

THE BRIDGE

Produced by Elmore Parish Council
Issue No. 5 - August 2015



From The Editor

This 5th edition of The Bridge concentrates mainly on Elmore Parish Council issues. No, don't throw it in the bin. **PLEASE READ ON.** Of greatest importance at the moment is EPC's project to put a second defibrillator in Elmore. With your copy of The Bridge you have received: a leaflet from Community Heartbeat explaining what a defibrillator does and how it can save lives anywhere, but particularly in more remote rural areas; a leaflet from EPC explaining the financial implications of a second defibrillator and asking you to contribute if you can, and finally, an envelope in which to place your contribution.

The Community Day - April 29th 2015

We had an outstanding day working on the Elmore Back riverbank repairing two very large holes caused by water erosion.

The EA was amazed at the work rate and enthusiasm of all those who attended and estimated that 2 weeks work had been completed in a day. This was the first Community Day of its type carried out between the EA and a local adult community and its success should now pave the way for other communities to get involved.

The techniques used were quite amazing and the principles so simple, using willow and other natural materials. We were tutored by experts from the EA and we all learnt many new skills.

The willow faggots we put in will trap river sediment and build up the banks. The willow will soon sprout and put down roots helping to consolidate the newly accumulated sediments.

We had some 17 Elmore residents attending to help cut wood, carry loads, hammer-in posts, make and tie up faggots, dig and generally get stuck in!

The weather was also very kind to us and Jenni Hobbs' chocolate cake provided some of the necessary energy! Elmore Parish Council also provided some delicious barbecued bangers at lunchtime.

A big 'thank you' to all of those who attended.

John Field

Editor's Comment: Those who visited the church over the Elmore 700 weekend may remember seeing a couple of photos of the work done on the day.

Elmore Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Statement

"This 'Statement' or Report by the Chair of the Parish Council is a legal requirement and has to be delivered at the Annual Meeting.

Finance:

Our finances have remained in a healthy state throughout the year, our accounts have been successfully audited and there were no adverse observations.

There is move afoot that will probably mean that we, as a small parish with an even smaller budget, will be exempt an external audit in future years – the final decision is awaited.

Budget:

We had one major purchase during the last FY and that was the first of our planned two Defibrillators and this is now installed at Elmore Back. We will cover the purchase of the second equipment later in this meeting but suffice to say that we will be carrying out fund-raising in order to purchase this second life-saving device for our village.

Precept:

In line with our healthy financial state we decided at our Parish Council meeting in March not to increase the Parish Precept for the 5th year in a row.

The Precept remains at £2,400 per annum which is divided on a pro-rata basis amongst all parishioners based on their respective Property Valuation Band.

The personal contribution is shown on your Council Tax Bill against 'Elmore Parish'. There may be small fluctuations from year to year which are accounted for by other residents in the village being awarded a reduction in their bill because they have applied for Housing Allowance (previously called Housing Benefit).

Composition of Your Parish Council:

Your Parish Council welcomed Nick Meek as a new member at the beginning of the Year following the elections last May when Clare Stewart stepped down as a Councillor; otherwise it has remained the same.

Clare Stewart resigned as an Elmore Councillor after 13 years of service to the community. Her sound contribution on all matters was greatly appreciated by all her fellow Councillors throughout her tenure. As Chair of Elmore Parish Council I valued her sound advice on matters large and small. She added a dimension that enabled us to address the issues facing us in a logical, sensible and sensitive manner.

The status of each Councillor is identical with all having an equal voice and vote on all matters under discussion.

For some reason, that will always remain a mystery, they have asked me to Chair the meetings.

I would emphasise that all the Councillors give of their time voluntarily and none of them receives any sort of payment or allowance for their services. They deserve your support.

We always welcome constructive comments and suggestions but it is disappointing when unwarranted criticism is directed at either individual councillors or the Parish Council as a whole.

We are totally apolitical and remain impartial in our approach to all matters and have been at pains to make sure that any decisions we have taken have reflected the majority view of the parishioners, formulated at the public meetings or in direct communication.

This is done by making sure that our meetings are publicised in advance and open to the public to express their views. Indeed, we have adopted a policy of permitting comment and discussion during our meetings from those who make the effort to attend – I have to stress that this is not the norm in other Parish Council meetings or at either the District or County Council meetings.

The dates of our regular Parish Council meetings are publicised well in advance and repeated in each issue of 'The Bridge' and while we make every attempt to publicise extraordinary meetings by posting notices at least 7 working days in advance and sending notification to all those on the database, we appreciate that there are some members of the community who may not be aware of such meetings either because they

don't read the notices, don't read our newsletters or have chosen not to be part of the electronic messaging via the e-mail database.

Nature of our Business:

Over the last 5 years we have seen an exponential rise in the volume of business directed at the Parish Council Clerk, Dorie Jones, who I might add has done an outstanding job since taking up the post and without whom my job would be so much harder. This increase is mainly attributed to the fact that most of our communications now arrive electronically and because it is so easy to distribute documents 'en masse' we tend to get just as much correspondence as far bigger towns like Stroud.

Not only does Stroud District Council send us information but Gloucestershire County Council do too and indeed we get a fair amount of correspondence from Central Government in London as well as assorted charities and other agencies.

Sadly, because most of the e-mails arrive without any guidance by the author who fails to draw attention to any specific aspect, it is necessary to wade through each letter to ensure that there is not something in them that concerns us.

The nature of our business has also changed.

Everything has now to be done formally and requests for highway services like pothole repairs, for example, become a time consuming and frustrating exercise. Few if any agencies are available at the end of a telephone these days and we get automated responses to our e-mail requests.

This is because many local government departments have suffered severe cuts during the recession which has meant that we no longer have dedicated local reps we can contact for services and have to join a queue.

The much hailed Localism Act – designed to give local councils more power - has meant that they also have more devolved responsibility and increased our workload.

One of the main effects has been the very short lead time for comments on Planning Applications – SDC are under remit to respond within set timeframes so our deadline for comments is normally 3 weeks. This makes it very difficult to carry out any sort of meaningful consultation so we would only hold a public meeting for contentious issues.

Parish Communications:

Electronic Database: Over the last 8 years we have built up an electronic database of addresses but this only includes those parishioners who wish to receive notices and updates via e-mail. Every issue of The Bridge draws attention to this facility as did the annual newsletters before that.

Currently we have some 54% of households included in this database but for a more effective system, not only for everyday messages but also for emergencies; we would like to see a broader base to our information network, especially as the access to electronic media is increasing.

It is fully understood that some people either do not have internet access or prefer not to get e-mails from other sources.

However, there is a major benefit for being on the database and that is if a short notice emergency occurs or it is necessary to issue flood warnings.

The Website: The website has now been functioning for over a year and contains not only the agendas of forthcoming meetings and the Minutes of previous meetings but also provides a reference for EPC Standing Orders and the Emergency Plan. www.elmoreparish.org

The Bridge: We've had the 4th edition of our quarterly Parish Newsletter and it seems to have been a great success with many positive comments received. We are always looking for contributions, no matter how small which our Editor, Trevor Jones, compiles, edits and produces. The printing is done commercially.

It is distributed by hand around the village with the aid of several volunteers.

Notice Boards: We have one main notice board in the Village, outside the Village Hall. However, during 2014 we replaced the 3 ad hoc notice boards elsewhere in the village – one each at Elmore Back, Farley's end and the Barn at the junction of Stonebench Road.

Elections & Boundary Changes and the Effect on Elmore:

The Electoral Commission have been conducting a review of the electoral boundaries within Stroud District Council and the result is that many of the Wards will now have 3 District Councillors. To alleviate a situation whereby parish and district elections get out-of-sync with national elections, Stroud District Council is proposing that we, and

many other parishes, have an election in 2016, out of normal 4-year cycle, and then 4-years later in 2020. This will ensure that we remain dove-tailed with either local or national elections at least until then, thus reducing costs to all concerned.

Flooding and the EA:

We have come a long way since the scare in January 2011 when the EA announced that the whole of Elmore Back was to be flooded to convert it into a wildlife sanctuary.

Since then, your Parish Council has worked tirelessly on this matter in conjunction with The Severn Voice Task Group.

We got the original report withdrawn and a second consultation was completed – this time with full involvement of the local stakeholders.

We have written to several Ministers of the Environment ('several' because they kept changing!) and after the Somerset Floods last year we wrote to the PM personally expressing our concern about the way the Government was handling the issue of flood protection.

Throughout this time we have also fully engaged with our local MP and the upshot of all of that is that the EA will no longer plan intentionally to flood Elmore Back and extra funding has been secured to carry out repairs and maintenance along our flood defences.

Over the last 12 months we have also engaged with the EA at a local level and this has produced added benefits for us all.

The latest highlight was the Community Day held at Elmore Back on 29th April in conjunction with the EA to repair a section of the riverbank. This was a ground-breaking event as it was the first of its kind anywhere and may provide a catalyst for the future.

The cost of this event to the EA, in terms of materials, fuel and manpower, was some £4,000 but they were delighted with the result as we managed to carry out 2-weeks work in one day.

We intend to build on the success of this event with a further event in the autumn to collect and make faggots, followed by a further maintenance day in the Spring 2016 to utilise the faggots and repair other sections of our riverbank."

John Field, Chair, Elmore Parish Council

Flooding in Elmore - 1770

An Elmore Parish Register (*Gloucestershire Archives reference, P 136/IN 1/5*) contains the following note at the back written by the perpetual curate, Revd Thomas Lewis.

Concerning the extraordinary & sudden Rise of the River Severn, and the great Damages, which the Waters have done to the Farmers & others in the Parish of Elmore, in the middle of November 1770.

On Saturday ye 17th of November 1770 the Severn was greatly swelled by a very heavy Rain, which being stopped by the Tide ran clean over the Sea walls above two Miles in length in this Parish, and Occasioned the most frightful Inundation that ever was known here by any man living.

On Sunday the Waters rose to such a height that those who lived on the Back were forced to leave their houses and Effects to the merciless Stream.

The Cottagers after Climbing their Lofts mightily Cried for help to save themselves; whilst the Farmers pensively beheld their Corn and Hay buried in the great waters.

On Monday our Sea walls broke in three Places, by reason of the great Quantity of Water which was Continually running over them, and, indeed the Scene this Day was truly affecting; some in Boats leading Beasts half-drowned out of their once dry Grounds; Others picking up their household Goods which were now afloat & going away.

Almost all the Cyder both new and old was damaged, the hoarded Apples Carried away, the Clean wheat in the bags wetted, the Cheese on the lofts, and the Butter in the Dairy hurted, and the Corn & Hay Ricks up to the Eaves in water, the Barns and Threshing floors Cleanly washed.

Many of the Inhabitants of the Back Came up to Elmore's Court and lived there many Days; And Dame Jennings & her family retired to the

*Step Green, for ye water was up in her house almost even with ye Loft.
There was happily no Lives lost.*

*There was a very good Crop of Wheat the following year about the
Back notwithstanding.*

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Village Hall AGM followed by a quarterly committee meeting were held in April.

At the meetings, the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Social Committee Chair and Letting Officer were re-elected, together with the Social and Building committees. Also Pauline Fisher was confirmed as Secretary.

Bookings are typically light over the Summer, so our programme of improvements can continue. This involves the final stage of the heating project, together with an overhaul of the room-divider curtain track and cording system (replacing worn out motor). Also, installation of a new separate curtain track system by the Village Players.

A new heater has been purchased and will soon be installed, replacing the old storage heater in the stage end of the Hall.

This will provide a more efficient, energy saving and cost effective system for the benefit and comfort of our hirers.

Demand for space in our Hall is steadily increasing, so early bookings (or enquiries) are advisable. I look forward to hearing from you - 01452 721798 or pikelett@hotmail.com.

For your diary.....

EVH Village Walk - Sunday 18th October

EVH Christmas Lunch - Sunday 13th December

Many thanks to all users and supporters of the Hall.

John (Hardisty), Chairman

Elmore Toddler Group

A lovely rural setting,
Super Friendly fun!!

Coffee & Cakes for mums (dads, grandparents, carers)
Stay & Play for kids 0-5 years!

Enjoy our huge selection of toys, puzzles, books, dressing up clothes, crafts, messy play and our ever popular climbing frame & slide. We also provide a designated baby area with padded flooring and age appropriate toys. Finally we finish off with group singing and dancing!

So please come along as we would love to welcome you to
Elmore Village Hall
Tuesday 10am-12 noon (term time)
GL2 3NT

Feel free to contact Sherene (07800808564) or Katie (07852490732)
for more info

Elmore 700

Celebrating the 700th anniversary of the consecration of the church by the Bishop of Worcester in July 1315 was a tremendous community success. Around £6200 was raised for the church over the weekend Friday 10th to Sunday 12th July. On behalf of the organising committee may I thank everyone for your help and generosity.

The planning for this event started 12 months ago. The organising committee first met on 14th August 2014. So a great big thanks to the committee Members for converting an idea into a very successful community event.

Most houses in the parish helped by making cakes, providing raffle prizes, books, party tents, gazebos and garden plants and providing electricity to the marquee as well as assisting in the food tent, on the stalls, on the bar or as a Steward in the church or actually visiting the church. Around 360 people came to the church over the weekend.

I would specifically thank John Attwooll for his generosity in providing the marquee, tables and chairs and also Graham Taylor for supplying the toilets.

There are so many others to thank but I want to thank Jennifer Watts for organising the fantastic floral displays and to the sponsors who made donations towards the cost for flowers. Michael Watts organised the preview evening and Jill Hurran, Clare Stewart and Tania Tooth organised the delicious food for that evening. Over 90 people attended.

Thanks also to Michael for allowing our visitors to park in his field. The tea tent and refreshments were yet another fine example of Elmore quality food and hospitality all organised by Ann Littleton. Thank you Ann. A great big thanks to Ann Phipps, Pat Buckland, Gill Farmer and Jenny Hobbs for running the stalls.

In the church were fantastic floral displays by ladies from the Cathedral Floral team as well as Village Hall user groups and parish residents. There were also fine examples of Christening Gowns and Foundling Bonnets. In the vestry were original church records plus two record books of the Elmore Land Charity. The photo books of Elmore created by Pauline Ellis were again studied by many people.

In the Bell Tower was a timeline display showing 1000 years of Elmore with historical facts and tax payment lists. This display was created by Sally Annett and Jenni Hobbs. Another great display which was very popular and thanks to them.

Music was provided over the weekend by Mary, Felix and Jed Hughes and by the J12 Folk Group. Many thanks to all of them.

Also thanks to John and Tania Tooth for managing the money for this great event.

Finally the event was initiated by Pauline Ellis who I know will have been delighted with the end result.

Colin Ellis, Chair of the organising committee

Pauline Ellis: 1944 - 2015

It came as a great shock when Pauline died suddenly on 26th March 2015. She was highly respected in Elmore and its wider community. More than 300 people attended her funeral, a wonderful tribute to her. I always knew Pauline as 'Flea' though I can't remember why. She was born at Church Farm on the 15th March 1944, the second daughter of Frank and Ida Littleton.

She was my first cousin though she was more like a sister and being of a similar age and living on adjacent farms she was my childhood playmate. Much of our time in those early years was spent here at Bridgmacote Farm, then the home of our uncle and aunt, Jack and Mary Camm, where we had considerably more freedom than we did with our respective parents!

When Uncle Jack died suddenly in April 1955 we were both stunned and found it very difficult to accept. On that day we walked around Farley's End completely lost, unable to accept that he was no longer with us. It is ironic that almost 60 years to that day, 'Flea' passed away. At Elmore School, she passed the 11+ and was awarded a place at Ribston Hall School. During this time she took up bell ringing (her father was then the Tower Captain) and joined the church choir. She also joined Gloucester Young Farmers' Club, took an active part in club activities and became secretary of the junior section.

After leaving school she got a job in an accountant's office but soon took up a position at GPO telephones.

She met Colin through the YFC and they got married in May 1966. They set up home in Cambridgeshire where Colin was working for the Welding Research Institute. Pauline transferred to the GPO in Cambridge but eventually also worked for the WRI.

Both of Colin and Pauline's children, Richard and Judy, were born in Cambridgeshire. A career move took Colin to Woverhampton where they lived for a short time. Eventually in 1978 Colin obtained a job with the Dowty Group enabling the family to move to Hardwicke.

Pauline joined Gloucestershire County Council's Social Services Unit as a Home Care Assistant and by 1993 had become Care Manager. At the same time she completed a four year degree course in Social Care. She retired in 2003.

Meanwhile she and Colin had moved to Elmore Back where they were for 13 years before buying 'Bacchus' opposite Church Farm where she was born. Once back in Elmore Pauline became involved in many village and other activities: Village Players, WI, Bridge Club, The Willow Trust. She was secretary of the Frampton Surgery Patients Group and also made kneelers for Elmore Church. Pauline was very interested in family and Elmore history. When we celebrated The Millennium she created a display of Elmore village life over the years which stimulated a tremendous amount of interest then and continues to do so - her work was recently on display at 'Elmore 700'.

To conclude, Pauline lived a very full life. On many issues she was straight and to the point as I was with her. She was very supportive of Colin and very proud of her children's achievements. She was a devoted grandmother to her grandchildren who called her 'Granny Flea'. In retirement she and Colin have been great travellers - a recently as January and February this year they visited Australia and New Zealand.

Graham Littleton

Pauline's Christian faith goes back many years and here at Elmore Church she had recently served as Church Warden; she brought commitment and friendship to that role, also taking up various other tasks which are part of being an effective and dedicated Church Warden.

Pauline was a member of our Parochial Church Council, attended weddings as Verger, and was involved in the planning for building works at Elmore Church. Her name appeared on various different rotas; she just got stuck in to whatever she was doing

To say "we will miss her at church" is a massive understatement, she was a valued friend who will always be remembered with affection and respect.

Fr.Andrew

The Village Players

Village Players would like to thank everyone who came and supported our latest production of Panic Stations by Derek Benfield. We all hope everyone enjoyed the production, and would like to remind you to keep an eye out for our next production which will be our annual pantomime. We are always looking for new members and if people would like to get involved with the group either onstage or offstage then please contact our secretary Amy Parkin either by phone 07557 793011 or by email villageplayers@outlook.com. **This year's pantomime will be 'Goody Two Shoes' by Paul Reakes**

2015 Parish Council Meetings

Any parishioner welcome.
Held in Village Hall at 7.45pm

Monday September 28th 2015

Monday December 14th 2015

Usually very few parishioners come to our meetings, often no one. It would be good to see more people attending and making their views known on the important issues of the day. That way the Parish Council could more easily represent the village

Elmore Court Noise Nuisance Number

A direct line has been set up so that you can phone Elmore Court to report any disturbance. The Court is keen not to cause a nuisance within the village but also not to be blamed for noise from other sources. So if you are disturbed please phone

01452 260100

You must use the full number; it will not work if you leave off the Gloucester code.

Village Agents in the Community

Christine Lingard is our agent and she spoke at the Parish Council meeting in May

Christine explained her role as Village Agent for 11 local villages including Elmore. Her job is to help older people to maintain their quality of life. She offers high quality information, can arrange access to a wide range of services and will identify unmet needs in the community. Her aim is to help older people maintain a secure, good quality of life. She will visit at home and her help is free.

She can be approached by the older person themselves or a concerned friend or relative. You are encouraged to phone her on 07810 630179 if you would like a visit or know of someone who does.

Village Agents are managed by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council and funded by Glos County Council and the NHS.

Defibrillator Training

The type of defibrillator we have bought can be used without training but greater confidence in its use will result from the valuable training offered by Community Heartbeat. A training session was held at Elmore Back Farm following the installation of the first machine. Here is a list of those who have been trained:

Jenny Voyce
Barry Overton
Dave Guilding

Andy Nash
Marvin Lovell
Nick Meek

Sophie Round
Amanda Lovell

EPC would like to thank Barry Overton for agreeing to undertake the weekly and monthly checks to make sure the machine remains ready for use at any time.

Another training session will be held when the second defibrillator is installed in the old phone box.

Contacts

Elmore PC			
Chair	John Field	720357	fernhay@btinternet.com
Vice Chair	Andy Nash	720903	andynash@talktalk.net
	Jenni Hobbs	724633	enni@barvaleholsteins.co.uk
	Trevor Jones	722034	rosecottage1818@gmail.com
	Nick Meek	750769	nick@archies.me.uk
Clerk	Dorie Jones	722034	elmore.parish@hotmail.com
Village Hall			
Chair	John Hardisty	721798	pikelet@hotmail.com
Social Chair	Su Hardisty	ditto	ditto
Other Village Organisations			
The Vicar	Fr Andrew James	720015	vicarage@inbox.com
Players	Amy Parkin	0755779011	villageplayers@outlook.com
WI	Val Overton	750591	vj.overton@tiscali.co.uk
Guides	Catherine Hartnell	722444	
Brownies	Jenny	722444	
Bridge Club	Caroline Meek	720383	
Toddlers	Sherene Watts	07800808564	sherenewatts@hotmail.com
Other Useful Contacts			
Police - non emergency		101	
Member of Parliament		01453751572	neil.carmichael.mp@parliament.uk
County Councillor		01453753429	anthony.blackburn@gloucestershire.gov.uk
District Councillor		01453538686	Cllr.dave.mossman@stroud.cov.uk
To report Fly Tipping		01453754424	publicspace@stroud.gov.uk
Report abandoned vehicles		01453754379	Abandoned.vehicle@stroud.gov.uk
Gloucs Highways (report potholes etc)			08000 514514
Village Agent			
Christine Lingard		07810630179	

Email Contacts

The Parish Council is keen to be able to communicate more easily with people who live in the village. For instance it would be far easier to announce any changes to meeting dates and times, especially extraordinary meetings which sometimes have to happen to meet sudden unexpected deadlines requiring your views. At present we have email addresses for barely half the village. If we do not yet have your address or you have changed your address, we would be grateful if you could contact the clerk, Dorie Jones. Her address is: elmore.parish@hotmail.com

Parish Website Hacked!

Yes, someone has hacked into the parish website and it is now unreadable. This is very disheartening to those who worked hard to set it up and maintain it. We are trying hard to resolve the situation.

THINGS TO KNOW

Sudden cardiac arrest affects over 90,000 people a year out of hospital. This is a jumbo jet full every day. It can happen to anyone at any age at any time.

You have about 5 minutes to start treatment and save their life. Call 999; start chest compressions then use a defibrillator.

You cannot harm the patient. To all intents and purposes they are already dead; you can only make them better. Doing something will help save a life.....doing nothing means they are likely to die.

(From the University of Gloucestershire's 'Stop the Heartbreak' campaign)

Please give as generously as you can to Elmore's Defibrillator Fund.

Thank you

