

# The Elsworth Chronicle



*Holy Trinity Church*

**Issue No. 46**

**November 2019**

## **ELSWORTH CHRONICLE**

[Established 1990]

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### **SURGERY CAR SCHEME**

For so many years now the Surgery Car Scheme has run smoothly providing Elsworth residents without access to a car a means to visit the surgery at Papworth. All are so very grateful to those drivers who provide this voluntary service, many of whom have driven for the scheme over many years. In order to ensure all is well for the future, it is felt that a small reservoir of reserve drivers would be beneficial in order to cover unexpected retirements or unavailability when exchanges within the team prove problematic.

For those unfamiliar with the scheme, it exists to cater for Elsworth residents who need to visit the Papworth surgery but haven't access to a car. To meet such a need, the surgery allocates three appointments for a G.P. and three for a nurse between 10.00 am 10.30 am every Thursday morning. If these allocated spaces have not been taken by Wednesday lunch-time, they will be offered to other patients.

The volunteer driver on a Thursday morning telephones the surgery on Wednesday afternoon to enquire if there are any patients requiring transport the following morning. If so, the patients are transported from their homes and returned after their appointment. There are five drivers on active duty, each being responsible once a month for a session - e.g. the first Thursday of the month, the second Thursday and so on.

A small pool of reserve volunteers would be most helpful and would enable the scheme to operate without hick-cups and allow for immediate replacements should a present driver need to give-up. Do contact Alan Farrow [01954-267472 or e-mail [farrow16@googlemail.com](mailto:farrow16@googlemail.com)] either to put your name forward or for further information. Many thanks if you do.

AWF

## **ELSWORTH, CONINGTON AND KNAPWELL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE MAY 2019 TO NOVEMBER 2019**

At the May meeting, in keeping with the WI's campaigning role, we had an interesting and wide-ranging discussion about two resolutions for the 2020 National AGM. The first was "Don't Fear the Smear". Cervical screening currently prevents 70% of deaths. However, this figure could be 83%, if all eligible women attended. The second was "A Call against the Decline in Rural Buses", a topic of great relevance for our community.

In June, we listened to Dr Jacqui Calvin and Victoria Leese-Wood give a talk "An introduction to Aromatherapy". The talk finished with an interactive session where we massaged each other's backs, having first asked permission.

We partied at the July meeting with strawberries and prosecco! During August we submitted our entry to the Fenland Fair. Making the exhibit was a fun, social occasion providing an opportunity to get to know other members better.

Elsworth Show at the beginning of September saw WI providing refreshments of tea and cake.

We reconvened in September with a talk by Victoria McNeill from "The British Herb Garden". Victoria started a new business in Elsworth using British herbs such as lovage, sweet cecily and hyssop. These herbs have been used for hundreds of years, and their use has become more relevant today because of the need to cut food miles. Products include sorrel pesto, tomato and lovage passata, dill anchovy and chilli food paint, as well as scones and biscuits. She trialed these at Elsworth Shop before being stocked by other outlets. She still trials and sells her products at Elsworth shop, so look out for them!

A speaker from Magpas attended our October meeting. Magpas was founded in 1971 by two local GPs. Since then the service has attended 60,000 incidents, with 1,600 being attended last year. Magpas is totally reliant on fund raising, and £5million each year is needed.

Finally, our members enjoyed the return for a second time of our November speaker, Angela Collins, with Part 2 of her talk about puppets. Angela gave a hilarious and at times moving account of making puppets and performing in different contexts.

Helen Askew

## THE EDGLEY OPTICA AEROPLANE



Back in December 1979 one of the weirdest looking aircraft yet seen was to take to the sky. Because of its odd appearance, with its prominent perspex cabin, it was nicknamed “Bug Eye”. It was designed to provide excellent visibility and to have the low speed capability of a helicopter but at a much lower cost and with the advantage of being as easy to fly as a conventional light aircraft.

The connection with Elsworth is that the designer, John Edgley, was of this parish. In the 1970s as a post graduate student at Imperial College, London, he was to design the aircraft which was finally assembled at Cranfield College of Aeronautics.

Considerable interest in the aircraft was shown from the time of its first appearance and at the 1981 Paris Air Show an order for twenty-five was placed by an Australian distributor. Its attributes were wide-ranging, from aerial photography, traffic and general surveillance, power-line inspections, military intelligence etc and, as noted above, at a much lower cost than with the use of a helicopter.

However, after this promising beginning all was not to go well. John Edgley was to be ousted from his project, arson destroyed ten aircraft at the factory, and the financial stakeholders changed time and time again. Perusing what occurred, a tale of one man’s tenacity, vision and believe emerges - namely that of John Edgley.

Continued -

In essence, back in 1982 the future seemed bright when institutional investors bought into the company, enabling full manufacturing to commence. Despite success, investment for the final phase of full production was not forthcoming. The company went into liquidation, John Edgley was forced out and new owners undertook production. A total of twenty-two Optica aircraft were manufactured, but the destruction of ten aircraft in an arson attack at the factory was a set-back.

Several changes of ownership were to occur until in 2007 it was offered back to John Edgley who established the new company, Aero Elvira Ltd.. In the following year a demonstration Optica was to take flight, but further financial backing was, and is, required to bring full production into being. John Edgley remains optimistic and at the same time philosophic stating “The main quality of an engineer is his stickability - never give up”. Has now, though, the Optica concept been superseded by drones? Tim Robinson of the Royal Aeronautical Society is of the view that the Optica could have a new lease of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century owing to its superior range of vision and to the need of drones for support teams. Time will tell.

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## Obituary



### **JOHN WILLIAM THURLEY** **1<sup>ST</sup> March 1926 - 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

With the passing of John Thurley, Elsworth has lost a man whose service to the parish extended far beyond what anyone could expect. For 47 years he was a member of the parish council, six of which were as vice chairman and seven as chairman; for 41 years he served on the Show Committee; for 34 years he was a trustee of the Elsworth combined charities. In addition he was a “hands on” servant of the parish, to be seen painting and repairing prominent village gates and perhaps foot bridges. An amazing record.

John was born at Sandy, Bedfordshire, the youngest child and only son of Florence and William Thurley. He went to the local primary school and was to win a scholarship to Bedford School. On leaving he gained work experience with Davison and Sons, for whom his father worked, before gaining a scholarship for a Diploma Course in Agriculture at the Midland Agricultural College, Sutton Bonington, Leicester, graduating with a National Diploma in Agriculture [NDA].

In 1946 John started work for Davison and Logsdon in Elsworth as assistant foreman, a 1700 acre farm which was mainly arable but also with Hereford cattle and Essex pigs. A year later he was transferred to Game Farm, near Kings Lynn in Norfolk, as manager. While there he met Vera, who later became his wife. After three years in Norfolk he returned to Elsworth as assistant manager and lodged with Mrs Kiddle in Brook Street, the church organist and piano teacher whose set of drums was the forerunner of those of his later years of drumming. In 1951 John married Vera at Pentney Church, near Kings Lyn and they moved to “Hill Crest” now Elsworth Lodge, which at that time was heated by solid fuel and lit by oil lamps and candles.

Continued -

1953 marked the beginning of John's service to the village, as outlined in the first paragraph above, when he became an Elsworth parish councillor. On the family side, Vera and John's first son, Michael, was born in 1959 at "Hill Crest", followed, after a move to Avenue Farm, by Nicholas in 1962 and Diane three years later. Following John's transfer to Great Barford - still with Davison & Co. - Avenue Farm had to be vacated and the family moved in 1971 to a newly built house in Roger's Close, where they lived for many years.

After 28 years service with the Davison family, John joined M. Meeks and Son at Pitt Dene Farm, Elsworth as farm manager in 1973 and was to remain until his retirement from farming in 1988. He then took up a post as warehouse manager with Talbots Insulation Company, retiring finally in 1995, two years after his wife Vera died.

John's health deteriorated in his later years and he struggled in particular with failing eyesight. However, he still lived independently in Roger's Close [but much helped and supported by neighbours and friends in the village]. After a short spell in hospital in December 2018/January 2019, he reluctantly accepted the need for full-time care and moved away from his beloved Elsworth to a care home near to Michael and Nicholas. He died at The Norwich and Norfolk Hospital on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

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## **JUBILEE CLUB**

We meet on the first Thursday of most months in Elsworth School Hall at 3.30 pm. Everybody is welcome. It is an informal 'get-together', with a speaker, tea, raffle and, of course, time for chatting!

Our speakers have varied subjects, including over the last year talks on Saffron Walden Auctioneers; Pot Luck and Other Sayings; Collecting a Selection of Clothes for a Cruise or Holiday. Our trips included Wells-Next-The-Sea and Southwold, both enjoyable hot days.

Do feel free to drop in and join us. For more information contact Betty on 01954-267470.



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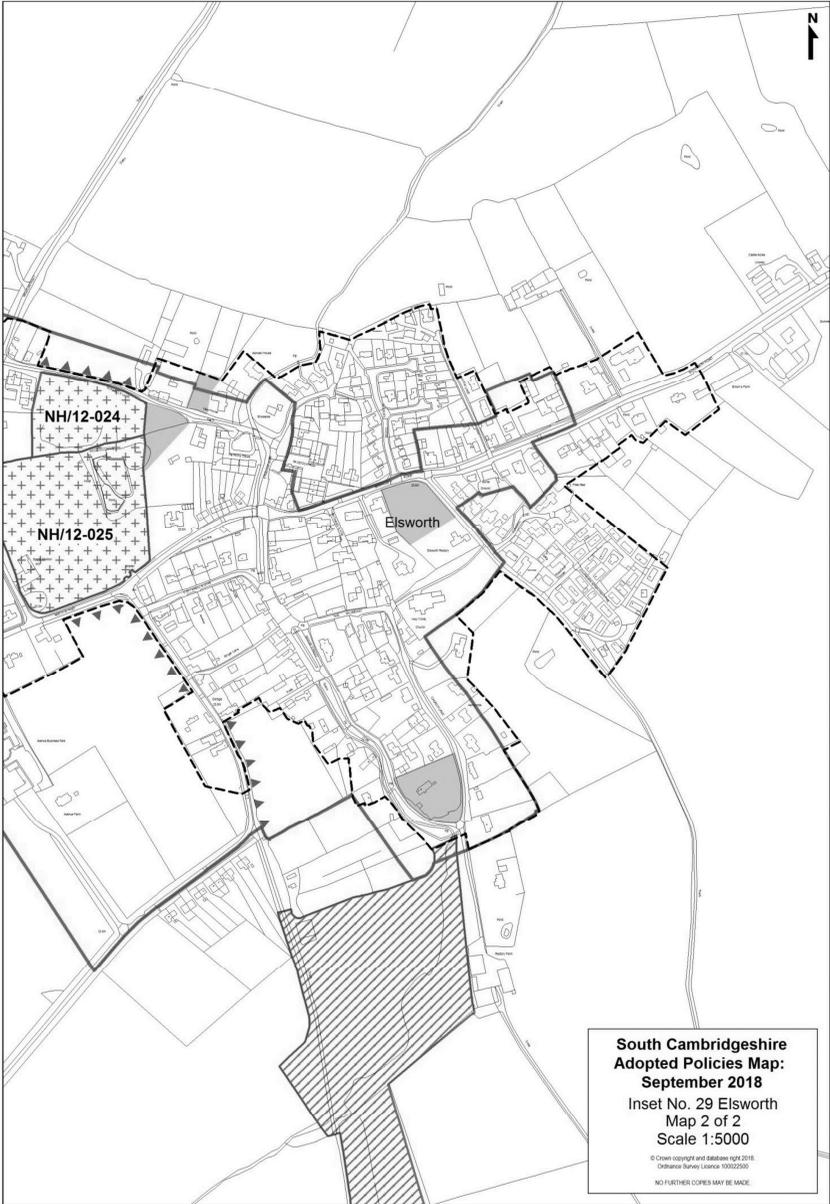
## CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN - ELSWORTH FOCUS

Back in the early 1970s Elsworth was recognised by planners as a typical village of the Western Clay Plateau of Cambridgeshire and as such had its outward growth protected by its designation as a Group Village in a succession of Local Plans. A draft map of 1973 makes for interesting viewing in that the extent of the proposed conservation area within the village has noticeably been extended since that time in the east of the village and in the south west.

By virtue of its protected framework, Elsworth remains small, compact and surrounded by fields on all sides - the amorphous growth of many South Cambridgeshire villages over many years has not blighted Elsworth. Recently, though, there was a danger that the building stop-line might be breached when the delay in the acceptance of the current Local Plan - with its long-standing restrictions - could have resulted in an external planning inspector granting permission for development beyond the building stop-line. However the Local Plan was accepted in time and the application for housing behind the village school was rejected. The significance of this is that had the stop line been breached in one place it could be done elsewhere along the line and sprawling developments given the green light, putting the village in danger of being changed irreparably. The current Local Plan contains details of planning decisions relating to all settlements in South Cambridgeshire, and the current summary map for Elsworth may be seen on the following page.

Within the village the Local Plan imposes restrictions designed to retain the character of the settlement. The importance of the conservation area in ensuring that any proposed development would have to sustain or enhance the character of the area is well known and respected. In addition 'green lungs' - open areas on which building developments are banned - play an important role in determining the nature of the village. On the present Local Plan two categories are recognised, namely **NH/11 'Protected Village Amenity Area'** which is designed to protect areas of undeveloped land within the village regarded as important and therefore retained; and **NH/12 'Local Green Space'**, protected as being of particular importance by the local community. **As depicted on the map overleaf, in Elsworth the church paddock is**

Continued -



**protect by NH/11, as is land either side of Fardell’s Lane and at Low Farm in Brook Street. NH/12 relates to the sports field and the nature reserve. In addition, development would not normally be permitted on the parcel of land immediately to the south of the village through which our brook flows - Policy NH/5. Tooth-like lines on the map indicate the recognition of ‘important views’**

Come 2031 when the next Local Plan comes into being, those around at that time will have to be diligent to see that their forefathers’ efforts of the present and recent past are maintained, and strengthened if need be.

AWF

**Map Key - Protected Areas**

Shaded areas .....South Cambs Policy NH/11  
 ++++++.....South Cambs Policy NH/12  
 ////////////////.....South Cambs Policy NH/5

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**ELSWORTH WALKING GROUP**

If you enjoy walking, coupled with a social outing with like-minded people, come and participate in one of our walks.

We mainly walk in Cambridgeshire within a 15 mile radius of Elsworth. The walks usually comprise of footpaths, bridleways and farm tracks with an occasional passage through a village. The walks are usually between 5 and 6 miles in length taking approximately 2 hours. Walks are usually on the second Sunday of the month and commence at 10.00 a.m.

Our next four walks will be on; 8<sup>th</sup> December, 12<sup>th</sup> January (members only), 9<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> March. Come along and try one, you may decide to join us on a regular basis. For more information please contact; Tom or Lyn Hogan on 01954 267166 or [tom&lyn@pathwaysystems.co.uk](mailto:tom&lyn@pathwaysystems.co.uk).

## THE VILLAGE SHOP NEEDS YOU

People to assist behind the counter are required, particularly at week-ends but also during the week to cover possible gaps as and when they occur. Spells of duty are not onerous and could be as little as an hour, but two hour sessions seem most popular. Offers to assist in collecting items for sale would also be welcome.

There is no need to be anxious as excellent tuition is given. The work is enjoyable and provides an excellent opportunity to socialise and keep in touch with village affairs. Anyone interested is asked to give name and contact number to the duty shop assistant.

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## YOUR HELP IS REQUIRED



It is pleasing to know that the Chronicle is read by people well outside the village boundary, doubly so when contact is made. We are therefore delighted to endeavour to help Martin Throssell in the quest outlined below. First, though, a few background notes. The picture above shows Martin's father, Charles Throssell outside his shop in Brook Street [No.10]. It was taken after he became incapacitated following two strokes and probably dates from the mid to late 1950s.

Martin writes "I am fairly sure that on the left is Mrs Straughan, who lived at Common Farm, and next to her Mrs Heffer who lived opposite the garage in the time it was kept by Les Papworth. But so far the identity of the lady next to my father has eluded us. Two suggestions - that it was my father's sister Bertha, or Grace Childerley - can be ignored. I have a feeling it is a Mrs Parnwell who lived in the council houses [they were called council houses then] in Caxton Road. Can any Chronicle readers confirm this?"

The editor would be very pleased to have suggestions.



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## Obituary



### **PRIMROSE MAULE HORNE**

The delightful humorous pantomime productions that Primrose and her sister Patience wrote and directed remain firmly and affectionately in the minds of many of the W.I. and Jubilee Club. Those not fortunate enough to witness these enactments would probably remember Primrose by virtue of her gentle and friendly manner. Few, though, would have had an inclination of the courage and fortitude shown by Primrose early in her adult life at a time of great personal danger when, as a member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force she was parachuted into German occupied France during the Second World War.

The mission entrusted to Primrose was to report back to England information passed on to her by resistance organisations regarding the German armed forces in her area. The danger to which she was exposed may be judged from the fact that of the 200 who trained with her as signallers in a remote part of Scotland, only four returned home.

To turn back to the beginnings of Primrose's life, she was born in Chelsea, London in 1921 and was brought up with four siblings. Her childhood was a happy time, based on a home resonating with music and the enjoyment of artwork - her father had been employed as an artist to

Continued -

illustrate news stories for a London newspaper and to design posters.

The outbreak of the Second World War brought a drastic change. Primrose's fiancé became a pilot in the RAF and was tragically to lose his life in the early years of the war. She was to join the Women's Auxiliary Air Corp with her sister Penelope and was to be stationed near the Port of London as a member of an anti-aircraft gunnery team. Later, with the death of her fiancé she volunteered for the dangerous work outlined above.

Fast forwarding to her time in Elsworth, she and her sister Patience lived in Duncock Lane for many years. They radiated good humour and together took an active part in the activities of the W.I. and Jubilee Club. From Elsworth the sisters moved to France for a while, returning to this country to live in nearby St. Ives. Patience predeceased Primrose who kept in contact with her friends in Elsworth. She regularly attended the bi-monthly village lunches - in fact she had ordered a meal due in the month in which she unexpectedly died. Even at 98, she remained active, fluent and alert to the end.

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## Obituary



### **NANCY COLLINWOOD**

Nancy Collinwood was a true Elsworthian, having lived in the village from birth until death, that is for 86 years; even more remarkable, she lived throughout her life in the house in Brockley Road in which she was born. However that is not to imply an insular outlook. For many years, from shortly after the Second World War, she worked in Cambridge for Pye, the electronics giant, remaining with this firm until reaching retiring age, after which she retained contact with her former colleagues for many years, enjoying annual reunions. Prior to this she had a short period with Papworth Industries on leaving the Childerley Gate School, which she attended after many years in our village school in Brook Street.

Nancy was the youngest of eight sisters. She had a happy childhood. Her father, who was a farm worker, always took the girls for a walk after chapel on Sundays and it was from this that Nancy's love of wild flowers came. Her father died when Nancy was young. Later, as the youngest daughter, she was the one who looked after her mother when she became elderly and unwell.

Shortly after her mother died, Nancy married Eric Collinwood and had twenty or so happy years with him. When Eric sadly died, Nancy created a new life for herself to fill the void - rather than sitting moping, she entered fully into the activities and fellowship of village organisations. She became an active member of the Jubilee Club, the Women's Institute, the Elsworth Walking Group, the Papworth W.I. Choir, the parish church, becoming a member of the parochial church council. In addition she joined the bi-monthly gatherings of the village lunch group and took her turn in hosting village coffee mornings which helped to add to donations given to the Air Ambulance, a charity dear to

Continued -

her heart.

Nancy was a renowned baker, and on her birthday she always had a tea party for which she provided a tremendous spread, including her famous sausage rolls and Pavlova. Guests would leave a donation for the Air Ambulance, money which when added to the contributions noted above, would, over the years, have amounted to a fair sum. Nancy also became very interested in cake decorating and made some wonderful birthday cakes for her friends when they had a special milestone occasion. Nancy is survived by her sister Phyllis and three step sons.

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### **ELSWORTH INTER-LANE CRICKET CHALLENGE**

It did not prove possible for the competition to take place in the summer - firstly the dates originally suggested had to be put forward from those planned and then it was found the cricket square was to be out of commission while improvements were in hand.

Cancellation is not the word in mind, rather postponement. Discussions will take place again nearer the time when an idea of support may be assessed. If this is positive an interesting tournament will hopefully provide a setting for a happy village gathering on the day of the final.

The encouraging offer for the provision offer of tea by the Parish Council noted in our last edition was not, it seems, ratified by the full council, but every cloud has a silver lining and the village shop could well be open to provide refreshment and thereby also benefitting, from the occasion, even if only in a limited way.

AWF

## **ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB**

Earlier in the year some interest was shown in re-establishing the football team but insufficient numbers meant that a team in the league was not a viable proposition. All who would like to be involved in the future are asked to contact Bill Knibbs [telephone 01954-267266] or myself. Once again teams from Swavesey Spartans are using the pitches at week-ends as their home venue.

The cricket season finished in September with Elsworth finishing twelfth of fourteen teams in Division 4 West of the Cambs Junior League. A team was also entered in the mid-week Business Houses League, but for various reasons only two matches were played. At the end of the season a 'get together' and meal was held when individual trophies were presented. Net practice will be available before the start of next season and any prospective new players should contact Bill Knibbs on the telephone number given above.

As with football, the table tennis season began in September with Elsworth fielding two teams in the Cambridge League and three in the Ely League. The teams are spaced throughout the leagues with one team each in Divisions 2 and 3 of the Cambridge League and one team each in Divisions 1, 2 and 3 of the Ely League. At the time of writing it is early days in each Division, with teams having played around four matches. When no matches are being played club evenings are arranged - anyone interested in playing should contact Bill Knibbs.

Snooker continues to be played on Monday mornings throughout the year and whist drives are held monthly on Friday evenings, commencing at 7.30 pm. Carpet bowls remains suspended due to lack of support.

Apart from sport, the pavilion is used as an outreach post office facility, for Pilates classes and may be hired for other functions such as meetings, parties etc. For bookings and/or enquiries please contact Bill Knibbs or myself.

Roger Fensom [01954-267534]

## **HAVE YOU NOTICED?**

At this year's Annual Parish Meeting it was reported that the Brook had been cleared for the first time in 25 years and that the Parish Council would be taking forward other initiatives during 2019. The **car park** between the Shop and the Sports Pavilion had become very uneven and was covered in puddles whenever it rained. Drainage has now been installed, the car park resurfaced with a grid put in to stabilise the gravel so that it will remain level and the rotten gates replaced and the new ones re-sited and slabs lain to improve pedestrian access from the Broad End footpath.

The **bus shelter** was looking as though it needed a bit of tlc and so it has been re-thatched and, after some repairs are undertaken, the wooden structure will be re-stained.

Parishioners told the Parish Council that they wanted to see some improvement in the general appearance of the village. The flower bed beneath the **village sign** was no longer a thing of beauty and so this has been given an overhaul and some new planting undertaken, while a plan for maintaining it has also been adopted.

While the PC has limited resources and few powers, councillors are happy to hear from parishioners about other issues that might be addressed.

Peter Deer (Chairman of the Parish Council)

## **MOBILE VEHICLE-ACTIVATED SIGNS**

A successful bid has been made to the A14 Legacy Fund for the provision of two mobile vehicle-activated signs (MVAS) to help manage and monitor vehicle numbers and speeds on Elsworth's roads. Residents may remember that in January 2018 the Parish Council was loaned one such device for two weeks for use on Brockley Road which had experienced a massive increase in traffic due to rat-running.

As well as warning drivers to keep within the 30 mph speed limit, the device provided useful information on numbers of vehicles (up to 700 during morning rush hours), variations in speed etc. The roads in Elsworth were not designed for the current amount of traffic seeking to avoid the bottleneck on the A428 at the Caxton Gibbett and the road works on the A14. Once the devices are handed over consideration will be given to where they are to be sited, bearing in mind that they can be moved as required to ensure the three busy roads, Brockley, Smith Street and Boxworth Road are able to be monitored.

Margaret Stephenson (Parish Councillor)

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## **COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME**

From time to time space has been given on these pages to the need for transport to supplement the woeful bus service for those without access to a car. Attention has been drawn to the Community Car Scheme, but short journeys can seem somewhat expensive if the driver has to come to the village from a distance, as the mileage cost to and from the driver's base has to be included.

Now, though, we have a volunteer driver within the village who could meet our needs, thus avoiding the additional mileage charge of the driver getting to and from Elsworth. Terry Gipp of Brockley Road has kindly offered to provide this service, for which many will be grateful. Certain administrative procedures are necessary before a new driver can take to the road with passengers, but it is hoped these could be completed in two weeks or so. Terry will be linked with the Cambourne Community office - tel. 07526 998465 - through which requests for transport should be made. The cost to passengers is 30p a mile, with a £3 minimum charge. This would seem excellent value - a shared journey to Morrisons at Cambourne would now seem well worthwhile.

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