

# Annual Review 2019



**Elmore Community Services**

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT IN COMPLEX SITUATIONS SINCE 1989

## Chair's Foreword

This year Elmore Community Services celebrates our 30th anniversary. Arguably our anniversary falls at the most difficult time for the delivery of community services in the whole of that period, with funding at its tightest and statutory services stretched.

Throughout this period, Elmore has maintained a commitment to excellence and innovation. We have been recognised locally and nationally for our persistence in working purposefully to change the lives of many of the most disadvantaged and excluded members of Oxfordshire's population. Elmore staff pride themselves on continually rising to this challenge and continue to deliver services to support people with multiple, complex needs, including mental health issues, substance use, offending, accommodation, and finances. This year our focus has been on increasing the level of service user involvement in our services.

### Some of our highlights this year:

*Elmore has supported interagency development of the 'Oxford Safe Haven' for people in mental health crisis, as an alternative to A&E. We also provided an invaluable pathway to community engagement and practical support within a new Primary Care Wellbeing project.*

*Elmore has enabled children and young people struggling with mental ill health to learn about what they're feeling, how they can feel better, and discover who they want to be and what they want to do, as part of the Oxfordshire Discovery College, pilot in Witney.*

*We worked with vulnerable residents to help them maintain tenancies, funded by Oxford City Council and Sovereign Housing Association. Our New Beginnings service has supported adult survivors of child sexual exploitation, who found the courage to face their abusers in court, resulting in criminal convictions.*

*And we finally have become a living wage employee.*

It has been a year of celebration, success and change. Tamsin Jewell, who had been Chief Executive for several years, moved on in May, and we were fortunate to appoint Tom Hayes as her successor. We have always been proud of the reputation we have earned, we could not do this without our partners, staff, board and most importantly our service users.

*Lyn*

Lyn Waddington



## Chief Executives's Foreword

**Elmore exists because, if we didn't, the people who depend on our services would have nowhere else to go in Oxfordshire. Since 1989 we have been working with vulnerable people experiencing several overlapping challenges at the same time, including mental ill health, homelessness, rough sleeping, slavery, abuse, exploitation, and alcohol and drug addictions.**

The people we support were not a recognised client group when Elmore was born in 1989. Ours is a model of recovery which we have helped to move into the mainstream of service delivery. We spot the gaps in existing services and innovate services to ensure that no-one is forced to fall through the cracks in service provision.

With such needs, clients do not fit easily into services and can be hard to engage. The 'Elmore way' is subtle, it's person-centred and flexible, and it brings out the skill and expert judgement of our experienced workers. Initial approaches may be rejected, but the Elmore worker will persevere. Different tactics will be tried out to engage the client. At the heart of this process is the relationship of the worker with the client, so the build-up of trust which delivers positive outcomes in the longer-term means work can go at a slower pace.

Last year Elmore supported a total of 385 clients. At the cutting edge of our work is our NHS-funded mental health and complex needs team, our work to help residents to maintain their tenancies, and our support to adult victims of childhood sexual exploitation.

The voices and views of service users down the years are at the heart of this anniversary review, just as they have been at the heart of Elmore for three decades. Now, in our thirtieth year, we want to support more people with multiple and complex needs to ensure that nobody falls through the cracks in existing service provision.

*Tom Hayes*

Tom Hayes

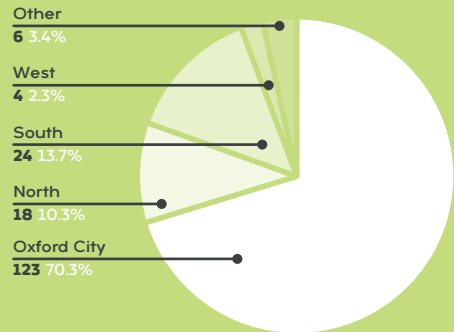


**“ WE WANT TO SUPPORT MORE PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE AND COMPLEX NEEDS TO ENSURE THAT NOBODY FALLS THROUGH THE CRACKS ”**

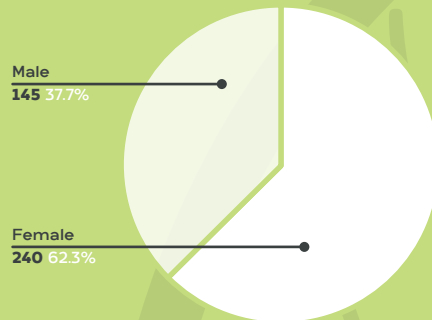
## A Year in Charts

Elmore has worked with 385 people this year, from a wide range of age groups and ethnicities.

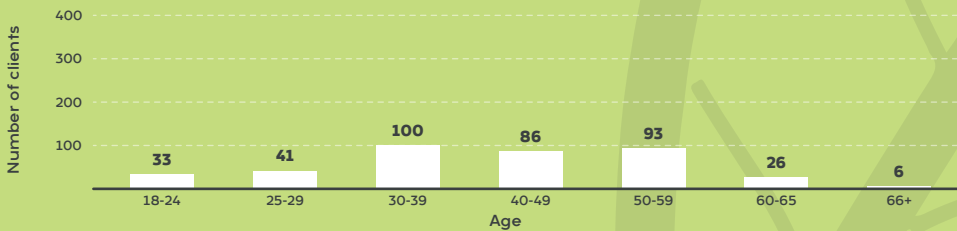
### District of Origin



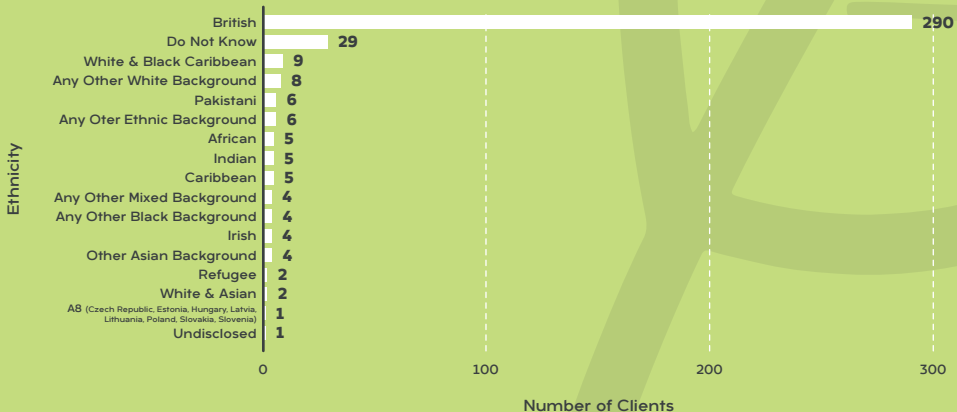
### Gender



### Age



### Ethnicity



## How Elmore Works

### How Elmore works within the local network of provision

Elmore occupies a disproportionately large position in the significant network of agencies across Oxfordshire because our work crosses so many professional boundaries. Agencies refer to the team on a variety of matters such as getting information about a particular client, about network resources, or to get advice on aspects of case management. Other aspects of network involvement include helping to maintain the feeling and continuity of the network, contributing to a directory of services, attending meetings to exchange information and problem solve, supporting new workers from partner agencies, presenting to people who are interested in the work of the team, actively promoting new initiatives to bridge emerging gaps, and developing local strategies and operational plans. Elmore directly draws on our relationships and linkages to support clients, in particular through our membership of Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership.

### How Elmore pursues brokerage and advocacy

Plugging people into local services is vital to the Elmore team's way of working. We persistently try to engage clients and make all potential avenues for treatment and support open and accessible. It is often the task of the support worker to make sense of the range of agencies that might be able to offer a relevant service to the client with multiple needs. One of the strengths of the team's interagency work with clients with multiple needs lies in the process of coordination.

To arrange a total package of care, each component must be clearly defined and agreed with the agency concerned to ensure their willing cooperation. The team workers act as the client's advocate by presenting their needs to the agency, either with or without the client. Elmore's caseworkers directly draw on their experiences and expertise in brokerage and advocacy on behalf of clients.

**“ PLUGGING PEOPLE INTO LOCAL SERVICES IS VITAL TO THE ELMORE TEAM'S WAY OF WORKING ”**

## Complex Needs

Elmore supports people with multiple, complex needs, including mental health issues, substance use, offending, accommodation, and finances.

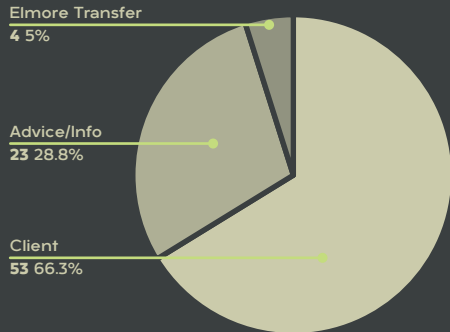
Many of our clients have chaotic lives and suffer from emotional difficulties and stress. Elmore's flexible approach enables us to engage with people who may have slipped through the net of mainstream services, and to make a positive and lasting impact on their lives. We enable our clients to stabilise their lives by linking them with the local services they need, such as health, housing and legal services. We also provide emotional support - helping individuals in crisis to gain self-confidence and independence.

**187**  
Clients

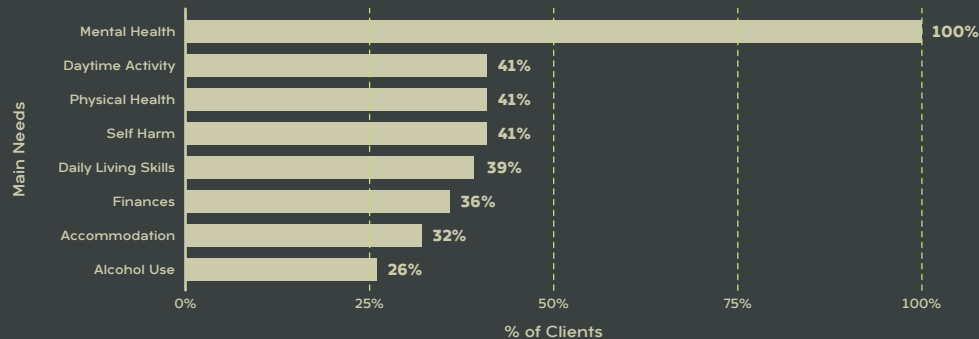


**80**  
Referrals

### Referral Outcomes



### Main Needs



## Arthur's Story (from 1987)

Arthur has swollen, ulcerated legs and schizophrenia with obsessive compulsive disorder. He was in and out of accommodation, eventually ending up sleeping rough. His major presenting problem was his compulsive behaviour which causes difficulties with housing.

Arthur visited skips and bins around the city on his bicycle all day, collecting items (mainly paper) and storing them in his room until it was too full to get into. Elmore had known Arthur for two years before he took to sleeping rough regularly. He found it very difficult to acknowledge that he has problems so attempts to get him to clear his FLAT did not work, nor did efforts to engage him with medical professionals.

He was now willing to work on his problems so that he could find and keep accommodation as his physical health was also deteriorating. But, even though Arthur was now receptive to help, he was extremely difficult to find on the streets. His busy round of skip and bin visiting meant that he

never kept appointments and his whereabouts were very unpredictable. Most of the resulting work took place on outreach sessions or chance meetings with Arthur in the street: encouraging him to re-present at the homeless unit, liaising with hostels, getting him to visit hostels, negotiating terms with the hostel that ultimately offered him a place. It took two months, at the coldest time of the year.

At the time of writing, Arthur has maintained his hostel place for six months but it has not been an easy time. His keyworker at the hostel has worked very closely with Arthur and The Elmore Team, setting limits on how much Arthur can store in the room and what the hostel can tolerate. We have linked him to a psychologist who is exploring other options with him. His legs are improving. Arthur is glad not to be on the streets any longer but still has little insight into his problems. Progress is and will continue to be slow.



*"As an acute care clinician I daily see patients with complex psychosocial needs that simply cannot be met through brief contacts in the hospital environment. It is there where I have seen the importance of an organisation like Elmore. The Elmore approach provides support to individuals who otherwise would be 'lost in the system', people who are then often forced into a situation where they may have to return to hospital. Which is exactly why I believe the healthcare community in Oxfordshire needs Elmore, and why we have to build on the relationship potential between Elmore and our NHS organisations."*

**Dr Deon Louw, Elmore Trustee and Emergency Department Lead for Mental Health, Oxford University NHS Foundation Trust**

## Mental Health

Elmore supports people with mental health issues to access specialist services and provide the longer-term practical and emotional support to improve their lives.

Our team approach means we pool skills and experience to offer practical help with housing, benefits, bills and debts, or to deal with or access agencies, including specialist counselling. We offer one-to-one emotional support, meeting clients wherever they feel most comfortable. Our 'traffic light' system enables us to highlight concerns, ensuring that the whole team is alerted when we feel a client is at risk.

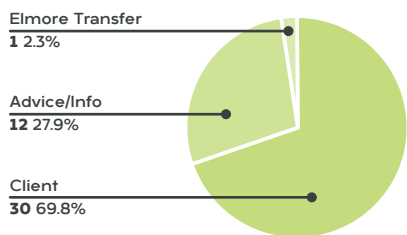
Elmore enables benefits and money advice for clients through our commissioning of Oxfordshire Mind's Benefits for Better Mental Health (BBMH) for a day a week of exclusive support. The assistance includes advice, information and tribunal representation, as well as form-filling and letter-writing.

**132**  
Clients

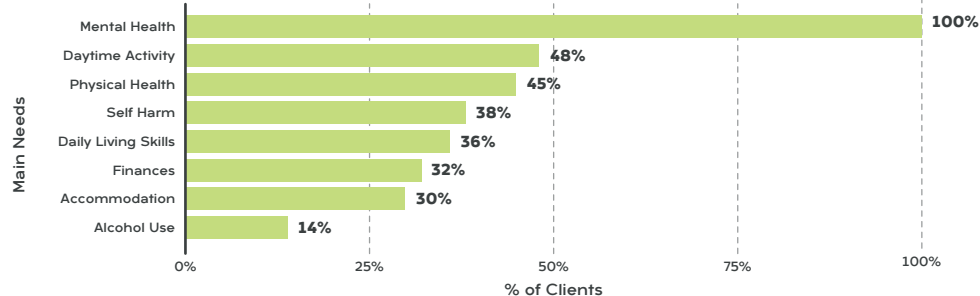


**43**  
Referrals

### Referral Outcomes



### Main Needs



## Katie's Story (from 2014)

When Katie first referred herself to Elmore, she was homeless and walking the streets with bin bags. Raised in children's homes after being sexually abused as a child, Katie had been a class A drug user and sex worker since her teens. She had served time in prison, never had a legal job, and been using crack daily. On a methadone script, Katie was also using heroin on top. She was ambivalent about giving up drugs and had never experienced adult life without them. The police had also warned her that she was at risk of getting an Anti-Social Behaviour Order because of her sex-working.

Katie referred herself to Elmore in the hope of securing help to find housing. Life was chaotic—she had no address, never managed to hold onto a mobile phone for very long, and only from time to time could her Elmore worker get messages to her, sometimes just happening upon her by chance in the local community. Time and again Katie said how much she needed help but failed to appear at the

appointments she promised to attend. Six assessment appointments were missed before Katie finally met with a worker, and when she did engage, she was often heavily under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Over time Katie was supported by Elmore to sort out her benefits, and began to talk to about reducing her drug use. Her worker began to talk to her about going into a residential detox unit. After a great deal of work, she agreed to this. While there, her worker visited and took her to medical appointments.

At the time of writing, Katie's physical health had improved greatly, and she was waiting for a course of treatment for Hepatitis C. She had been volunteering in a medical study looking at depression. And Katie had not used drugs or drank alcohol in a year, and was no longer a sex-worker.



*"As an Oxfordshire NHS leader until mid-2019 and someone who worked in the NHS for over 40 years, I know local mental health services are under huge pressure. Elmore's partnerships with other mental health services has enabled more people to get help than before, but there remain gaps to fill and Elmore has a vital role in supporting more of the most vulnerable people at the most difficult times in their lives. Elmore's commitment to working alongside those who are often living through very tough times is important in helping people to avoid hospital admission and develop stronger links to their communities. It is of the utmost importance that the services provided by Elmore continue to be supported and grow."*

Pauline Scully, Elmore Trustee and formerly Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Service Director for Children and Young People, and Service Director for Adult Mental Health Services, all at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

## Tenancy Sustainment

Over the last thirty years, Elmore has run a range of services to support vulnerable people to retain housing and sustain tenancies, and we have brought this skill to our work with Sovereign Housing and Oxford City Council. Our support can focus on the mental health of residents, but also practical matters such as helping them apply for (and stay on) the benefits they are entitled to.

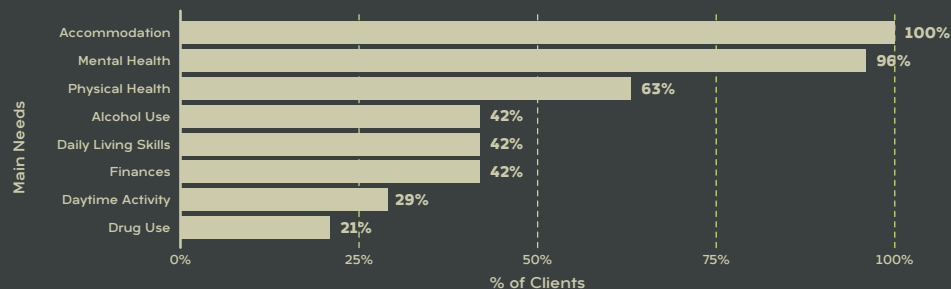
In recent years, Elmore has collaborated with Oxford Night Shelter and Connection to explore why tenancies break down and improve interagency working, delivered an Older Homeless Persons' Project with Connection to improve support and services to older people who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, and run an award-winning Anti-Social Behaviour service with Oxford City Council for people with multiple needs subject to ASB orders, including those at risk of losing their tenancies.

28  
Clients

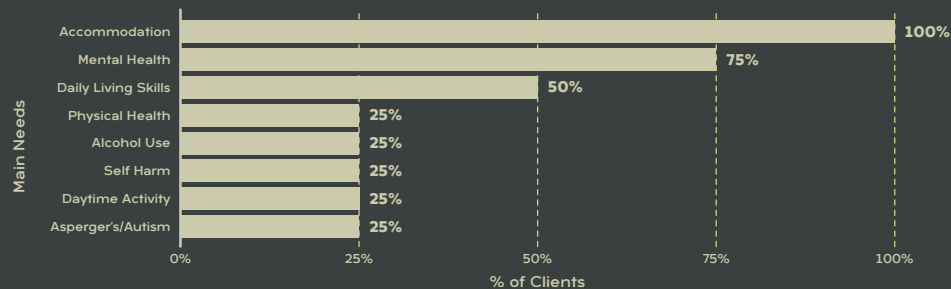


19  
Referrals

### Tenancy Sustainment Statistics relating to Oxford City Council



### Sovereign Tenancy Sustainment Project



## Jessica's Story, in her own words (from 2015)

I was referred to Elmore by my Independent Domestic Violence Advocate. I had separated from my partner and was about to mover house so that he couldn't find me. I was tearful all the time, and suicidal - ending up in hospital after attempts to end my life. I had no friends, and following the death of my mother, to whom I was very close, I would spend all my time alone in my flat.

Elmore changed my life. At first, I felt scared as I didn't know what to expect, but soon I formed a bond with my Elmore worker, calling her when I was feeling down. She would give me confidence, advice and a lot of support to get me through the difficult situations. She would often help me to see the other people's perspectives. She also helped me to find therapy, referring me for bereavement and sexual abuse counselling. I had issued with budgeting and spending too much money, and with Elmore's support, I switched my bills to direct debits, cancelled a catalogue subscription, and paid off my debts. We attended a budgeting meeting course together, and I am now living within my

means and regularly saving money. I was also referred to local mental health charities, and was supported at initial meetings, and if I felt too anxious to attend. I have learned knitting, which I love, and donate what I make to charity. I am supported by the Learning Disability Team, and Elmore has worked closely with them and helped me to advocate for myself in meetings. I have also been an active member of the Elmore Members' Association, and enjoy meeting people, and discussing issues together.

My life has changed since I started to work with Elmore. I have a new partner who is kind to me, and a kitten (which Elmore helped me to find). I have friends and activities to occupy my time, and through voluntary work I can give back. I feel that I know and trust Elmore workers, as they have always gone out of their way to help me. I have had support that I needed, and they have always been at the end of the phone when I needed them."



*"I'm thrilled that Elmore and Oxford City Council continue to work together to support vulnerable people to maintain their tenancies. Without Elmore, there would be more vulnerable people facing challenging situations. It's particularly helpful for us to work with Elmore given its role as a member of the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership and the link that it has into Oxford's mental health pathway."*

**Councillor Linda Smith, Deputy Leader of Oxford City Council and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Housing**

## New Beginnings

The effects of childhood sexual exploitation (CSE) are long-lasting and can have a huge impact on adult lives. Survivors often experience difficulties with mental health, relationships, addictions, and poorer physical health. Elmore's New Beginnings service works alongside adult survivors of CSE to support them in making positive changes to their lives.

This year the team worked in partnership with Thames Valley Police for a second year to support several women through a court case brought as a result of Operation Silk, an investigation into historical CSE in Oxford. The work done by this partnership was instrumental for empowering the women to manage the process.

The severity of the issues means clients often cannot access specific help elsewhere. The journey of clients to reaching Elmore is often distinct: they are isolated, rarely encounter statutory agencies, and rarely present directly and immediately with an experience of sexual exploitation.

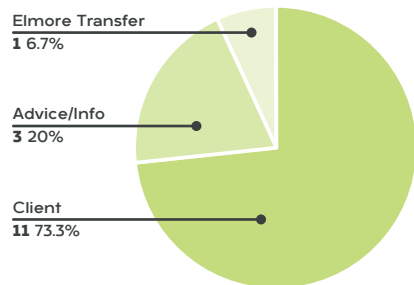
Routinely, Elmore will take referrals of clients who later share experiences of childhood sexual exploitation. Increasingly, Elmore is increasingly seeing male clients who cannot access specialist support because they are male.

**28**  
Clients

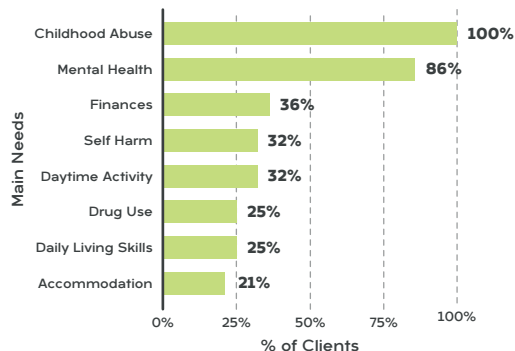


**15**  
Referrals

### Referral Outcomes



### Main Needs



## Wendy's Story, in her own words (from 2014)

The Adult NHS Mental Team referred me to Elmore. I was suffering from profound anxiety after being bullied at work. I was finding it difficult to leave my house, even to go out into my own garden. My arms and legs would not work, I would shake and sweat and put my arms up to guard my head. I found it hard to breathe and it felt like I was being attacked. It was like I was stuck in a lift and there was no door to get out. The only place I felt safe was my bed. I didn't want my sons to see me like that. I have always been strong for them and wanted things to be right. One of my sons was getting married and I wanted desperately to be there.

and it upset me that I wouldn't see her before she left. I used to hide if she came to the door, and she stopped coming as often. My Elmore worker suggested that I wrote her a letter, and we composed and sent it together. I received a nice letter back and we started seeing each other again.

After two years of absence, I was under pressure to return to work, or it was made clear I would lose my job. My Elmore worker referred me to an employment coach at Restore, and I was represented by an advocate. I am now back at work and gradually building up my hours.

Together with my Elmore worker, I practiced going out, and she taught me relaxation techniques. We gradually met further away from my home, and eventually I started to return by myself. We practiced ordering coffee in cafes and going to shops. I used to buy myself a treat from the shops as a reward to take back home. I was referred to counselling by the mental health team and went to MIND to slowly get more comfortable being around other people. My neighbor was moving to a new house. We used to be good friends

I managed to go to my son's wedding, which meant the world to me. I have now even started looking forward to going out. I still find work challenging, but my Elmore workers have given me strength. I feel I am not alone, and it is comforting to think that they understand and are only a phone call away.



*"Elmore's New Beginnings programme provides vital support to adult survivors of child sexual exploitation. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to tackling child sexual exploitation and works with partners to provide specialist support for survivors of exploitation. New Beginnings is a key part of this, and we are happy to be funding Elmore's work that enables people to make a positive and lasting difference to their lives."*

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council

## Anne's Story (from 1995)

Anne was referred to Elmore by a MIND day centre worker in 1994. She was 28 years old at the time and living in a housing association flat with her husband. She had told the day centre worker that she was being beaten by him and that he had taken control of the couple's finances, allowing her only £3 a week to spend on herself. She had expressed she wished to leave him but did not know what to do.

Elmore's assessment of Anne found that she had a mild learning disability (and had spent most of her life until adulthood in "special" accommodation for people with a learning disability), suffered from serious asthma attacks and had a weak heart, and was prone to anxiety. She had been in trouble many times for shoplifting and criminal damage and was well known to the Probation service. These problems were causing her serious financial and accommodation difficulties. She had made several serious attempts at suicide and had three times been barred from a day centre for throwing plates at a wall. We felt this to be an appropriate Elmore referral.

Anne's learning disability was not sufficiently serious for specialist services to believe it warranted help and, though she used services

designed for people with a mental health problem, she was not eligible for help from community mental health teams or other mental health services since she did not have a diagnosed mental illness.

Though her repeated offending was causing concern to the Probation service she was not actually on probation and their efforts to offer informal contact had been refused by her. Her GP was aware of her marital problems but felt powerless to offer any practical help, especially since Anne would rarely come for appointments. Anne had multiple problems which meant, in Elmore terms, she was "difficult to place" as no other agency could offer support to Anne with an overall view of all of her needs.

The immediate task for Anne's Elmore worker was to help her find a way of leaving her violent husband. Anne chose to surrender her tenancy rather than attempt to have her husband evicted. With the help of her Elmore worker Anne was accepted as homeless by Oxford City Council and placed in a bedsit. Elmore supported her through the resulting divorce and helped to sort out a complicated financial and benefit situation. Since she took control of her own finances, Anne has not offended. She has made two attempts at self-harm that were

## Anne's Story (from 1995)

not thought to be serious attempts, and has started attending a sheltered workshop and is regularly seeing her GP.

Though Elmore input was high during the first few weeks of contact (almost daily), contact at the time of writing is only needed on a fortnightly basis and will cease once she becomes more established at the sheltered workshop.

Continuity and a flexible approach were very important in our work with Anne. Simply because of the diversity of her problems, other issues were being masked which badly needed attention. She had

not been picked up by other agencies and this was exacerbating and compounding all her difficulties and resulting in her initial chaotic behaviour.

This behaviour quickly became more manageable once she had learnt to trust her Elmore worker and was therefore feeling less angry with the world. She said she was used to being written off as "thick" whereas we helped her to discover that she was very competent in some areas. Her newly found confidence means that she is now able to take control of her own life in a way that she was never able to previously.

**“ ONCE SHE HAD LEARNT TO TRUST HER ELMORE WORKER ... AND WE HELPED HER TO DISCOVER THAT SHE WAS VERY COMPETENT IN SOME AREAS. HER NEWLY FOUND CONFIDENCE MEANS THAT SHE IS NOW ABLE TO TAKE CONTROL OF HER OWN LIFE IN A WAY THAT SHE WAS NEVER ABLE TO PREVIOUSLY. ”**



## Fred's Story (from 1996)

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Fred was referred by a Probation Officer. He was on a Probation Order but was felt to require more social support. He had a housing association tenancy in danger because of poor domestic hygiene and non-payment of bills. He had suffered brain damage as a child and had a problem with alcohol misuse. As a result, he had poor skills, was barely literate, and continued to commit minor offences, mainly related to alcohol consumption, which meant regular court appearances. We agreed to take him on as a client.

The first priority, on meeting him, was to read through a 2-year collection of mail and attempt to settle his various debts - some of whom were threatening court action. With his agreement the Department for Social Security was contacted and he was put on direct payments for water and fuel which solved the immediate problem. Disability Living Allowance was applied for and granted for life, which improved his income.

Lack of domestic hygiene skills meant that his flat, particularly the kitchen, was in a poor state of cleanliness. It was agreed with Fred that help would be given to clean up in order to reduce the health risk and risk of complaints from neighbours about the odour. The clean-up became a regular strategy to keep his flat in a habitable condition and reduce the risk of eviction. Fred is unable to do this for himself.

Elmore accompanied Fred to court, speaking on his behalf, and liaising and sharing information with his probation officer to help prepare pre-sentence reports.

Fred has elderly parents who are very concerned about him and his future care. Part of the support package is to offer support and accessibility to them.

Fred requires on-going support of a practical nature in order to maintain him at his current level of independence. He brings all his mail and any forms to the attention of Elmore to ensure that all his benefits continue to be paid, as he has difficulty understanding. Practical help will be required now and in the future to maintain his home and quality of life.

## Emma's Story (from 2011)

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Emma was 22 years old, and had a long history of family neglect, homelessness, rough sleeping, and being in violent relationships. She had a child who had been taken into care and adopted on the grounds of risk of domestic violence and neglect, and when Elmore began working with Emma she was pregnant with her second child. She has been with her violent and controlling partner (also the father of both children) for over five years. She had a long history of depression, and historically had found it very hard to engage with services, so Elmore had to slowly build up a relationship with Emma, gaining her trust by providing the support she needed.

We accompanied her to her first pre-birth Child Protection meeting, where it was made clear to her that Social Services felt that she did not have capacity to parent a child either then or in the future. Facing the additional possibility of being made homeless, Elmore secured temporary housing for Emma and supported her in instructing a family lawyer to act on her behalf. We continued to provide support at meetings with her lawyer, midwife, housing and Child Protection teams, and liaised closely with the medical team on her ward, when she was admitted to hospital for pregnancy-related complications. The day after her baby's birth, her partner was sentenced to 8 weeks in prison for an assault on another female. Emma only then began to share information about the level of her fear she held for her partner and the extent of abuse she had experienced, expressing motivation to end the relationship for the first time.

Elmore enabled Emma to access mental health counselling (Talking Space), arranged a prescription for anti-depressant drugs, and liaised closely with various domestic violence services. She was given a specialist domestic violence outreach worker and began liaising with her housing team and the rent department to ensure that her tenancy is safe.

Emma's engagement with services has improved dramatically. At the time of writing, she was seeing her child at an approved contact centre three times a week. Overall her chances of gaining custody of her child were dramatically increased. Elmore workers noticed a change in her mood and motivation. Her parenting skills had improved, meaning that she was able to take control of her life far better than local support services had initially expected.

## Ending Modern Slavery in Oxfordshire

You may think slavery is an evil from a distant past or something that only happens to faraway people in faraway places. The truth is that slavery is happening right here, right now.

It's not so secret that it can't be detected. Often it takes place in plain sight, with vulnerable people working excessively long shifts, obviously undernourished, perhaps in situations that look wrong. At Elmore, we take our responsibility to stop slavery in its track and support survivors very seriously. Until 2017, when funding came to an end, Elmore delivered an Independent Trauma Advisor (ITA) service to over 50 victims or suspected victims of slavery.

Since 2016, Elmore has delivered a service to adult survivors of child sexual exploitation. Since 2005, Elmore has delivered a tenancy sustainment service for Oxford City Council that, in recent years, has been responding to reports of cuckooing.

Drawing on our learning, and the very positive independent evaluation of our ITA service, Elmore was commissioned by Oxford City Council to carry out a research project to uncover the clearest picture yet of the nature and extent of slavery and trafficking in Oxford.

Elmore continues to use our skills and experience to benefit clients who appear vulnerable or fall victim to exploitation. We share this expertise through the Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Network which Elmore helped to found and co-chairs to make the county hostile to modern slavery. The Network convened a roundtable for Anti-Slavery Day 2019, chaired by Elmore's Chief Executive, which brought together decision-makers from the leading partners involved in the fight against modern slavery to redouble our efforts across Oxfordshire.



*"The Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Network is a great opportunity to bring partners together to eradicate this appalling abuse. The recent roundtable event ensured a shared purpose*

*across policing, health and social care. The work of the network to support victims wouldn't be possible without the voluntary sector. Led by the work of Elmore, the support for victims of modern-slavery exceeds anything that could ever be done by the public sector alone."*

**Matthew Barber, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley**

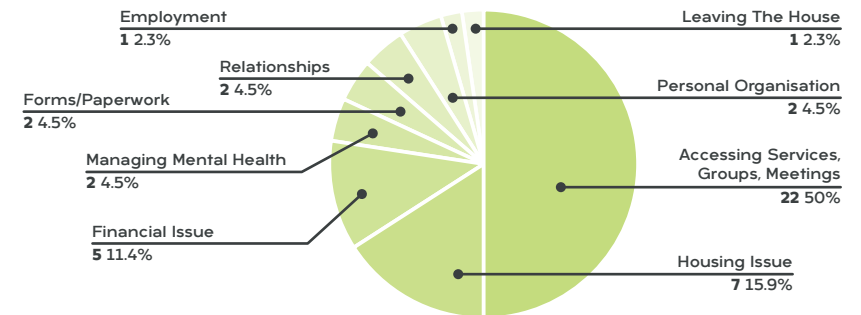
## Primary Wellbeing Project

Mental health issues run through all aspects of health care, and primary care is the front door for many patients with complex mental health problems, who often have a personality disorder. Social prescribing links people using primary care with support in the community to improve their wellbeing and inclusion.

The Oxfordshire Mind Primary Care Wellbeing Project assists GPs and other primary care professional to link people to support for social, emotional, and practical needs. Elmore works in partnership with Mind in Oxford, providing an invaluable pathway with community engagement and practical support.

Up until the end of August 2019, Oxfordshire Mind Wellbeing Workers have referred **28 service users** to the Elmore Brief Intervention service.

### Reasons for Referral



*"The Primary Care Wellbeing Project assists GPs and other primary care professionals to link people to support for social, emotional, and practical needs. Oxfordshire Mind is thrilled to be working closely with Elmore on this Project and other projects, too. Elmore's flexible, person-centred support provides an invaluable pathway with community engagement and practical support, and clients are benefiting as a result."*

**Dan Knowles, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire Mind**

## Oxfordshire Discovery College

Elmore is supporting a brand-new initiative, the Oxfordshire Discovery College to give children and young people struggling with mental health issues the tools to be happier and healthier and better understand themselves.

As the Host Partner, we provide vital infrastructure support while the new service finds its feet, and thanks to a grant from Oxfordshire Community Foundation, it will be piloting a term in a Witney school in March 2020.



The College will be a physical place where young people can be with those who understand them, learn about what they're feeling, and what they can do to make things feel better. Providing tools and support through workshops and enjoyable activities, the College will support groups to explore topics such as resilience building, understanding different diagnoses, and DIY wellbeing strategies through play and age-appropriate activity. Tutors will have professional training and lived experience of their own, and so create a space where young people can share without stigma or judgement.

The College was created after a 2019 report produced by it, Oxfordshire Youth, and the University of Oxford Micro-Internship Scheme, found that in Oxfordshire referrals to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have rocketed by 80% between 2011-2017, and identified a gap for families to improve their mental health.



*"Local services are already doing great work with young people in this area but are stretched to capacity. Supported by Elmore, the Discovery College will sit alongside these other services and support young people in all stages of their experience and recovery. The peer support model really helps to normalise what the young people are going through and gives them positive role models to look up to."*

Laura Harte, Oxfordshire Discovery College Founder

## Community Support

We want to live in a world where people aren't afraid to talk about mental health and, whatever the challenges, are able to get the support they need when they need it.

All of this change starts with you. Elmore is a vital part of the Oxfordshire community, and we are so grateful to the local people, groups, and businesses, that support our life-changing services.

Every penny and act of generosity you donate makes a big difference, and helps Elmore to continue our fight for a future where everyone is supported and empowered.

We can't name every supporter, but we wanted to give you a sense of the ways we've been helped!

*A number of runners supported Elmore in the Oxford Half-Marathon in October 2019, and this included the Mayor of Witney Duncan Enright!*

*Blackwell's booksellers have raised money for Elmore's services by hosting a recent mental health festival, running for Elmore in the Oxford Half-Marathon, and placing our fundraising tins at their tills. Our educational banners about how to spot the signs of slavery have been based in the store's historic store on Broad Street.*

*Oxfordshire UNISON branch raised nearly £500 for mental health recovery on World Mental Health Day with a delicious bake sale across the six sites of Oxfordshire County Council!*



*St Columbia's United Reform Church raised £186 for Elmore on Anti-Slavery Day 2019!*

*Please get in touch if you want to support Elmore or have any questions about fundraising. We would love to hear from you!*

*"I backed Elmore because of the person-centred work they do with people in my Witney community. Fundraising was fun and I had direct contact with the Elmore team throughout, who made me feel part of the family! I'm proud to be able to directly support Elmore's frontline work in Witney."*

Cllr Duncan Enright, Mayor of Witney (2019-20)

## Co-producing Elmore

Co-production means working together as equals—professionals and service users - to ensure services work for the people using them. Formed in 2014 by staff and past and present service users, Elmore's Members Association is a group committed to co-production as equals.

The aims of the group are to increase member's control over their care and produce positive change. Participants have increased their skills and confidence, with the group now chaired and documented by members. The EMA is seen as a safe, consistent, and welcoming space.

In its current incarnation, the EMA meets in alternate months for two hours, with the first hour addressing business relating to Elmore and Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership, and the second used for education, training and sharing information, often involving visitors from outside agencies.

Recently members have inputted into Healthwatch Oxfordshire's consultation on county-wide mental health services, worked alongside staff to shape planning of events such as the celebration of co-production, My Life Festival, and our own 30th birthday party. A service user recently presented an introduction to Co-Production and it was because of the EMA that Elmore became a signatory to the

principles of the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter.

EMA members attended the interviews and presentations of Elmore CEO candidates which produced positive feedback from service-users. "It's unbelievable but service users really are heard," said a service user on the interview panel. "Elmore listens and they made me feel heard and valued. This doesn't happen anywhere else."

The service-user noted that she'd been involved in the process from the formulation of questions at an EMA meeting to the interviews where she put some of them to the candidates. She thought the other members of the panel listened and cared about what she thought. It was "not a tick box exercise", she said.

Recently, members have requested and enjoyed sessions on Food, Belief, and Education and Training. These sessions have stimulated interesting and lively conversations, and members have identified enjoying these spaces. A recent visit by Pets as Therapy dogs was particularly appreciated during a Managing Anxiety session.

As a group, we are continually exploring ways to ensure co-production at Elmore can become more robust, so that service user's voices are clearly heard.

## Campaigning

Across Oxfordshire, people with complex and multiple needs are denied basic rights. They may struggle to access the information, tools, and means they need to claim their rights. The result is vulnerable people unable to tackle problems, lead sustainably better lives, and feel part of their communities. Elmore campaigns because people should have the rights they're entitled to.

We campaign to extend people's rights. Modern-day slavery victims need support to avoid the risk of further exploitation. That's why Elmore campaigns for a right to a guaranteed twelve months of full support, including financial aid, housing and advice, to help them rebuild their lives. We have been calling for a change in law to create a statutory duty to receive ongoing support and leave to remain for 12 months.

We campaign for people to have the information, tools, and means to claim their rights. With the Government creating a 'digital by default' welfare system, claimants who are not at ease and able online struggle to claim and maintain benefits digitally. In effect, digital assistance is outsourced to charities like Elmore who provide people with the knowledge and skills to claim their rights through our commissioning of Oxfordshire Mind's Better Benefits for Mental Health Service.

We campaign against narratives that challenge the rights of the people we support. There is an urgency to counter stigma about mental health and narratives which strengthen discriminatory attitudes that undermine people's rights, wellbeing, and dignity. The stigma that surrounds mental health is built into the words we use. Language can drive people to—or away from—life-changing support. Elmore plays our part in ending stigma and shifting how society talks about mental health.

Language shapes how we see each other and the world, but it can also cause people worry about saying or doing the wrong thing. An effort to improve attitudes towards mental health does not mean people should obsess about restricting language. We take a practical approach.



*"I am proud to join Elmore in calling on the Government to do everything within their power to improve the support on offer to victims of modern-day slavery. Survivors need the Government to extend the support on offer, giving them at least one year of tailored help to rebuild their lives."*

**Anneliese Dodds MP**

## Paying a Living Wage

Elmore is now an accredited Oxford Living Wage and Living Wage employer. We wanted all our staff to feel valued and able to provide the best possible support to clients, so that they can achieve the best possible outcomes.

We recognise that many charities of our size face significant challenges when trying to pay a Living Wage. Service delivery is facing significant underfunding while at the same time, demand is rising exponentially. Charities are often dependent on public sector contracts and grant-funding, which can lead to commissioners expecting its service providers to deliver projects at the lowest possible cost. In this context staff wages are treated as a cost whereas Elmore sees them as an investment in the recruitment and retention of a skilled and committed workforce.



As a campaigning charity, Elmore seeks to inspire and advise other small charities to become Living Wage employers, particularly as low pay is a particularly tough issue for women and ethnic minorities in the charity sector. We are working with others to grow the movement over the next few years, encouraging other employers to pay a Living Wage, and recently held a roundtable with Unison Oxfordshire and Unison's

Assistant General Secretary Roger McKenzie, and spoke at a business forum.



*"It's great to see Elmore become an Oxford Living Wage employer because they want to do the right thing by their skilled and committed workforce. By signing up, Elmore is playing a further role in our community by encouraging employers, especially in the small charity sector, to become Oxford Living Wage employers."*

**Councillor Martyn Rush, Oxford City Council's Living Wage Champion**

## Investing in Frontline Workers

### How Elmore's Team approach directly benefits clients

The Elmore Team has a strong track record in staff retention for a small organisation. Staff continuity is vital to the success of the Team. All Team members are motivated and enthusiastic and there is a strong culture that has not been disrupted by constant staff changes. There is a healthy reliance on trust between the team members. This is greatly aided by this staff continuity as trust takes time to develop. It is accepted within the team that working with this client group can be a difficult, frustrating, and challenging process. They accept that some team members may work better with some individuals than others. Elmore encourages honesty—if one worker's approach isn't working, they will say 'this is not working', discuss it with the team, and another worker might be allocated as a result.

The trust and honesty which has developed between support staff, enables a constant dialogue about client related problems that is healthy and supportive. Difficult client visits are discussed—there is a high level of awareness between support staff of the work their colleagues are doing. Informal peer supervision and discussion about client work is commonplace.

Team members hold a monthly meeting to develop and discuss working practices, making sure that there is a clear link between policy and practice. Lunch can be shared during the meeting and guests from other agencies are often invited. The team holds two weekly meetings to exchange information about clients and other agencies, divide up diary commitments, and discuss referrals.

In between the weekly team meetings

there is an informal exchange of ideas and information between team members. All the team try to spend part of their day at the office, recognising that lone working in the field is not always the best way to support people with entrenched problems. Periods of reflection and talks with colleagues often provide the spark needed for a more creative way of working.

### How Elmore manages risk

With such a high risk client group, a key management task is ensuring the safety of all team members and having a sound health and safety policy that works well in practice. Elmore brings this strong reputation and record risk management to our work with Sovereign Housing.

When developing and implementing systems around risk and safety, the team is conscious of the need for good communication. Backed up by good information about potential risk, the team are able to use a variety of safe ways to work. Initial visits to new clients are conducted in pairs, unless another agency worker will also be present. Further visits are often done in pairs when it is thought necessary.

The team discusses ways to minimise risk with each client, including location, particular triggers, time of the day. Both this and a reporting back system are summarised in the health and safety policy which is a key part of induction for any new team member or student on placement.

The Elmore team is able to work comparatively more safely with clients who present as relatively high risk than some other agencies. Elmore has no reason to be complacent about safety and all team members are very aware of the important of risk management.

## Finances

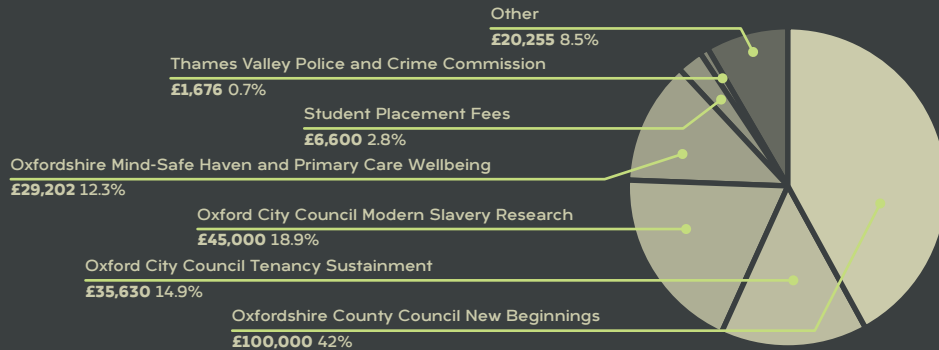
Elmore's expenses exceeded its income for the second year in a row, following the end of some commissioned services and the creation of smaller-scale projects which did not make up the shortfall.

Seeking financial balance is a priority, for which the Chief Executive and Board are pursuing new approaches, including the creation of larger-scale projects and fundraising opportunities.

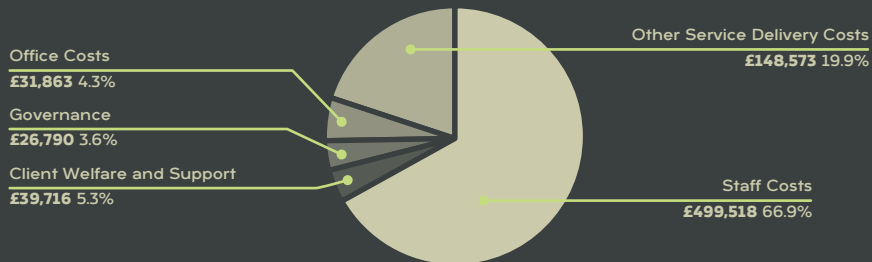
Elmore depends on a small number of fixed-term contracts from the NHS and local government, and we recognise the need to grow and diversify our income. Elmore is working to put ourselves on a sustainable footing.

**£706k** Income  **£746k** Expenditure

### Income in 2018-2019 - £706,389



### Expenditure in 2018-2019 - £746,460



## Thanks to Supporters

We would like to thank everyone who has supported Elmore and our life-changing services over the last year. Without your support and generosity, Elmore would not be able to make a difference to people using our services and living on the margins of society. Our thanks go to commissioners of Elmore's services and the organisations and individuals who have provided support or funded our clients' essential items and much needed welfare in crisis situations.

In our thirtieth birthday year, we would like to thank the commissioners of our services, many of which have been longstanding partners of Elmore:



We would like to thank our supporters over the twelve-month period covered by this review:

- Abingdon Emergency Foodbank
- Banbury Charities
- Banbury Foodbank
- Bicester Foodbank
- City of Oxford Charities
- Community Emergency Foodbank
- Didcot Emergency Foodbank
- North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank
- OxFAP—Oxford Friends Action on Poverty
- Oxford West Foodbank
- OxPAT—Oxford Poverty Action Trust
- Response Giving
- St Michael's and All Saints' Charities
- The Besom in Witney
- The Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust
- The Witney Town Charity
- Vicar's Relief Fund
- Wantage and Grove Foodbank
- Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank

We would also like to thank our supporters in the six-months since the financial year ended:

- Blackwell's Oxford
- Bounce Design
- Dayna Connolly
- Councillor Duncan Enright, the Mayor of Witney (2019-20)
- Patricia Berry
- Jonathan Mitty
- Lily Qui
- Mid-counties Co-operative Campaigning Fund
- Oxford City Councillor David Henwood's Ward Budget
- Our friends and partners in the Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Network
- Oxfordshire Community Foundation
- Patricia Judez
- Sophia Holme
- St Columbia's United Reform Church
- UNISON Branch, Oxfordshire County Council

# Elmore Community Services

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