



# Longstanton Parish Council

*The Village Institute, 24 High Street, Longstanton, CB24 3BS  
T: 01954 782323 E: [parish.clerk@longstantonvillage.org](mailto:parish.clerk@longstantonvillage.org)  
Parish Clerk/Proper Officer: Mrs Libby White PSLCC*

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Dear Longstanton Resident

## Longstanton Community Hall

Thank you for your patience over the last 18 months in relation to the Longstanton Community Hall Project. Longstanton Parish Council has been working through a number of legal and governance requirements in order to advance the Community Hall Project in the best way for the village.

Longstanton Parish Council is Trustee to three separate charities within the parish, as well as a governance body in its own right. Due to the number of charities and associated purposes, councillors received conflicting advice from supporting bodies during the scoping of the community hall project on the most efficient governance model.

To ensure that the project is run correctly and to the parish's greatest advantage, Councillors have sought legal advice which has taken into consideration our unique position. We have now received final legal recommendations, which are described as follows:

- **Longstanton Village Institute Charity**

Longstanton Village Institute Charity currently runs and provides the Village Institute. The advice to the Trustee (Parish Council) that has been provided is that this charity should run the community hall project, as the particular purposes of the charity are aligned with the purpose of providing a community space. This means that the building(s) will be charity owned and run.

- **Longstanton Recreation Ground Charity**

While our advisors undertook the work looking at the charitable entities, it was found that the Longstanton Recreation Ground Charity, which from Parish Council records had been closed in 2008 wasn't recognised by the Charity Commission as being closed. We are currently considering merging this charity with the Longstanton Village Institute charity.

The outcome of the above is to have one charity in the village to run the two facilities, which will continue to work for the benefit of the residents of Longstanton. Longstanton Parish Council has received confirmation from the Charity Commission that they have no issue joining these two charities, but those that benefit (i.e. residents of Longstanton) need to be consulted. *We will be holding a public meeting at 7pm on 10<sup>th</sup> September at the Village Institute (prior to the Parish Council meeting) for this purpose.*



Combining these two charities will reduce the governance burden of two separate charities and means that the assets will be held by one charity, therefore providing better value for money.

### **The Community Hall Project**

While it has taken some time to work through the legal challenges, the Parish Council recognises that the last village-wide survey was done nearly three years ago and the desires and needs of the village may have changed.

A group of residents have been working on a community-led Village Plan<sup>i</sup>. It would be appreciated if you could express your opinions via the survey when it is delivered. This will help us understand the current village needs and requirements.

Trustees of the Gravel Pit (Allotment for Gravel, Clay and Stone Pits) charity, the third charity Longstanton Parish Council are trustee of, are considering the sale of an unused plot of land it holds as its only asset. Though the charity is still 'active', it has not produced any income or incurred any expenses for the village for many years.

The sale of the land detailed above, grants, fundraising and if necessary, an interest-bearing loan, which would need to be paid back from precept (via council tax) would be possible ways of the charity financing the project.

As ever, we are looking for residents who may have expertise or have a particular interest in getting involved to get this project moving forward. If you would like to help, share any thoughts or comments, please email [parish.clerk@longstantonvillage.org](mailto:parish.clerk@longstantonvillage.org).

We would ask that you keep an eye out for the Village Plan questionnaire which will be with you shortly and ask that as many households as possible complete this and share your views on what Longstanton needs from new community facilities.

Thanking you in anticipation of your input.

Yours faithfully

Longstanton Parish Council

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<sup>i</sup> A Village Plan (also known as a Community-Led Plan or Parish Plan) aims to reflect the local vision of how local residents would like their area to develop in future years. They are generally broader than Neighbourhood Plans and cover more areas than just planning issues.