

Elmore Community Services



Annual Review 2020

Chair's Foreword

This year Elmore Community Services has continued to deliver life-changing services in the face of a very difficult times, with the coronavirus outbreak.

Throughout this year, Elmore has maintained a well-known commitment to excellence and innovation. We have been recognised for our persistence in working purposefully to change the lives of many of the most disadvantaged and excluded members of Oxfordshire's population. Our staff rightly pride themselves on continually rising to this challenge and delivering services that matter to people, and they have made Elmore proud yet again, excelling in the year of coronavirus.

Some of our highlights this year:

Elmore has secured new contracts to deliver three new services:

- a High Intensity User (HIU) project to support frequent attenders as an alternative to A&E
- leadership of a new domestic abuse service across Oxfordshire, and
- a major role in a new mental health partnership, also across Oxfordshire.

We have continued to provide a pathway to community engagement and practical support within a Primary Care Wellbeing project, support vulnerable people to sustain tenancies, and sponsor a new innovation in mental health support to young people in the form of Oxfordshire Discovery College.

Our New Beginnings service has continued to support adult survivors of child sexual exploitation, who found the courage to face their abusers in court, resulting in criminal convictions.

Elmore has continued to be an active delivery partner of the award-winning Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership (OMHP). Now in its fifth year of delivering Outcomes Base Commissioning, the OMHP has been extended for a further two years after two positive external reviews.

Elmore has responded to the coronavirus outbreak by moving staff to working from home in place of the office and the community, delivering a phone-based service in place of in-person client support, delivering food parcels and activities such as jigsaws and puzzles, and preparing to trial videocalling with clients, including through the distribution of smartphones to digitally excluded clients.

And we have moved into our second year as an accredited Living Wage and Oxford Living Wage employer, wearing our values on our sleeve.

We have always been proud of our reputation. We could not make a difference to people's lives without our partners, staff, board and most importantly our service users. To them we share our thanks and commit our ongoing support.



Aziz Halime



Chief Executives's Foreword

Looking back over the year, I am exceptionally proud of all that we have achieved in providing life-changing mental health and complex needs support to 359 vulnerable people in Oxfordshire. When reflecting on the team's achievements I am reminded that each statistic is not only a number—it tells a human story. We are determined that the next year is about continuing to focus all our efforts on lasting change for ever greater numbers of people with multiple and complex needs.

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. While celebrating our thirtieth anniversary, we never could have imagined how much more indispensable Elmore would become.

Elmore has been affected by the Coronavirus outbreak that caused the country to retreat indoors before the end of the year reviewed in this report.

The virus has created risks to the health and wellbeing of clients, presented unprecedented difficulties for staff, and challenged our partners like never before.

Across Oxfordshire, Elmore workers delivered 134 food parcels to 57 clients at risk of going hungry, roughly 30% of clients. To support clients and families to withstand lockdown and follow Government guidance, Elmore delivered jigsaws, books, and a range of entertainment to people's doors. And we have continued to provide support to people, with the number of contacts doubling in frequency for some clients for one service alone (New Beginnings).

In addition to finding new ways to deliver existing services, Elmore has started the delivery of three new services which you can read more about in this review: a new High Intensity User (HIU) project as an alternative to A&E for frequent attenders, a new mental health service and a new domestic abuse service, working with victims and perpetrators, to support families to address the problems that affect their ability to look after their children.

At the cutting edge of our work is our mental health and complex needs work, our support to residents to maintain their tenancies, and our support to adult victims of childhood sexual exploitation. Clients do not fit easily into services and can be hard to engage. The 'Elmore way' is subtle, person-centred and flexible, and it brings out the skill and expert judgement of our experienced workers.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Elmore team for their commitment to their clients, our commissioners and partners for their ongoing support, and everyone in the wider community who supports Elmore to ensure that nobody falls through the cracks of existing service provision.



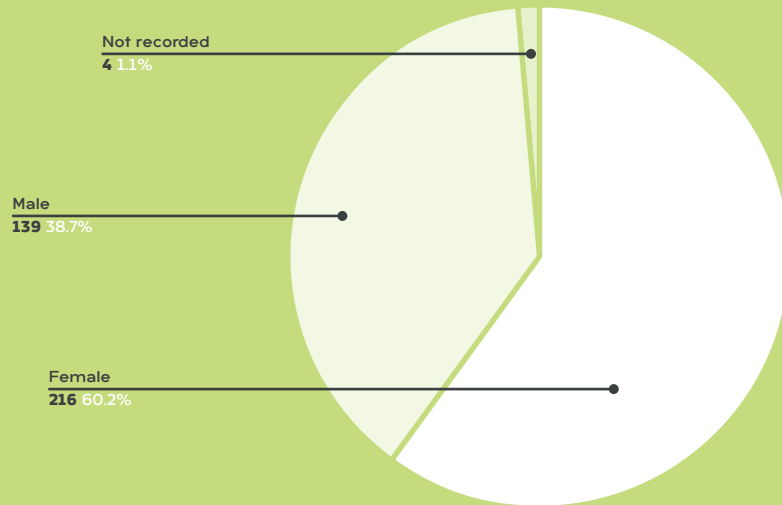
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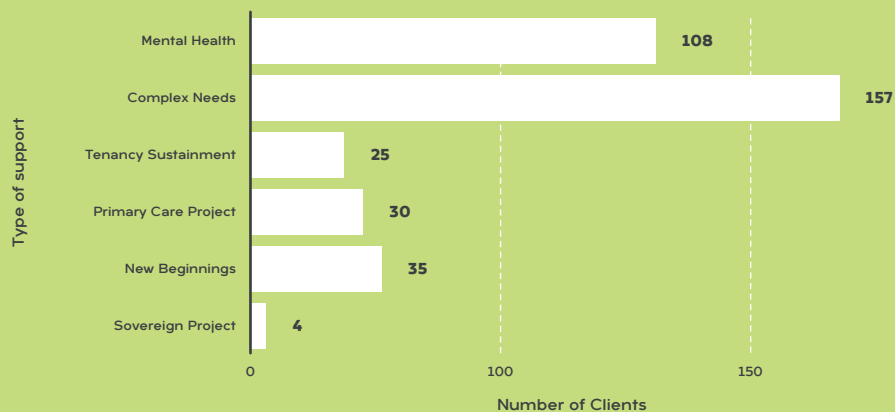
A Year in Charts

Elmore has worked with 359 people this year, from a wide range of age groups and ethnicities.

Gender



Support to clients



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 through our membership of the 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 lie 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, sometimes accompanied by the client or without them. Elmore's caseworkers directly draw on their experiences and expertise in brokerage and advocacy on behalf of clients.



"I was delighted to join Elmore Community Service's 30th Anniversary celebrations last year. I was impressed to hear about their work with vulnerable people experiencing challenges, including mental health, homelessness and exploitation. As Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, it is important that we are supporting community-based services, such as Elmore. This remains a key part of my Police and Crime Plan for the region."

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

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.

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Clients



"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

Mental health issues such as depression or social anxiety can make it very difficult for people to seek help. We support our clients to access specialist services and provide the longer-term practical and emotional support that can help them improve their lives.

Our team approach means we can pool our skills and experience to offer clients a wide range of support to help their recovery. This includes practical help with housing, benefits, bills and debts, or to deal with police or solicitors. We also help our clients gain access to healthcare and other services, 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 is committed to providing benefits and money advice to the people who use our services, and as such, in 2020 commissioned the Oxfordshire Mind Benefits for Better Mental Health (BBMH) to provide a day a week of exclusive support.

The assistance includes advice, information and tribunal representation, as well as form-filling and letter-writing. Our adviser is experienced in mental health problems, as well as the benefits support needs of people with mental health issues. Ongoing assistance is provided to patients to ensure continued support.



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Clients

William's Story

"I have been worried about my housing security since 2012 when regulations for houses of multiple occupancy (the kind of property I live in) changed. Things came to a head in 2019 when my property agent took legal action to have me evicted. There followed many months of meetings with my solicitor and, during this time, my Elmore caseworker Maron's support was invaluable. He also helped by accompanying me to court appearances and even contributed to a satisfactory settlement of the situation. The exemplary care has continued and at the start of this year when I fell ill with pneumonia, my caseworker took me to my GP's surgery and then to hospital. Maron visited several times, bringing essential supplies, and at the end of my stay brought me back home again. I find it hard to imagine how I would have managed without Maron's help."

Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership

Elmore is a founding member of the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership (OMHP) along with Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and fellow third-sector organisations Restore, Oxfordshire Mind, Response, and Connection Support.

The OMHP has been congratulated for pioneering the model of outcomes-based commissioning in mental health—most recently by the Centre for Mental Health, an independent charity commissioned by the OMHP to evaluate our record.

The Partnership aims to bring about seven outcomes for people of working age using mental health services in the county:

- People with mental illness will live longer
- Improved level of wellbeing and recovery
- Timely access to assessment and support
- People will maintain a role that is meaningful to them
- Continue to live in stable and suitable accommodation
- Better physical health
- Carers will feel supported

According to our evaluation, all the outcomes are being achieved and the OMHP has helped to create several new services including a crisis café.

The OMHP has also been named regional winner of the prestigious NHS Parliamentary Awards' Excellence in Mental Health Care Award 2019. The judging panel named the OMHP the winner from among hundreds of entries after hearing how we collectively improve the lives of more than 6,000 people living with mental health challenges a year.

OMHP gives people a complete recovery package focusing on emotional and physical care, wellbeing, education, skills, employment, financial stability, and housing. It is provided by specialist mental health organisations from the NHS and third sector through a range of intersecting services, project and initiatives which combine to create a network of support around service users.



"In my current role as CEO of Restore, I continue to enjoy a strong relationship with Elmore as part of the OMHP. I was one of the original staff, right at the start of the Elmore Community Support team.

Over time, we forged strong links with an enormous

range of local practitioners and services in the worlds of health, substance misuse, housing and offending. Our role was to be brokers, advocates, jacks of all trades and masters of none. For Elmore to work successfully, strong relationships are everything. It was a job I loved and, in time, progressed to become Elmore's Director in 1997, finally leaving for pastures new in 2003 after 15 years of being part of this wonderful, unique organisation. Long may Elmore thrive!"

Lesley Dewhurst, Chief Executive of Restore and Chair of OMHP

Primary Care Wellbeing Project (PCP)

Primary care is the front door for many patients with complex mental health problems who often have a personality disorder. This exciting project, based on a social prescribing model, started in the middle of October 2018 and has been delivered by Oxfordshire Mind and Elmore in partnership.

The Primary Care Wellbeing Project assists GPs and other primary care professionals to link people to support for social, emotional, and practical needs. Elmore works with clients in Oxford in a non-clinical, person-centred way to encourage and enable them to link in with existing support services, use the support available in their community and develop tools to increase their ability to manage their own wellbeing.

One of the aims of the project is to reduce demand on NHS services. 77% of GPs who responded to our primary care staff survey in April/May believed that 'The Oxfordshire Mind service is reducing the need for multiple GP appointments for patients with wellbeing / mental health issues'.



30

Clients



"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

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 third year to support 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 CSE. Increasingly Elmore is seeing male clients who cannot access specialist support because they are male.

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Clients



"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

30th Birthday

The Elmore team began working with 23 vulnerable people on a face-to-face basis from 3rd January 2019. The team consisted of a coordinator, three support workers, an administrator, a researcher, and a finance lead. The very first task was to create the model that lives on to this day—finding ways of supporting some of the most disenfranchised, complex people in Oxford, wherever they are and whatever need they presented.

On the thirtieth anniversary of the formal inauguration of the work of the team, the Elmore model has stood the test of time for engaging with people with multiple needs. The people we work with were not a recognised client group when the team was set up in 1989, but it continues to be surprising how accurately the papers and reports of the founding Elmore Committee describe this group.

Elmore celebrated our thirtieth anniversary with a birthday party at the Museum of Oxford in 2019. The celebration brought together Elmore's original, past, and current team members, trustees, partners, and commissioners. Indeed, for many of the people who founded Elmore, the celebration was their first reunion for many decades, and they enjoyed a birthday cake baked by service users of the Garden Café from Elmore's close partner Restore.



Timeline of Elmore

- Working with homeless people with chronic physical health problems, including clients who are HIV positive. A feature of the work was the link to Oxfordshire Social Services' HIV Team and a pilot assessment project looking at the needs of people living with HIV and housing need. The project ran from 1991 to 1995.
- From 1995 to 1997, a community psychiatric nurse was based at Elmore as part of a local court scheme to provide speedy psychiatric assessment and support to Magistrates' Court.
- From 1997 to 2001, Elmore provided an outreach service to rough sleepers. Workers carried an individual case load and actively found referrals on the street.
- From 2000 to 2004, Elmore collaborated with the Oxford Night Shelter and Connection Support to provide support, explore why tenancies break down, and improve interagency working.
- From 2000 to 2002, Elmore ran an Older Homeless Persons' Project in partnership with Connection Support.
- From 2005 to 2012, Elmore ran a project with people with complex needs in prison prior to their release from custody. The project developed over the years from being a successful pilot to having specialist prison posts to supporting three vulnerable groups in particular—young offenders, female offenders, and persistent repeat offenders.
- From 2007 to 2015, Elmore ran an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) service which provided support for people who have multiple needs and were subject to ASB orders. The service gained a local and national reputation, and its impact was evidenced in a DVD made by the clients themselves. In 2009 the service was a finalist in the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Awards for exemplary practice and in 2012 the team went county-wide.
- From 2009 to 2012, Elmore ran a Community Parenting Project in partnership with Children's Social Care, aimed at people aged 16-25 with complex needs, who were either pregnant or had a child under the age of two. In 2011, the project was hailed as an example of multi-agency working in the Monro Review of Child Protection.
- In 2012, Elmore delivered a yearlong pilot Court Service for people with mental health, autism and learning difficulties who were coming into contact with the Oxford Magistrate Court.



Founding Trustees Nick Welch, Caroline Roaf, Pat Goodwin; Founding Trustee and Founder Peter Agunik; and original team members Lesley Dewhurst and Angela Stannard; original Team Coordinator Jon McLeavy; and original team member Bill Trotter.



- In 2013, Elmore supported homeless adults with complex needs accessing A+E.
- In 2014, Elmore was funded by the Ministry of Justice to support offenders with communication difficulties (including hearing impairments).
- From 2015 to 2018, Elmore worked within the new drug and alcohol services across Oxfordshire. Elmore provided Assertive Outreach Substance Misuse workers to ensure complex clients with substance use issues accessed the new services. This included outreach work in various homeless shelters and hostels.
- From 2015 to 2017, Elmore ran a service called Bucks Empower in partnership with Connection Support and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust to support people with mental health issues who have a high reliance on emergency acute services (in particular, A&E) in Buckinghamshire.
- From 2015 to 2018, Elmore ran a service to address modern-day slavery. The project refined the model of support and helped to develop pathways into support.
- Since 2015, Elmore has been working with adult survivors of childhood sexual exploitation.
- In 2019, Elmore worked with Sovereign Housing to help residents to maintain tenancies and continues to work with Oxford City Council to provide support around mental health.

30th Birthday

"I worked for Elmore for 4 years in the late 80s and early 90s in a post which was also part of the HIV Social Services Team. The focus was support work with people who were homeless and living with serious physical health problems. There was also some work to develop housing for people living with HIV/AIDS and policy work. This fitted with the ethos of Elmore to work with people with complex needs and I was very much part of the team. I joined the Board of OXAIDS and was part of that becoming Terrence Higgins Trust. I continue to value the important contribution that Elmore makes and Connection Support works closely with Elmore to deliver floating support as part of the Oxfordshire Mental Health Project, and I look forward to developing the Family Solutions Plus project with Elmore and Oxfordshire Mind."

Mark Thompson, Chief Executive of Connection Support and former Elmore caseworker



"The evening was hugely gratifying. A wonderful chance to catch up with old friends who had either been involved in the planning, or the early implementation of the service. Elmore is about finding ways to work across institutional boundaries to help people, who are "difficult to place" find the help they need. With backgrounds from the bench, probation, mental health, social services, and care of the homeless, we ourselves had widened our horizons, and helped the germ of an idea, turn into a robust reality."

Peter Agulnik, overall founder of Elmore

Tenancy Sustainment

Elmore has run a range of services to support vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies, and we have brought this skill to our work with Oxford City Council. Our work includes support around people's mental health and practical matters such as helping tenants to access the social security support they are entitled to.

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Clients

Emergency High Intensity User Programme

One of the new services started by Elmore Community Services this year has been an Emergency High Intensity User (HIU) programme with Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Elmore plays a critical role within the HIU programme by supporting a specific cohort of people who need intense community-based interventions.

Our project seeks to deliver improved outcomes for high-risk, marginalised people who are high intensity users of emergency care, while also contributing to the reduction of emergency attendances and admissions. These patients typically have a combination of physical, mental health, and substance abuse issues. In many cases the persistent use of services suggests an urgent requirement to address the needs of complex patients in a coordinated way by the health and social care community. The aim is to provide this coordination and person-centred support with effective interventions.



"It's been fantastic to see the way Elmore has developed this year. They continue to be a lifeline for hard to reach groups and have innovated to ensure people receive ongoing support throughout the Covid crisis. Despite challenging times they are expanding services in key areas of need. I very much look forward to working with Elmore as it grows, particularly as it explores working with volunteers and more local partners."

Laura Price, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire Community And Voluntary Action (OCVA)

Ending Modern Slavery in Oxfordshire

You may think that slavery only happens to faraway people in faraway places. But the truth is that modern-day slavery is happening right here, right now.

Until 2017, Elmore delivered a service to over 50 victims or suspected victims of slavery. We know that these figures are just the tip of the iceberg. Elmore developed an Independent Trauma Advisory (ITA) role that, like Independent Domestic Violence Advisor and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor roles, offered immediate crisis intervention and emotional support. The service assessed needs, and offered support with emotional needs, accessing substance use services, finances and benefits support, and housing advice, and attended police exploitation raids to provide immediate support to survivors.

Drawing on our service delivery and its positive independent evaluation, Elmore has been working to uncover a clearer

picture of the nature and extent of slavery and trafficking in the city of Oxford. A research project was commissioned by Oxford City Council, funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, to generate a stronger evidence base on which those responsible for community safety across Oxford can better assess the threat, risks and harm posed by modern slavery to adults and children in the city, and develop more effective responses to identify, protect and support victims.

Elmore continues to use our skills and experience to benefit Elmore 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.



“Elmore has been working to uncover a clearer picture of the nature and extent of slavery and trafficking in the city of Oxford”

Family Solutions Plus

Launching new domestic abuse and mental health services as part of Oxfordshire’s new model to support children and families

Oxfordshire County Council is transforming the way it helps frontline social workers to support children and families. The new Family Solutions Plus model aims to radically improve outcomes for children and families while reducing demands and costs, and Elmore is involved in the delivery of two of the three new services.

Elmore will have ten specialist adult workers located in FSP teams with children’s social workers helping families to deal with domestic abuse, and a further 3.5 helping families to deal with parental mental health. This approach is set to tackle parental behaviours and support children to remain with their families, as necessary.

As the lead delivery partner for the domestic abuse service, Elmore is creating a unique and innovative perpetrator treatment programme, as well as a victim support service. In face-face and online settings, Elmore’s workers will deliver bespoke individual and group interventions. Being able to achieve this involves equipping staff with the right skills and training, and Elmore has kick-started this by training workers in motivational interviewing, one of the four key elements of the model, and our new interventions.

The model is inspired by an approach pioneered by Hertfordshire County Council, which has been independently evaluated as effective and complimented by Ofsted.

Partnerships are at the heart of Elmore’s work, and this is the case with the FSP model. Elmore is working with Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse to establish the domestic abuse service, and a delivery partner of Connection Floating Support and Oxford Health in the mental health service led by Oxfordshire Mind.

The two services launch in early 2021.



“In the summer of this year Elmore won the tender to provide the domestic abuse service within the new model for Children’s Social Care. The service will be delivering tailor made support for both the abusive and non-abusive parent to ensure children have a happier and safer home life. This new innovative whole family approach to prevent further abuse and violence is progressive and a challenge which Elmore is very well equipped to take on.

Liz Jones MBE, Domestic Abuse Lead for Oxford City Council

Oxfordshire Discovery College

The Oxfordshire Discovery College aims to give children and young people the tools to look after their own mental health and wellbeing, and to understand what they're experiencing. The college brings together experts with professional backgrounds and with lived experience to show that mental health can be talked about openly, and that there's hope for the future.

In its first year of operating some positive strides forward have been made:

- The first pilot has been written and delivery begun, with a group of 10 fantastic children from the Tower Hill Primary School in Witney.
- The College's Founder led its first community fundraising event by walking 200 miles, raising approximately £1800.
- A brand new website has been created by Reulo Creative.
- A Stakeholder Steering Group has been established, with people with lived experience, carers and professionals all represented to guide the college's strategic decision-making.
- In response to the national lockdown, the College launched its remote Youth In Lockdown project which collected creative works from young people across the county expressing their experiences of the pandemic and its impact on their mental health.



"Whilst this hasn't been the year we expected, we've adapted our approach and continued to provide opportunities to young people remotely whilst planning an innovative and exciting return to face-to-face work in 2021. Supported by Elmore, we're delighted to be having valuable conversations with stakeholders across Oxfordshire to make sure that we provide exactly what children and young people want and need, and are always on the lookout for inspiring people to help guide our choices - do get in touch!"

Laura Harte, Oxfordshire Discovery College Founder

Elmore Members Association

Co-production means working together as equals and making best use of our resources and strengths to find ways of doing things that benefit our community.

Co-production can improve the way Elmore's services are designed and delivered by putting an emphasis on a more equal partnership between professionals and people using those services. Working together as equals builds better relationships (based on trust, respect and understanding) and helps to create services that actually work for the people using them.

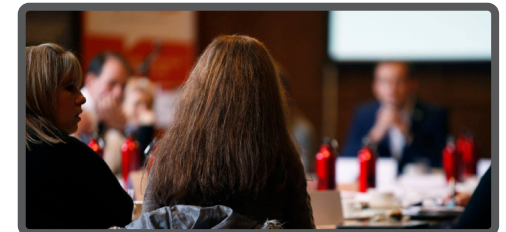
Formed in 2014 by staff and past and present service users, the Elmore Members Association is a group of people committed to doing co-production, or working together. We believe that if we work together, we can make services better and more sustainable, and communities stronger and healthier. The aims of the group are to increase the members' control over their own care and to produce positive change. We have found that the group has enhanced the skills and increased the confidence of participants - it is now chaired by members, and has been identified as a consistent and welcoming space.

In its current incarnation, the Association meets in alternate months. The first hour of the meeting addresses business related to Elmore Community Services (and, more broadly, the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership) including updates and

service issues. Members are paid the Oxford Living Wage of £10.02 for attending.

The members have recently had beneficial conversations about the support they receive, and have usefully discussed their thoughts on the out-of-hours service Oxford Safe Haven. They have also been heavily involved in the recent recruitment of a new CEO and development of Elmore's 30th birthday celebration event. It was because of the Association's support for the principles of the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter that Elmore became a signatory. And members have been involved in discussion with Healthwatch Oxfordshire about their consultation into mental health services in the county.

The second hour of the meeting is used for education, training and information sharing. In 2019, this has included sessions on Physical Health (involving guests from Active Body, Healthy Mind and the Active Communities Team), Education, Employment and Training (with the Job Centre's Disability Employment Adviser) and Money.



Low Pay and Living Wage

Elmore became an accredited Oxford Living Wage and Living Wage employer in September 2019 after making the necessary budgetary changes. This comes from our experiences of supporting people who are low-paid and struggling with the mental and physical health effects of low-pay. We wanted our all our staff to be able to provide the best support, so that they are able to achieve the right outcomes for clients.

As a small charity, we recognise that many charities of our size across the country face significant challenges when trying to pay the Living Wage and, here in Oxford, the Oxford Living Wage, currently set at £10.02 an hour. Charities are seeing significant funding pressures on their service delivery at the same time as demand is rising exponentially. So dependent on contracts and grant-funding, small charities such as Elmore often encounter contracts where we are expected to deliver projects at the lowest possible cost. In this context, staff wages are seen as a cost, rather than as an investment in recruiting and retaining a skilled and committed workforce. With an increasingly uncertain economic climate ahead, it can be difficult for small charities to commit to the Living Wage for future years.

However, it was important to Elmore to step up and pay all our staff the Oxford Living Wage. Our hope at Elmore is that by signing up to the Oxford Living Wage will help the movement to grow over the next few years. That way we can play a further role in our community by encouraging other employers in the local small charity sector to increase wages and lift people out of poverty.

Nationally, according to NCVO, the majority of voluntary sector employees work in smaller organisations with almost half (47%) in organisations with fewer than 25 staff. Many of the voluntary sector organisations in Oxford and Oxfordshire are smaller in size. Our hope is that Elmore inspires and advises other similarly sized charities to accredit to the Living Wage Foundation, particularly as low pay is especially a serious issue in the charity sector for women, ethnic minorities, part-time workers, and young people.



"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."

Cllr Martyn Rush, Oxford City Council's Living Wage Champion 2018-2020

Investing in Staff

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 importance of risk management.

Coronavirus

Elmore has been affected by the Coronavirus outbreak that caused the country to retreat indoors just before the end of the year reviewed in this report.

The virus has created risks to the health and wellbeing of clients and staff and challenged Elmore and our partners like never before.

Elmore has:

- moved to working from home, operating a telephone support service in place of our usual face-face support. As the year has passed, Elmore has returned to some face-face support, always in line with national guidelines
- delivered 134 food parcels to 57 clients all over Oxfordshire to ensure that none of our clients went hungry. We supported roughly 30% of our clients.
- supported clients and families to withstand lockdown and follow Government guidance, Elmore delivered jigsaws, books, and a range of entertainment to people's doors.
- moved our Elmore Members' Association online, so that meetings are now taking place virtually through videocalls.
- continued to provide support to people, with the number of contacts doubling in frequency for some clients for one service alone (New Beginnings).
- received recognition from Anneliese Dodds MP and HM The Queen's representative in Oxfordshire the Lord-Lieutenant Tim Stevenson (please see pages 23 and 24)

"Elmore provides a vital safety net for the most vulnerable in our community. They deserve our support and gratitude. Elmore's work is particularly critical during these troubled times; any one of us could find ourselves in need of their help."

Councillor Craig Simmons, Lord Mayor of Oxford (2019-2020)



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tom Hayes
Chief Executive
Elmore Community Services
213 Barns Road
Oxford
OX4 3UT

Our Ref: SD/AN97804

16th April 2020

Dear Tom

As our city faces an unprecedented time of disruption and anxiety caused by the coronavirus crisis, I wanted to write and say how much I am thinking of everyone in the Elmore team and the five other teams which make up the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership (OMHP). At this time in particular, we need to be making mental health a real priority in our country.

Every mental health and care professional in our city is a hero. Together our third sector and NHS are making a huge contribution to the mental wellbeing of Oxford and Oxfordshire. I was pleased to hear that Elmore has adapted to these challenges by moving swiftly to an entirely phone-based service and delivering food parcels, in partnership with SOFEA, to residents in Oxford and—now that the Oxford Hubs have launched—started to prioritise supporting people isolated across Oxfordshire.

I understand the pressures on all your services are increasing significantly. I am thinking of everyone at Elmore, Restore, Oxfordshire Mind, Connection Floating Support, Response, and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust as you deal with the current crisis. The OMHP is a wonderful example of staff and volunteers achieving more by the strength of their common endeavour. That common endeavour is needed now more than ever.

I was proud to be one of the Members of Parliament who supported the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership in the 2019 NHS Parliamentary Awards. I was particularly thrilled when the OMHP went on to win the Excellence for Mental Health Care Award. Not only does the OMHP improve the lives of more than 6,000 people living with mental health challenges a year, but it offers hope and ambition to people through a recovery programme which offers all-round support and care. That award was a testament to the hard work of staff and volunteers, and importantly, all users of your services.

If I can be of any support to Elmore and the other members of the OMHP, please do say. I am proud to have worked so closely with you in recent years and I will do all I can to support your teams and the people who rely on you, both as your Member of Parliament and in my new role as Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Anneliese Dodds MP



Office of Her Majesty's
Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire
263 Woodstock Road
Oxford
OX2 7AE

Telephone: 01865 515477
Email: office@stevenson-oxford.co.uk

1 May 2020

Dear Tom,

As Her Majesty the Queen's Lord Lieutenant for Oxfordshire, I am writing to you and your team to thank you all for the commitment, energy and creativity that you are bringing to the very challenging task of sustaining the support and service you provide to individuals with mental health and other complex needs. The circumstances we are all faced with have required you to be innovative in terms of the way in which you support your clients, and it is clear that you are achieving this with great success.

Since 1989 Elmore has been a lifeline for marginalised and disadvantaged people across Oxfordshire. At this period of acute crisis for our country and county your team's efforts to sustain the support that you provide is a great example of the surge of community solidarity and support that is enabling us all to work through this period to the other side. Our challenge as we emerge from the crisis will be to sustain the benefits of what we are learning now through what will continue to be a very challenging environment. We can all be confident that Elmore will continue to deliver.

Thank you indeed for all that you and your dedicated team are doing.

Best regards

Tim
TIM STEVENSON

Finances

Financial sustainability was identified by the Board as a key priority for the organisation and we are pleased to report that Elmore's income exceeded its expenses in 2019-20 for the first time since 2016-17, with additional funding being secured to meet inflationary pressures.

Seeking financial sustainability has been a key priority, for which the Chief Executive and Board have been pursuing new approaches, including the creation of larger-scale projects and fundraising opportunities.

Since year end 2019-20 Elmore has also been awarded new contracts. These new services represent a major increase in size and income to Elmore, with income for 2020-21 forecast to exceed £1million for the first time. Our focus is on ensuring excellent delivery of these projects in collaboration with partners, for the benefit of our clients and to put Elmore on a strong footing going forwards.

£840k
Income

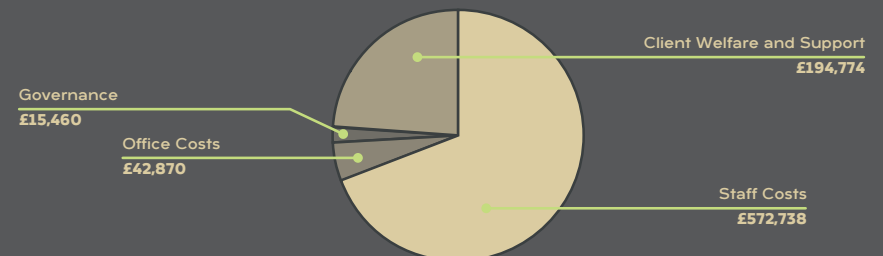


£826k
Expenditure

Income in 2019-2020 - £839,501



Expenditure in 2019-2020 - £825,842



Community Response

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 this change starts with you. Elmore is a vital part of our community, and we are 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 here's some of the ways that Elmore's services have been supported financially:

- Several runners supported Elmore in the Oxford Half-Marathon in October 2019, and this included the Mayor of Witney Councillor Duncan Enright who also spoke about Elmore and his running on BBC Radio Oxford.

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

- In honour of Time to Talk Day 2020, Elmore's Chief Executive interviewed the pop star Frankie Bridge at Blackwell's about her own experiences of depression and the importance of asking for help and speaking up about mental health.

- Oxfordshire UNISON branch raised nearly £500 for mental health recovery on World Mental Health Day 2019 with a delicious bake sale across six sites.

- St Columbia's United Reform Church raised £186 for Elmore on Anti-Slavery Day and Infineum UK Ltd contributed £4000 to meet Elmore's COVID-19 costs.

Please email info@elmorecommunityservices.org.uk if you want to support Elmore or have any questions about fundraising. We would love to hear from you!

Thanks to Supporters

Thank you to everyone who has supported Elmore and our life-changing services over the last year. Without their support and generosity, Elmore would not be able to make a difference to people using our services and living on the margins of society.

This year we benefited from many fundraising activities, including Elmore supporters running the Blenheim 7K, the trade union Unison holding a bake sale on World Mental Health Day, shoppers contributing to shakers based at Blackwell's pay desks, the University of Oxford's Lincoln College Graduate Society making us their Charity of the Year, and faith groups donating to Elmore!

We would like to thank everyone who has supported Elmore and the commissioners of our services, many of which have been longstanding partners.



Thanks to Supporters

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

- Abingdon Emergency Foodbank
- Anneliese Dodds MP
- Anthony Stansfield, Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner
- Banbury Charities
- Banbury Foodbank
- Bicester Foodbank
- Blackwell's Oxford
- Bounce Design
- City of Oxford Charities
- Community Emergency Foodbank
- Councillor Alexandrine Kantor, South Oxfordshire District Council
- Councillor Colin Cook, Oxford City Council
- Councillor Susanna Pressel, Oxford City Council
- Cllr Glynis Philipps, Oxfordshire County Council
- Councillor Lubna Arshad, Oxford City Council
- Councillor Craig Simmons, the Lord Mayor of Oxford (2019-2020)
- Councillor Duncan Enright, the Mayor of Witney (2019-2020)
- Dayna Connolly
- Didcot Emergency Foodbank
- Grace Berry
- High Sheriff of Oxfordshire
- Councillor Colin Cook, Oxford City Council
- Justin Meadows
- Jonathan Mitty
- Lily Qui
- Lincoln College Graduate Society
- Mid-counties Co-operative Campaigning Fund
- North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank
- Our friends and partners in the Oxfordshire Anti-Slavery Network
- OxFAP—Oxford Friends Action on Poverty
- Oxford City Councillor David Henwood's Ward Budget
- Oxford West Foodbank
- OxPAT—Oxford Poverty Action Trust
- Patricia Judez
- RAW Workshop
- Response Giving
- Sophia Holme
- St Columbia's United Reform Church
- St Michael's and All Saint's Charities
- The Besom in Witney
- The Stanton Bollard Charitable Trust
- The Witney Town Charity
- Trisha Andrews
- UNSON branch, Oxfordshire County Council
- Vicar's Relief Fund
- Wantage and Grove Foodbank
- Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank
- Witney Town Council
- Zayna Ratty, Chair of Oxford Pride

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

- Councillor Cassi Perry's Ward Budget, Cherwell District Council
- Bicester Town Council
- Bluespires Support
- Business in the Community
- Gibsons Games
- Infineum SMILE
- Liz Jones MBE
- Rachel Axtell
- SOFEA Community Larder
- Tesco Bags of Help Covid-19 Fund
- The Clothworkers' Foundation
- The Parochial Charities of St Clement's
- The Phone Co-op
- Three



"I'm very happy to be here with Elmore and hear all about the amazing work that they do"

Frankie Bridge, Singer and Mental Health Spokesperson



213 Barns Rd, Oxford OX4 3UT
01865 200130

info@elmorecommunityservices.org.uk
www.elmorecommunityservices.org.uk

 [elmorecommunity](https://www.facebook.com/elmorecommunity)

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