

LONGHIRST LEADER

August / September 2021

CHURCH FETE

Saturday 11th September

10.00 am to 3.00 pm

Longhirst Village Hall

AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED!

We have stalls offering hand-made crafts, framed photos, fabric bags, cushions and accessories, local honey, beeswax products and bee-related handmade goods, home-made cakes and produce, plants, watercolour prints, coasters, tablemats, cards and lots more!

Delicious home-made refreshments available, including bacon butties and ice creams/lollies

Grand Raffle with lots of prizes (see below)

FREE ENTRY and all proceeds will be in aid of St John's Church

Our Church Fete has obviously had to be rearranged from 10th July, to accommodate the Government pandemic regulations. Please note, however, that although the raffle tickets for the Grand Raffle will still bear the original date, in all other respects they are being utilised as if they had been printed with the revised date of the Church Fete, which is **11th September**. If you have any queries about this, please contact Dorothy (e).

Prizes currently include £50 Cash, £50 M&S voucher, £50 gardening voucher, Golf voucher, Afternoon Tea for Two at the Running Fox and Entry for Two to Alnwick Gardens. However, you will also see below a message from Jan Oliver and her group, who are donating the most beautiful throw as our star raffle prize, in memory of Jill Elphick, who is dearly missed by so many people in Longhirst and beyond. Jill would have been delighted and proud and we're sure her many friends will be happy to bolster the day's proceeds to St John's Church, while taking advantage of the possibility of winning such a beautiful prize by purchasing raffle tickets! It really has to be seen to be appreciated.

Dorothy Launchbury (e)

A Throw for Jill Elphick

At the start of the first Covid lockdown some crafty friends and myself, including Jill, decided to knit or crochet squares to create a throw. At the time it was intended simply to keep us occupied and connected. However, we tragically lost our friend Jill and our focus changed. We decided to make a bigger throw with the intention of raffling it to raise funds for St John's in memory of Jill. We have enjoyed seeing the throw evolve and much love has gone into its making. I have to admit that we are rather pleased with it!

Jan Oliver



PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



At the meeting held (in person) at the Village Hall on 1st July Andy Robson, on behalf of **Longhirst Hall residents**, reported that there are still concerns over the drainage work being carried out on behalf of the developers building two new dwellings in the field north of Dairy Lane. Reinstatement work remains outstanding and residents are having to take advice as they believe the sewers through the Hall grounds are incapable of taking the extra foul and surface water. In addition, the progress of the work is still very slow meaning the two year permission for the "hole in the wall" is likely to be exceeded (see the report below on the meeting with Rob Murfin).

Helyn Douglas has been in contact with NCC and a **new dog waste bin** has been installed at The Colliery.

The meeting reviewed **communications within the Parish** and everyone looked forward to the (hopefully) imminent return of social contacts (eg. Luncheon Club, Coffee Mornings and Pub Nights) sooner rather than later. The Leader, backed up by e-supplements, remains the key means of circulating news around all households.

Jon Mills, ably assisted by Jenny Ames and Dave Wiggett, has now completed a survey of the Parish **Public Rights of Way (PROW)** network and a report has been sent to the Countryside Officer at County Hall.*

Peter Coates reported on the very serious damage to the **Church Lychgate** that occurred in the early hours of 19th June. Parishioners are now prevented from attending services within St. John's until the gateway can be cleared and the cost of reinstating the structure is going to be significant. The good news seems to be that the insurers concerned have accepted liability and repair work should get underway shortly (see John Park's report on Page 6).

The long **grass obstructing the new Longhirst nameplate signs** on three approaches to the Village has been cut back and arrangements will be made to have this work carried out in future. (NB: our thanks go to Dave Chambers for all the work he does around the sign on Butcher's Lane). It was noted that the Cricket Club had invited Parish residents to watch Euro 20 matches in their club house and the Parish Council has sent a letter of support on behalf of the **Tennis Club** in their application for grants to install three replacement courts.

Subsequent to the Parish Council meeting Glen Fahy and Peter Coates took part in an on-line discussion with **Rob Murfin, the NCC Director of Planning**, to discuss obstructed PROWs in the proposed Potland Park, the ongoing development work at Longhirst Station, drainage from the new houses in the field north of Dairy Lane and the construction access across the Lane from the grounds of Longhirst Hall. Rob agreed to investigate the matters raised.

The **next meeting** of the Parish Council will be on **Thursday 2nd September at 7pm** in the Village Hall. All residents are invited to attend.

Peter Coates (k)

*Stop press: Tony Derbyshire, the Countryside Officer, has just praised Jon and his team for their report and plans to act on their recommendations.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN



Hello everyone. As I write, the sun is shining and summer is well and truly here (I know, because I am getting lots of e-mails and calls about weeds and grass cutting...!).

Coronavirus cases have been rising steeply in our area throughout June and July. Recent months have been such a rollercoaster of events, we can never be sure whether or not we are truly emerging from these dark times. Certainly, the vaccination programme seems to be hugely successful and as a vaccination centre volunteer, I have seen myself how our brilliant local surgeries and NHS have pulled together as part of a major national effort to beat covid-19. However, there are difficult times ahead for the health system as it battles to get back on top of routine surgeries and prepares to deal with what is likely to be a bad season for flu and other viruses. Please do remain safe and thinking of others who may be vulnerable not just to coronavirus, but also to flu and severe colds. As many of you will know, there were local elections in May. I was delighted to have been re-elected as your local county councillor with a significantly increased share of the vote and majority - my heartfelt thanks go to those who put their faith in me for a second term. To those who did not vote for me, rest assured I will do my best for all residents and groups regardless of how you voted. My commiserations go to the other candidates, who I know will continue to keep me on my toes! I have a lot of issues to be working on for you, but some good results already, including road repair and resurfacing works on the road between the Village and Longhirst Colliery. The recent speed-reduction and safety scheme also appears to be having an impact, although it was very distressing to see the destruction of the Lychgate at the Church by a large vehicle leaving the road early one morning. I can't comment on the details of that incident, but it is true to say the Council can only do so much to encourage drivers to take care and to be aware of their surroundings.

At the request of a number of residents, I am looking at what can be done to improve the path running alongside Butcher's Lane. There is no quick-fix in that case, but please know it is high on my agenda. As ever, I will continue to work with the excellent Longhirst Parish Council to address your concerns and to bring about improvements in the community wherever we can. I will also continue to engage with local community groups and organisations, so that they can expand their offering and the support they provide to residents.

As ever, if you have any issues to raise with me, I can be contacted by email or by phone (my details are on the back page) and if you see me out and about please feel free to stop me for a chat. If you want more regular updates and you use Facebook, please "like" my page - "Councillor David Towns - Pegswood". I am always happy to come to see people at their convenience to discuss any matter and am here to help.

David Towns (g)

WELCOME

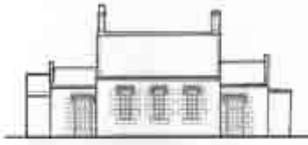


Carol Davidson has purchased 14 Main Street and is working very hard to renovate it before she moves in.

Richard and Kathy Turner are now the owners of Greystones. They run the Old Cinema Launderette in Durham which is a working Laundry that also holds live music events organised by Richard. They are mainly in Longhirst at weekends at present but plan to live here full time next year.

We welcome them all to the Village, hope they will be very happy here and look forward to seeing them at future events.

VILLAGE HALL NEWS



The Village Hall is now ready for re-opening; indeed, the Luncheon Club, the Parish Council and some U3A groups have already started. The Church has also held services in the Hall while waiting for damage to the Lychgate to be cleared away. It is planned to restart the monthly coffee mornings (on the 2nd Saturday in the month) and the Pub Nights (on the 3rd Friday in the month) in August.

The Wi-Fi service is up and running with a download speed of around 36 mega bites per second. Orders have been placed for installing bookshelves, storage and a board for display of historical records donated by Ian Thompson and Gill Featonby. These works will be completed in the Library during September after which a wood laminate floor will be fitted and the room will be redecorated, bringing to an end this phase of the Village Hall redevelopment.

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

Macmillan Coffee Morning in Longhirst Village Hall on Saturday 25th September from 10am till 12 noon.

Entrance £5 to include coffee and cake.

Bacon butties £3 made to order

Accompanied children free

Please come along and bring your family and friends.

If you are willing to help by donating cake please contact Linda Rudd (i) on 790116.

VILLAGE PUB NIGHTS



Great News! Pub Night will resume on **Friday 20th August from 7.30pm** in the Village Hall or perhaps outside (weather permitting).

We would like to welcome back old and new. Be assured we will be adhering to Covid restrictions.

We have a WhatsApp page 'Pub Night United' to keep you updated. If you would like to be part of it, please send your details to Allison (h).

We hope to see everyone there for a long awaited get together.



Allison, Richard, Susan, Kathleen and Phil

A NEW FITNESS CLASS CALLED "POUND" IN THE VILLAGE HALL

"Pound" is a drumming inspired workout using exercise drum sticks.

Rock out, relieve stress and feel empowered in a unique community fitness class. Combining pilates and cardio, "Pound" transforms drumming into an effective way to work out for the mind, body, and soul. The class is suitable for men and women aged 14 years and over.

Having taught this class in Morpeth for 5 years, fitness instructor Bethan Ashton, is relocating Pound to Longhirst on **Tuesday evenings; 6.30 to 7.30 and 7.30 to 8.30pm.**

To join please book in via www.bookwhen.com/bodyelectric. Any queries please e mail: bodyelectricbethan@hotmail.com or Facebook: [body Electric Fitness and wellbeing](https://www.facebook.com/bodyelectricfitness).

LONGHIRST VILLAGE LUNCHEON CLUB NEEDS VOLUNTEER STAFF!

Until the Covid pandemic closed us all down in March 2019, the Longhirst Village Luncheon Club had been running fortnightly on a Wednesday for over 15 years, thanks, in no small measure, to the dedication of four volunteer lead cooks and their teams.

We are delighted to report that this much valued Village resource has now restarted but we are desperately in need of 1 lead cook, 3 assistant cooks, and ideally, 5 table layers/servers/washer-uppers to fill all the vacant roles in four teams, each of which prepares, cooks, serves, and clears away a two-course meal for between 25 and 30 diners on a Wednesday, on alternate months throughout the year. Each team is organised to have the capacity for at least one member to be absent without causing undue pressure on the rest and if more than one team member needs to be absent, there are people who can be contacted to provide cover.

The lead cook role involves planning, in conjunction with the other three lead cooks, and purchasing for the meal and heading a team of at least two assistant cooks and two or three table layers/servers/washer-uppers on no more than 6 Wednesdays per year. Two of our long-standing lead cooks, Carol Robson (f) and Linda Rudd (i), are happy to discuss details of what is required, with anyone interested.

Assistant cooks turn up at about 10am on the morning of their shift to assist with the preparation and cooking of the food. They may also assist in serving and washing up, as necessary and their duty is over by 1.30/2.00pm at the latest. We can arrange for volunteers to obtain a food hygiene qualification free of charge.

Table layers/servers/washer-uppers turn up at a time, agreed with their lead cook to set up tables and lay them. They then serve the meal from 12 noon onwards and their shift ends when all is washed up and cleared away, usually by 1.30/2.00pm

If you feel you might be able to serve the community in any of these capacities, please get in touch with Mike Elphick (c).

Mike Elphick

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOGS.

We have recently become aware of and disgusted at the amount of dog fouling around our lovely Village as well as on the paths in, and to and from, the Millennium Wood.

All responsible dog owners should carry a few bags in their pockets and be prepared to 'pick up' after their dogs. There are bins in the Main Street, at the top of the bridle path or you just take the bag home with you and use your own bin. Please think of others when you exercise your dogs.

Thank you.

A group of Grumpy Grandmas and Grandads!

DAMAGE TO THE CHURCH LYCHGATE

As most people seem to know by now a few weeks ago a motor vehicle crashed into the Lychgate at St. John's Church, an incident in which, thankfully, nobody was injured. However, the Lychgate was virtually demolished and access to the Church and Churchyard blocked. As the gate is a Grade Two listed structure, the intention is to have it carefully and expertly dismantled, the stone and timber securely stored and then reconstructed. How long this might take is not yet clear but the process is underway.

The Lychgate was constructed in 1885 in memory of Rev'd Edward Lawson, the first vicar of St. John's church and dedicated, "to the glory of God and the use of the people of Longhirst." Since the collision happened several people have asked me why these roofed gateways into churchyards, so popular with the Victorians, were give such a distinctive name. Apparently, they were used in those days during burials for sheltering a coffin until the clergyman's arrival and the word "Lych" derives from the Old English word for a dead body. On a happier note, the gate has over the



years been a popular setting for newly married couples to have their photos taken and we hope the restoration will go smoothly so that in the future many more happy memories can be made there.

On the morning of the collision I went down very early to check nobody was hurt and to ensure that the police had been informed. While taking some photos to help with the investigation I couldn't resist capturing the irony in the little cautionary notice by the gate still standing dutifully amid the rubble

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)
June	Ticket No. 230 Wendy Witten	Ticket No. 228 Joan McKenzie for Richard	Ticket No. 26 Dorothy McMillan
July	Ticket No. 208 Gordon Ferguson for Grace	Ticket No. 25 Dorothy McMillan	Ticket No. 235 Paul McCabe

Mike ELphick

VICAR'S LETTER



When England's football team scored their third goal in the 50th minute of their recent Euro "2020" quarter final match against Ukraine I received a most uncharacteristic phone text from my son who, under normal circumstances, isn't given to expressions of patriotism. He quoted from William Shakespeare's play King Henry the Fifth, "Cry, God for Harry, England and Saint George". My reaction was two-fold: I thought to myself that his GCSE English Literature lessons must have had some good effect and my second thought was to ask, "But which Harry?" Was he referring to Harry Kane England's captain, or to Harry Maguire England's centre half, (who between them had breached the Ukraine defence three times) or to England's warrior king?

With English football's promising but as yet unfulfilled renaissance, came the reappearance of red crossed St. George's flags fluttering from cars, taxis, garden gates, bedroom windows and not forgetting the occasional spire of a parish church. Alongside Harry (take your pick) St. George was for a couple of weeks the Englishman of the moment which nicely obscured the fact that St. George wasn't actually English but an international and cosmopolitan patron saint. He was, it seems, an officer of Greek descent serving in the Roman Army who was martyred at the beginning of the fourth century in Palestine for refusing to renounce his Christian faith. As his fame spread throughout christendom a host of countries claimed St. George as a patron saint as well as England including, not surprisingly, Georgia!

The flag's origins too are to be found, ironically in view of the football result, in the Italian port of Genoa whose red cross was adopted by the city of London in the twelfth century and flown from the masts of its merchant ships to claim Genoese protection in the sometimes hostile waters of the Mediterranean. Even within England itself St. George did not achieve his monopoly on patron saint status until the sixteenth century and this was also when the flag finally became the English national emblem.

Of course, it is the dragon story and the association between medieval English knighthood and the cult of St. George which really captured the imagination of storytellers like Shakespeare and was, I remember, also the inspiration behind a favourite school hymn which goes: "When a knight won his spurs in the stories of old, he was gentle and brave, he was gallant and bold, with a shield on his arm and a lance in his hand, for God and for valour he rode through the land." The hymn also points out that while the knights are now no more and the imaginary dragons long since dead, there are still very real enemies to confront and there are noble causes to pursue: "Let faith be my shield and let joy be my steed, 'gainst the dragons of anger, the ogres of greed; and let me set free with the sword of my youth, from the castle of darkness, the power of the truth."

While such aspirations may appear, like a red crossed flag atop a church spire - too high to reach - surely such a hopeful vision is nevertheless well worth revisiting, renewing, valuing, and holding on to each and every day until the final whistle goes?

John Park (b)

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



The August and September services are:

Date	Holy Communion
August 1 st	9.30am at Longhirst*
August 8 th	9.30am at Bothal
August 15 th	9.30am at Longhirst*
August 22 nd	9.30am at Bothal
August 29 th	10.15 am at Pegswood
September 5 th	9.30am at Longhirst*
September 12 th	9.30am at Bothal
September 19 th	9.30am at Longhirst*
September 26 th	9.30am at Bothal

Morning Service Wednesdays at 9.30am in St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood

*Services at Longhirst will be in the Village Hall until further notice.

Dorothy Launchbury (e)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUGUST

Wednesday 4 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Saturday 14 th	10am Litter Pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
	10.15am Village Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n)
Wednesday 18 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Friday 20 th	7.30pm Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 1 st	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Thursday 2 nd	7pm Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall. All welcome	(a)
Friday 3 rd	Late Black bin collection	
Friday 3 rd	Deadline for October / November Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com	Ed. Group
Saturday 11 th	10am-3pm Church Fete in the Village Hall	(e)
Wednesday 15 th	11.45am Luncheon Club in the Village Hall	(i)
Saturday 25 th	10am - 12noon Macmillan Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(i)

REGULAR EVENTS

Everyone is welcome to.....

- Church services as detailed above
 - Pound Fitness Class in the Village Hall on Tuesdays, 6.30 - 7.30 and 7.30 to 8.30pm (see P4)
- Mobile Library - 9.45am in the Village on 20th August and 17th September

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.gov.uk (g)

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

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

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

PCC Secretary - Dorothy Launchbury 790491 / email: launching1@outlook.com (e)

Longhirst Parish Association - Margaret Lediard 790268/ e-mail : margaret.lediard@tiscali.co.uk (t)

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

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

Longhirst Village Show Association - Carol Benbow 790194 / e-mail : carol_benbow@hotmail.com (p)

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)

Longhirst Colliery Residents Association - Norah Dryden 817862 / e-mail : n.dryden@sky.com (j)

Longhirst Colliery Recreation Hall -- Bill Dryden 817862. / email : drydenx2@btinternet.com (m)

Red/Grey Squirrel Sightings - MADRS 07570 897979 / enquiries@madredsquirrels.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)

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If you require a copy in large print please let us know.