

LONGHIRST LEADER

February / March 2023

LONGHIRST WILDLIFE AND COMMUNITY TRUST PUBLIC EVENT

Thursday 16 February, 7.30pm at Longhirst Village Hall



Join us for Peter Matthewson's illustrated talk about Clark's Bog, the nature reserve he created on the outskirts of Morpeth (east of Coopies Lane). Hear how he has transformed a disused piece of farmland into a wildlife haven teeming with thousands of different species, just three miles from Longhirst!



Suggested donation of £3 per head, to include tea or coffee.
No registration necessary, just come along, all are welcome.

For more information contact Pauline Gilbertson (paulinegilbertson@gmail.com, 07717 224072)

SPRING FAIR

Saturday 1 April 10.30am – 2.30pm Longhirst Village Hall

Various craft and other miscellaneous stalls

Homemade refreshments including Bacon Butties, Soup, Cakes etc.

Admission £1

All Welcome

All proceeds in aid of St. John's Church

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



At the Parish Council meeting held on 5 January residents from Longhirst Hall again raised the issue of the “**hole in the wall**” leading onto Dairy Lane (see below). Bill Dryden from Longhirst Colliery reported that good progress has been made by NCC in clearing the wood after **Storm Arwen**, although the path repairs have been delayed by the bad weather. Jon Mills from **Micklewood** informed the Council that the shares in the estate are about to be transferred to the residents. (Editor’s note: the shares have now been transferred).

Paddock (Millennium) Wood - Tilhill have confirmed that they are content with proposed works to plant the Jubilee tree and repair the bird hide.

St John’s Lychgate repairs - the insurers have asked for additional quotations for the restoration work and this has led to further delays (see page 3).

Planning - Butterwell Disposal Point - a public meeting was held on 6 December and attended by about 35 residents from both Longhirst and Linton. The site agent for NB Clarke outlined proposals and answered a number of questions from residents. In spite of residents’ objections mainly to the dust, noise and traffic implications, it is likely the proposal will be approved as the site is already set aside in the NCC Local Plan for minerals processing and has the rail head that links to the East Coast main line. The Parish Council is going to ask for a set of safeguards to ensure there will be effective monitoring of dust, noise and traffic, and the creation of a regular liaison group. The notes of the meeting are available on the Parish Council website (x).

Repair of the hole in the wall of Longhirst Hall - Northumberland County Council has agreed to chase up the repair of the wall with the developers and if no progress is made will take formal action.

Domino’s Field - the Parish Council welcomed the news that the developer’s appeal had been dismissed and the confirmation that the site is green belt. The Parish Council and the Wildlife and Community Trust hope to discuss with the owner of the field the possibility of extending Paddock Wood over the burn.

Old Coal Haul Road Restoration – NCC Planners have instructed Sanders to cease work on the restoration of the former Butterwell and Stobswood haul road until planning approval for the scheme has been obtained.

Other Issues - Ashington Road - the drainage ditch at the flooding site was cleared last November, again at the request of the Parish Council and concern was expressed that it seems to be necessary to raise the issue every year. The Council agreed to offer £1000 as a contribution to the cost of raising the level of the road.

Butcher’s Lane Footpath – County Councillor David Towns reported that he had discussed the maintenance of the footpath into Pegswood with NCC Highways and it seemed likely that they would only agree to patching repairs in future.

Longhirst Wildlife and Community Trust is about to submit a revised bid to the Heritage Lottery for about £10,000 to purchase bat detectors, trail cameras, nest boxes, etc. and an extensive training programme agreed with the Natural History Society of Northumbria. It will also cover repairs to the bird hide in Paddock Wood.

Parish Logo - A bespoke logo is being designed based on the oak tree image selected at the last meeting.

Public Rights of Way - path maintenance repairs have been delayed due to lack of staffing however new signposts should be installed shortly.

The Parish Council agreed to increase the **parish precept** by 5% next financial year to £8000.

The next meeting will be held at **7pm on Thursday 2 March** in the Village Hall and all residents are welcome to attend.

Janet Quinn (q)

VILLAGE HALL NEWS



The Reading Room is back in operation but we still await a decision on the curtains. This will be made at the Board of Trustees meeting towards the end of January. There have been a few problems with the operation of the new fan radiator but these are being addressed and, in the meantime, the heating in the Reading Room will be supplemented by use of the fire.

The Fresh Air Ventilation System is still on track to be installed during August.

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

Many thanks to everyone who organised or supported our fund raising events in December. The Christmas Fair raised £850 for St. John's funds and our carol singing around the Village, Micklewood, Longhirst Villas and Old Moor raised £416 which, combined with the collection from the Christmas Eve Carol Service, enabled us to donate an amazing £720 to the North Air Ambulance.

The **Spring Fair** will be held on **Saturday 1 April** from 10.30am to 2.30pm (see page 1 for details).



February and March Sunday services are:-

Date	Holy Communion	Evening Prayer
5 February	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
12 February	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
19 February	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
26 February	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
5 March	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
12 March	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
19 March (Mothering Sunday)	9.30am St. John's, Longhirst	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood
26 March	9.30am St. Andrew's, Bothal	4.00pm St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood

Holy Communion Service every Wednesday at 9.30am in St. Margaret's Hall, Pegswood

ST. JOHN'S LYCHGATE

Several readers have been enquiring about the Lychgate at St. John's and the frustrating lack of progress with its restoration. At our end we have done all we are required to do by the church authorities regarding the permissions needed for the restoration of a Grade 2 Listed structure. In March last year our architect produced very detailed plans on how the work is to proceed which were made available for people to examine at Longhirst Village Hall and on the basis of that in June we obtained the necessary "Faculty" (the Church of England's version of planning permission) to go ahead. Before Christmas I asked our architect about the lack of progress and it appears that complications arose in obtaining a second quotation for the work which the insurers now require. We hope however to receive a positive update from our architect soon which would mean work beginning hopefully in the Spring, assuming costs are agreed between NFU Mutual insurers and the preferred tenderer.

John Park (b)

VICAR'S LETTER



This year, Ash Wednesday is on 22 February and we will be marking the start of Lent by holding our regular Wednesday 9.30am Holy Communion Service at St. Margaret's Chapel, Pegswood and including within it the traditional imposition of ashes.

By then I hope that the first signs of Spring will be clearly evident. We may be familiar with Lent as the rather dour Christian season of fasting and penitence but once upon a time the old English word "Lenten" simply meant Springtime, deriving from "lengthening" of the daylight at this time of year and hinted at

the renewed optimism of nature with its restoration of foliage and flowers to the earth, and increasing light and warmth from the sun. However, in subsistence agricultural economies this was also, by contrast, the season which required a tightening of belts because stocks of food and fuel gathered at last year's harvest would be running low and thus it admirably suited the Christian season of Lent, forty days of self denial, discipline and penitence. The season of "doing without" was thus given spiritual significance.

The season of abstinence is symbolically bookended by banquets: Shrove Tuesday and pancakes at one end and chocolate eggs on Easter Sunday. It makes the point that fasting is for feasters, only those, for example, who properly adore chocolate (or whatever you prefer) are the ones who may truly, if grudgingly, let it go in Lent. In other words, you cannot relinquish something you do not want to possess. At the very least then one of the merits of Lenten fasting may well be to help us recognise more clearly than before what we really treasure and value, by doing without it for a time. Yet what might begin as the rather frivolous matter of giving up sugar in your tea may then become significantly more meaningful as we find ourselves rather unexpectedly and surprisingly engaging in an exercise in appreciation in the spirit of "you don't know what you've got till it's gone". It works I suppose in much the same way as the old saying "absence makes the heart grow fonder" and points to the reality that by rediscovering our appreciation of one thing (however small), it increases one's general capacity to appreciate all things and especially perhaps our relationships with the people we cherish most. I wonder whether this simple thought could transform the apparently rather quaint, old-fashioned notion of giving up something you enjoy for Lent into nothing less than an invitation to a character enhancing springtime for the soul?

John Park (b)

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)
December	Ticket No. 231 Helen McCabe	Ticket No. 141 Joanne Penfold	Ticket No. 82 Pat Land
January	Ticket No. 93 Amanda Sayers	Ticket No. 64 Audrey Jordon	Ticket No. 223 Joan McKenzie <i>for Richard</i>

Mike Elphick (c)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEBRUARY

1	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
3	Friday	9.45am Mobile Library in the Village	
11	Saturday	10am Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall 10.30am – 12noon Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n) (r)
15	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
16	Thursday	7.30pm Wildlife and Community Trust talk on Clark's Bog in the Village Hall	See P1
17	Friday	7.30pm Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)

MARCH

1	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
2	Thursday	7pm Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall. All welcome	(a)
3	Friday	9.45am Mobile Library in the Village	
10	Friday	Deadline for April / May Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com	Ed. Group
11	Saturday	10am Litter pickers meet at the Village Hall 10.30am – 12noon Coffee Morning in the Village Hall	(n) (r)
15	Wednesday	11.45am Lunch Club in the Village Hall	(i)
17	Friday	7.30pm Pub Night in the Village Hall	(h)
26	Sunday	British Summer Time begins. Clocks go forward 1 hour	
31	Friday	9.45am Mobile Library in the Village	

APRIL

1	Saturday	10.30am – 2.30pm Spring Fair in the Village Hall	(f)
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REGULAR EVENTS

- Church services as detailed on page 3
- Tai Chi in the Village Hall on Tuesday at 9.30am
- Yoga in the Village Hall on Sunday at 9.30am
- 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

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 – **(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)**

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 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)**

Tai Chi - Margaret Lovering - 794927 or 07814494337/ e-mail: margaretlovering@gmail.com **(o)**

Longhirst Colliery Recreation Room bookings – Mary Climson 07727 198108 / maryclimson@icloud.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)**

Longhirst Leader Editorial Group:

Peter and Claire Coates - The Old Farmhouse, Broomhaugh: 791088, clairecoates32@gmail.com **(k)**

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