

# LONGHIRST LEADER

## FEBRUARY & MARCH 2025

### WHAT'S ON...

**Coffee mornings at Longhirst Village Hall** Saturdays 8 February and 8 March 10.30am

Our regular monthly coffee mornings. £1.50 for coffee and cake. All welcome.

**Wildlife talk at Longhirst Village Hall: The Beavers' Return to Northumberland**

Saturday 8 February 11.00am

Join Heather Devey, Co-Director of Wild Intrigue CIC and beaver ecologist, for an illustrated insight into the life and influence of the Eurasian Beaver. With footage from study trips across Britain and Europe, and Northumberland's re-established Beaver wetland at National Trust Wallington, we will become re-acquainted with this once-lost wetland engineer.

£3 per person (children under 18 free of charge). Cash or cheque only please. If you would like to attend, please contact Pauline at [paulinegilbertson@gmail.com](mailto:paulinegilbertson@gmail.com) or ring 07717 224972

**Pub Nights at the Village Hall** Fridays 21 February and 21 March from 7.30pm.

All welcome.

Help appreciated either to set up beforehand, during the evening or clearing up after closing time. Please email Allison on [wadders40@googlemail.com](mailto:wadders40@googlemail.com) if you would like to help out.

**Coffee morning at Longhirst Colliery** Saturday 22 February 10.30am

£4 Drink and sweet or savoury food. Raffle and bottle bag tombola. All welcome.

**Pie and Peas Supper and Beetle Drive** Saturday 1 March 7.00 – 9.00pm

Contact Linda Mowbray at 10 Longhirst Village to reserve your place. Tickets £5. Our last event was a great success and tickets sold out so please book early to avoid disappointment.

## **BEAVERING AWAY... by Pauline Gilbertson of the Longhirst Wildlife & Community Trust**

When I think of beavers (which, admittedly, isn't often) I think of industrious creatures who, before we hunted them to extinction, shaped our countryside by building dams. Until recently I didn't appreciate that their work encouraged biodiversity, discouraged flooding and increased fish populations by keeping the waterways clean. Any fan of *The Archers* (in which the proposed reintroduction of beavers to Ambridge is currently a hot topic) will be aware that opinions are strongly divided; for every beaver protagonist there is a vociferous dissenter. Beavers, hunted for their pelts and meat, became extinct in the UK in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and across most of Europe two hundred years later. It's only in recent years that beavers have been reintroduced to the UK, first in Kent in 2001 and followed by other reintroductions at various sites from Devon to Scotland.

In 2023 it was time for beavers to return to Northumberland with four animals being reintroduce in a large enclosure at the National Trust's Wallington Hall estate.



Most of us (me included) know very little about these fascinating and controversial creatures, which is why the Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust has arranged an illustrated talk about them on Saturday morning, 8<sup>th</sup> February. Heather Devey, who you might have seen with her partner Cain on BBC2's *Our Dream Farm* last year, will be our speaker. She and Cain run Wild Intrigue, the company which manages the Beaver Safari events at Wallington.

Do join us if you can – it will be fascinating - and you might also like to combine our talk with the village coffee morning immediately beforehand – a double reason to visit the Village Hall on Saturday 8th February!

## OBITUARIES

### Jean Humble

Jean Humble of Kylloe House died on 24th December after a long illness. Jean had been involved with the community since the early days, arranging many events including a Christmas lunch one year for 55 people of the colliery. She was always very kind and contributed to the Colliery Hall events. Jean began her working life as a nurse then later went into the police force. In retirement, she loved nothing better than to sit outside and talk to anyone passing and tell stories of her past.

Jean leaves her husband George; they had been married 52 years. Jean will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

### Bill Wake 19 October 1925 – 9 December 2024

Bill Wake was an only child; his widowed mother worked to support them both, and his early years were spent at Callerton, where she was house-keeper to the Fenwick family. He started work aged 14, as a chemist's message boy.



In 1943 he joined the Navy and trained as a sick-berth attendant. On the eve of D-Day he was assigned to a tank landing ship which took troops and tanks to Normandy and brought home the wounded. For this role he was later awarded the Legion d'Honneur, of which he was immensely proud. Naval service then took him to Australia, where he met Nerida. After the War they corresponded for years before she joined him in England. They married in 1952 and set up home in Ashington, where their daughters Helen and Yvonne were born.

By this time Bill was a qualified pharmacist, and in 1961 he bought the pharmacy in Red Row, where he served the community devotedly until his retirement. In 1971 Bill and Nerida moved to Ulgham and became regular attenders at St. John's church, Longhirst. Their many friends among the congregation supported Bill through Nerida's long illness, and after her death in 2001, and he continued his regular visits to church and village events.

He was gentle, kind and even-tempered but also determined and resilient, and his standards were always high. The onset of dementia did not affect his unfailing courtesy, or his meticulous care of his appearance. He continued to live independently until his move to a care home only six months before his death at the age of 99.

Bill regularly attended the lunches at the Village Hall and is fondly remembered by the other diners. His last visit to Longhirst was to lay a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday. He will be greatly missed by his two daughters, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, and by his many friends.

**A celebration of Bill's life will be held at 2pm on Saturday 15 February at St. John's church and afterwards at Longhirst village hall. All are welcome to attend.**

## **LONGHIRST NEWS**

**Parish Council Meeting Jan 9 2025**

**Barry Flux, Clerk to the Parish Council**

Parish precept

At the January meeting of Longhirst Parish Council it was agreed to freeze the parish precept for 2025 / 2026 at £8000.

As part of this budget there are funds that can be allocated to community projects in Longhirst. If you have any views on this please do contact us.

New Councillor

We welcome Julie Murray who was co-opted to the council at the January meeting for the few remaining months before elections and wish Peter Coates all the best wishes following his leaving of the council.

Elections

Parish Council elections will be held in May and will coincide with the County Council elections. Longhirst Parish Council would welcome new people putting themselves forward at this election. For more details, contact the Parish Council at [longhirstpc@gmail.com](mailto:longhirstpc@gmail.com)

**Road safety concerns**

**John Young & Jill McManus**

On January 6, a group of residents met with David Towns who is currently the county councillor for Longhirst.

Concerns were raised about the speed of vehicles through the village and vehicles treating some pavements as part of the road. There is a consequent, serious risk to the safety of pedestrians on footpaths and crossing the road, particularly for those who have reduced mobility, hearing or vision, as well as reports of damage to parked vehicles.

Potential actions to address this issue were discussed including a 20 mph speed limit through the village, a 40 mph buffer zone to the north of the village, speed bumps and a pedestrian crossing.

The meeting identified that an essential next step was to gather evidence by surveying residents about their experiences. This will provide a broader view of the impacts of traffic than is possible from speed surveys of the type which have been carried out in the past. The councillor also recommended that a petition to the County Council would be helpful as an indicator of support for installing traffic calming measures to ensure the safety of pedestrians and all road users in Longhirst.

Road safety concerns were discussed further at the Parish Council meeting on 9 Jan where it was suggested that a survey and petition is sent to residents.

The survey will be distributed by email with copies available on paper.

## **Longhirst Parish Association Trustees**

**Mike Elphick**

At its first Board Meeting of 2025, the Longhirst Parish Association approved the investment of the Featonby legacy in a temporary HSBC money market account for three months, to give time for the board to consider the best way to manage the funds in the long term.

The Board approved the proposal that the status of the Longhirst Parish Association be changed from an unincorporated charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Applications have already been made to Northumberland County Council for planning and listed building consent for developments. These include the replacement of the front windows with bespoke double-glazed units, built to look exactly like the existing ones; the removal of the plaster and cement rendering on the foyer walls and replacing it with ventilated timber wainscoting such as that which has been installed in the reading room; the rebuilding and securing of the slightly leaning chimney; and the resurfacing of the rear car park.

## **Drains**

**John Young**

You may have been aware recently that Northumbria Water have been in attendance around the village.

This is because there was a serious blockage in the main sewer adjacent to the memorial. The blockage was caused by a ball of fat, oil and grease. The blockage caused a sewage back up past some of the houses in the village and, if left unchecked would have continued all the way up to the north end of the village.

Northumbria Water asked, in an attempt to prevent further blockages, if people could please endeavour not to put any fat oil or grease down the sink.

## **FUND RAISING**

### **Hundred club**

Month	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize (£60)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize (£40)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize (£20)
December	Ticket No. 45 Peter Coates	Ticket No. 158 Margaret Wooldridge	Ticket No. 145 Janet Quinn
January	Ticket No. 65 Linda Rudd	Ticket No. 89 Vivienne Heskett	Ticket No. 99 Marie Labus

### **Carol singing**

Door-to-door carol singing around Longhirst raised £325.11 for the Air Ambulance. Many thanks to all who contributed.

## FEBRUARY DIARY

5	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall
8	Saturday	10.00am 10.30am-12noon 11.00am	Litter pickers Coffee morning in Village Hall LWCT talk – “Northumberland Beavers” in Village Hall
15	Saturday	2pm	Celebration of Life for Bill Wake St John’s Church and then Village Hall
19	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall
21	Friday	7.30pm	Pub night in the Village Hall
22	Saturday	10.30am	Coffee Morning Longhirst Colliery

## MARCH DIARY

1	Saturday	7.00-9.00pm	Pie & Peas Supper and Beetle Drive
5	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall
6	Thursday	7.00pm	Parish Council in the Village Hall
8	Saturday	10.00am 10.30am-12noon	Litter pickers Coffee morning in Village Hall
19	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall
21	Friday	7.30pm	Pub night in the Village Hall
30	Sunday		British Summertime begins

Changes to mobile library dates are still not confirmed. These will be emailed separately once we have the new information.

## CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

Date	Time	Service
2 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St John’s, Longhirst
9 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Andrew’s, Bothal
16 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St John’s, Longhirst
23 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Andrew’s, Bothal
2 March	9.30am	Holy Communion at St John’s, Longhirst
9 March	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Andrew’s, Bothal
16 March	9.30am	Holy Communion at St John’s, Longhirst
23 March	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Andrew’s, Bothal
30 March	10.15am	Holy Communion at St Margaret’s Chapel, Pegswood

## LONGHIRST VILLAGE HALL REGULAR EVENTS

Pilates	Fridays	9.30-10.30am	charlotte@charlottewoodpilates.com
Sewing Group	First & Third Tuesdays	10am-2pm	helenpotts65@gmail.com
U3A	Check Village website for information		www.longhirstvillage.co.uk

## Reminder

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

## CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerk	Barry Flux		<a href="mailto:longhirstpc@gmail.com">longhirstpc@gmail.com</a>
Parish Council website	<a href="https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst">https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst</a>		
County Councillor	David Towns	07985 012012	<a href="mailto:david.towns@northumberland.gov.uk">david.towns@northumberland.gov.uk</a>
Churchwarden	Heather Jackson	07756 690027	<a href="mailto:siriusa1998@aol.com">siriusa1998@aol.com</a>
Church website	<a href="https://longhirstchurch.chessck.co.uk/">https://longhirstchurch.chessck.co.uk/</a>		
Parochial Church Council Secretary	Mike Elphick	01670 790764	<a href="mailto:mike.elphick1@gmail.com">mike.elphick1@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Parish Association	Janet Quinn	01670 790630	<a href="mailto:quinnjanet@sky.com">quinnjanet@sky.com</a>
Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust	Kim Woolhead	07749 811937	<a href="mailto:kim.woolhead@gmail.com">kim.woolhead@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	Mike Elphick	01670 790764	<a href="mailto:mike.elphick1@gmail.com">mike.elphick1@gmail.com</a>
Lunch Club	Linda Rudd	01670 790116	<a href="mailto:barnacrelmr@aol.co.uk">barnacrelmr@aol.co.uk</a>
Litter Picking	Chris Lediard	01670 790268	<a href="mailto:chris.lediard@tiscali.co.uk">chris.lediard@tiscali.co.uk</a>
Coffee Mornings	Helen McCabe	01670 790494	<a href="mailto:mccabe_paul1@sky.com">mccabe_paul1@sky.com</a>
Pub Nights	Allison and Richard Tordoff	01670 790364	<a href="mailto:rtordoffs@gmail.com">rtordoffs@gmail.com</a>
Longhirst Hundred Club	Mike Elphick	01670 790764	<a href="mailto:mike.elphick1@gmail.com">mike.elphick1@gmail.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="https://www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel">https://www.facebook.com/longhirstvillage/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel</a>		
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