

Boulmer Howick & Longhoughton

BEACH LANE LONGHOUGHTON

We've all felt the impact of lockdown restrictions on our ability to move around our villages in some way or other these last few months, and this has highlighted a number of issues concerning the beach lane in Longhoughton. We are blessed to live in a rural village with space and natural beauty all around us, and a beautiful beach at the end of a country lane which has been car-free for the last two months. Some residents would like to see changes made to car access to the beach.

Two of the numerous emails sent to Longhoughton Parish Council from parents in the last week echo the sentiments of many others received:

"The last two months walking down that road has been totally stress-free. When my family go for walks I haven't worried about them, knowing it was traffic-free."

"As parents it has been the most relaxed we have ever felt taking them out for walks or bike rides, they were able to safely go ahead from us without concern which made us relax and enjoy our walk and take in the scenery knowing they were so safe."

Within one week of the lane re-opening, complaints had been received from residents concerning cars driving too fast or



impatiently, with some drivers being discourteous and even verbally abusive to pedestrians. No comments have yet been received asking for the lane to continue as a public highway, without making any changes.

Dozens of comments have been made across social media about potential solutions to the problem and we continue to encourage residents to write to the Parish Council to share your position with us. Pedestrian-only ideas such as developing part of the old recreation field for parking for school traffic use and beach users, consideration of blue-badge-holder beach access, possibly a permit-system for people such as surfers or kayakers and fishermen are just a few we have received.

The specific issues of parking and speeding across the Parish are well known to the Parish Council and we are addressing them as they relate to Longhoughton as part of the Longhoughton Review priorities.

The Parish Council believes that the individual issues are best resolved within a more comprehensive and strategic plan. This is the reason why we are urging the County Council to help us develop such a vision for traffic management. It may be the first in the AONB along the coast.

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CONTACT YOUR COUNCILLOR

Boulmer Ward

Adrian Hinchcliffe (Vice Chair)
01665 572888

Howick Ward

John Haughey 01665 577020

Longhoughton Ward

Peter Bromley 01665 577071
Kris Cochrane 01665 572923
Carole Green 01665 572610
Ellie Phillips 01665 577563
(Chair)

County Councillor

Wendy Pattison 01665 579137

Parish Clerk

Elizabeth Taylor 01665 830040
parishclerk@hotmail.com
[Please contact the Clerk about the parish councillor vacancies.](#)

Websites

northumberlandparishes.uk/longhoughton
www.longhoughtonndp.co.uk

Newsletter Editors

Adrian Hinchcliffe
adrian.hinchcliffe@btopenworld.com
Ellie Phillips
eleanorphillips1@gmail.com
Chris Thomas (Design)
chrismerythomas@gmail.com

Please let us have your newsworthy items for the next edition before the next **deadline on 21 July**. Thank you.

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Parish Council News

Continued from page 1/ A wide number of other organisations also need to be engaged in the process, including Northumbria Police, AONB, Lowsteads Farm and Howick and Northumberland Estates. The specific issues concerning Beach Lane will now be added to the Longhoughton Review priorities. The Parish Council actively encourages your engagement in this process.

Please share your views with us on what changes you would like to see concerning the beach lane or whether you wish the status quo to prevail. Either way we need your mandate to move forward. The Longhoughton Review Detailed Plan can be found on the Parish Council website. Please email your comments to parishclerk@hotmail.com

Ellie Phillips, Chairperson on behalf of Longhoughton Parish Council



COVID-19 VOLUNTEER GROUP

So what have we been up to for the last couple of months?

Longhoughton Parish COVID-19 Volunteer Group was established in March as a joint partnership with Longhoughton Parish Council and Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust, combining our existing village volunteers with new recruits. Twenty-five have joined the group and all volunteers can be identified by their ID card.

The group has a co-ordinator who receives requests for help and allocates tasks. A key part of the co-ordinator's role is to keep in touch with agencies across Northumberland who help provide resources and funding. For example, Age UK provided thirty-six food boxes donated from a local celebrity which were distributed along with Easter eggs and hand-made cards designed by a volunteer's family. We've been involved in garden maintenance for some residents who can't maintain their gardens themselves. We've been guerrilla gardening in places too. The Coop asked us to plant their containers. Planters on Longhoughton village green have also been refreshed.

We held a rock-painting competition in Longhoughton and then distributed the rocks to our older residents with messages of support from the children. We've currently got a parish-wide grow-your-own-sunflower competition on the go through to September. The Parish Council has allocated a grant for Covid-related activities. We provide a weekly trolley service with free magazines, puzzle books, jigsaws and sweets to help keep some of our older residents busy. It's a great opportunity to check in with residents and have a bit of a socially-distanced blether on the step in true North-East style!

There are some residents who live alone and who appreciate a weekly telephone chat. We are well aware of the effects of isolation, particularly on our older residents. We have very quickly built a rapport with many of them and hope that when lockdown is lifted some of them will engage in community centre activities. Some residents were running out of cash and could not get to a cash machine owing to self-isolation. To solve this problem the Community Centre set up a facility for them to be given cash in exchange for a cheque or bank transfer.

We've also sewn on buttons, posted letters, baked cakes, bought birthday presents, arranged food bank parcels, picked up prescriptions, made telephone calls on behalf of residents and hung out washing. We've even contacted a foreign embassy on behalf of someone ...the list goes on! Please call 01665 572315 if help is needed. Some of our volunteers are slowly returning to work now, but all wish to continue in some volunteering capacity which is great for the Parish.

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Coronavirus has interrupted the progress that was being made with the vital background papers for the Plan. It is hoped that soon the Steering Group can pick up the themes and take things forward. The suggestion for the pedestrianisation of Beach Road and the use of the old recreation field will become part of the plan but subject to full consultation.

FLY-TIPPING GARDEN WASTE

Please do not tip garden waste onto the dunes or anywhere else. This is liable for a fine of £400.

Parish Council News

CLEAN-UP AFTER YOUR DOG

The dunes south of the car park at Boulmer were relatively clear of dog poo over the lockdown period until the car park was re-opened. The grassland and dunes to the south of the car park are again beginning to accumulate dog poo. This is not acceptable and is creating a health hazard. It does not matter whether the poo is in long or short grass; it is illegal and is punishable by a fine of up to £1,000. The County Council Dog Warden is fully aware of this situation and is on the lookout for the perpetrators. We know that most dog owners are responsible and pick up after their dogs, and the problem lies with a small minority.



AN UNUSUAL EVENT

We enjoy a relatively crime-free area, but an incident during Bank Holiday week shows that we have to be on the alert. A man broke into sheds and attempted to get into caravans at Seaton Point. A site committee member was alerted and managed to get to the site and found the man hiding and making camp under some large bushes. He left after admitting what he had done. The police had already been called by someone else and they arrested him after a chase along Boulmer Beach. The man admitted to the offence.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The April and May meetings were held using Skype. The minutes of the meetings have been displayed on the noticeboards and on the Parish Council website. Should any residents wish to ask questions they will be invited to log into Skype for the question time at the beginning of each meeting. The Agenda will contain a link to the meeting and a councillor will help with any technical help that is needed. Alternatively please drop an email to the Clerk to the Council. The next meetings will be held on 15 June and the 20 July, both commencing at 7.30pm.



NHS design made by Rosie & Finn Overhead in Eastmoor from council grass cuttings

Howick & Boulmer News

LONGHOUGHTON & BOULMER WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

When composing this year's programme of meetings our Committee could never have imagined they would soon have to be cancelling the arrangements, even before the new programme was to be published last April. We have all missed getting together with our WI friends and are keen to restart the programme of events again. In the meantime, we trust all have managed to stay well.

BOULMER LIFEBOAT BALL CANCELLED

Boulmer Lifeboat committee have made the decision to cancel this year's annual Lifeboat Ball. After an online committee meeting it was decided it would be best to cancel the event due to Covid-19, even though it is not due to be held until August. We shall return in 2021 when the country is hopefully a safer place to celebrate and fundraise together as a community.

'THANK YOU' FROM BOULMER RESIDENTS

Boulmer residents would like to thank the people of Longhoughton and other local communities for not driving to Boulmer and parking there whilst the early stages of the coronavirus lockdown was in progress. Visitors were asked not to park on Boulmer Village Street due to coronavirus. All but a handful of people complied with this request. Residents are extremely grateful to those who did.

Longhoughton News

LONGHOUGHTON COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE TRUST

The Committee met in both April and May using Zoom. Vital business was dealt with and the Trustees are putting together a programme of events for when the Centre is able to open. Social distancing is going to be essential and ways of achieving this will be considered. It is appreciated that people will be nervous about coming together when the remnants of the virus are still about and it will be essential to find ways to rebuild confidence and ensure that people are safe.

Footpath News

FOOTPATH FRIENDLY

Many of us exercising during the lock-down have shared a sense of gratitude that we live where we do and have an area of outstanding natural beauty by the sea to enjoy and to help alleviate the inevitable cabin fever. We are also fortunate that our network of routes is managed by supportive landowners who are actively maintaining the paths. Some even offer permissive paths to complement the rights-of-way network.

As more and more of us are enjoying the network and hopefully will increasingly continue to do so in the coming weeks and months, it seems an appropriate time to remind ourselves of how to enjoy the footpaths and the countryside to everyone's benefit.

Please follow the route markers and do not stray off the paths. The land is owned and managed by others and we may cause unintended damage. Footpaths (as opposed to bridleways) can only be used by pedestrians, not cyclists and horses; we should also use gates and stiles and not climb over fences. And please shut gates after you, as stock could easily escape. Finally, we still suffer from waste like crisp packets, plastic bottles and visible dog poo left by some waysides; we should take all litter home with us, and that includes whilst driving on the roads too.

While the vast majority of people do follow these simple rules, we've had a couple of calls from landowners and households on routes pointing out that people are straying off the paths and also cycling on footpaths, including at the Limery where the private track is a footpath only, people have also been wandering through their private land rather than staying on the paths.

The network of footpaths and bridleways has seen increased usage, and now that we can go out more than once a day, it is busy at times with cyclists sharing some routes with runners, walkers, pushchairs, scooters, dogs and children of all ages. We would all agree that this is a good thing, and so everyone showing respect for each other will mean we can all continue to enjoy the benefits. For those of us old enough to remember the Countryside Code, the maxim is 'Respect – Protect – Enjoy':

- consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- leave gates and property as you find them
- protect the natural environment
- leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- keep dogs under effective control
- enjoy the outdoors
- plan ahead and be prepared
- follow advice and local signs, staying to the paths.

Please help spread this advice and continue to enjoy the benefits of living where we do.

