

LONGHIRST LEADER

October / November 2023

REV. JOHN PARK'S RETIREMENT LUNCH

As many of you will already know, the Rev. John Park is retiring this November after 17 years of devoted service to this community.

To mark the occasion, we are holding a **pooled lunch in the Village Hall on Saturday 4 November** starting at 12 noon. A pooled lunch involves us all bringing enough food for ourselves and a tiny bit more (if we bring too much there is always lots of food wasted) and all the food we bring is laid out for us all to share. Drinks for a toast will be provided together with water, teas, and coffees. It would be most helpful if you could contact Carol Robson on 07773 738442 so that she can plan for the numbers of people who wish to attend and to help create a balance of savoury and sweet dishes.

Should you wish to contribute to a leaving gift for John, please leave your donation in a sealed envelope at No. 10, the Village, Linda and Edwin Mowbray's House.

We have been very fortunate to have had John as our Rector for so long and this occasion, to which all are cordially invited, will serve to wish him all the best for a long and happy retirement. His last service in the Parish will be on Sunday 5 November at St. John's Church, starting at 9.30am.

VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS



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 14 October**. Please note that there is then a **Special Coffee Morning** in the Village Hall on **Sunday 12 November following the 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)

LONGHIRST WILDLIFE & COMMUNITY TRUST FREE EVENTS

The following free events are planned in October/November:

Saturday, 21 October, 10.00 -12.00 Northumberland Wildlife Trust Walk at East Chevington Nature Reserve.

Monday, 27 November, 10.00-12.00 Winter Wildflowers, Scotch Gill Woods, Morpeth.

If you would like to book onto either of these, please e-mail Pauline Gilbertson at pauline.gilbertson@gmail.com or 07717 224072. Lifts will be available if needed. Once we have confirmed dates for further events we will let you know.



Kim Woolhead (y)

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



Longhirst Parish Council

Meeting held on THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

Peter Coates referred to the recent sad deaths of Jon Mills and Ian Thompson. The Chair and Vice Chair and a number of Councillors past and present attended both funerals. The Parish Council is indebted to them for everything they did for the Parish and they will be very sadly missed. Donations to the nominated charities of both families were agreed.

Northumberland County Council Update – Cllr. David Towns reported that there has been an increased number of complaints around verges being overgrown, or conversely being cut back too much. He is keeping pressure on the County Council to continue its road maintenance schedule.

Planning Issues - A number of residents attended to discuss the most recent planning application for Station Cottages. One resident asked if there was any time limit or expiry date after which an unauthorised building would be allowed to remain. David Towns explained that this can happen but only where no objections have been raised. That will not apply in this case because a number of objections have already been submitted. Peter Coates confirmed that the Parish Council remains opposed to the development of this site and a letter of objection would be sent to the County Council.

Longhirst Colliery - Julie Murray reported that the damage to the woods caused by Storm Arwen has still not been rectified. The County Council has confirmed that the woods will be tidied up and the paths cleared, but there is no timescale for when this will happen. The woods are not safe underfoot, particularly for the elderly, and accidents have recently occurred.

Residents have witnessed tractors mounting the pavements and forcing pedestrians off the path. Peter Coates suggested he could take this up with North East Grains if he is given full details of the date and time of such incidents and the vehicle involved.

Councillor Vacancies - the vacancy to replace Peter Lovering (who has moved from the Village) was advertised and one candidate responded. Bill Climson has lived in Longhirst Colliery for the past 10 years and his application was agreed.

The second vacancy, to replace Jon Mills, remains (see page 3).

Woodland Trust meeting – several attempts have been made to contact the Woodland Trust to arrange a meeting. NB: since the Council meeting a response has now come through and arrangements are in hand.

Ashington Road Flooding – The Parish Council has agreed to take a complaint to NCC's Castle Morpeth Local Area Council in November. The road floods each winter after any period of heavy rain. The Parish Council is asking for the ditches to be cleaned out on a regular basis and for the road level to be lifted.

Potland Park Access - Glen Fahy attended meetings with officers from Advance Northumberland and NCC. He has received assurances that the Park will be reopened but no specific timescale was forthcoming. A number of entrances and rights of way remain blocked.

Land Registry documentation for the Football Field - David Towns confirmed that the relevant paperwork has been submitted to the Land Registry. This will verify the Parish Council ownership of the field, but it may take several months for the paperwork to be processed.

Ian Thompson Archive - Ian Thompson collected a significant number of papers related to Longhirst Parish. Richard Tordoff plans to go through them and ideally create a digitised archive. The project will take some time to complete and offers of help will be much appreciated.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm on **Thursday 2 November** in Longhirst Village Hall and all residents are welcome to attend.

Janet Quinn (q)

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

I am delighted that Bill Climson from The Colliery has joined the Parish Council but we still need someone to replace Jon Mills who recently died so tragically. Expressions of interest from any residents would be most welcome although it is worth noting that we are under-represented by women and those who live in Longhirst Hall.

Duties are not that onerous – we meet once every two months – so please contact Helyn Douglas, the Parish Clerk (a) of myself (k) for further information.

Hardly anyone has come forward in response to my appeal for more support in the last edition of The Leader.

Five have very kindly offered to help with sign cleaning and I'll be in touch with them shortly. I need two more please.

We still need offers to help with the following:

Lunch Club – please contact Mike Elphick (c)

Litter Picking – Chris Lediard (r)

Pub Nights – Alison and Richard Tordoff (h)

Coffee Mornings – Helen McCabe (n)

Wildlife and Community Trust – Kim Woolhead (y)

Peter Coates, Chairman, Longhirst Parish Council (k)

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Fresh Air Ventilation System has been installed and the building, particularly the kitchen and all its contents, was thoroughly cleaned in time for the re-opening of the Hall on Monday 4 September.

The new gate has been delivered and will be installed shortly.

The Secretary and Trustees are looking forward to a period of less frenetic activity for a while but will begin to give consideration to issues such as wainscoting the Foyer walls (similar to those in the Reading Room) to

enable the stone walls to dry out, the relining of the chimney and the installation of a sound system. If there are any other issues which you, the main users of the Hall, wish to raise this can be done at the AGM on the **Thursday 23 November**.



The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

VILLAGE PUB NIGHTS



Just a reminder that our next Pub Nights are on **Friday 20 October** and **Friday 17 November** from 7.30pm. We look forward to welcoming new and old friends to our very informal nights in Longhirst Village Hall.



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

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. 209 David Clarkson	Ticket No. 156 Margaret Lediard	Ticket No. 44 Peter Coates
September	Ticket No. 211 Irene Clarkson	Ticket No. 66 Linda Rudd	Ticket No. 37 Mark Davis

Mike Elphick (c)

IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we report the recent deaths of Ian Thompson, Norah Dryden, Ruth Hallowell and John Trewick. All will be greatly missed by their families and friends, both within the Parish and further afield. Our thoughts are with them at this very difficult time.

Ian died after a short illness at the beginning of August. He was born in the Village, served as Parish Clerk for many years, chaired the Longhirst Parish Association and regularly maintained the Churchyard before he and Val moved to Consett. His greatest claim to fame was his knowledge of the history of Longhirst Village going back more than two hundred years. He donated his records to the Parish Association and they are now in the archive in the Village Hall.

Norah died at the end of July. She had lived at Longhirst Colliery for 11 years and played an active part in the community until she was taken ill earlier this year. She was on the Residents' Committee and organised a number of Christmas wreath making classes which were a great success.

Ruth moved to Longhirst in the 80's and celebrated her 100th birthday in Foxton Court Care Home earlier this year. She died there in August with her son, John and daughter, Judith by her side. Her funeral service was held at St. John's.



John, a long-term resident of Longhirst, died on 1 June aged 95 years. His daughter, Christine, wrote the following piece.

'It was Dad's dying wish that he could return to Longhirst and have his ashes spread in the Millennium Wood and it would be like he had returned home. I am grateful beyond words to the Parish Council, The Woodland Trust and to Mike Elphick for making it possible for this to be carried out.

It was a bleak rainy day on 15 September when the family planted an apple tree for Dad and spread his ashes in the wood. We hope that it will grow and flourish and that everyone will enjoy it and if you knew my dad please pause awhile and remember him. He had a life well lived.

(The photo shows John's son, sister and son-in-law).

It was such a long time ago - 1969 to be precise, when we arrived in Longhirst Village. I was only 7 years old then. My father was in his element there and one of the first jobs was clearing the jungle that was supposed to be a garden so we could at least walk down it. Over the years that followed he and my mother turned it into a beautiful space with long herbaceous borders and striped lawn. Dad's large vegetable patch and greenhouse were pride of place. Many years of entering the Village Flower Show followed and taken very seriously.

Dad was very involved in Village life and often called upon to be a Mr Fix it. My mother recalls when he and Bobby Moore (they were often together working), were on the Village Hall roof fixing it. A passerby shouted up "Aren't you a bit old to be up there?" To which my dad replied, " If you think I am old you should see my apprentice!" To which they both nearly fell off the roof laughing!

Another time they decided to clear out a drain that was blocked. Bobby lay down and reached in and in a second slid down into the drain with just his wellingtons sticking up out of the top! Dad couldn't pull him out for laughing till his sides hurt. Every time they told the story they would howl with laughter. There were so many of these tales over the years. He got the Victorian radiators for the Village Hall and fixed the heating, and he was proud of that. Every year he would be seen at the Village Fete setting up and then clearing away at the end of the day. He helped set up the Village Bowls Club and enjoyed playing immensely. Mam and Dad both went and planted trees with the other villagers in the new Millennium Wood. They were just sticks and it was hard to envisage how it would eventually look.

It was a sad day when Mam and Dad decided they could no longer manage the garden and thought it better if they downsized while they still could and moved to Morpeth. He definitely left part of him behind in Longhirst and you could tell he really missed being there.'

Christine Timson (nee Trewick)

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



Many thanks to Carol Robson and her helpers who worked so hard to provide such an enjoyable Afternoon Tea at Rose Cottage in August and to all those who helped to make the Autumn Fair a success in September.

The Afternoon Tea raised £444 and the Autumn Fair £530. The proceeds from both went to St. John's Church funds.

Our next major fund-raising event will be the Grand Christmas Coffee Morning on **Saturday 9 December**.

October and November Sunday services are:-

Date	Holy Communion	Evening Prayer
1 October	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Andrew's, Bothal
8 October	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. John's, Longhirst
15 October	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Andrew's, Bothal
22 October	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. John's, Longhirst
29 October	9.30am Pegswood Chapel	4.00pm St. Andrew's, Bothal
5 November	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall
12 November	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall
19 November	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall
26 November	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall

Every Wednesday morning at 9.30am there is a church service in St. Margaret's Hall in Pegswood.

Sunday 12 November, 10.55am - Act of Remembrance at Longhirst War Memorial

Sunday 3 December is Advent Sunday and at St. John's Church, Longhirst, 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 Meadow Well 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 me and I will collect them.

Heather Jackson (d)

VICAR'S LETTER



As many of you may know I am soon to retire from my post as your local vicar and my last Sunday morning service will be at St. John's here at Longhirst on 5 November. I wish I had a pound for every time somebody has said, "Oh, you're going out with a bang then?!" I was "installed" (as they say) at a service held at St. John's on the evening of 28 March 2006 and remember two things very clearly about the occasion. It poured with rain non-stop, so we all got very wet as we made our way up to Longhirst Village Hall for refreshments after the service, but also how

this was more than offset by the warmth of the welcome extended to myself and my family by all who attended. By modern standards seventeen years is a long time for clergy to serve in any one place but we (myself and the family) saw no good reason to ever want to move anywhere else and it has been a happy place in which our children, Alice and Tom, could spend their formative years and attend schools in Morpeth before moving on.

It has also been a very interesting place to work because not only are the communities of Bothal, Pegswood and Longhirst so different, but also the church buildings, which in their unique ways evoke on the one hand, Edwardian Methodism, on another, Victorian Anglicanism and on another the high Catholicism of the medieval world. But what impressed me most, right from the start, was that the church communities at Longhirst and Bothal come together for worship on Sundays and likewise at Pegswood in the Local Ecumenical Partnership where it has been a privilege to share the ministry with Methodist colleagues over the years.

There are of course some particular events that will live fondly in the memory: the Advent Toy services at St. John's and the valuable link with The Cedarwood Centre at North Shields; the Heritage Open Days each September attracting scores of visitors to St. Andrew's Church and Bothal Castle; the poignant Covenant Service each New Year at St. Margaret's, Pegswood, a valuable gift from Methodism; the gatherings in all three villages on Remembrance Sundays; the Tuesday evening youth club which ran for many years in Longhirst Village Hall, the Christingle activity afternoons before Christmas at Bothal, not to mention of course the hugely popular Longhirst Open Gardens weekends, I could go on ...

However, space is limited so I'll sign off with a thought for the day attributed to the co-founder of Methodism, John Wesley.

*"Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,*

With all best wishes and God bless.

*at all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can."
... and you won't go far wrong.*

THE UPCOMING VACANCY

During the time when we will be without an appointed minister, the oversight of the parishes will be undertaken by the Morpeth Area Dean, Reverend Chris Grocock who is Priest in Charge of Holy Sepulchre Ashington and he will arrange for visiting ministers when services of Holy Communion, Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals are required.

I am also delighted to let you know that on Sunday 24 September in St. Nicholas' Cathedral in Newcastle our Churchwarden at St. John's, Mrs Heather Jackson, was authorised as a Lay Minister in the parishes by the Bishop of Newcastle. She therefore has authorisation to conduct services such as Morning and Evening Prayer, Remembrance and Carol Services. Heather has been in training for this for the past twelve months and she will be a great asset no doubt during the vacancy and beyond. Her contact number for matters relating to St. John's is 07756690027

John Park (b)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OCTOBER

4	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
13	Friday	9.45am Mobile Library in the Village	
14	Saturday	10am Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall 10.30am – 12noon Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n) (r)
18	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
20	Friday	7.30pm Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
21	Saturday	10am -12 noon LWCT walk at East Chevington with NWT (see P1)	(y)
29	Sunday	British Summer Time ends. Clocks go back 1 hour	

NOVEMBER

1	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
2	Thursday	7pm Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall. All welcome	(a)
4	Saturday	12noon Rev. John Park's Pooled Retirement Lunch in the V.Hall (see P1)	(f)
10	Friday	9.45am Mobile Library in the Village Deadline for December / January Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com	Ed Group
11	Saturday	10am Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall	(r)
12	Sunday	10.55am Act of Remembrance at Longhirst War Memorial Followed by a Special Coffee Morning in the Village Hall (see P1)	(n)
15	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
17	Friday	7.30pm Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
23	Thursday	6pm Longhirst Parish Association AGM in the Village Hall	(c)
27	Monday	10am-12noon LWCT Winter Wildflowers, Scotch Gill Woods, Morpeth (see P1)	(y)

REGULAR EVENTS

- Church services as detailed on page 5
- Tuesdays in October (and possibly November) 7.30-8.30pm, Ballroom dancing classes contact cramhall@googlemail.com or 07811 811 848
- 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 3 December, 2pm- Annual Toy Service at St. John's
- Saturday 9 December, 10.30 to 12noon – Grand Christmas Coffee Morning
- Tuesday 19 and Thursday 21 December - Carol singing around the Parish

CONTACT DETAILS

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

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

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

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)**

Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust- Kim Woolhead 07749 811937 / e-mail : kim.woolhead@gmail.com **(y)**

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

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 Recreation Room bookings – Mary Climson 07727 198108 / maryclimson67@gmail.com **(j)**

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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Kim Woolhead – 3 Broomhaugh: 07749 811937, kim.woolhead@gmail.com **(y)**