

# Latest news from Elmsbrook



## Neighbourhood updates

### Community hub and local centre

The local centre works have started again and are progressing well, following a slight delay to allow some further checks to be made. The roof works are continuing and the roof slabs have now been installed.

We are looking to be watertight by Christmas and completion is scheduled for Summer 2024.

If you have any queries in respect of the works please contact the site manager Matthew Houghton at [matthew.houghton@excelgroup.co.uk](mailto:matthew.houghton@excelgroup.co.uk)

### Residents Surgery – Wednesday 1st November at the Community House, 1 Bramley Avenue OX27 8BA

Staff will be available by appointment if you need advice or have any queries on; defects, My Account, using the shimmy, grounds maintenance and Crest Nicholson,. My Account appointments will be made on Teams in the office.

You must book your time slot in advance before Thursday 26th October 2023 by emailing us at [elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk)

### Residents Q&A meeting Wednesday 15 November 6.30pm – 8.00pm on Zoom

Elmsbrook residents are invited to come along to a meeting which will be held on Teams. A2Dominion staff will be available to update you on building works, road adoption, grounds maintenance and changes that have been made by A2Dominion which may affect you.

If you'd like to join the meeting and find out more please drop us a line at [Elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:Elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk) and we will send you the link to the meeting nearer the time.

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### Rubbish reminders

If you have large items that you want to dispose of and are unable to take them to the tip yourself, Cherwell District Council will collect them for a small charge. More information about their collections can be found here:

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/10/rubbish-and-recycling/38/bulky-waste-collection>.

The cost of disposing of any fly tipped items found at Elmsbrook is unfortunately added to your service charges, so it is in everyone's interest to stop this happening.

We have also had a few incidents where there has been an infestation of maggots as the bin men have refused to take away bins which have the wrong rubbish in them. As a reminder:

- Green bin** – Use for non recyclable rubbish, plastic bags, wrappers
- Blue bin** – Use for cartons, plastic bottles, cans, paper and cardboard
- Brown bin** – (You need to have registered and paid the subscription cost of £43 a year to Cherwell District Council to receive this service) Use for grass cuttings, flowers, branches, weeds, leaves
- Silver food caddy** – line it with a compostable liner or newspaper. Use for tea bags, coffee grounds, food (without packaging)

More information, including when the collections are, can be found here: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/10/waste-and-recycling/42/your-bins>

## Win £50 of shopping vouchers by completing our health, wellbeing and travel survey

As the UK's first eco-town, monitoring is vital to track our progress against targets and to collect valuable feedback for future policy.

Housing is responsible for a considerable amount of greenhouse gas emissions, so successful eco-developments are vital to help tackle the climate emergency and ensure people can enjoy happy, healthy lifestyles within the limits of the planet.

We are therefore asking you to complete a short survey on behalf of your household, telling us about your health, wellbeing and travel at Elmsbrook.

**The survey will be open from 9 October until 5 November 2023.**

You will receive a letter with the link to the survey shortly. It will also be available on the Elmsbrook Facebook page, WhatsApp groups and Shimmy app. It should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and your feedback will be combined with actual energy, water and waste data (collected automatically via Shimmy) and submitted as a report to Cherwell District Council.

All data will be anonymised, and high-level results shared with you and the rest of the community to help support sustainable lifestyle choices.

Customers who complete the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win £50 of shopping vouchers.

**Thank you in advance for taking part as your feedback is vitally important!**

## Community projects and activities

We've had a really busy summer at Elmsbrook with lots of activities going on. Here's a taste of what we got up to....

### Summer play day

Back for the second year running, we held our 'Summer Play Day' in Partnership with Oxfordshire Play Association on 25th July. There was a great turn out with over 300 people coming along over the course of the day.

This year's theme focused on the everyday low-cost or no-cost play adventures that children can enjoy at home, in settings, and in our communities. The event demonstrated that play opportunities don't need to involve expensive activities, costly toys, or trips to far-off destinations. It is often the simplest ideas, the free and found opportunities, which offer the most fun, and are the most developmentally beneficial for children and young people.

Elmsbrook Community Organisation ran a teddy bear tombola at the event which was very popular and all the proceeds from that went to support the Community Organisation.



## Bat walk

On Friday 8th September we held our first bat walk which was led by Veritie Turner from Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust. Thanks to all who came along to this really interesting event.

Veritie has a wealth of knowledge about bats so not only did we learn there are over 1,300 species of bats in the world and 18 in the UK. The one you mostly see around Elmsbrook is the common pipistrelle (the size of a 20p piece). A single pipistrelle can eat 3000 insects in a night. Once it started to get dark, we were able to detect the bats call with our special bat monitors and actually see them flying overhead.

It was a really enjoyable event and one parent feedback the following: Our boy has been talking about it lots over the weekend and so we are going to see if he would like to be involved in or have closer links to the organisation in due course.

We hope to work with Veritie and her team in the future to organise other nature and wildlife based activities.



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## Childrens Summer Craft activities

The OYAP Trust based in Bicester ran a series of art and drama workshops for children during August. They were a chance for children aged from 4 to 14 to be creative, try new materials and let their ideas run wild with them, work in a collaborative way and learn new skills.

The sessions were well attended and the children really enjoyed them. We are hoping to provide some Christmas craft activities for children so please keep a look out on your notice boards for more information.



## Summer Pop up Forest Schools

The Pop-up Forest Schools are particularly successful and this summer was no exception. Organised in partnership with Muddy feet, a local Forest School training specialist, a series of 8 Pop Up Forest Schools were held throughout July, August and September.

Muddy feet leaders got the children crafting elder beads and pencils. They turned freshly cut willow sticks into charcoal on the fire and used these for lead in the elder pencils which were then used to draw maps and pictures. They harvested some of the seeds that were planted in the wildflower patch sown at an Easter Pop Up school so they now have even more seeds to sow for next year.

Other activities included leaf bashing, nature crafts, stream paddling, practicing fire skills by toasting apples in cinnamon sugar, whittling wood, wildflower identification and nettle cordage.

Feedback from parents whose children attended the Summer pop-up sessions included:

- 'Brilliant morning, brilliant activities for all to enjoy'
- 'We love Forest School! My son has been coming since the sessions began and each time he learns new skills such as fire safety rules. He is so excited to come out in the mornings'
- 'A refreshing taste of nature for little minds – thank you'
- 'Fantastic morning! Very well organised with lots of lovely interactive engaging activities'.

More pop up forest schools have been arranged for:

**Tuesday 24 October** – Autumn activities

**Saturday 18 November** – Tree and hedge planting

To book please go to [muddyfeettraining.co.uk](http://muddyfeettraining.co.uk) The sessions are very popular so make sure you book early to avoid disappointment!



## Sunflower competition winners revealed

Thanks to all who entered this years competition which was sponsored by Smarter Services. We haven't seen sunflowers like we saw this summer....there was some really tough competition!

This years winners were:

### 1st prize

Therese Grear  
with the tallest  
sunflower at 381 cm



### 2nd prize

Beverley Evans  
with a sunflower  
of 348cm



### 3rd prize

Martha McShea  
with a sunflower  
of 304cm



Congratulations to you all!

## Forest School Tree planting Working Party Tuesday 28 November

We're looking for volunteers to help plant some trees and hedging plants at the Forest School that your Elmsbrook Community Organisation has received from the Woodland Trust?

Are you free on the morning of Tuesday 28 November and able to give us a hand? We'll be working with Bicester Green Gym from 10am to get the job done.


Please contact Val Wright (Communities Partner) at [val.wright@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:val.wright@a2dominion.co.uk) if you can help. Equipment and refreshments will be provided.

## New Pilates Class Tuesdays 6.30pm – 7.30pm at Gate Brook School

A2Domminion is offering 12 subsidised places for Elmsbrook residents at £2 a session (usually £7 for Elmsbrook residents and £9 for non-residents).

Classes suitable for all levels and mats are provided, just wear comfortable clothing.

To book please contact:  
[info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk](mailto:info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk)  
or call 07980 939554

A photograph of a Pilates class in progress. Three women are on mats, performing a plank-like exercise. The instructor is visible in the background.

**PILATES AT ELMSBROOK**

Sculpt, strengthen & stretch your body with Andreas. He has 20 years of experience teaching pilates. Classes are suitable for all levels from beginners to advanced. Mats supplied, just wear comfortable clothing.

**WHEN**  
Tuesdays  
6.30pm - 7.30pm

**WHERE**  
Gate Brook  
Primary School

**CONTACT**  
[info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk](mailto:info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk)  
07980 939554

A2Domminion is subsidising 12 places for Elmsbrook residents. Cost is £2 per adult per session (£7 per session for Elmsbrook residents non-subsidised places at £9 per session for non-Elmsbrook residents)

## Adult Nature Connection Workshop

Our Adult wellbeing workshop on Saturday 23rd September at Elmsbrook Forest School, was a totally inspirational session enjoyed by everyone who attended. Those that came along had a chance to do some pewter casting, wreath making, fire skills activities, poetry reflections along with some freshly brewed 'fire' coffee and croissants.

Thanks to Muddy Feet Forest School Trainers for piloting this at Elmsbrook. It was the first of its kind at the Forest School and following the fantastic feedback we have received, we're looking to hold a Christmas session to include Wreath making. Watch out for details on the Elmsbrook Notice Boards.





## Elmsbrook Community Organisation (ECO) news

Elmsbrook Community Organisation have been meeting each month at the Community House to plan events and activities for you over the next few months.

If you would like to contact them with any ideas or would like to get more involved yourself, please contact them at [Elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:Elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com)

ECO helped local residents organise a fabulous concert on 24.9.23 at the Eco Business Centre to raise money for Ukraine with local musicians taking part.

They raised £630 for the Swindon Humanitarian Aid Partnership to help their amazing work delivering lorries of vital aid to Ukraine. If you didn't manage to donate on the day it's not too late just scan the QR code.



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### Elmsbrook Gardening Groups Tulip planting event - Saturday 11 November

Everyone is invited to join us for a tulip planting event on Saturday 11 November 10am-12 noon at the Community House, 1 Bramley Avenue. We will have tulip bulbs to plant in community spaces and more to take home (donations to Elmsbrook Community Organisation).

As it will be Armistice Day, we will pause at 11am to commemorate the service of all in our military and civilian forces.

For more information please contact Debbie Winson (Chair of Elmsbrook Gardening Group) at [elmsbrookegg@gmail.com](mailto:elmsbrookegg@gmail.com)



### Elmsbrook Gardening Group events

We chose the hottest day in June for our Open Gardens event and the hottest day in September for the Harvest Lunch!

Nevertheless a big crowd turned out to see each other's gardens and exchange gardening ideas on Saturday 24 June, and a smaller number brought some produce or a dish of food to share for the September Lunch held at the Community House on 9 September. Locally grown produce included beans, courgettes, tomatoes, and lettuce. They had rhubarb from the Community House garden and a cordial with local mint. Andrea made a most delicious zucchini cake! It was a very good opportunity to meet together and chat, with both longstanding residents and welcome "newcomers" from Phase 4.

We are looking forward to having more space when the Community Hub opens so we can showcase more of the growing and cooking skills of Elmsbrook Residents. Next year the event will be on Saturday 14 September 2024 – please put it in your diary!



## Dates for your diary

### 24 October

Autumn pop-up forest school

### 1 November

Residents surgery

### 11 November

Tulip planting with Elmsbrook gardening Group

### 15 November

Elmsbrook residents Q&A session

### 28 November

Forest School Working Party

## Useful contacts

### A2Dominion Customer Services (queries and repairs)

0800 432 0077

### Defects for Phase 4 (under 12 months)

0333 136 0360

[customerserviceCH@crestnicholson.com](mailto:customerserviceCH@crestnicholson.com)

### Shimmy support

0330 332 6280

[support@carnego.net](mailto:support@carnego.net)

### Travel Plan Coordinator (travel queries and Brompton bike hire)

[TPC@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:TPC@a2dominion.co.uk)

### Elmsbrook Community Organisation (ECO)

[elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com)

### Elmsbrook general customer queries (residents surgeries and Q&A session)

[Elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:Elmsbrook.customers@a2dominion.co.uk)

## Elmsbrook Groups

### Elmsbrook Games Group

Second Friday of every month 7pm– 10pm at the Community House.

[elmsbrookgames@gmail.com](mailto:elmsbrookgames@gmail.com)

### Knit and Natter

Tuesdays 7pm–9pm at The Community House.

[val.wright@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:val.wright@a2dominion.co.uk)

### Baby group

Fridays (during term time) 2.30pm – 4.30pm at the Community House

[mumswalkntalk@gmail.com](mailto:mumswalkntalk@gmail.com)

### Yoga

Wednesdays 6.30pm–7.30pm at Gagle Brook School.

[info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk](mailto:info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk)

### ECO pop up café

Fridays 8.30am–12.00pm.

[Elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:Elmsbrookcommunity@gmail.com)

### Elmsbrook Gardening Club (EGC)

[elmsbrookegg@gmail.com](mailto:elmsbrookegg@gmail.com)

### Elmsbrook Book Club

[coryrayjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:coryrayjohnson@gmail.com)

### Pilates

Tuesdays 6.30pm–7.30pm at Gaglebrook School

[info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk](mailto:info@andreaswrenyoga.co.uk)