consultation.

All comments received on the draft Local Plan will help shape the final version of the plan. This will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate at the end of 2026. A public examination will follow in 2027, and if approved, the council aims to adopt the Local Plan before the end of 2027.

Unlocking Orpheus: Cirencester museum hosts day of Roman myth and mosaic discovery

Enthusiasts of archaeology and ancient myth are invited to step back into Roman Britain and uncover the story behind Cirencester's celebrated Orpheus mosaic at a special conference hosted by the Corinium Museum.

Taking place at the museum on 7 February, the Project Orpheus Partnership Conference will bring together leading experts to explore the artistry, archaeology, and mythology behind the mosaic as part of Project Orpheus - a National Lottery Heritage Fund initiative marking 200 years since the mosaic's discovery in Cirencester.

The event will showcase fresh insights from recent excavations, cutting-edge research, and the timeless stories that inspired these masterpieces, while drawing together current scholarship on Orpheus and his mosaics across Britain.

Guest speakers include Professor Richard Miles, Professor Mark Horton, Professor Jenny Mann, and Stephen R. Cosh, who will explore Orpheus through the lenses of heritage, literature, art, and archaeology.

Highlights include:

- Professor Horton, who has conducted a geophysical survey on Barton Farm where the Corinium Museum Orpheus was discovered, exploring the question, Why Orpheus?
- Professor Miles, overseeing archaeological excavations at Withington where another Orpheus mosaic was found, sharing an update on the dig and discoveries so far.
- Stephen Cosh, who co-authored the compendium on *Roman Mosaics of Britain*,
- speaking about Orpheus mosaics in Britain.
- Professor Mann, author of *The Trials of Orpheus*, appearing virtually to talk about the literature of the Orpheus Myth.



Emma Stuart, Corinium Museum Director, said: "We are really privileged to have been able to bring together so many specialists on one day, several of whom have appeared on national and international television and lead experts in their respective fields.

The conference runs from 10am until 4pm on 7 February, and tickets cost £20 or £15 for members of the museum, BGAS and Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society. The ticket price includes tea and coffee.

“Don’t Get Left in the Dark”

Essential tips to keep your home safe and warm during unexpected power cuts.

Stormy weather can lead to unexpected power cuts, leaving you without heating, light, or a way to contact people. Here’s what you need to know.

Report the outage:

Your electricity network operator (not your energy supplier) is responsible for fixing power cuts. To report an outage call **105** – a free number that connects you to them.

Gas concerns:

In most cases, it’s your electricity that will go off in a storm, but it can seem like your gas is disrupted because you usually need electricity to start up a gas boiler.

Gas pipes are usually safe underground, but if you do smell gas or your carbon monoxide alarm sounds, turn off the boiler, go outside, and call the **National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999**.

Heat networks:

If you’re on a heat network, also known as district heating, your supplier or landlord should contact you or your landlord about an outage.

Compensation:

If power isn’t restored within **24 hours**, you may be entitled to compensation. Check the Citizens Advice website (www.citizensadvice.org.uk) to see how much you could get.

How to Prepare

Power might not return quickly, so plan ahead:

- **Stay warm:** Without electricity, central heating may not work. Keep blankets and extra layers handy. Consider staying with friends or family or visiting local warm spaces.
- **Stay connected:** Invest in a battery power bank to charge devices. Keep a written list of important phone numbers in a safe place. Analogue landlines may still work during cuts.
- **Food and baby care:** Stock easy-to-eat food. If you can’t boil water for baby formula, use pre-mixed formula.
- **Priority Services Register (PSR):** If you’re disabled, pregnant, or have young children, you may qualify for extra support during outages. See the full list of eligibility criteria and sign up at www.thepsr.co.uk.

For more advice, visit the Citizens Advice website or call us on **0800 800 0510**.

Nature Notes

February is supposedly the month for snowdrops although, because influenced by weather and soil temperatures, they can bloom from December to March. The plant was first recorded in the 1770's in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. This may imply that it was brought over from continental Europe because, if a native plant, it surely would have been recorded before then.

