

ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ending 31 March 2021



SUMMARY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The year has been dominated by the COVID 19 pandemic. Longhoughton Parish Council (LPC) has carried on business as usual but it has had to adapt to virtual meetings and communicating with residents by means other than face to face. Ten meetings were held during the year.

It is essential to acknowledge the work of Councillors, the Clerk to the Council, Councillor Pattison and all other volunteers and people who have helped the community during the year. These efforts are much appreciated in what has been an extraordinary year.

COUNCILLORS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES

Parish Councillors The following Councillors held office during the year:

Eleanor Phillips (Chair)

Adrian Hinchcliffe (Vice Chair)

Peter Bromley

Carole Green

John Haughie

Clerk to the Parish Council Mrs Elizabeth Taylor

Kris Cochrane (to March 2021)

County Councillor Wendy Pattison

Jacqueline Barras (from July 2020)

Representative of RAF Boulmer Flt Lt Ayshea Lewis

IMPACT OF COVID Many residents were unable to cope with the restrictions and needed considerable help. Eleanor Phillips the Chair of LPC brought together a team of volunteers who did things like shopping, fetching medical prescriptions, gardening and checking on people to ensure they were well. This was an invaluable service and helped many people get through the lockdowns. Thanks are due to Eleanor and all the volunteers who helped in this way including the many residents who gave help to their neighbours and the community during the very difficult period. LPC assisted with small grants for COVID purposes.

PRECEPT: WHAT RESIDENTS PAID Residents paid the £35.47 for each household at the Band D level.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH RESIDENTS

During the year six bi-monthly newsletters were delivered to all households. Two websites were maintained during the year as follows:

- General information www.northumberlandparishes.uk/longhoughton
- Neighbourhood Plan www.longhoughtonndp.co.uk

Noticeboards displaying agendas, minutes and other items of publicity were maintained at Boulmer, Longhoughton (2) and Howick.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

Throughout the year LPC conducted the following routine business:

- Responding to planning applications.
- Responding to various consultations.
- Dealing with complaints, queries and requests from residents.
- Approval of all payments for services received and the approval of grants to community organisations.
- Maintenance of the Council's assets.
- Routine correspondence.

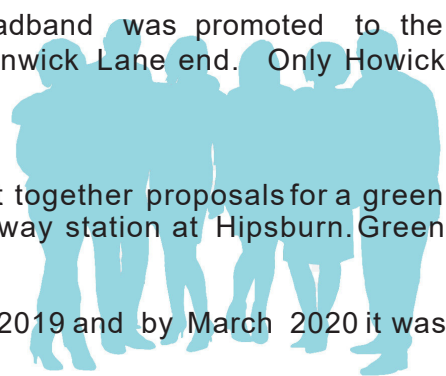
PROJECTS

ULTRA-FAST BROADBAND A scheme to promote ultra-fast Broadband was promoted to the neighbourhoods of Howick, Littlemill, Pasture House Farm and Denwick Lane end. Only Howick received sufficient support for the scheme to be taken forward.

GREEN ROUTES FOR WALKERS, CYCLISTS AND HORSE RIDERS

A joint working group with Lesbury Parish Council was formed to put together proposals for a green route between Lesbury and Longhoughton with a link to the railway station at Hipsburn. Green routes around Longhoughton were also being considered.

CLIMATE CHANGE LPC set up a Climate Change Group in late 2019 and by March 2020 it was getting established. COVID prevented the Group meeting.



BEACH ROAD AND CAR PARKING AT LONGHOUGHTON BEACH

After the first COVID lockdown Longhoughton residents enjoyed safe walking and cycling down Beach Road to the beaches. Many appreciated this, and it became a well used safe exerciseroute free from traffic. When the first lockdown ended the route became heavily used by traffic in much greater volumes than previously seen. On one occasion in July 2020 394 vehicles passed down the road to park on the beach. This made it very unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists and was damaging the dunes and the delicate biodiversity of this special place which is part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It was also affecting the viability of Low Steads farm. LPC received many complaints and comments from residents on this issue.

Acting as a 'honest broker' LPC became involved in finding a solution to these issues acting with Howick Trustees (the owner of the dunes), the Forsyth Farmers and the AONB. Several meetings were held involving senior representatives of Northumberland County Council (NCC) and Northumberland Estates (NE). There appeared to be agreement on a solution but by the end of the year no detailed proposal had been formulated.



BOULMER OFF ROAD PARKING AND PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Boulmer also suffered from the unprecedented increase in vehicles coming to the coast with vehicle congestion occurring daily. LPC worked with NCC to try and find solutions to these issues. In August 2020 no-parking cones were supplied by NCC and placed in three locations to ease congestion and these were later replaced by double yellow lines. By the end of the year no progress had been achieved on the request for additional off-road parking or the responsibility for the Beach car park.



HOWICK BURN BRIDGE

The removal of the makeshift bridge over the Howick Burn has interrupted a very good circular route enjoyed by many residents and visitors. Peter Bromley took on the task of finding ways to re-establish the bridge. Towards the end of the year a specification was being developed to obtain quotations.

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING APPLICATION

It was clear that considerable funding was going to be needed by LPC for projects such as the Howick Burn bridge and the Green routes around Longhoughton and the link to Lesbury and Initial enquiries were made with the Heritage Lottery fund.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN The Steering Committee has taken forward the Neighbourhood Plan during the year. The main objective was to complete the background evidence for the Plan and to prepare this to go out to consultation with residents. The following background papers have been prepared with the assistance of Jo-Anne Garrick the professional planner:

Natural Environment. Housing and Housing Sites. Second and Holiday Homes. Heritage. Local Green Space and Protected Open Space. Community Needs and Facilities. Business and Tourism Support. Transport and Access Support.

In addition, applications were made to the Government for the preparation of the following documents that were received during the year. *Housing Needs Assessment. Design Guide and Design Codes.*

LONGHOUGHTON TRAFFIC REVIEW In the 2018 Longhoughton review many residents stated that they were unhappy with traffic speed and road safety in the village and that the 20mph scheme was not working. It was agreed with the Highways Department that a major review should take place and it should incorporate the most up to date thinking and proposed solutions.



OTHER PROJECTS

Numerous smaller projects/topics were dealt with by LPC during the year. Some of these were: *Burnside one way system review. Glass recycling. Signage for dog owners. Longhoughton Planting Group. Longhoughton Paths Group. Replacement of the seat and renovation of the memorial at School Green. Northumbria Police Engagement vehicle. Potential community-led affordable housing at the Johnston site. Tedder Place Play area and MUGA scheme. Formation of a litter picking Group. Community ventures and its successor LBH Community Trust.*