

LONGHIRST LEADER

October & November 2026

What's On...

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Saturday 3 October 10.30am – 1pm Longhirst Colliery Recreation Hall

£5 for coffee and buffet. All donations appreciated.

Longhirst Monthly Luncheon Club

Wednesdays 7 October, 2 November & 2 December (Christmas Dinner)

12 noon Longhirst Village Hall

Looking for good food, great company, and a friendly atmosphere? Our Monthly Luncheon Club at Longhirst Village Hall, on the first Wednesday of each month at noon is the perfect place to enjoy a delicious home-cooked meal while catching up with friends and neighbours. Our wonderful volunteers prepare a hearty main course followed by a tempting dessert. Whether you come along with friends or on your own, you'll always find a warm welcome and plenty of conversation. It's a lovely way to start the month, meet new people, and support our community. Everyone is welcome and there is always space for newcomers.

Main course and dessert for £7.50. Please book in advance with Helen McCabe 07964 159957 or Diane Milmore 07962 138788

LITTER PICKERS NEEDED!

Saturdays 10 October & 14 November 10am Meet at Longhirst Village Hall

Our team of litter pickers meets at the Village Hall on the second Saturday of each month, at 10am. All equipment is provided.

Please join us - even if you can't make it every month - and help to keep our village, and the approach roads, clean and tidy! Plus, you get an hour's exercise and can enjoy refreshments and a chat at the village coffee morning afterwards.

Email paulinegilbertson@gmail.com if you'd like to help.

Coffee Mornings 10.30 am – 12 noon Longhirst Village Hall

A reminder that our monthly Coffee Morning currently takes place in the Village Hall, usually on the second Saturday of each month between 10.30am and 12noon, following on from the village litter-picking session.

As always, it is a great opportunity to catch up with neighbours, for £1.50 enjoy delicious fresh coffee or tea with cake and biscuits and support the community at the same time.

On **Saturday 10 October**, the Coffee Morning will include presentations of funds raised from the Village Open Gardens Event to the Church and the Wildlife Group.

Sunday 8 November: Coffee Morning follows the 11am Remembrance Service at the War Memorial.

Saturday 12 December: Christmas Coffee Morning

Due to declining numbers over recent years and months, we have sadly decided to make the Christmas coffee morning in December our last. Thereafter, please note there are no further coffee mornings planned while we pause and have a rethink.

We welcome any ideas to take this forward: please contact Helen McCabe 07964 159957.

Pub Nights

Fridays 16 October & 20 November 8 – 11pm Longhirst Village Hall

Drinks at great prices and good company. The monthly Pub Night on the third Friday of the month continues to have a regular following. Many thanks to those who come along and make it all worthwhile.

Please contact susanhutchinsonbrown@gmail.com if you would like to join our team and help run Pub Nights.

Remembrance Day Service Sunday 8 November

Details to be confirmed

Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust Events 29 October & 28 November

See article below for details

100 Club Draw

Month	1 st Prize (£60)	2 nd Prize (£40)	3 rd Prize (£20)
August	Hazel Ponton (for Jonny) No 67	Alistair Buglass No 149	Shiela Gilbertson No 120
September	Trevor Stevenson No 200	Luke Vale No 86	Alex Mitchell No 41

Longhirst News

Welcome to Longhirst and the Longhirst Leader

Welcome to all new residents in Longhirst. We hope you will enjoy your new homes and new life in the village.

Welcome also existing residents – including seventeen from Micklewood - who have recently joined the Longhirst Leader circulation list.

The Longhirst Leader is a bimonthly newsletter which covers the whole of Longhirst parish and has an email circulation list of around 220 people. (If you're reading this over your neighbour's shoulder, sign up for your own e-copy by emailing longhirstleader@gmail.com)

Village improvements



The phone box

It's over a year since the Parish Council first contacted BT about the state of the village phone box. The repairs to the actual phone box didn't take too long but the repainting was assigned to a schedule to be done by this October. Requests were made to get it painted in time for the Open Gardens weekend, but BT wouldn't budge on timescales. It looks good now and is a chance for younger residents of Longhirst to try making a phone call from a phone box and experience 'living history'!

Footpaths

The footpath to Pegswood alongside Butcher's Lane has been a problem for a long time. It had become so uneven and grown over with grass that people often walked in the road rather than on the path which was clearly unsafe. Clearing the path has hopefully made it safer until further improvements can be made.

Improvements are also being made to some of the muddier paths in Paddock Wood.



The chicane



These photos were taken in December 2025 and September 2026 and show the repairs to the chicane.

Unfortunately, one of the bollards has since been knocked over again, but at least the signage and most of the bollards are properly in place.

If you notice any road issues, you can report them through the County Council website: www.northumberland.gov.uk



Traffic News

Jill McManus

Traffic has been a hot topic in Longhirst for a while. Two separate documents are being sent out with this copy of the Longhirst Leader: an update from the Parish Council about traffic issues and a summary of the County Council's traffic data for Longhirst.

Last year, in response to a request from a resident, Northumberland County Council provided the Excel spreadsheets of the raw data from traffic surveys undertaken in 2018, 2021 and 2025.

As it is not everyone's idea of fun to trawl through spreadsheets, we have summarised the data comparing 2018, 2021 and 2025 and giving a more detailed breakdown of 2025. The 2025 data show which parts of the village currently have the bigger issues, and the comparison of 2018, 2021 and 2025 shows how things have changed since 2018.

The evidence shows that traffic speeds, the number of vehicles exceeding the speed limit and the number of higher-speed vehicles have all decreased since 2018. This suggests that the traffic calming measures (chicane, speed signs, prominent village signs and relocation of speed limits) put in place by the County Council in this period have had a positive impact.

The benefits of a 20mph speed limit are widely known and understood and are most effective where it is a national or regional change as it is in Scotland and Wales. However, the reductions in Longhirst traffic speeds since 2018 support the view that traffic calming measures, other than a 20mph speed limit, can be beneficial.

Longhirst Wildlife & Community Trust News

Pauline Gilbertson

Our most recent event took place almost on our doorstep, at the Potland Burn Habitat Bank. This is a new Biodiversity Net Gain project on a 268-hectare site, which was formerly the UK Coal Potland Opencast Mine, located between Longhirst and Ashington. The site had originally been designated for housing, but when that proved impractical it became an environmental project instead. New and restored grasslands, scrub, woodland, ponds and hedges are being introduced for the benefit of wildlife whilst also being accessible to the public. Managed by Advance Green Futures, part of Advance Northumberland, this is an exciting project of which all local residents should be made aware. It is still at an early stage but will quickly develop into a wonderful resource for all of us to enjoy.

Our upcoming events include the following: on 29 October at 7.30pm, ornithologist Martin Davison will give an illustrated talk about Northumberland's Ospreys and other raptors; whilst on 28 November at 2pm we have a Saturday afternoon talk by local resident (and excellent photographer) Keith Cochrane, who will introduce some of Longhirst's very special birds and mammals which he has photographed over many years. These talks (£3 per head, children under 18 free) will take place at the Village Hall, and you can secure a place by emailing paulinegilbertson@gmail.com

Finally, we are looking for a few volunteers to help us with a task on Church Island this autumn. We have already cleared some undergrowth and done some work on the overgrown hedge by the roadside, but we need to clear more of the brambles (but not all!) so that we can plant some small native trees and shrubs to attract more wildlife to the site.

If you would like to help, please let contact kim.woolhead@gmail.com .

Longhirst Village Hall

Gerard Thornton

It has been a relatively quiet couple of months at the Village Hall following the excitement and success of the Open Gardens. We will now hopefully be able to complete some maintenance, including finalisation of the entrance hall. The Hall itself however does continue to be busy almost every day, hosting U3A groups, dancing, exercise classes and a wide variety of other public and private events.

We are keen to welcome one or more new trustees to join our committee. We are particularly interested in hearing from people who share our ambition to see the Hall thrive as a vibrant hub for the whole community, rather than simply a building available for hire. If you have ideas, enthusiasm and a little time to spare, we would love to hear from you. You don't need previous experience – just a desire to help make a difference to village life and our small community.

With that in mind and looking ahead to the festive season, the Village Hall will be used to host a New Year's Eve party this year. It will be a traditional celebration party with a pooled supper and bring your own drinks. Whilst the Village Hall is not organising the event, it will be open to all parish residents, their friends and family so it would be lovely to see lots of faces there to welcome in 2027! Please give expressions of interest by phone or text to Carol on 07854 809370 or Barbara on 07808 012666.

Parish Council

Glen Fahy

Meeting held at Longhirst Village Hall, on Thursday, 3rd September 2026

Apologies were received from Cllr Ed Dungait and Cllr Richard Tordoff.

The Chair provided feedback on Cllr Dungait's behalf regarding ongoing Highways issues. Nearly a year has passed since the joint site walkthrough with Highways officers. The Parish Council and Cllr Dungait have repeatedly pressed Highways officers regarding traffic calming proposals, but no update has been received.

Following complaints from residents about the condition of the footpath to Pegswood, the Chair met with Highways to discuss repairs to the path. Highways agreed to allow the Parish Council to clear overgrown vegetation and the topsoil to expose the original path, thus exposing the poor condition of the path. The Parish Council funded this work. Highways agreed to dispose of the soil and have agreed to consider resurfacing the path in next year's budget.

PUBLIC FORUM: The public session was opened for 10 minutes.

Accessibility Needs & Domino's Field Walkway: A resident with two disabled children using power wheelchairs raised serious concerns regarding traffic speeds, large agricultural traffic, and physical barriers/narrow gaps at Domino's Field gates. The Chair agreed to conduct a site visit with the resident (and participate in a planned wheelchair walkover in October) to explore options for a safer, accessible pedestrian route.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk presented the financial update. The ordinary current account balance stands at £7483. The business savings account stands at £15,145.15.

PLANNING

26/00498/COU Fairwinds, Ulgham Lane, Longhirst, NE61 3NE: NOTED that the application was approved by County Planning officers under delegated powers. The Clerk will make preliminary inquiries regarding appeal or ombudsman rules.

26/02858/FUL The Crossing House, Ulgham Lane, Longhirst, NE61 3NF: New submission for a timber L-shaped stable block (3 boxes, concrete base, hardstanding, fencing). Longhirst Parish Council reiterates its formal support for this application.

GENERAL ITEMS

Entrance to Paddock Wood: The entrance to Paddock Wood becomes very muddy, particularly in winter, the Parish Council will purchase approximately ten dumpy bags of natural wood chippings at approx. £30 per bag. This will establish a firm base at the entrance.

Poppy Wreath procurement: The Clerk will order three Royal British Legion poppy wreaths (Colliery, Village Hall, and Parish Council) at £25 each.

Christmas lights: It was suggested that the Parish Council could put up some Christmas lights at the church. However, investigation has revealed that there is no external power socket at the church. The Parish Council will liaise with the church to discuss the siting of electrical fittings.

Potland Park: Parish Councillors joined the guided walk through Potland Park along with the Longhirst Wildlife Group. This area is being developed as a wildlife area, with a variety of habitats created. Work is well underway and this is encouraging wildlife into the area.

Submission of Formal Letter: A resident presented a formal letter signed by twenty village residents specifically regarding progress on the 20mph speed limit and traffic calming campaign. The resident requested a response within two weeks. The Clerk formally accepted the letter and confirmed he would review and respond.

Micklewood Boundary Wall Breach: Village residents raised concerns about a gap/breach in the listed boundary wall between Dairy Lane and Micklewood. The Chair reiterated that this is a private boundary dispute and the parish council cannot legally intervene.

Bin Sticker Tampering & Anti-Social Behaviour: A resident reported instances of foul/abusive language and bin sticker tampering linked to traffic speed discussions. The Chair noted that harassment and property tampering are police matters but confirmed that the item would be recorded in the minutes.

Fallen Tree Obstruction: A large fallen tree obstructing a public footway/road in the dip near the church towards Pegswood was reported. The Chair will liaise with Cllr Richard Tordoff and report it to the County Council countryside officer.

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 5 November 2026 at 7 pm. at Longhirst Colliery.

LONGHIRST HISTORY

LONGHIRST TO LHASA

Peter McKenzie

The Moore family of Longhirst and the Royal Army Veterinary Corps: Part Two



An article in the August-September 2024 edition of the Longhirst Leader described how Domino's Field was where the British Army assembled horses conscripted during the Crimean and South African wars and in World War One. The account went on to describe how John Moore, of the old-established North-East farming family, became Major-General Sir John Moore, with a distinguished career in the Royal Army Veterinary Corps.

Until full mechanisation was achieved in the late 1930's, the Veterinary service played a vital part in the army's operations. Horses and mules - in vast numbers - were essential for the movement of artillery and infantry weapons, ammunition, general supplies and evacuation of the wounded and as remounts to replace horses lost in action. Without the horse, the Army could not function.

Sir John had a younger brother who also had a notable career in the Veterinary Corps. Robert Moore was born at Longhirst Farm in 1871 and was educated at Longhirst School. He followed his brother to New Veterinary College, Edinburgh and obtained the Diploma of The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. Joining the Army, he served in Bombay from 1897 to 1903 and took part in British expeditions to Burma, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal.

Alarmed by possible Russian incursions into India, a British force was sent into Tibet in 1903, commanded by Brigadier-General James Macdonald. Captain Robert Moore of the 3rd Dragoon Guards was in charge of the veterinary staff. In February 1905 he was awarded the Tibet Medal with Gyantse Clasp, given to those who had taken part in an action at the Gyantse fortress. Following this, Robert continued with the force to Lhasa.

The photograph here shows him on his wedding day in Dublin to Isabella Buchanan in June 1909. He died in Ambala, Punjab in August 1910. Isabella lived until 1954.

John and Robert were not the first members of the Moore family to join the Army Veterinary service. An earlier Robert Moore (1851-1913) also qualified in Edinburgh. After a period in a civilian practice he joined the army, serving in the 21st Hussars, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. The 21st Hussars became the 21st Lancers and took part in the Battle of Omdurman in 1898. If Robert had been there, he may well have dined in the mess with Winston Churchill.

Endnote: The 1903 Tibet Expedition was later also known as the Younghusband Expedition. Francis Younghusband had become deeply interested in the high mountains of the Himalayas when, in 1889, he explored the Karakoram and saw K2, the second highest mountain in the world, a sight that left him profoundly moved. Shortly after, he decided that an attempt should be made to climb Everest.

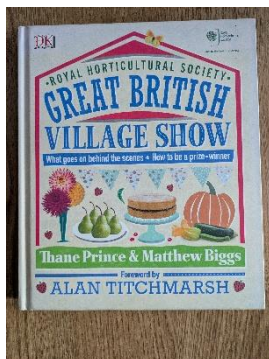


In 1919 Younghusband was appointed President of the Royal Geographical Society. In a Presidential Address he said “if a man stands on Earth’s highest summit, he will have an increased pride and confidence in himself in the struggle for ascendancy over matter. This is the incalculable good which the ascent of Mount Everest will confer”.

Two years later he became chairman of the Mount Everest Committee, which set up the British reconnaissance Expedition to Mount Everest. He endorsed George Mallory’s participation in the 1920’s expeditions, culminating in the 1924 summit attempt which resulted in the loss of Mallory and his climbing partner Andrew Irvine.

WHO REMEMBERS LONGHIRST VILLAGE SHOW?

Carol Benbow



Many in the village will remember the days of the Longhirst Village Show where villagers would enter their best fruit, vegetables, flowers, bakes, preserves, crafts or even photos. Prizes for best in show would be awarded. Teas, sandwiches and cakes would be served to all and an auction of produce would be held (three parsnips for 20p anyone?) at the end of the show. The village show was always great fun but, sadly, the number of entries dwindled over the years until eventually the village show was no more.

However, 'The Great British Village Show' book is still held in the library in the village hall should anyone wish to borrow it. It contains sections on how to grow, how to show, rules for judging and even has some recipes in the 'Bake & Preserve' section.

OCTOBER DIARY

3	Saturday	10.30am-1.00pm	Macmillan Coffee Morning at Longhirst Colliery
7	Wednesday	12noon	Lunch Club
10	Saturday	10.00am 10.30am-12noon	Litter pickers Coffee morning
16	Friday	9.30-10.10am	Mobile Library
16	Friday	8.00—11.00pm	Pub night
29	Thursday	7.30pm	LWCT talk: Northumberland's Ospreys

NOVEMBER DIARY

4	Wednesday	12noon	Lunch Club
6	Friday	9.30-10.10am	Mobile library
14	Saturday	10.00am 10.30am-12noon	Litter picking Coffee morning
20	Friday	8.00-11.00pm	Pub night
27	Friday	9.30-10.10am	Mobile library
28	Saturday	2.00pm	LWCT talk: Longhirst's birds & mammals

Unless stated otherwise, all events are held in the Village Hall. The mobile library parks opposite the Village Hall near the bus stop.

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

Date	Time	Service
4 October	9.15	St John's, Longhirst
18 October	9.15	St John's, Longhirst
1 November	9.15	St John's, Longhirst
8 November	TBC	Remembrance Day Service
15 November	9.15	St John's, Longhirst

LONGHIRST VILLAGE HALL REGULAR EVENTS

Pilates	Fridays	9.30-10.30am	charlotte@charlottewoodpilates.com
Pilates	Tuesdays	5.45-7.00pm	Jillates-Pilates with Jill
U3A	Check U3A website for information		https://midnorthumberland.u3asite.uk

Reminder

The fish van from Eyemouth stops by the war memorial every Friday around 9am.

CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerk	Barry Flux	07472002538	clerk@longhirst-pc.gov.uk
Parish Council Chair	Glen Fahy	07752 279939	glenfahy06@aol.com
Parish Council website	www.longhirst-pc.gov.uk		
County Councillor	Ed Dungait		ed.dungait@northumberland.gov.uk
Member of Parliament	David Smith	01670 704099	david.smith.mp@parliament.uk
Churchwarden & Parochial Church Council	Chris Lediard	01670 790268	
Church website			
Longhirst Village Hall	Gerard Thornton		gthornton.lvh@gmail.com
Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust	Kim Woolhead	07749 811937	kim.woolhead@gmail.com
Longhirst Hundred Club	Pauline Gilbertson		paulinegilbertson@gmail.com
Longhirst Colliery Recreation Room Bookings	Mary Climson	07727 198108	maryclimson67@gmail.com
Longhirst Village Hall Bookings		https://longhirstvillagehall.co.uk	
Lunch Club	Helen McCabe Diane Milmore	07964 159957 07962 138788	
Litter Picking	Pauline Gilbertson		paulinegilbertson@gmail.com
Coffee Mornings	Helen McCabe	07964 159957	mccabe_paul1@sky.com
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