

LONGHIRST LEADER

April / May 2024

OPEN GARDENS AND CHURCH FLOWER FESTIVAL WEEKEND SATURDAY 29 AND SUNDAY 30 JUNE



Thanks to everyone who has been in touch about helping out during the Open Gardens Weekend. More volunteers are always welcome as there is plenty to do. If you have a couple of hours to spare that weekend, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact me.

We would also welcome new additions to our list of Open Gardens from Micklewood, Lawson Villas, Longhirst Hall or the Colliery as well as the Village itself. If you are considering opening your garden, and would like to know more about what it entails, do not hesitate to contact me. We will be finalising our list of gardens that are opening at the beginning of May so there is still time to join in!

St John's Church is hosting the Flower Festival with the support of local flower clubs and individual flower arrangers and we would like to thank those who have already promised donations to support this. These promises of funding are in memory of loved ones who have passed away. If you would like to make a small donation in memory of someone you have lost and have their name(s) acknowledged at the Flower Festival, please contact Mike Elphick (c).



Jill McManus (o)

LONGHIRST WILDLIFE & COMMUNITY TRUST FREE EVENTS



Friday 26 April, 11.00-14.00, Spring Wildlife Walk at Scotch Gill Woods, Morpeth (meeting at Morpeth Rugby Club). An opportunity to explore plants and other spring wildlife in an ancient woodland along with Mark Welfare from the Natural History Society of Northumbria.

Saturday, 4 May, 10.00-12.30, Bird ID for Beginners at Gosforth Nature Reserve. A guided walk around the reserve listening to and spotting the abundant birdlife at this time of year. Open to all, NOT just beginners!

Sunday, 26 May, 18.00-20.00, Evening Chorus. A nature walk around Woodruff Wood (on Ulgham Lane) with the owners to listen to the bird calls at dusk.

If you would like to book any of these, please contact Pauline Gilbertson at paulinegilbertson@gmail.com or 07717 224072. Lifts will be available if needed. Once we have confirmed dates for further events we will let you know.



It may not feel like Spring yet but it's the time of year when birds are beginning to build their nests and hedgehogs are starting to think about coming out of hibernation. The Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust has bought a multi-purpose steam cleaner which you are welcome to borrow to clean out your bird feeders, nesting boxes and hedgehog houses. Just contact Pauline if you'd like to borrow it. You can also clean and disinfect your feeders and nest boxes with Virkon S disinfectant, which is highly effective yet safe to use around pets (and easy to buy over the internet).

Kim Woolhead (y)

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



Longhirst Parish Council

At the Parish Council meeting held on 7 March two residents raised the following concerns:-

Speeding through the Village: It was explained that this is an ongoing problem and that all current options have been considered. The chicane had been installed at the north end and flashing speed warning signs both north and south. Speed bumps would cause disturbance for adjacent residents, especially at night. The police have been requested to carry out speed checks.

Gully cleaning and fly-tipping: It was explained that the County Council had reduced the frequency of their gully maintenance schedule because of spending cuts and, as a consequence, all residents should promptly report any problems directly to NCC using the FixMyStreet system. Any instances of fly-tipping should also be reported this way. The County has acted on many previous reports.

Longhirst Colliery

Bill Climson has recently reported to NCC that human waste had been left at the Longhirst Colliery bus shelter. He also reported tyres having been dumped near Potland Park, and the numerous potholes near Longhirst Colliery. In addition, he mentioned that wagons were arriving before North East Grains (NEG) opened and waiting at the Colliery bus shelter. It was suggested that full details of the lorries or photographs are taken by residents and to report to NEG.

Julie Murray asked if it would be possible to reduce the speed limit on the road from Longhirst Colliery because of the deer which cross that road. She also mentioned the overgrown hedges on the same stretch of road and the mud-covered footpaths caused by lorries and tractors creating ruts and depositing mud. Colleen Anderson commented that the same applied to Ulgham Lane.

Longhirst Hall

Andy Robson raised an issue that the deeds of the flats at Longhirst Hall may include some liability for Church repairs. It was suggested that the residents take advice from their solicitors.

The Forge Ulgham

The Community Management Committee has made a formal purchase offer to the owner of The Forge and at this stage it has been rejected. Despite this they are going to continue their efforts.

Butterwell Site Liaison Group

N B Clark would prefer to wait until the site is operational before constituting a liaison group. Concerns over lorries being routed from Coney Garth or through the Village were raised with the Company and it would seem that the correct route from the east is now being adhered to.

Public Footpath

A resident previously raised the need for a public footpath to the north of the Village towards Broomhaugh. He has agreed to research the history of a former track running south from Broomhaugh.

Morpeth Caravan Park

The application for a change of use for 4 holiday cottages has been rejected by NCC.

Budget Items

- **Ashington Road flooding** - NCC has apparently agreed to undertake the drainage repairs so the proposed Parish Council contribution may be used towards the cost of raising of the road.
- **Community Skips** - to be used by residents who cannot get to the recycling centre. Richard Tordoff agreed to have the skip placed on his driveway (see page 3 for further details).
- **Area around the War Memorial** - Chris Marr was thanked for his work in tidying the area opposite the memorial. Purchase of additional seating is being investigated together with the fitting of a water supply to aid the maintenance of the flower tubs.

- **Longhirst Hall Community Event** - Andy Robson reported a lack of interest by Longhirst Hall residents to celebrate the bicentenary of the Hall, so this is not going ahead.
- **Paddock (Millennium)Wood path improvements** – a meeting is being held with Groundwork NE to prepare a detailed plan and costings.
- **Village Hall projector and screen** – more information and costs are being researched.

Overhanging trees near the Church bus stop – Richard Tordoff was thanked for clearing some of the overhanging branches and NCC has subsequently carried out further clearance work. NCC will also install three bollards to protect the new lychgate and to improve the area in front of the Church.

Voter ID requirements – Identification is now required in order to vote at a polling station. Reminders of this will be placed on noticeboards and on the Parish Council website (see below for further details). Because of the forthcoming elections there are various **temporary job opportunities** available. Please see this link for more details <https://nland.cc/applyelectionroles2024>.

Next Meeting – the Annual General Meetings will take place at **7pm on Thursday 2 May** at Longhirst Colliery Recreation Hall (please note the change of venue because of the mayoral election). All residents are welcome to come along and join us. Colleen Anderson

SKIP IN VILLAGE

As part of a Parish Council initiative, there will be a skip placed in the Village for the benefit of residents. The idea behind this has come from Pegswood who offer this facility to assist in the clearing of rubbish that blights the appearance of their Village. Although we do not seem to have the same problem, we have a lot of elderly people who may benefit from a little in-house clearance, possibly with the help of neighbours.

With this in mind we intend to rent a skip that will be placed in the drive of The Farmhouse in the centre of the Village. This is to prevent unauthorized use and to take it off the road. The date is to be confirmed and it will be there for a limited time.

Items that can be discarded ideally should be within the spirit of its original concept. If you normally go to the tip with waste then please continue to do so, therefore allowing more space for those who cannot get there. No tyres, oil, white goods, asbestos etc. please. Otherwise there are no limits as long as the object fits into the skip.

We hope to offer this again if it is used positively and I would welcome your comments to me in person, by phone or e-mail (07850066633 or rtordoffs@gmail.com). Richard Tordoff

PHOTO ID NEEDED TO VOTE

There are elections coming up in Northumberland on **2 May**. To vote at a polling station you must take photo ID such as a passport, older person’s bus pass or driving licence with a photo. If you do not have a photo ID you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate. More information is available at Electoralcommission.org.uk.

VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS



There will NOT be a Coffee Morning in the Village Hall on Saturday 13 April. Instead, you are warmly invited to Carol Robson’s Wildlife Watch Day (see page 5). Helen McCabe (n)

ST. JOHN'S LYCHGATE RESTORED AT LAST

Everyone is invited to the official dedication of the rebuilt lychgate. The archdeacon of Lindisfarne will perform a short ceremony on **Sunday 5 May at 11am**. There will be light refreshments in the Church after the event to which all are welcome. The rebuilding has taken far longer than anticipated but the final result is magnificent. Come and see for yourselves.

Chris Lediard, Acting Chairman of the PCC



A lychgate is commonly the principal gateway to a churchyard, separating consecrated and un-consecrated ground and traditionally was the place where coffin-bearers would shelter prior to a burial. The gate at St. John's is particularly impressive with a high-pitched roof covered with clay tiles. It was originally erected in 1885 and was wrecked in June 2021 when a pick-up truck failed to take the bend and hit the gate head on, demolishing the superstructure and the stone supporting pillars.

Since then it has been a long and frustrating two and a half year wait for the lychgate to be repaired. As much of the original stone and timber as possible was retained and reconstruction eventually commenced in July 2023, with the masonry work being completed first. There was then a two-month delay while the joiner sourced timber that matched the original. The roof tiles then had to be hand-made at a kiln in the south of England and just to add to the delays the vehicle carrying the tiles to Longhirst was involved in a collision on the M1. The tiles were scattered all over the carriageway and replacements had to be made. Work was finally completed on 13 December 2023.

With assistance from Northumberland County Council Highways and local County Councillor David Towns, bollards should soon be installed which we hope will protect the lychgate from future damage. The area in front of the gate will also be resurfaced and the step removed.



Carol Benbow and Mike Elphick

LONGHIRST MUSIC SOCIETY

A Northumbrian Concert will be given by The Bridge Singers of Felton
on

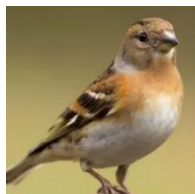
Saturday 20 April at 7.30 pm in Longhirst Village Hall

Tickets are £5 each and may be obtained at the door on the night of the concert
or by contacting Peter McKenzie (01670 790344) or Chris Lediard (01670 790268)

Proceeds to St. John's Church

This is intended to be a fun evening with entertainment and a social afterwards with food and drinks.
Everyone is very welcome.

Carol Robson invites you to a **WILDLIFE WATCH DAY** in aid of St. John's Church at **ROSE COTTAGE, ULGHAM LANE NE61 3NQ** on **SATURDAY 13 APRIL**



10am – 12noon Coffee/tea and scones

2pm – 4pm Tea/coffee and cake

Raffle and Bottle Tombola

£5 per session, includes refreshment



Come with your friends to enjoy a peaceful haven and watch the wildlife.

TRAINING TO USE THE DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATED IN THE BUS SHELTER OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE HALL

Many of you will recall that a defibrillator was installed in the bus shelter, outside the Village Hall, towards the end of 2019. We ran a number of very successful short training courses in 2022 for local people so that they knew how to use it in an emergency. I have recently been asked whether we could repeat this for people who couldn't attend two years ago, or who have since moved into the Village. Richard Tordoff has agreed to run a short course lasting about one hour in the Village Hall, starting at **7pm on Wednesday 17 April**. Anyone wishing to attend this course should contact me to book a place.



If you would like to attend but cannot make that date, please let me know and I will endeavour to find a later date suitable for all those who could not attend this one.

Mike Elphick (c)

VILLAGE HALL NEWS



At our March Board of Trustees meeting, we were pleased to hear that the Lottery funded fresh air ventilation system has been commissioned and is working fairly well, but there remain one or two issues that still need to be put right and plans are in hand to accomplish these. The board approved, in principle, a new safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults which will be confirmed at the next meeting.

Initial estimates for the cost of resurfacing the rear car park came in well above the amount that the Parish Association can currently afford. Nevertheless, the board recognised that there is a need to solve this problem before next winter and they resolved to find a way to do so.

The board received a report that confirmed we could install a video projector and screen within the budget offered by the Parish Council and, subject to agreement on the location of the screen and projector and to the obtaining of another estimate, it was agreed that this will go ahead.

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



The Broth and Beetle Evening, which raised £262 for Church funds, was great fun and the soups were very much appreciated.

Our next event is the Wildlife Watch Day at Carol Robson's on **Saturday 13 April** (see page 5 for the details).

April and May Sunday Services

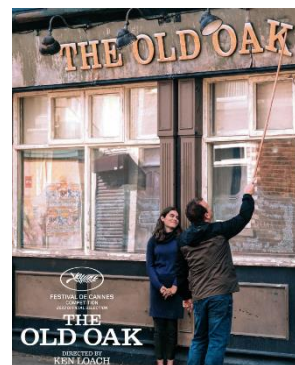
Date	Time	Service
7 April	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
14 April	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal
21 April	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
28 April	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal
5 May	9.30am 11.am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst The rededication of the lychgate
12 May	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal
19 May	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
26 May	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal

FILM NIGHT IN THE VILLAGE HALL

On **Friday 12 April from 7-10pm** the U3A are holding a film night to which residents of Longhirst are invited. The film will be *The Old Oak*, a movie made in 2023 and directed by Ken Loach. It is set in a formerly thriving County Durham mining community and focuses on the arrival of a group of Syrian refugees who have been sent there, and the subsequent tensions which arise.

Ken Loach turned 87 prior to the release of the film and he has said that *The Old Oak* will "probably" be his final movie. Before the screening, there will be a brief introduction, and afterwards there will be a discussion. With Ken Loach's work there is usually plenty to say, both from a positive and a negative standpoint, and this will surely also be true of *The Old Oak*.

Bring your own drinks and nibbles. A suggested donation of £4.00 per person would be welcomed. To reserve a seat, it is essential to contact judysmith2810@yahoo.co.uk or 07944 816807.



Brian Hannaford

THE LONGHIRST HUNDRED CLUB

The winners of the last two 'Hundred Club' draws are:

Month	1 st Prize (£60)	2 nd Prize (£40)	3 rd Prize (£20)
February	Ticket No. 86 Amanda Sayers	Ticket No. 116 Simone Costello	Ticket No. 161 Gerard Thornton
March	Ticket No. 100 Beryl Gibson	Ticket No. 57 Audrey Jordon	Ticket No. 174 Kim Woolhead

It's now time for us all to join or renew our membership of the Longhirst Hundred club. If you have not signed a standing order you should have received a letter or e-mail from me. If I have not been in touch please let me know.

Mike Elphick (c)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

2	Tuesday		Late food bin collection	
3	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
5	Friday		Late blue bin collection	
12	Friday	7-10pm	Film Night in Village Hall – The Old Oak (see page 6)	
13	Saturday	10am	Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
		10-12am & 2-4pm	Wildlife Watch Day at Carol Robson's, Ulgham Lane (NB. There will NOT be a Coffee Morning in the Village Hall)	(f) (n)
17	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
		7pm	Defibrillator training in the Village Hall	(c)
19	Friday	7.30pm	Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
20	Saturday	7.30pm	A Northumbrian Concert in the Village Hall	(r)
26	Friday	9.30-10.15am	Mobile Library in the Village	
		11am -2 pm	LWCT Spring Wildlife Watch at Scotch Gill Woods	(y)

MAY

1	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
2	Thursday	7pm	Parish Council AGM in Colliery Recreation Hall .	(a)
4	Saturday	10am – 12.30pm	LWCT Bird ID for Beginners at Gosforth Nature Reserve	(y)
5	Sunday	11am	Dedication of St. John's rebuilt lychgate	(c)
7	Tuesday		Late food bin collection	
9	Thursday		Late garden waste bin collection	
10	Friday		Late black bin collection	
			Deadline for June / July Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com	Ed. Group
11	Saturday	10am	Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
		10.30 – noon	Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n)
15	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
17	Friday	7.30pm	Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
24	Friday	9.30-10.15am	Mobile Library in the Village	
26	Sunday	6 – 8pm	LWCT Evening Chorus in Woodruff Wood	(y)
28	Tuesday		Late food bin collection	
31	Friday		Late blue bin collection	

REGULAR EVENTS

- Church services as detailed on page 6
- Holistic Health 'Sound Bath' in Village Hall on first Friday of the month 5.30 – 7.30pm
(rachel.holistichealth@gmail.com, www.lifeholistictherapies.co.uk)
- The Fish Van stops at the War Memorial every Friday between 8.30 and 9.00am
- Mobile Post Office in De Walden Terrace, Pegswood every Thursday from 11.45am – 12.45pm

FUTURE EVENTS

- Open Gardens Weekend – Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 June

CONTACT DETAILS

For more information about the various activities and events mentioned in this Newsletter contact:-

Parish Council Clerk – Helyn Douglas 826803 / e-mail : longhirstpc@gmail.com **(a)**

County Councillor – David Towns 07985 012012 / e-mail : david.towns@northumberland.go.uk **(g)**

Vicar - **(b)**

Churchwarden - Heather Jackson 07756 690027/ e-mail : siriusa1998@aol.com **(d)**

PCC Secretary – Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com **(c)**

Longhirst Parish Association – Janet Quinn 790630 / e-mail : quinnjanet@sky.com **(q)**

Village Hall Bookings - Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com **(c)**

Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust- Kim Woolhead 07749 811937 / e-mail : kim.woolhead@gmail.com **(y)**

Lunch Club – Linda Rudd 790116 / e-mail : barnacrelmr@aol.co.uk **(i)**

Longhirst Hundred Club - Mike Elphick 790764 / e-mail : mike.elphick1@gmail.com **(c)**

Parish Voluntary Litter Clearance – Chris Lediard 790268 / chris.lediard@tiscali.co.uk **(r)**

Village Coffee Mornings – Helen McCabe 790494 / e-mail : mccabe_paul1@sky.com **(n)**

Village Pub Nights – Allison and Richard Tordoff 790364 / e-mail : rtordoffs@gmail.com **(h)**

Open Gardens Weekend – Jill McManus 07837 525634 / e-mail : jemcmanus@hotmail.co.uk **(o)**

Longhirst Colliery Recreation Room bookings – Mary Climson 07727 198108 / maryclimson67@gmail.com **(j)**

Red/Grey Squirrel Sightings – Bedlington and District Red Squirrel Group, Paul Brannan 07961 937304,
Carole Neesam 07488 286434 / e-mail: badrsg@btinternet.com **(s)**

Village Website – www.longhirstvillage.co.uk - Chris Marr 790196 / e-mail : chrismarr@btinternet.com **(u)**

Village Facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel **(v)**

Longhirst Parish Council Website - <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst> **(x)**

Church Website - www.longhirstchurch.btck.co.uk **(b)**

Longhirst Leader Editorial Group:

Peter and Claire Coates - The Old Farmhouse, Broomhaugh: 791088, clairecoates32@gmail.com **(k)**

Carol Robson - Rose Cottage, Ulgham Lane: 07773 738442 **(f)**

Mo Dewar - 7 Stable Close : 791149, dewarms@btinternet.com **(w)**

Janet Quinn – 38 Micklewood Close : 790630, quinnjanet@sky.com **(q)**

Kim Woolhead – 3 Broomhaugh: 07749 811937, kim.woolhead@gmail.com **(y)**