

# LONGHIRST LEADER

## June & July 2026

### **Open Gardens and Flower Festival Weekend 4 & 5 July**

**Saturday & Sunday 11am to 5pm**

#### **Go Wild in the Garden**

The theme of this year's open gardens is wildlife in the garden. This is to showcase how we encourage wildlife to our village. Examples of how this has been achieved will be displayed for visitors over the weekend. There will be stalls selling 'wildlife' goods and the Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust will demonstrate past and present involvement in Longhirst.

#### **Tickets**

Tickets are £7.50 per person per day available on the day with payment either by card or cash. Accompanied children are free and well-behaved dogs are welcome.

#### **Things to see**

Ten open gardens and a Flower festival in St John's Church

Delicious home-made food at the Village Hall: morning coffee, lunches & afternoon teas

The North-East N Gauge Model Railway group exhibition layout in Cherryburn garage

Longhirst Farmhouse will host stalls of plants, local honey, beeswax candles and crafts

Ice cream will be on sale after lunch in the front garden of No 7 Longhirst Village

#### **Parking in the Village**

The Village is very busy during the Open Gardens weekend. It would be very helpful, and make it safer for visitors crossing the road, if people who normally park on the main street could park elsewhere between 11am and 5pm on both days. Residents are welcome to use the park and ride car park next to NE Grains which will be available from 10am until 5.15pm.

#### **Volunteers**

A big thank you to everybody who has offered to help. The event would not happen without the support of the community and the many people from Longhirst who volunteer. More help is always welcome - if you would like to volunteer, please contact Jill by email at [longhirstopengardens@gmail.com](mailto:longhirstopengardens@gmail.com) or ring 07837 525634

#### **Website**

Check out our website for more information: [www.longhirstopengardens.com](http://www.longhirstopengardens.com)

## Maureen Lowes

Born 29 December 1930      Died 1 May 2026

Maureen spent an idyllic childhood in Monkseaton. Her education was somewhat chaotic due to the war, attending various private schools or being home educated. She was a keen tennis player and conveniently her family home was directly opposite the tennis club.

After leaving school she trained in Institutional and Catering Management before marrying Bill in 1951 and having a son, Peter, in 1954.

After living an exotic life in the Bahamas with her husband, Maureen returned to live in the UK. In 1974 she bought No 23 Longhirst Village where she settled and lived happily until her final days. She loved the house, the friends she made and the whole community.

She was an avid reader and enjoyed holidays and travel, notably visiting China, Australia and New Zealand. She loved the ballet and theatre and collected some famous performer's autographs.

She was a valuable member of our community, taking an active part in the life of the village. For many years she was a faithful member of the Parish Council and took a great interest in all that was happening in the village community. She was a regular member of the luncheon club and the monthly coffee mornings.

Maureen was a great character with a wonderful sense of humour and *joie de vivre*. She shared lots of anecdotes from her past, notably stories about the Bahamas and trips to the rugby. Right until the end she was interested in everything around her especially latterly when latterly when a few of us went out for lunch regularly around Northumberland.

She will be sadly missed by her family and friends. May she rest in peace.

## 100 Club Draw

Month	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize (£60)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize (£40)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize (£20)
April	160 Margaret Wooldridge (for Reece Somerfield)	99 Marie Labus	41 Alex Mitchell
May	35 Linda Mowbray	82 Phil Hourigan (for Daniel)	123 Ian Rickard

## **Longhirst 100 Club Report**

**Peter Coates (on behalf of 100 Club)**

The final figures for the 2025/26 financial year have now been calculated and third party reviewed and the total paid out in prize money to our members over the last year is £1440. The balance is divided between St. John's Church and the Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust and, in accordance with members' wishes, £489 is being donated to the Church and £571 to the Trust.

We are most grateful to everyone who has taken part; the donations are important to us and very much appreciated.

Current membership is slightly down on last year and it is not too late to join in. A single entry to the monthly draw is only £1 per month and multiple entries are welcome.

To enter please contact Pauline Gilbertson at [paulinegilbertson@gmail.com](mailto:paulinegilbertson@gmail.com)

## **Help for Hedgehogs**

**Pauline Gilbertson**

Hedgehogs primarily give birth to their young in June and July and it is very important that their nests are not disturbed over the summer months, as the hoglets remain in the nest for several weeks before starting to forage with their mother.

Putting down meaty (not fishy) cat or kitten food, and a bowl of water, can be a lifesaver for hedgehogs at this time of year (you are doubtless aware that you should never put down milk or bread for hedgehogs as bread has no nutritional value and milk will make them very sick).

If you see a hedgehog (whether juvenile or mature) out and about during daylight hours this will very probably mean that it needs help in order to survive, as hedgehogs do not naturally venture out during the daytime. You can phone our local hedgehog expert Richard Tordoff on 07850 066633 for advice on what action to take if you do spot one.

If you need to control slugs and snails in your garden, please don't use a poisonous product which will kill anything which eats these creatures; google 'environmentally friendly slug control' to find a selection of products which will not harm wildlife or pets.

Finally, make sure that your garden has a 'hedgehog highway' (e.g. hole in the fence) to your next-door neighbours' gardens, as hedgehogs need to cover a large area every night in their search for food. The hole need only be four inches wide and high for them to pass through.

## **Longhirst Wildlife & Community Trust Events**

If you would like to receive email notifications of future Longhirst Wildlife & Community Trust nature walks and talks please email [paulinegilbertson@gmail.com](mailto:paulinegilbertson@gmail.com)

Glen Fahy was elected as chair and Andy Robson as vice chair.  
Cllr Ed Dungait gave an update from Northumberland County Council.

### **Resurfacing of the road past North East Grains**

Delays had arisen due to permissions required from Network Rail in relation to the railway crossing. Concern was expressed that further delay into the harvest period would cause disruption.

### **Fairwinds planning application**

Network Rail has highway and pedestrian safety concerns and discussions have taken place between Planning Officers and Network Rail. Discussion on whether the application should be referred to Planning Committee rather than delegated to officers.

### **Millennium Wood**

Potential improvement works to Millennium Wood, including the possible use of stone, wood chippings, or boardwalk sections to improve accessibility. It was agreed that the quickest and least labour-intensive option should be pursued.

### **Funding Request**

Peter Coates requested additional funding to complete the work relating to the triangle area in front of the church. The amount requested is £300. This was approved.

### **Highway and speed management**

Discussions with Northumberland County Council Highways department covered:

- The condition of roads and requests for scraping works
- Vehicle speeds through the village
- Requests for additional traffic calming measures
- Possibility of additional chicanes, road narrowing and signage
- The potential benefits of improved speed data collection was discussed and further engagement with Highways officers.

### **Land in Front of the Village Hall**

Discussion about the ongoing proposals for landscaping and maintenance of the land in front of the Village Hall. Concerns were raised regarding differing views within the community about how the area should be managed. Representatives of the Village Hall and Parish Council indicated a willingness to take greater responsibility for the area. They will meet and discuss the possibilities and financing.

### **Dog Fouling Signs**

Ongoing concerns regarding dog fouling within the Parish was discussed and it was noted that Northumberland County Council may be able to provide signage free of charge. If the supplied signs were unsuitable or too small, members agreed that additional signs could be purchased independently at minimal cost.

The Clerk agreed to pursue this further with the relevant County Council contact.

### **Remembrance Sunday**

The Parish Council was asked to investigate the possibility of closing the road near the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday. Whilst sympathetic to the request, unfortunately, after making enquiries, the Council felt that the costs (outlined below) were too high to be justified. The current cost paid by an applicant is £1625. The applicant is also responsible for organising and paying for the required traffic management and must give at least 12 weeks' notice of the road closure.

### **Proposal for Christmas Lights within the village**

The installation costs quoted by the County Council remained prohibitively expensive, with estimated costs of approximately £8,000 due to electrical and installation requirements. Concerns were also raised regarding potential objections from residents affected by illuminated displays near their homes. It was agreed that the Parish Council would explore the possibility of a display around the Lychgate and village hall.

### **Colliery Road & Car Park Maintenance**

Members discussed maintenance concerns relating to the Colliery Road and adjoining car park area, including sweeping, faded parking lines, lighting concerns, and a damaged bollard. It was noted that:

- The County Council generally undertakes line painting works in batches.
- Sweeping may need to be funded locally if not undertaken by the County Council.
- Additional lighting in the car park could be requested, although installation costs may be significant.
- The damaged bollard may only require cosmetic repairs.

The Parish Council will support funding the sweeping of Colliery Road if costs remain modest.

### **Speedwatch Scheme**

Members received an update regarding the Community Speedwatch initiative.

It was explained that local volunteers could undertake training with the police in order to participate in community speed monitoring exercises.

It was agreed that details of the scheme would be included in the Longhirst Leader newsletter to encourage volunteer participation.

### **Calendar for ordinary meetings of the Parish Council**

Dates and locations with 7pm start times were confirmed for the forthcoming civic year.

- 2 July 2026 (Longhirst Colliery)
- 3 September 2026 (Longhirst Village Hall)
- 5 November 2026 (Longhirst Colliery)
- 8 January 2027 (Longhirst Village Hall)
- 5 March 2027 (Longhirst Colliery)
- 7 May 2027 (Longhirst Village Hall)

### **Items for the July meeting**

- Road safety and speeding proposals
- Village Hall frontage arrangements
- Millennium Wood improvements
- Dog fouling signage
- Community Speedwatch

## **LONGHIRST VILLAGE HALL**

**Gerard Thornton**

The village hall continues to be busy behind the scenes with work on panelling the entrance hall next on the list now that the walls have dried out. It will be great to see another improvement finally coming to fruition.

The monthly **Coffee Mornings** continue alongside the litter pickers' outings on the second Saturday of each month — whatever the weather. A big thank you to our hosts for the

delicious cakes and pastries. We would love to see a few more faces joining us for coffee and a chat and to prevent some of us from eating too much.

10.30 – 12 noon 13 June 11 July	Refreshment & cake £1.50	Helen McCabe 07964 159957
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The monthly **Pub Night** on the third Friday of the month was a little livelier recently with more chairs required thanks to the excellent Longhirst Gin team who came along to offer tastings and share their story. Many thanks for a most enjoyable evening.

8pm – 11pm 19 June 17 July	Beer, wine and spirits at great prices	susanhutchinsonbrown@gmail.com
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The **Lunch Club** in May unfortunately had to be cancelled due to ill health, but we look forward to welcoming everyone back again at the next sitting in June.

Noon 3 June 1 July	Main course and dessert £7.50 Please book in advance	Helen McCabe 07964 159957 Diane Milmore 07962 138788
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We are very fortunate to have such an excellent community facility, and it would be lovely to see even more people joining us at these events – watch out for reminders throughout the month. Why not bring a friend, neighbour, acquaintance - or perhaps spread the word to someone you think would like it - and enjoy the experience together? We hope to see you soon!

## OTHER DIARY DATES

Mobile Library (parks opposite the Village Hall near the bus stop)

- Friday 12 June 9.30-10am
- Friday 3 July 9.30-10am

## 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	<a href="mailto:midnorthumberlandu3a@gmail.com">midnorthumberlandu3a@gmail.com</a>		<a href="https://midnorthumberland.u3asite.uk">https://midnorthumberland.u3asite.uk</a>

## Reminder

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

## CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerk	Barry Flux	07472002538	<a href="mailto:longhirstpc@gmail.com">longhirstpc@gmail.com</a>
Parish Council Chair	Glen Fahy	07752 279939	<a href="mailto:glenfahy06@aol.com">glenfahy06@aol.com</a>
Parish Council website	<a href="https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst">https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst</a>		
County Councillor	Ed Dungait		<a href="mailto:ed.dungait@northumberland.gov.uk">ed.dungait@northumberland.gov.uk</a>
Member of Parliament	David Smith	01670 704099	<a href="mailto:david.smith.mp@parliament.uk">david.smith.mp@parliament.uk</a>
Churchwarden & Parochial Church Council	Chris Leddiard	01670 790268	
Church website			
Longhirst Parish Association	Gerard Thornton		<a href="mailto:gthornton.lvh@gmail.com">gthornton.lvh@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust	Kim Woolhead	07749 811937	<a href="mailto:kim.woolhead@gmail.com">kim.woolhead@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Hundred Club	Pauline Gilbertson		<a href="mailto:paulinegilbertson@gmail.com">paulinegilbertson@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Colliery Recreation Room Bookings	Mary Climson	07727 198108	<a href="mailto:maryclimson67@gmail.com">maryclimson67@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Village Hall Bookings	<a href="https://longhirstvillagehall.co.uk">https://longhirstvillagehall.co.uk</a>		
Lunch Club	Helen McCabe Diane Milmore	07964 159957 07962 138788	
Litter Picking	Pauline Gilbertson		<a href="mailto:paulinegilbertson@gmail.com">paulinegilbertson@gmail.com</a>
Coffee Mornings	Helen McCabe	07964 159957	<a href="mailto:mccabe_paul1@sky.com">mccabe_paul1@sky.com</a>
Village Website <a href="http://www.longhirstvillage.co.uk">www.longhirstvillage.co.uk</a>	Chris Marr	01670 790196	<a href="mailto:chrismarr@btinternet.com">chrismarr@btinternet.com</a>
Village Facebook Group	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage">www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage</a>		
Longhirst Leader	Jill McManus	07837 525634	<a href="mailto:longhirstleader@gmail.com">longhirstleader@gmail.com</a>
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	Kim Woolhead	07749 811937	<a href="mailto:kim.woolhead@gmail.com">kim.woolhead@gmail.com</a>