

16th April 2026

LONGSTOWE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thursday 16th April 2026

Longstowe Village Hall 7.15pm

MINUTES

Present: Parish Councillors Bobbie Coe, Will Bevan, Barbara Cooper, Ben Holland and Peter White, Parish Council Clerk, Sharon Brown, Skylark newsletter editor, Christine Morton, those contributing the reports as below and one other resident.

Cllr Bobbie Coe welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting, noting that it is a time for residents to bring matters of concern or interest to the fore. As such, any resident of the parish can chair the meeting. Those present were asked if anyone would like to come forward, but Bobbie Coe was requested to remain in the chair.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, CCC and Cllr Tumi Hawkins, SCDC.

Minutes of the Open Parish Meeting April 2025:

The minutes were available at the meeting, having been agreed and signed at the May 2025 Parish Council Meeting.

Parish Council Annual Report – full report Appendix 1:

Cllr Coe the PC chair explained that PC meetings are always open to residents for comments and suggestions. She noted the importance of the community of our small village and the active band of volunteers. Fellow councillors and all those who contribute voluntarily to village life were thanked.

Problems: Longstowe faces speeding traffic and regular accidents or near accidents at the crossroads. Everyone is asked to report any incidents to the parish council clerk for the records which may be useful in obtaining future traffic calming. Air plane noise is also increasing due to the change in flight paths to Luton airport.

Neighbourhood Plan: Longstowe had started on the process of producing a Plan, but the government cut of support funding, for any consultancy work needed, has brought a stop to this.

Skylark: a small trial of the newsletter at A5 size has been abandoned as one of the volunteer delivers was bitten by a dog when having difficulty posting this size through a letter box! The change to bi-monthly rather than quarterly will however be continued.

Parish Council administration: the PC email will soon change to a gov.uk address and all councillors will have a dedicated PC gov.uk email address as well. As required, all agendas, minutes and accounts information are posted on the PC website and where required on the noticeboards.

Defibrillator and CPR training: a morning of training has been arranged on 18th April.

Village Hall Committee Report – full report Appendix 2:

Peter White, chairman of the Committee, provided a resume of the Village Hall report. The year has not been busy in terms of lettings, but this has allowed refurbishments of toilets and showers and other maintenance to be undertaken. Regular users remain the Parish Council, the Cricket Club and the monthly Teas. 2025 saw several successful village events; Celebration Tea for VE Day, Fete,

Harvest Supper, Christmas Fair and fundraising quiz. There has also been an anonymous donation of £200 in support the Village Hall.

Sports / Cricket Club Report:

The Cricket Club chair was unable to attend.

Longstowe History Society Report – full report Appendix 3 - Annual Report and

Accounts 2025: Steve Owen, chairman of the Society provided a resume of the History Society report. Annually, the 5 talks and one away visit format continue to work well. Membership is slightly down on last year, but those members are very supportive. Society finances are small but healthy, which allows for input to the CCAN (Cambridge Community Archive Network) website, a small fee to be paid to speakers and for hire of the village hall. The Society would still value a possible safe archive space at the Village Hall if this could be incorporated

Footpath Warden's Report: Footpath Warden, Michael Murden provided a verbal report. Michael has been active looking every footpath, bridleway and byway, and mapping maintenance needed. He will replace any missing waymarkers from the small stock held and also spoke with Cllr Bevan concerning post maintenance on the permissive paths. Michael was thanked for this input as a volunteer.

Town Lands Trust, Longstowe

Cllr Cooper provided a verbal report and some background history to the Trust. The Trust was created to support St. Mary's Church and those in need in the Parish. Only the interest on the capital can be used. The current trustees are Rev. Nigel Pearson, Nick Jenkins, Sheena Mac Crae, John Crowther, Maddy Crowther and Barbara Cooper.

The Trust was asked for an article to put in the Skylark.

Other items discussed:

Milestones

The northern milestone can still not be replaced as Highways objects to this as unnecessary 'street furniture'. There are also practical issues with lorry accidents, drivers veering on to the verge at this point of the road. A Historic England listing of the milestones and obtaining the support of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Officer could assist in getting the northern stone back in place.

Crossroads problems

There have been more accidents or near accidents during the year. The continuing reason to have the new MVAS in use as soon as possible.

Drains at crossroads and by postbox:

A request to do something about the above drains. The drain at the crossroads / School Lane – north side is nearly always blocked and floods despite having been cleared during the year by Highways. The recent tarmac repairs around the drain by the post box, still do not address the fact that it is now below road level by 10-15 cm. Further, a lot of large gravel has not been cleared up after the tarmac repair.

MVAS installation and speed monitoring:

Five positions for the MVAS posts have been agreed with Highways: Old North Road/A1198 by the entrance to Anglian Water / just north of the entrance to The Dene / School Lane opposite entrance to church / High Street just east of the bus shelter / High Street on verge opposite the Post Office. (Noted, a couple of the suggested

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positions were too close to a 40 or 50 mph signs or the crossroads to be effective). Highways will now contact underground and overground services to check they will not be affected.

Annual Report from the PCC:

A request that the PCC (Parochial Church Council) be invited to contribute a report to the APM each year.

The Open Meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.

Signed by:
Chairperson

Date: 21st May 2026

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Appendix 1

Longstowe Parish Council April 2026 Report from the Chair

First of all, I would like to thank all those volunteering or undertaking tasks in and around the village. This includes the Parish Councillors, who give up their time to discuss items of concern for the Village. We don't always get it right and we try to make a lot of noise when we disagree with other powers. We are such a small village that it is sometimes difficult to see how we can make a difference. But we try; and we would appreciate it very much if others would like to help us. The village is a pleasure to view and this is mainly due to hard work from a small band of people. The Village Hall plays a large part in the community, as does the Parish magazine, *The Skylark*, again mainly due to hard work from a small band of people. We were lucky to get a partial grant to refurbish the Village sign, which I hope you all appreciate.

But we do have problems: mainly with speeding traffic, a problem road junction and aircraft noise. For the speeding traffic, we have been lucky in our grant application and a vehicle speed monitoring sign (MVAS) will soon be installed. With regard to the road junction, we would like everyone who has a potential problem with the cross-roads to report it to the Parish Clerk, Sharon Brown. All accidents and near-misses need to be reported. Aircraft noise has increased along with the change to the flight path for Luton Airport. All we can do for this is to collect evidence of day/date/time of noise and check with an online flight tracker together with the flight paths map reproduced by the local campaign group RELAS to see if the aircraft used the correct flight path. (see links and contacts at end of this report).

Due to the Government funding cut of the Neighbourhood Development Planning, the Longstowe Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has had to be suspended. We would like to thank the Working Group for their commitment and their hard work.

The trial of a change from A4 to A5 format for *The Skylark* was abandoned when one of the volunteer deliverers was bitten by a dog whilst trying to push the smaller format through a letter-box.

The Parish Council has agreed to change the domain name of the website from .co.uk to .gov.uk and to issue all Councillors with .gov.uk email addresses.

For the Village accounts, there is a copy available so that you can see where your money has been spent. All copies of *The Skylark*, meeting Agendas and Minutes, as well as the annual Accounts are available on our web pages, the address of which is always printed in *The Skylark*.

And to finish: On Saturday morning, 18th April, from 10am to 12 noon, there will be free defibrillator awareness training as well as CPR training. All are welcome but please remember to give your name to the Clerk.

RELAS

<https://relas.uk/maps.html>

Noise Complaints Luton Airport:

If your complaint relates to aircraft noise, email **noise@ltn.aero** with the date, time, location, and details of the disturbance. Luton Airport provides the **TraVis flight tracking system** to identify specific flights causing noise, allowing you to submit a targeted complaint.

<https://www.london-luton.co.uk/corporate/community/noise/making-a-noise-complaint>

<https://travisltn.topsonic.aero/>

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Appendix 2:

Longstowe Village Hall Report to the Annual Parish Meeting April 2026

This past year has not been as busy as the previous year and we have used the opportunity to carry out significant improvements to our Village Hall.

We have upgraded the outside lighting making the car parking safer. We have renewed doors in the changing rooms and one of our committee members has kindly sponsored a replacement of the stable type door between the bar and verandah. The upgraded doors not only have improved insulation, but are far more secure than the originals.

The hot water system and shower area have been upgraded and some of the sanitary ware has been renewed. It is no longer necessary for hirers to remember to turn on and off, the water heating.

We didn't have a large number of hires for this period though Friday Teas brought in a fair number of takers and were held most "last Fridays of the month". Exceptions were mainly when the date coincided with a bank holiday or other special occasion.

We hosted a celebration tea in May, to remember the V.E. Day events and a successful fete at the end of June, this alone brought in around £1,300. In August the VH joined forces with the Sports Club to provide teas for the cricketers and those who had come as spectators.

During October the V.H. was hired out, free of charge, to a couple running a fund raiser for their own charity. The committee decided not to charge for the use of the hall as the "hirers" had for many years, provided free of charge, the cider that they make, for sale in the bar at our annual fetes. They have been supplying us for more than ten years, very generous of them.

Harvest supper was hosted during October, a fund raiser for the church in Longstowe.

Late in November, in place of Afternoon Teas, the VH committee hosted a Christmas party, a jolly and well supported event.

The cold early months of 2026 saw little use of the VH until March arrived when a well supported quiz was held. The event raised £500 which all went to VH funds. Many thanks to those from Longstowe and further afield who joined in.

There was regular use of the VH by the Parish Council, the VH Committee and our History Society which host five meetings during the year. The VH received an anonymous £200 donation. The Sports Club used the VH and cricket pitch extensively during the Cricket season.

Financially we were a little down on last year though remain optimistic as the committee continues to seek new hirings by more widespread advertising but also by having a presence on "Halls for Hire" website. We do what we can to save money where possible, by careful control of the heating system, a well insulated hot water system and most if not all of the cleaning is done by Committee members.

We look forward to a busy and fruitful new year, plans are well under way for our next big event, the village show, last Saturday in June.

Peter.

L.V.H. Committee Chair

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Appendix 3:

Longstowe History Society 2025 Annual Report and Accounts

Report

This is the tenth Annual Report and Accounts of the Longstowe History Society.

Our ninth AGM was held in February 2025, the Annual Report and Accounts were approved, and the three committee members were re-elected.

Five talks and one visit were held in 2025.

- February – King James I's Place in Royston by Sophie Riches
- April – The History of the Cambridge American Cemetery by Suzie Harrison
- May – Visit to Cambridge American Cemetery
- June – My Grandfather's Exploits with the SAS in WW2 by Nicky Muirhead
- September – Did Cromwell Really Cancel Christmas by Stuart Orme
- November – 1940, Preventing Invasion, the Bomber's Role by Ian Cameron

We have a full programme for the current season, and a number of potential speakers for 2026-27. As always, we welcome other suggestions or recommendations for future talks and activities from our membership.

The Society Membership numbers 33 (2024 – 30), and 48 (2024 – 62) visitors (mostly from surrounding villages) attended our talks in 2025.

The finances of the Society for 2025 are on a firm footing with a stronger Closing Balance than the previous year. The major outgoings are the CCAN (Cambridge Community Archive Network) annual subscription by which the Longstowe History Society website is hosted, speakers' fees and the hire of the Village Hall.

As previously stated, one of our ambitions is the creation of a local archive, ideally in the Village Hall, and we will continue to work with the Village Hall Committee to explore the feasibility of achieving this goal despite this appearing to be less likely in the short term.

The activities of the Society have been driven by a Committee comprising Steve Owen (Chairman), Viv Storey (Treasurer) and Jane Bowden (Secretary). These three have agreed to put themselves forward for re-election to the Committee. We would welcome other volunteers or nominations to the Committee.

15th January 2026

Accounts for Period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £	Notes
Opening Balance 1 January	<u>1419.44</u>	<u>1376.59</u>	
Incomings			
Donations	10.00	15.20	
Membership Subscriptions	298.00	332.00	1
Visitors Fees from Talks	144.00	186.00	2
Interest from Building Society	34.21	24.65	
Other (Museum entrance fees)	0.00	0.00	
Total Incomings	486.21	557.85	
Outgoings			
CCAN annual membership	100.00	100.00	
Village Hall Hire	150.00	150.00	
Speakers' Fees	163.50	265.00	
Other (Museum charges)	0.00	0.00	
Total Outgoings	413.50	515.00	
Closing Balance 31 December	1492.15	1419.44	3
Notes			

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1. Annual Membership Subscription is £10.
2. Visitor's Fee is £3 per talk.
3. The Closing Balance is held as £1,386.85 in the Longstowe History Society account at the Cambridge Building Society and £105.30 cash in hand held by the Treasurer.

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