
LONGHIRST LEADER

April / May 2017

OPEN GARDENS AND CHURCH FLOWER FESTIVAL
SATURDAY 1ST AND SUNDAY 2ND JULY



Our **Open Gardens** weekend is fast approaching! We now have offers from twelve owners to open their gardens in the Village and we thank them very much. We know that there are many more lovely gardens but access and distance prevent them from being included. We hope to mount an exhibition of photographs of 'Gardens around the Parish' and if you would like your garden to be included please send Keith Cochrane (see below) a photo or two. Not a photographer - then contact Keith who will be happy to capture your garden on camera.

Everyone is important and has a role to play over the weekend, whether you open your garden; act as a steward welcoming people when they arrive; drive the minibus from the car park to the Village centre; greet visitors in the Church; serve refreshments in the Village Hall or are involved in the preparations beforehand - **WE NEED YOU ALL!**

Dorothy Launchbury writes - The **Flower Festival** will be held as usual within St. John's Church and the theme this year is "Our Favourite Poems and Rhymes". This gives us lots of possibilities for inspiration and flair and if you would like to participate by creating a display do please let me know. We would welcome donations towards the cost of the flowers - you might like to choose a favourite poem or rhyme and this could be in memory of a loved one.

Please drop in to the **Village Coffee Mornings** on the second Saturday of each month from 10.15am to noon in the Village Hall to offer your ideas and help, go on the Open Gardens web site www.longhirstopengardens.org or just contact any of the following to let them know what you would like to do.

Linda Mowbray (f) - **Open Gardens**

Dorothy Launchbury (790491) - **Flower Festival**

Carol Robson (x) - **Refreshments**

Claire and Peter Coates (k) - **Traffic Management, Stewarding, Selling Tickets**

Mike Elphick (c) - **Signage, Minibus Transport**

Keith Launchbury (790491) - **Finance and Donations**

Keith Cochrane (cochranekeith@yahoo.co.uk / 07980 575101) - Photography

Jill Elphick (e) - Co-ordinator

Thank you all in anticipation and we look forward to another successful Weekend.

Jill Elphick

VILLAGE WEB SITE

For many years Bjeorn Backe guided the development and upkeep of the Village Web Site. Now Bjeorn has moved away from the Village we need someone else to work with Alan Block to keep this useful resource up to date. Any offers? Please contact Jill Elphick (e).

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Parish Council met on Thursday 2nd March.

There were 5 residents present. It was pointed out that the **spotlight** from the Church is too high and one from the Golf Range causes distraction heading past Longhirst Hall gates. The Clerk said he would see if they could be lowered or moved.

Parking at the top of the Village is again blocking the footpath forcing pedestrians onto the road at a point of a blind corner which is very dangerous.

It would appear that receiving **fast broadband** is not straightforward and results are varied.

The **Colliery footpath** is still not properly repaired and our County Councillor has asked NCC to look at the situation.

Parish Maintenance - Richard Tordoff has obtained quotes from County Highways and local contractors for extra verge cutting. This will be discussed once all prices are available and NCC have decided how much they will do.

As yet we have had no response from NCC's Planning Manager concerning the request to Dere Street homes to re-instate the **footpath from Micklewood to the Village**. It was suggested that the PC should ask our County Councillor to talk to the Planning Department to see if we can negotiate opening up a "Permissive Right of Way" and so help to provide some access to local social amenities.

A **planning application** has been received from Mr. Jordon to build a garage extension onto the Old Moor Farmhouse. The seasonal change for the equestrian centre has been approved. A variation application has been received regarding the conversions of Longhirst Hall. This included new plans for the bedroom block and an increase in the number of apartments to 15.

A request was made that we explore the idea of placing a **street light** 50 yards down the Pegswood Road to cover the bus stop and the exit from the Church car park. The Clerk will make enquiries with the Highways Department.

Parish Council elections will take place on 4th May. The Clerk has copies of nomination briefing notes for anyone who wishes to be a candidate. The election is open to all Parishioners. If you are interested please view the NCC website or contact the Clerk for information.

STOP PRESS

Since the meeting it has been brought to my attention that there is a **rat infestation** in the Village. Could people PLEASE desist from feeding birds and poultry on the ground and only use

designated feeders well away from anything that rodents can climb. Please also ensure that the ground surrounding these feeders is kept clear.

Catherine Farrell

COLOURFUL BUNTING FOR THE VILLAGE HALL

Like the idea? We have an offer from Anne Atkinson to show us a quick way to make material bunting. No particular skills needed but those involved might form the basis of a sewing/craft group for next winter!! If you would like to give it a go please let us know and hopefully you can join us on Wednesday 26th April in the Village Hall between 6pm and 8.30pm. Please bring as much material (not nylon) and sewing threads as possible.

Jill Elphick (e)

MICKLEWOOD MATTERS

The developers of the five new houses on the old orchard site are hoping to have the main structures completed by the end of May. This would mean an end to the dawn chorus of heavy plant machinery thundering through the estate and, hopefully, mud free and repaired roads and paths. There will still be cosmetic work to do on the new houses but disruption should be kept to a minimum.

There is a great deal of litter appearing on the paths and in the hedges. I know that the Village has a litter picking group and it might be worth setting up our own group.

On one of my dog walks we disturbed a stoat with its pure white winter coat with a jet black streak down its back.

Margot Deas

PARISH BROADBAND WORKING PARTY NEWS

Much of the Village is now connected to fibre broadband and iNorthumberland report that they are very encouraged by the level of take up. Needless to say, a number of households experienced problems and Openreach were not always the flavour of the month! Hopefully most of the teething problems are now behind us and we can look forward to faster broadband in the outstanding parts of the Parish in the near future.

iNorthumberland have also advised us that Virgin Media have a main fibre route running down the A1 and that this has been extended along the new Morpeth Bypass with a view to linking Morpeth, Pegswood and Ashington. They say "the advice from Virgin is to encourage people who are interested in their services to complete the form at <http://www.virginmedia.com/cablemystreet> and if there is a high level of interest they will take that into account as part of their future planning work. It may come to nothing but probably worth people spending a couple of minutes filling in a form." This advice applies to all Parish households, even if you already have access to fibre broadband and the more expressions of interest Virgin receive the more likely we are to benefit from improved services and from increased competition between providers. Please take a few moments to sign up.

For further information please contact Peter Coates (I).

The Parish Broadband Working Party

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Longhirst Parish Association welcomes two new Trustees, Alan Hardiman, appointed by the Mid Northumberland U3A and Mo Dewar, appointed by the Garden Association.



The uplighters that were not working have now been repaired as have the leaking valves above the dividing doors. It has been reported that the water heater in the ladies toilet has been vibrating noisily again but the plumber who came to repair it could not find the fault. If anyone is aware of this problem, please let Mike Elphick or one of the Trustees know about it. We are pleased to report that a roll of soil reinforcement mesh has been purchased and will be laid down over the rear car park in the very near future.

Finally, it seems that we have lost a few large white plates and desert bowls from the kitchen. These may have migrated to some of our homes as we have had meals delivered to us or taken spare food home rather than letting it be put in the waste bin. **If you find any plates, bowls or other crockery or cutlery that belongs to the Hall please return them or contact Carol Robson (x).**

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

Carol Robson invites you to a **WILDLIFE WATCH DAY** in aid of St. John's Church

at

ROSE COTTAGE, ULGHAM LANE

on

SATURDAY 29th APRIL



10.00am - 12.00noon

Coffee/tea and scones

2.00pm - 4.00pm

Tea/coffee and cake

6.30pm - 9.30pm

Coffee/tea and snacks

£5 per session, includes refreshments

Raffle and Bottle Tombola

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

Tickets from Carol Robson (x), Sibell Pigg (790354) and Dorothy McMillan (d).

Parking is limited so please car share if possible.

JAM JARS WANTED

I use a lot of jam jars when making preserves for the various Village sales and am running out of them. I would be very glad to receive clean jam jars, particularly the 1lb size. They could be left at the Village Hall or I could collect them. Thank you.

Margaret Lediard (r).

VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS

Thank you to everyone who supported the TRAUDCRAFT Big Brew Coffee Morning. We raised £37 which will go towards Changing the Future for Families in some of the world's poorest communities.

Jill Elphick



WOODRUFF WOOD GUIDED TOUR - SATURDAY 20th MAY AT 2PM



wildlife, well-being, woodfuel, warmth

We would like to invite residents of Longhirst to our annual free of charge behind the scenes guided tour of Woodruff Wood.

It will be a very friendly and informal tour - a gentle stroll whilst chatting about the wildlife, woodland management and our work over the last twelve months. Adults and children are welcome.

Please note that although we now have one hardstanding track in place, the remainder of the ground is uneven and wet and muddy in places. Suitable footwear is essential for the majority of the walk. Most sections are not suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs - however, you are more than welcome to accompany us along Main Ride which is surfaced but you will have to return via the same route. There are no toilets on site (but plenty of bushes if desperate!). As disturbance is kept to a minimum for the benefit of wildlife (which in May includes ground nesting birds), only dogs on short leads please.

If you are interested in joining us, please arrive for a 2pm start (no need to book). The tour will last for one to two hours. We will meet at the entrance of the Wood and we now have car parking on site. The Wood is situated on Ulgham Lane which is the back road between Longhirst and Ulgham. We are located just south of the Old Haul Road bridge. For satnav users, the postcode of the nearest dwellings is NE61 3NQ.

For further information, please contact us at info@woodruffwood.co.uk or tel. 07525 841361.

We hope to see you soon!

Julia Meldrum and Chris Tomlinson

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

LIFE ON ULGHAM LANE

Hello! I live at The Hazels with my partner Mick and we see some interesting, unusual, and occasionally comical sights in our wood. One frosty, bright, early morning in late January I opened the bedroom blind to be greeted by two very tame robin red breasts in photographic pose perched on the garden furniture just in front of the window. A little later a small red squirrel arrived on one of the nut feeders. A couple of years ago we would have been quite blasé about this, having a colony of about twelve constantly performing acrobatics through the tall trees but unfortunately not any more since the grumpy greys arrived in force! Still, just recently we are seeing the occasional red which is heart warming.

That same day driving towards Morpeth I saw a heron perched on the grass verge looking intently skywards - waiting to spot aircraft?!

February/March has brought the night sound of calling foxes - which incidentally murdered a neighbour's hens recently - for the first time I may add. The owls are also very vocal at the moment. They both hoot and screech. Sometimes I join in just to confuse them and they reply! I wonder what April will bring!

Julie Roberts

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



We offer you all a warm invitation to join us for our Holy Communion service on Easter Sunday in St. John's Church on 16th April at 9.30am. Our other combined services for April and May follow the usual pattern at St. John's, Longhirst and St. Andrew's, Bothal.

2nd April - Holy Communion 9.30am St. John's; Evensong 4pm in the Rectory

9th April - Palm Sunday service 9.30am St. Andrew's; Evensong 4pm Rectory

16th April - EASTER SUNDAY 9.30am St. John's

23rd April - Holy Communion 9.30am St. Andrew's

30th April - Combined service 10.15am St. Margaret's, Pegswood; Evensong 4pm at St. John's

7th May - Holy Communion 9.30am St. John's; Evensong 4pm St. Andrew's

14th May - Holy Communion 9.30am St. Andrew's; Evensong 4pm St. John's

21st May - Family Service 10am St. John's; Evensong 4pm St. Andrew's

28th May - Holy Communion 9.30am St. Andrew's; Evensong 4pm St. John's

There are special services throughout Holy Week within the Benefice. On Monday 10th April the Holy Communion at 7.30pm is in St. John's, Longhirst and on 13th April the Maundy Thursday Holy Communion is again in St. John's. We will meet to clean and decorate the Church for Easter on Saturday 15th April at 9.30am. We would welcome any new volunteers and if you have flowers you would like to donate please come along with them.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

Saturday 29th April - Carol Robson's Wildlife Watch Day - see page 4.

Saturday 3rd June - our traditional **Church Fete** in the Village Hall from 2pm. All donations of cakes, plants and tombola prizes would be welcome, together with your help and support on the day itself.

Our recent Broth and Beetle Drive raised £256 for Church funds. Thank you to everyone who supported the evening.

Jill Elphick

VICAR'S LETTER



I was fascinated to learn that according to a study on our economy, Easter is fast becoming the new Christmas. It would appear that more and more of us are now sending Easter cards and presents to one another than ever before, yet all the while struggling like never before with the traditional Easter. Thus while our society finds it harder to cope with a resurrected Christ, it appears to have less and less difficulty in conferring divine status on an over-sized rabbit running around with eggs in a basket. Whatever next?

Well, next apparently is the plan to fix the date of Easter. As you may know, unlike Christmas, Easter is an inconveniently movable feast. The proposed change does I'm sure have something to do with making easier the planning of the Easter holidays but I suspect the real driving force is the perceived positive impact that a fixed Easter might have on the sales and consumer spending thereby making this sacred time an even more useful cog in the economic machine. Is this really the best way to go? It seems to me to be reinforcing the tendency to measure our worth according to convenience or according to our capacity for production or consumption.

What really connects Christmas and Easter of course is fulfilment. At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus as the light who is coming into the world and at Easter we celebrate him as the light that could not be extinguished by the darkness of death and destruction. On that first Easter morning his friends expected to find him dead in the tomb exactly where he had been placed on Good Friday, the latest victim of the powers that be, or, if you know the story, as a commodity conveniently traded in for the life of a nationalist freedom fighter (or terrorist depending on your point of view). In this and in other ways the Easter story does not deny the darkness, the reality that all is not well with our world but it does surprise us with the assertion that there is more to life than death, and more to death than destruction.

Jesus once told those who came to him, "*even the hairs on your head are numbered*" his way of saying that they were of infinite and eternal value and precious in the divine economy. That is why on that first Easter Day, against all the odds, he met the bewildered, grieving, faltering disciples in their darkness, exactly where they were and they were surprised to find that there was a future beyond their disillusion, failure and wildest imaginings. That is also why, in the light

of Easter, St. John could include in his Christmas Gospel, " *The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.*" Now that is Christian hope.

John Park

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. 164 Eileen Buglass	Ticket No. 81 Claire Coates	Ticket No. 5 Jill Elphick
March	Ticket No. 53 Linda Mowbray	Ticket No. 115 Phil Hourigan	Ticket No. 63 Gill Featonby

If you have not signed a standing order you should have had a letter from me asking you to join the Hundred Club or to renew your membership. If you have not heard from me and would like to know more or would like to join please do not hesitate to contact me (c).

Mike Elphick

STAINER'S CRUCIFIXION

During Holy Week as part of sung EVENSONG in St. James Church Morpeth at 7pm on Wednesday 12th April the Mid Northumberland Chorus will be singing Stainer's Crucifixion. We suggest you arrive early to make sure of your seat for what is going to be a memorable evening. For more information contact Jill and Mike Elphick (e) (c).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

Wednesday 5 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Saturday 8 th	10am Litter Pickers meeting at the Village Hall	(r)
	10.15am - noon Village Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(e)
Sunday 9 th	9.30am Holy Communion at St. Andrew's Bothal	(b)
Monday 10 th	7.30pm Holy Communion at St. John's Longhirst	(b)
Thursday 13 th	7.30pm Maundy Thursday Holy Communion at St. John's	(b)
Saturday 15 th	9.30am Clean and decorate the Church for Easter	
Sunday 16 th	9.30am Easter Sunday Holy Communion at St. John's Longhirst	(b)
Tuesday 18 th	2 pm Mother's Union meet at St. Margaret's, Pegswood	(g)
Wednesday 19 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Friday 21 st	Late black bin collection after bank holiday	
Saturday 29 th	Wildlife watch day - see page 4	(x)
Sunday 30 th	10.15am Combined service on 5 th Sunday at St. Margaret's Pegswood	(b)

MAY

Wednesday 3 rd	11.45am Luncheon club in the Village Hall	(i)
Thursday 4 th	7pm Parish Council AGM	(a)
Friday 5 th	Late black bin collection after bank holiday	
Friday 12 th	Deadline for items for the June/July Longhirst Leader e-mail to claire@petercoates.plus.com	Editorial Group
Saturday 13 th	10am Litter Pickers meeting at the Village Hall	(r)
	10.15am - noon Village Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(e)
Tuesday 16 th	2 pm Mother's Union meets at St. Margaret's, Pegswood	(g)
Wednesday 17 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Saturday 20 th	2pm Guided tour of Woodruff Wood	See p 4

JUNE

Saturday 3 rd	2pm Traditional Church Fete in the Village Hall	(e)
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REGULAR EVENTS

Everyone is welcome to.....

- Church services as detailed on page 5
- Junior (7-14 yrs) Activities Club in the V. Hall 6.30 - 7.30pm every Tuesday during term time
- Badminton in the Village Hall on Tuesday at 8.15pm [please contact Claire Coates (k)]
- Yoga in the Village Hall on Wednesday at 7.30pm

Mobile Library 10am in Village/4.10pm Colliery 7th/21st April and 5th/19th May

FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 1st/Sunday 2nd July - Open Gardens and Church Flower Festival

Sunday 3rd September - Village Show

CONTACT DETAILS

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

Parish Council Clerk - Ian Thompson 791851 / e-mail : ianoflonghirst@hotmail.co.uk (a)

Vicar - Rev. John Park 510793 / e-mail : johnp2910@gmx.co.uk (b)

Assistant Curate - Rev. Lee Cleminson 519398 / e-mail : Revlleecleminson@gmail.com (j)

Churchwardens - Dorothy McMillan 518375 / e-mail : dorothymcmillan23@yahoo.co.uk (d)

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

PCC Secretary - Jill Elphick 790764 / e-mail : jill.elphick1@gmail.com (e)

Home Communion Contact - Linda Mowbray 791627 / e-mail : lindamowbray41@gmail.com (f)

Mothers Union - Jean Richardson 504960 / e-mail : jeanandjimr@hotmail.com (g)

Longhirst Parish Association - Gill Featonby 812447 / e-mail : gfeatonby@btinternet.com (h)

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

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Badminton - Claire Coates 791088 / e-mail : pandc@petercoates.plus.com (k)

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Village Coffee Mornings - Jill Elphick 790764 / e-mail : jill.elphick1@gmail.com (e)
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If you require a copy in large print please let us know.