

Longhorsley Annual Parish Assembly – 28th May 2025 – in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Douglas (Chairman), Bell, Boyle, Parker, Peat and Potts

Mrs S Doyle (Clerk)

6 Parishioners

Apologies: Cllr Alcock & County Cllr G Sanderson

1. **Minutes** – of the previous meeting held on 22nd May, 2024, which have been available on the website, were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.
2. **County Councillor Sanderson** - was not in attendance but had supplied an email I'm very grateful and privileged to represent Longhorsley and really look forward to working for everyone. Having been re-elected again as leader I will struggle to make meetings but will always try to do a written note and I'm always available if needed.
3. **Police Representation – no-one in attendance**
The Clerk read out the police report as received from PC Sutcliffe dated 8th May 2025.
4. **Chairman's Report and Review of the Year 2024/25 – Cllr Norman Douglas**

At the beginning of May we had the elections for the Parish Council, which are held every 4 years. All of the existing Councillors were elected unopposed which means that there are no changes to the members of the Parish Council to report since last year. I would like to extend my thanks to my fellow Councillors for their valuable contribution, during the past year, and their commitment to continue for the next 4 years.

My thanks also go to our county councillor, Glen Sanderson, who was also re-elected in May, for his continuing support in ensuring the issues raised by the Parish Council get the best possible attention.

Longhorsley continues to benefit from a comprehensive newsletter and breaking news facility and our thanks go to Jan and Sheena Haveman, along with their team, for all their hard work maintaining this on behalf of the Parish.

I would also like to extend thanks to our Gillian Turner, who served as Parish Clerk for almost 10 years and who retired in December Last year. I would like to take the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new Parish Clerk, Samantha Doyle, who joined us last autumn, and has done an outstanding job in following the high standards set by Gillian and is keeping everything running smoothly.

A Village Fete was held last July in the village and I would like to thank the organisers for the time and effort they put into creating this event. Following the great success last year's event, it will be held again this year and will hopefully continue as an annual event for the community.

The Parish Council supported the VE Day 80th anniversary this year with the raising of the VE flag and the lighting of the beacon on the village green as part of a coordinated national activity. This activity was also complemented by A Warm Space event and a VE themed flower festival, well done to all concerned.

Planning applications and new developments always require serious consideration and often research. The development South of the Shoulder of Mutton has progressed this year with the village green at entrance being deregistered and sold to the developer. An area of village green of a larger size is to be included to the North of the development as part of the sale conditions. The Parish Council will engage with the developer during the development phase to ensure that the best interests of the village are respected.

The Council continues to manage and maintain Archies Pond, Adamson Park, the Church View play area, the allotments, planters and flowers.

Speeding on South road continues to be a concern and during this year we were able to get Police operated cameras in the village on a number of occasions. We are continuing to work with Cllr Sanderson and the Police regarding the placement of a new fixed speed camera in the village.

The Parish Award Scheme continues to be a great way to thank those who have made a significant contribution to the Parish, more on that later!

5. Moor Report – Cllr Potts

The past year has been a particularly busy one with the Moor Committee as we continue to meet on site bi-monthly from April to October. At these meetings, the animal husbandry has been monitored to ensure that both the ponies and sheep are in the best of health along with walking the full area to ensure any works requiring attention are noted and dealt with. There has been several meetings with our Consultant George Dodds and Natural England with regard to Heath Management.



Our Agreement Compliance from DEFRA and approval of Stewardship Implementation Plan from Natural England which takes us up to 2026. We will be undertaking meetings to agree a new agreement going forward.

With the guidance of both Natural England and George Dodds we are now implementing a Heath Management Plan. This was completed by George Dodds and covers every aspect of the Moor regarding the most recent legislation and all under the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Standards and guidance documentation.



Sadly, Tom Voyce of Trevow Vegetation passed away last year, his company had previously undertaken substantial clearance to the South section of the Moor to allow the heather and other natural flora to regenerate. It was his professional advice we took for the North side last year prior to the work being undertaken to allow regeneration and leaving areas for natural flora and wildlife to thrive.

However, since the work, and due to the extensive invasive species overtaking the natural heath land we, in conjunction with Natural England, are now looking to create 3 test areas to see what kind of management of the heather will work best. When this is undertaken it will be closely monitored, so future maintenance can be implemented for individual areas.



Unfortunately, due to poor weather conditions and inconsistent winds, a “burn” did not take place this year. However, we are also undertaking a new Fire Risk Assessment for the Moor should any future incidents occur. We are also implementing a new fire break system in agreement and instruction with Natural England, which will involve a cut around the perimeter of the moor heathland. This will continue to be monitored.



With the continued assistance of the River’s Trust, the watering hole, by the established burn, has undergone some minor repairs to ensure that there is always enough water for the animals on the Moor. During the most recent visit vegetation growth and wildlife is now visible after only a short time.

Another example that given time the area will regenerate with very minor assistance if good maintenance is

continued.

Continued access maintenance such as strimming and clearance to the Cattle Grid continues as and when required.

Looking forward to the coming year continued fence maintenance and gate renewals are on the agenda. With regards to footpath signage we are also in discussions with NE for the type and placement required.



I would like to thank the members of the Moor Committee for their hard work and dedication and assistance in managing this unique area along with the continued assistance and guidance from Natural England and George Dodds.

6. The Old Church Wood Report – Cllr Douglas on behalf of Cllr Alcock

We've had a very successful year at the Church Wood, which has been helped by drier weather than the prior year.

The Friends of Old Church Wood group has met several times over the last 12 months to check and maintain the new hedgerows around the perimeter, including checking the tree guards and strimming where necessary, to ensure the trees and hedgerows are growing well. Time has also been dedicated to weeding and maintaining the wildflower flowerbeds in the Old Church, which are just starting to come into bloom.

The wildflower sections in the main field grew well again last year and was a beautiful display of grasses and flowers in early summer. We cut the area back at the end of the summer and left the hay on the ground for the seeds to fall before removing it.

Our path contractor, James Chisholm, has done an excellent job of keeping the paths mown. Thank you to him for his hard work and advice over the last 12 months.

The wetland area developed in the SE corner provides an excellent habitat for biodiversity and much needed watering hole for wild animals. It has become more established over the last year and is often frequented by ducks, so please ensure small children are supervised by a responsible adult if they are playing near the picnic tables. Care should be exercised for dogs too if they are off the lead as the water can be deep at times.

A number of people have dedicated trees in the coppice (set back from the main walkway to the church) to loved ones. Thank you to all who have donated and taken part

in the care of the trees. If you are interested in dedicating a tree, please contact me for further information.

Finally, a big thank you to all the volunteers who have kindly given up their time to help preserve this wonderful green space. We're always looking for new volunteers; we typically give two hours on a Saturday or Sunday morning, four times each year. We are creating a Friends of Longhorsley Green Spaces Group to help maintain the upkeep of other green spaces around the village. If you would like to get involved, please contact Tim or myself to find out more information.

7. Un-Audited Accounts 2024/5

The Clerk provided the meeting with copies of the un-audited annual accounts for 2024/5. The accounts are currently being examined by the Internal Auditor, Gary Kennedy, before being presented to the Parish Council Meeting for approval in June.

She highlighted that there was expenditure not budgeted for which was the felling of the trees with Ash die back along the A697.

Accounting Statements 2024/25	Year Ending 31 March 2025	Year Ending 31 March 2024
001. Balances brought forward	175,651	53,472
(+) Precept	28,560	27,200
(+) Other Receipts	40,449	207,163
(-) Staff Costs	8,296	8,078
(-) Loan/Capital repayments	0	0
(--) Other Payments	76,519	104,106
(=) Balances carried forward	159,845	175,651
Total value of cash and short-term investments	159,845	175,651
Total fixed assets plus long-term investments	259,758	258,654
Total borrowings	0	0
Disclosure note re Trust Funds	n/a	n/a

All of the year-end financial documents will be placed onto the Council's website www.longhorsley.gov.uk when signed-off by the Internal Auditor.

8. Question & Answer Session

Q. A member of the public asked about the future of the Village Hall following the recent structural report.

A. The Village Hall Committee will respond when they are in a position to do so with regards to the future of the hall.

Q. A Parishioner requested confirmation of the statement read out from County Cllr. Sanserson, was he leaving or leading.

A. Confirmed that County Councillor Sanderson was now the Leader of Northumberland County Council.

9. Longhorsley Community Awards 2025

In March 2025, parishioners were asked to nominate a person or organisation who they believed had enhanced the parish through:

- service to the community
- contributing to the life of the parish
- credit to Longhorsley's reputation
- charitable works
- selflessness

The number of nominations received determined who the deserving recipients would be. This year we have 1 clear winner.... **Mick Wake** – and our sincere congratulations go to you.

Those parishioners who nominated said the following kind words:

“Mick does so much for all the different groups in the village, giving up his time to be a quiz master, bingo caller, master of ceremonies and Santa! He will help anyone, using his own time to compile quiz questions for charity fundraisers, as well as sourcing prizes for those fundraisers. He is always cheery and chatty and would genuinely do anything for the village. He's helped the Village Hall, Village Fete, school, playgroup, toddler group, the pub and a number of charities. He does everything on top of working full time in a busy farm job. We are all the richer for having Mick in our community!”

“Brought the older residents of Longhorsley for an enjoyable morning of chat and most of all laughter”.

The meeting closed at 6:55 pm