

LONGHIRST LEADER

October / November 2024

FUTURE OF THE LEADER

I am delighted to report that Jill McManus has agreed to take over the task of compiling the Leader, so its future is in excellent hands. A new email address, longhirstleader@gmail.com, has been set up. Please use this from now on.

Thank you to all who have supplied me with very many articles on a variety of topics and to the Editorial Team who have helped to correct errors and suggest improvements. Thanks also to the printers who have provided their service free of charge, to Mike Elphick for sending out the email copies, to Chris Marr for putting it on the website and finally to everyone who has helped to deliver the paper copies over the years. Clearly many people are involved in the production of the Leader and I am confident that they will be as helpful to Jill as they have been to me.

Claire Coates

ACT OF REMEMBRANCE AND SPECIAL COFFEE MORNING

Everyone is welcome at the regular Village Coffee Morning which usually takes place in the Village Hall on the second Saturday of every month from 10.30am. The charge is £1.50 for adults and 50p for children for coffee/tea/juice and biscuits. Usually there are home baked treats as well! The next Coffee Morning will be on **Saturday 12 October**.



Please note that there is a **Special Coffee Morning** in the Village Hall on **Sunday 10 November following the 10.55am Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial**. We offer a special invitation to all residents, new and old, to join us. New residents are most welcome to come along and find out about life in Longhirst and meet other members of the community.

Helen McCabe (n)

COLLIERY CORNER



**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

We are having our **Macmillan Coffee Morning** on **Monday 14 October** from 11am in Longhirst Colliery Recreation Room. Raffle and bottle bags £1. Drinks and cakes for sale. Everyone is welcome to this very worthwhile charity event.

Mary Climson (j)

VILLAGE PUB NIGHTS



The next two Pub Nights will be on **Friday 18 October** and **Friday 15 November**. Please come and join friends old and new from 7.30pm onwards

Allison (h), Richard, Kathleen, Susan and Phil



PARISH COUNCIL REPORT OF MEETING ON 5 SEPTEMBER

Public Forum:

- **Speeding:** Residents raised concerns about speeding along the Village main street, and at Longhirst Colliery where there was a recent accident. Potential solutions were discussed, including a 20mph speed limit, speed humps and cameras. All options have been discussed many times before and each has its drawbacks. The Parish Council agreed to approach County Council Highways to discuss wide-ranging road safety issues.
- **Telephone Box:** A request will be made to BT for repainting the village telephone box.
- **Drainage Improvements:** Residents believe drainage improvement work is proposed on the main roads near Longhirst Colliery. The Parish Council will seek to find out more about this, including start dates (see page 3).

Planning:

- **Station Cottages:** Several residents attended the meeting to express their surprise and disappointment that planning permission was granted for the ancillary building, despite earlier discussions with the County Council. The PC will raise this issue with County Cllr. David Towns.

Business:

- **Parish Clerk Vacancy:** Helyn Douglas, the current Clerk, has resigned due to other work commitments and will leave at the end of September. A temporary replacement has been appointed to cover whilst recruitment takes place. The post has been advertised, with a closing date of 6 October. Anyone interested in the role should contact the Parish Council at longhirstpc@gmail.com. Helyn was warmly thanked for all the work she has done on our behalf, especially in modernising the Council, and many of the fruits of her labours can be viewed on the Parish Council website (x).
- **Longhirst Wildlife & Community Trust (LWCT):** Volunteers are sought to help tidy the overgrown vegetation on the island alongside St. John's Church car park. The Parish Council will provide funds of £100 towards equipment needed for the job. Please contact Peter Coates (k) if you are willing to help. The County Council has agreed to deal with the dying ash trees close to the electricity cables.
- **Benches:** Richard Tordoff is very kindly repairing the benches beside the war memorial and opposite the church. Three new benches are available for installation at various locations around the Parish. Councillors agreed that one will be placed at Longhirst Colliery and a second at Paddock Wood. Discussions are on-going about the third.
- **Paddock Wood Paths:** A meeting has been held with area management staff from the Woodland Trust and various options to improve access for residents to the wood during the winter have been discussed. The cheapest option is to cut two new paths from the south eastern access, one to the hide and the second on higher ground above the burnside path (which can then be closed). Groundwork North East have agreed to undertake the work using volunteers and the Parish Council will make up to £500 available towards the cost.
- **Ashington Road:** Although ditch clearance work has not been carried out this year, the work done last year was extensive and means the road is less likely to flood this winter. However, without continued maintenance this problem will re-occur. Wider land management issues at Potland Country Park still remain unresolved and these will be raised with the County Council.
- **Bus Stops:** The Parish Council will print off current timetables and put these on the notice board in the bus shelter outside the Village Hall. Problems with the existing timetable displays have been raised with NCC.
- **Tree Maintenance:** Trees at the 'Football Field' on Station Road have been reported as diseased by the tenant and the Parish Council will seek quotes for the necessary maintenance work.

The **next meeting** will be held in the Village Hall at 7pm on **Thursday 7 November** and all residents are invited to attend.

Colleen Anderson

RESURFACING AND DRAINAGE WORKS

The Parish Council has discovered that NCC Highways are proposing to carry out resurfacing and drainage works on Station Road east from North East Grains (as Phase 2 of the road resurfacing work done recently) and a similar scheme on the Ashington Road. Each set of roadworks is scheduled to be to a value of £100,000. This news is obviously most welcome. We hope that work starts as soon as possible and that the Ashington Road scheme includes removing the flooding hazard. Further details are being sought at the time of writing.

Peter Coates (k)

VILLAGE HALL NEWS



The big news this month is that the Village Hall is a beneficiary of a bequest from the estate of the late Gill Featonby. Gill served as chairperson of the Longhirst Parish Association for its first 15 years, from 2002 until 2017, and oversaw the initial redevelopment of the Village Hall in 2006/7. Her will leaves the significant sum of £248,000 to the Village Hall specifically to ensure that it remains in perpetuity as the essential hub for Village activity. The Board of Trustees met on the 19 September and decided that £48,000 will be retained to fund developments over the next few years. They will seek the advice of the Charity Commission, the Community Foundation for Northumberland and Tyne & Wear, and wealth management experts as to the best way to invest the remaining £200,000 long term to fulfil the requirements of Gill's will to maintain the Hall in perpetuity. The Trustees recognise that all members of the community may well have ideas about the priorities the Parish Association ought to have in terms of the long and short-term use of some of the funds so generously bequeathed by Gill. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be the Annual General Meeting in the Village Hall at **6pm on Thursday 21 November**. This will be a public meeting at which your views can be aired and you will have the opportunity to nominate and elect four community trustees. For nomination papers please contact the Association's Honorary Secretary, Mike Elphick (c).

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

LONGHIRST WILDLIFE & COMMUNITY TRUST - UPDATE

We were delighted to receive a grant of £10,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May last year. Since then, we have focused our efforts on:

- building a substantial range of equipment for future use by Longhirst residents (details are listed in the Summer edition of the Trust newsletter published on the Longhirst Village website)
- repairing the bird hide in Paddock (Millennium) Wood
- organising an initial programme of events highlighting our local wildlife (flora and fauna). This was done despite a very dreary winter and a cold and wet spring.



The Lottery insisted that we completed a planned 2-year events programme in 12 months which was challenging, but we believe we achieved it successfully. For our second year we do not intend to bid for a further grant but will run a more modest events programme and encourage residents to make full use of the equipment that is now available.

We are also working closely with the Parish Council to improve the appearance of the island beside the Church car park and to make the paths in Paddock Wood more accessible to residents in winter. We would be delighted if more residents came forward and joined us. The Trust has been created to benefit the whole community.

Peter Coates, LWCT (k)

LONGHIRST LUNCH CLUB – NEWS UPDATE

Longhirst Lunch Club has been operating very successfully on the first and third Wednesdays of each month for the past seventeen years. The Lunch Club provides a fantastic two-course home cooked meal followed by a cup of tea or coffee for only £5 per head. It is open to Longhirst residents and their friends, of any age, who want to share a meal in a friendly, convivial atmosphere.

Volunteers to Help

Some more volunteers would be great!

The lunches are currently provided by four separate teams who operate on a rota which means each team provides the lunch six times across the year. Recently one of the teams has retired and so there is a need to replace that team. Each team of volunteers comprises a team leader and three or four kitchen assistants and servers who together, depending on their skills, plan the meal, prepare, cook, and serve for up to 20-25 people at lunch time on the Wednesday. If you would like to be part of a team or would like to know more about what is involved, please contact Helen McCabe (n) who would love to have a chat with you. It is a lot of fun and a really wonderful way to be part of the community.

Come and enjoy a meal

We have space for more newcomers to enjoy a fantastic meal with friends. The next four Lunch Club dates are 2 and 16 October and 6 and 20 November. Please contact Mike Elphick(c) on or before the weekend prior to the session you want to attend so that we have enough time to purchase the ingredients required. Why not give us a try! We will give you a very warm welcome. Mike Elphick (c) and Helen McCabe (n)

WEST COAST BAND AT THE VILLAGE HALL

A reminder that the West Coast Band is making a return visit on **Friday 4 October** at 7.30pm and will be playing music from the 70s and 80s (and one or two from the 60s).

Bring your own drinks and nibbles. Tickets are £10 each and there are only a few left.

Contact judysmith2810@yahoo.co.uk to book your place.

CHURCHYARD APPEAL



Our Parish Church of St John the Evangelist has an open graveyard surrounding it and in the spring time it is a mass of snowdrops, primroses, daffodils and bluebells.

The Churchyard is well used by visitors, walkers and people visiting family graves, all of whom appreciate the peaceful well-maintained environment it offers. This is something we wish to continue to provide, but with rising costs it is becoming increasingly difficult.

The current cost has increased to £1,500 per annum and while the Parish Council contributes £700, we are appealing for regular donations, however small, to help towards the £800 per annum shortfall needed for continued provision of this wonderful environment for all.

If you can help in any way, please contact either Heather Jackson, Churchwarden (d) or Mike Elphick, Secretary (c).

Thank you.

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

October and November Sunday Services

Date	Time	Service
6 October	9.30am	Holy Communion and Harvest Festival at St. John's, Longhirst Donations of tinned and packaged food for the Harvest Festival will be taken to the Wansbeck Valley Food Bank after the service.
13 October	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal
20 October	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
27 October	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal
3 November	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
10 November	9.30am 10.55am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal Act of Remembrance at Longhirst War Memorial followed by coffee at the Village Hall
17 November	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. John's, Longhirst
24 November	9.30am	Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, Bothal

Annual Toy Service

Sunday 1 December is Advent Sunday and at St. John's Church we are holding our annual Toy Service at 2pm. This is a wonderful way of anticipating Christmas through the singing of Advent Carols and blessing the Advent Ring. Children are especially welcome and we traditionally get a good turn out from the young peoples' uniformed organisations with their banners. We have done this for many years now, but for newcomers to the Parish who may not have attended before, the idea is very simple. We bring a wrapped Christmas present indicating on it whether it is suitable for a boy or girl and an approximate age. Presents for teenagers are also welcome. During the service the presents are placed at the front of the Church and are later taken to North Shields where they are given to the Cedarwood Trust, a Church of England community outreach organisation, for distribution among less well-off families in the Meadowell area. This helps some children to have a much happier Christmas than they might otherwise have expected. In past years it has been an enjoyable occasion for all, and we look forward to seeing you.

If you are unable to come to the service, presents can be left in the Village Hall or at the home of our PCC secretary, Mike Elphick, at Howarth Cottage, NE61 3LJ. If this is not possible, please contact Mike and he will collect them.

Heather Jackson (d) and Mike Elphick (c)

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)
August	Ticket No. 70 Linda Rudd <i>for Robert</i>	Ticket No. 58 Audrey Jordon	Ticket No. 77 Pat Land
September	Ticket No. 38 Amanda Bonner-Davis	Ticket No. 140 Louise Bassett	Ticket No. 207 Jimmy Lillico

If you would like to join the Hundred Club please contact Mike Elphick (c).

WIDDRINGTON CO-OP CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Widdrington Co-op and Post Office will be closed from 27 September to 14 November while the store is extended into the garages around the back.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OCTOBER

2	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
4	Friday	7.30pm	West Coast Band in the Village Hall (see page 4)	
11	Friday	9.30 – 10.15am	Mobile Library in the Village	
12	Saturday	10am	Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
		10.30 – 12noon	Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n)
14	Monday	11am	Macmillan Coffee Morning in Colliery Recreation Room	(j)
16	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
18	Friday	7.30pm	Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
27	Sunday	2am	British Summer Time ends. Clocks go back 1 hour	

NOVEMBER

6	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
7	Thursday	7pm	Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall.	(a)
8	Friday	9.30 – 10.15am	Mobile Library in the Village Deadline for December / January Longhirst Leader email to longhirstleader@gmail.com	Ed. Group
9	Saturday	10am	Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
10	Sunday	10.55am	Act of Remembrance at Longhirst War Memorial Followed by a Special Coffee Morning in V. Hall (see P1)	(c) (n)
15	Friday	7.30pm	Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
20	Wednesday	11.45am	Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
21	Thursday	6pm	Parish Association AGM in Village Hall (see page 3)	(c)

REGULAR EVENTS

- Church services as detailed on page 5
- Pilates in Village Hall on Fridays, 9.30 – 10.30am. Contact charlotte@charlottewoodpilates.com
- Sewing Group in Village Hall on first and third Tuesdays of the month, 10am – 2pm.
Contact helenpotts65@gmail.com
- 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

Sunday 1 November, 2pm – Advent Toy Service at St. John's (see page 5)

CONTACT DETAILS

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

Parish Council Clerk – email : longhirstpc@gmail.com (a)
County Councillor – David Towns 07985 012012 / email : david.towns@northumberland.go.uk (g)
Vicar - (b)
Churchwarden - Heather Jackson 07756 690027/ email : siriusa1998@aol.com (d)
PCC Secretary – Mike Elphick 01670 790764 / email : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)
Longhirst Parish Association – Janet Quinn 01670 790630 / email : quinnjanet@sky.com(q)
Village Hall Bookings - Mike Elphick 01670 790764 / email : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)
Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust- Kim Woolhead 07749 811937 / email : kim.woolhead@gmail.com (y)
Lunch Club – Linda Rudd 01670 790116 / email : barnacrelmr@aol.co.uk (i)
Longhirst Hundred Club - Mike Elphick 01670 790764 / email : mike.elphick1@gmail.com (c)
Parish Voluntary Litter Clearance – Chris Lediard 01670 790268 / email : chris.lediard@tiscali.co.uk (r)
Village Coffee Mornings – Helen McCabe 01670 790494 / email : mccabe_paul1@sky.com (n)
Village Pub Nights – Allison and Richard Tordoff 01670 790364 / email : rtordoffs@gmail.com (h)
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 / email: badrsg@btinternet.com (s)
Village Website – www.longhirstvillage.co.uk - Chris Marr 01670 790196 / email : 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 : 01670 791149, dewarms@btinternet.com (w)
Janet Quinn – Micklewood Close : 01670 790630, quinnjanet@sky.com (q)
Kim Woolhead – 3 Broomhaugh: 07749 811937, kim.woolhead@gmail.com (y)
Jill McManus – 7 The Village: 07837 525634, longhirstleader@gmail.com (o)

A copy of this and other Longhirst Leaders can be found on the Village website (u)

If you would like to receive a copy by email please let Mike Elphick (c) know.