

# Longstanton Village Institute

Charity No.: 300408

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Good evening,

The Village Institute is at the heart of our community, this building was donated for the use of the community many years ago and we as a Parish Council meet here each month for all our meetings and committees. As a Council we rent the back offices from the Trust that runs this community building. The institute operates under an independent Charitable Trust status. It is independent from the LPC, however its Trustees are made up of the current parish councillors. This seems to be normal practice for other community buildings in the local area.

To be honest, with everything that had been going on with our main role as councillors the fact that the Institute was ticking over with no immediate issues was a godsend. May I take this opportunity to thank William our caretaker for all his efforts over this last year.

This financial year I became the Chairman of the Trustees and the first task we implemented was an overview of the building - we looked at health and safety issues as well as general maintenance of the building. It's fairly apparent to all that the building is in need of some updates and general maintenance. We also looked at rental charges for the building as they had not been reviewed in a considerable amount of time. We have as a result increased charges for all new clients. Cost cutting for our main cost for utilities are also being reviewed and some savings and changes have already taken place.

One main thing stood out from our review - we could find no formal cash accounts for the institute prepared or reviewed since 2010. As a result we felt that no maintenance and development could be put in place and signed off until we had a full financial review and checked our accounts thoroughly. This became possible as soon as we got the professional and brilliant services of our new clerk - Libby White. Between the two of us we prepared a set of accounts for the last two years. The good news, we have not found any financial irregularities, all monies are accounted for over the last two years. The bad news, the summary is bleak! The Institute made a loss in 2011/12 and a small profit last year but not nearly enough to look at maintenance, emergencies or any form of development.

So our conclusion is that as the Institute runs under charitable status we must therefore raise funds via fundraising as a charity in order to restore the institute to if not its former glory, but to a standard that it has at least a fighting chance of being competitive in the local market and attract new business as well as being an asset to our community for the next 5 years at least.

We do however have to do some urgent basic maintenance - the boiler is hanging on by a wish and the guttering outside is in desperate need of cleaning and inspecting. Both of these things we must do ASAP.

As a result of the boiler being replaced the kitchen will more than likely need a re-fit, so we are going to need the community to come together and help raise money and help with these projects. We would like people to come forward and help the trustees with fund raising ideas so we can improve, refit and maintain the building.

**Longstanton Village Institute**

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We would like to ask for help from local business, the air and army cadets and volunteer help from any individuals who have the skill base to help. We also appeal for help from anyone with expertise in grant aid projects, local tradesmen who may be able to give us some professional help and anyone else who feels they can help.

Further information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks and months via our website so please look out for further information as we bring a plan together. Our accounts will also be available at our AGM scheduled to be confirmed.

Cllr Annmaria **Brash-Hall**  
*Chairman of the Trustees - Longstanton Village Institute.*