

LONGHIRST LEADER

April / May 2020

With the new movement restrictions due to Covid-19 we cannot print and distribute this copy of the Leader. You are receiving it as you are on the Parish Data Base and it will be on the Village website (u). However, some people are not on the internet and will not receive this or other important messages such as the one below from Kathleen and Fiona and some people with internet access are not on the Data Base. If you know of a friend or neighbour in this position perhaps you could phone them, put a note through their letterbox suggesting they phone you or print out some or all of this Leader and other subsequent messages for them. Anyone wishing to be added to the data base should contact Mike Elphick (c).

Important information could be placed on notice boards in the Parish, but not everyone will read these.

Village life has many advantages, one of which is the sense of community as exemplified by Kathleen and Fiona's initiative. A number of other Villagers have also expressed their desire to help and further arrangements may well be made as the situation develops.

There are a number of contact numbers on the back page of the Leader and if you phone any member of the Editorial Group we will happily put you or someone in need in touch with an appropriate helper. PLEASE let someone know if you need assistance with anything, no matter how big or small.

Sadly, it is also important to say that there are rogues out there who are already using the Covid-19 outbreak as a way to scam people, both on-line and on the doorstep, so please be vigilant and report any incidents to the police and Editorial Group who can pass the information on to other Villagers.

The Editorial Group

SUPPORT DURING CORONAVIRUS ALERT

A small group of 'Longhirst ladies' would like to help out at this difficult time especially for those who need, or have chosen, to self-isolate. We can collect your shopping, prescriptions etc. so there's no need to leave your home. If you prefer, we can do this without any direct contact and all items will be left where you specify. Unfortunately, we can't offer any support for chores within your home - this is for essential errands only.

If you need anything we will be delivering on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please contact Kathleen Robson (07922 494365 / 512058) or Fiona Smith (07881 351341 / 790551) with your order the day before. We will need your name, address, telephone number, items required and where you want us to leave them. We will leave the shopping and receipt and will call back to collect the money from the same place.

Kathleen and Fiona

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



At the meeting held on 5th March Chris Marr reported that **improvement works to the entrances to Paddock Wood** had been completed by the Woodland Trust and he had thanked them on behalf of the Council.

Richard Tordoff was planning to hold **training sessions on the use of the new defibrillator** in April and is hoping that additional volunteers will come forward to participate (watch this space following Corvid restrictions!).

A decision on the **planning application for Domino's Field** is expected shortly and recent documents submitted by the developer suggested that they were still trying to establish that the field had been part of the Butterwell Opencast site. The Parish Council had already pointed out that the field was outside the opencast earth bund and had only ever been used for livestock grazing.

It was noted that key fobs had been issued to residents of Longhirst Hall giving them access to the **new pedestrian gate into Dairy Lane**.

It was agreed to **donate £300 to Morpeth Cricket Club** towards their fund to improve the practice nets at Longhirst Hall as these would be available for the use of all Parish residents. £50 will also be donated to **St. John's Church Grand Raffle** to purchase a garden centre voucher prize.

Peter Coates gave an update on the latest proposals by NCC Highways to replace the **Village speed warning signs**. Work was scheduled to start the following week on 9th March.

The County Council had not included the joint bid by Longhirst and Pegswood Parish Councils to **improve the footpath between the two Villages** in their new Local Transport Plan.

Catherine Farrell reported that a very positive meeting had taken place with representatives of **Longhirst Colliery Residents Association**. Council meeting agendas will be sent to the Association, a representative will be invited to attend and the Colliery will also be invited to have a regular column included in future editions of The Leader.

Glen Fahy outlined the progress by Advance Northumberland on the creation of the **new country park** on the site of the former Potland Opencast Mine. He also explained the problems encountered with **persistent fly tipping** along the Ashington Road and that regular reports were being passed to the County Council and to Advance Northumberland, the adjacent land owner.

The **next meeting** was to have been the Annual General Meeting and would have discussed the Parish Council's **Strategic Plan and proposals from residents for future activities/projects** that the Council might undertake. All Parish residents and representatives from the three larger Residents Associations (the Colliery, Micklewood and Longhirst Hall) would have been invited to attend. The Covid-19 outbreak necessitates that alternative arrangements are having to be made - please watch the e-supplement for further details.

Residents are welcome to contact any member of the Parish Council if we can be of assistance during the current emergency. Contact details are listed on the Longhirst Village website (u) and on <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst/people>.

Peter Coates

COLLIERY CORNER

The April workshop hosted by Simply Smallholding in the Recreation Room at Longhirst Colliery has been cancelled but a decision has still to be made about the one on 24th May from 9.30am to 13.30pm on Lino Printing (cost £45).

For further information please contact Norah Dryden on 07823 407090.

MICKLEWOOD AND LONGHIRST HALL MATTERS

I was lucky enough to see the red squirrels (see Alan Scott's letter on P4) running along the branches of the trees near Mr Cowell's pond.

The pedestrian gate from Longhirst Hall via Dairy Lane to the Village has now been installed, but has fob only access. Unfortunately Micklewood residents still have no direct access to the Village.

Janet Quinn

VILLAGE HALL NEWS



At the Longhirst Parish Association's postponed AGM on the 23rd January, Beryl Gibson, Keith Launchbury, Margaret Lediard and Elizabeth Yeouart were re-elected to serve as community Trustees for the coming year. The Trustees who were re-appointed by user groups are Sandy Egan-Fowler (Arts & Crafts), Mo Dewar (Village Show Association), Alan Hardiman (U3A), June Lumsden (Luncheon Club), Peter McKenzie (Music Society), Sibell Pigg (St. John's P.C.C.) and Carol Robson (Young People). There is currently a vacancy with regard to our link with the Parish Council. At the Board Meeting that followed the AGM, Margaret Lediard was elected to serve as Chairperson in place of Ian Thompson who has moved away and Mike Elphick and Linda Rudd were re-appointed as Secretary and Treasurer.

In these unprecedented times, all the Hall user groups have understandably cancelled their bookings for the foreseeable future. The Board of Trustees has therefore decided to take the opportunity of an empty hall to move ahead with completing the upgrade of the heating system and to reorganise the store room. These matters are already in hand and we are in the process of putting in a bid to the Lottery for funds to install an insulated false ceiling in the Sports Hall.

JIGSAWS and BOOKS

If you have some free time to fill don't forget there is a collection of jigsaws and books in the Village Hall library and anyone can borrow them and/or provide new stock. We just ask borrowers to put 20p in the pot provided. In order to gain access to the Village Hall please contact one of the Trustees listed above.

MISSING GLASS PYREX DISH WITH A GREEN PLASTIC LID

One of four dishes that are regularly used for serving vegetables at the Luncheon Club has gone missing. If you have it can you please return it to the Village Hall or contact Linda Rudd (i) or Mike Elphick (c).

The Longhirst Parish Association Trustees

ECOVER CLEANING PRODUCTS

Some of us in the Village use Ecover cleaning products in our homes and they are used in the Village Hall. These are plant based cleaning materials which are environmentally friendly and include toilet cleaner, washing up liquid and laundry products. At present we order these in bulk, some in 5 litre containers. However, this means that we are amassing the plastic which we are all trying to avoid these days. In some outlets it is possible to refill these containers but the nearest one I know of is in Chatton and possibly somewhere in Newcastle. Does anyone know of anywhere closer? Maybe if there was enough interest we could investigate having supplies in the Village.

Please contact me (t) if you have any thoughts or information. They will be most welcome.

Margaret Lediard

FISH AND MILK

The Fishman is usually in the Village near the War Memorial on Fridays at 8.15am and as far as he knows this will continue.

Hauxley Farm Dairy deliver milk in bottles to Longhirst every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between 5 and 6am, 65p per pint including delivery. They use electric vehicles and we have yet to hear them! Telephone 01665 712419 or e-mail hauxleyfarm@yahoo.co.uk if you are interested.

Jill Elphick

MOBILE LIBRARY

There will be no Mobile Library service until further notice due to the coronavirus.

Linda Mowbray

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RED SQUIRREL CONSERVATION UPDATE.

I'm pleased to report Red Squirrel sightings in the grounds of Longhirst Hall and on the edge of the Village adjacent to the Hall. Please take a few minutes to report any sightings of Red or Grey Squirrels by leaving a phone message or e-mailing MADRS (s). This really helps me in trying to establish a stronghold of Reds in the Longhirst area which is important in saving the native Red Squirrel species for us all to enjoy.

Please take care when driving through the Hall grounds as unfortunately the Reds don't seem to have much road sense and it would be tragic to lose any in this way. Each one is precious. It's very early days but a big thank you to everyone who has helped me in any way as this is a joint effort to try and keep the Red Squirrels in Longhirst.

Allan Scott.

Red Squirrel Conservation

Mole & Vermin Control.

DRAIN CLEARANCE AT REASONABLE PRICES



I have recently had cause to seek help with the clearance of drains at both the Village Hall and the Church. In both cases I had tried and failed to deal with the problem with my own rods, so they were serious blockages. I was given the name of 'EnviroClear Ltd', Iris House, 335 Rothbury Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 5DE Tel. No. 0191 265 7334.

On the first occasion I called them, they came the following day, did not charge for the first call out because they could not open the manhole, returned the next day with two men and the right equipment and dealt with the blockage. On the second occasion they came to the Church the day I called and cleared the blockage immediately. In both cases they charged only £65 + VAT. In my book, that is excellent service.

Mike Elphick

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. 22 Adrienne Dobson (for Elizabeth) | Ticket No. 13 Carol Robson (for Keiran) | Ticket No. 36 Veronica Healey |
| March | Ticket No. 209 Margaret Lediard | Ticket No. 55 Peter Coates | Ticket No. 159 Craig Penfold (for Gabrielle) |

This is the time of year when we all need to join or renew our membership of the Longhirst Hundred Club. If you have not signed a standing order you should have received a letter from me during March. If you have not heard from me and would like to join, please let me know. All proceeds are shared between the Church and the Village Hall.

Mike Elphick (c)

JILL AND MIKE ELPHICK



Jill and Mike were both born in NW London in 1942 and, according to their parents, first met at the age of 4 when Jill bit Mike one afternoon at Sunday school in circumstances which remain unclear. In spite of that introduction their paths continued to cross, mainly at church related functions and in their teenage years a relationship started to blossom.

In 1960 Mike attended a summer school in Switzerland to expand his horizons and then found work in Dortmund which involved resettling men from behind the Berlin Wall who were seeking work in West Germany. As an Englishman he was able, unlike West Germans, to cross the frontier and one of his responsibilities was liaison with the mens' families back home. He twice passed through Check Point Charlie immediately collecting an East German tail which appeared to be withdrawn as soon as he crossed the border into Poland. He then went to Rome to work in an orphanage where, among many other experiences, he drove a truck 600Km through the night 3 times a week for a month carrying emergency relief supplies to be shipped across to Agadir following a major earthquake. However, after ten months, he picked up a mastoid infection and ended up being nursed back to health by the Little Sisters of Mercy.

On his return to the UK their friendship was rekindled. Jill, in the meantime, had been to secretarial college and worked for Phillips Electrical and in a Community Centre in Bermondsey who provided activities for the locals and accommodation for young people from all over the world. They became engaged in 1963 and married 3 years later by which time Mike was working for Devon County Council as a social worker and Jill became secretary with a local firm of Quantity Surveyors. Their son, Jon, was born in 1970 and following a move to Cheshire their daughter, Helen, in 1972. In 1974 they moved to North Shields with Mike taking a position as Area Social Services Manager

for North Tyneside. He eventually retired in 1999 as Chief Inspector of Residential Homes for the Authority. Meanwhile, Jill became a registered child minder and together they fostered nine children over a ten year period from 1976. Jill then worked for NEEB, ran South Tyneside's Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme, carried out social work training, was appointed National Chairperson of the PPA's (Pre-School Play-Groups Association) 'Mothers & Toddlers Committee' and eventually ran her own mobile clothing business until she retired in 2002.

They moved to Longhirst in 1994 and have lived in Howarth Cottage ever since. To say that they have subsequently been active in the community is a major understatement. Jill is Secretary of the PCC and Mike is a Church Warden. Fund raising activities include Church Fetes, Harvest Suppers, Jumble Sales, Coffee Mornings, the 100 Club, Miles of Pennies, Ceilidhs, BBQs, the Diamond Jubilee Party in 2012 and many more. They have been heavily involved with the Families and Fairtrade Group, Northumbria University students when they were based at Longhirst Hall, the Youth Club, the Luncheon Club, the Village Show and Open Gardens. Jill has also played a leading part in the production of The Longhirst Leader. Mike is Secretary to the Parish Association and handles all Village Hall bookings, maintenance and fund raising - over the years he has submitted successful bids totalling over £150,000 for Hall improvements. He is also one of the original volunteer Litter Pickers who have cleared the Parish verges every month for the last 17 years. There is no doubt that their joint contribution to Parish life is quite outstanding and when outsiders regularly comment that Longhirst is very active with a real community spirit then a large part of the credit should be theirs.

Mike and Jill would like to express their very sincere thanks to everyone for the amazing support they have received during the challenging time since Jill's diagnosis.

Peter and Claire Coates

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD



Sadly we need to inform you that all Church services will be cancelled in line with guidance from the Archbishops because of the coronavirus pandemic. The Church will be closed completely except for funeral services. These are strange times we are living in and we can only hope that we are able to resume 'normal services' as soon as possible.

John has produced a leaflet called 'Praying at Home' which he will be distributing to all members of the congregation. If you have not received one yet, or would like to have one, please get in touch with John (b).

At our AGM in March we reluctantly accepted Dorothy McMillan's resignation as Churchwarden. Dorothy has served the Church in this capacity, as Treasurer and as a member of the PCC for over twenty years and was presented with a bouquet of flowers in recognition of all her hard work. We are delighted to welcome Heather Jackson as Churchwarden and it was unanimously agreed that all the other officers will remain in post.

Our recent Broth and Beetle event raised £210. Thank you all for a most enjoyable and worthwhile evening.

Take care and keep well.

Jill Elphick, PCC Secretary

VICAR'S LETTER



One of the earliest and most common artistic depictions of the Christian Church was of a small boat with a cross shaped mast tossed about on a rough sea seemingly at the mercy of the elements and contending with forces beyond its control. I sometimes feel this image could well apply to the whole world today as life as we know it is changing and we are faced with many uncertainties.

The early Christians derived their ship logo from two strange stories from the Gospels. In one of them Jesus appears after midnight walking upon the water towards a boat in which are the disciples struggling against the elements and in another is woken by his disciples as he sleeps peacefully through a storm in the back of their beleaguered trawler and then commands the waves, "Peace, be still."

The image of Jesus walking on the rough sea towards the boat, while often mockingly cited to disparage the credulity of believers is nevertheless one with a tenacious hold on our folk memory and no doubt will continue to be so as long as we are adrift. As he draws alongside the boat Jesus appears to the disciples as a ghostly figure giving more cause for alarm than reassurance and as we might expect they wanted proof that it really was him. So, one of them, Peter the fisherman, steps out, walking on the water towards him and as long as he keeps looking at Jesus in faith he is safe. However, the high sea raging around Peter causes him to lose both his nerve and his faith and he begins to sink. When he cries out for help Jesus of course brings him safely into the boat while also teasing him because of his lack of faith.

I have often found this image of a small, vulnerable vessel bobbing about on the water and its associated stories to have been a great encouragement and is, I believe, a good emblem for our times or indeed any age given that faith is the only way to cross the place where everyone is out of their depth.

John Park

RE-CYCLING

Did you know that at Whorral Bank household recycling centre in the Hard Plastics Skip they accept a greater variety of plastics than we are able to put in our Blue Bins? They take plastic pots including yogurt pots, margarine pots and lids, plant pots, plastic crates (including trays that fruit and vegetables are bought in), plastic toys and furniture together with other items that are made of hard plastics - do check to see if your plastic items can be re-cycled rather than just putting them in the 'rubbish' skip or black bin.

Jill Elphick

NB. We have just been notified that Whorral Bank is now closed.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Friday 17 th | Late black bin collection after Easter | |
|-------------------------|--|--|

MAY

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Friday 8 th | Deadline for items for the June/July Longhirst Leader e-mail to clairecoates32@gmail.com | Editorial Group |
| Friday 29 th | Late black bin collection after Bank Holiday | |

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)

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

Mothers' Union - Angela Mason 517872 / e-mail : angela148@hotmail.co.uk (g)

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 Recreation Hall - Maureen Carrick 458674 / e-mail : maureencarrick@talktalk.net (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)

Church Website - www.longhirstchurch.btck.co.uk (b)

Longhirst Leader Editorial Group:

Jill Elphick - Howarth Cottage:790764, jill.elphick1@gmail.com (e)

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

Carol Robson - Rose Cottage, Ulgham Lane: 07773738442 (f)

Mo Dewar - 7 Stable Close : 791149, dewarms@btinternet.com (w)

Janet Quinn - 38 Micklewood Close : 790630, quinnjanet@sky.com (q)

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