

The Longlander

SEPTEMBER 2023 ISSUE 12



WELCOME



Greetings everyone, welcome to our Autumn 2023 edition of the Longlander.

First off, I want to thank our editor Artemis for all the work she's done over the last three years, getting our Newsletter together in a professional and consistent way; Among all of the videos, photos, texts, announcements we make and events we put on, the Longlander is our most-seen piece of media output. That's a lot of responsibility to bear on a single keyboard, for such a long time!

I can't thank Artemis enough for all the hard work she has put in to produce our first 11 issues, and I hope to see her work again soon.

I'm only guest-Editing our Newsletter for this quarter, and we've got a role description advert for a new Editor later in this issue. Do you feel like you could Edit the Longlander, particularly as it expands from covering one site, up to all three sites in the Long Lands Community? Then please drop us a line to find out more!

Speaking of our future on three sites (Long Lands Common, Long Lands Community Food Forest, and Knaresborough Forest Park), at the time of writing our land purchase is yet to be finalised - but we hope to have more news on that very, very soon! Keep your eyes on our social media channels for that. When we have that news, we'll be putting out a special edition of our Newsletter (which otherwise normally releases around the equinox of each quarter of the year) to lay out our path ahead for the Long Lands Community as a greater whole.

Ben Skinner – Chair of the Long Lands Community

If you would like to contribute to The Longlander by writing an article, or want to send us your letters and photographs, then get in touch at: thelonglander@yahoo.com

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KEEPING IN TOUCH

The Long Lands Community has a number of social media channels and email contact addresses (and we'll probably be spawning more over the next few months!). Please feel free to follow them all, and contact us with enquiries too.



LONG LANDS COMMON



[FACEBOOK LINK](#)



[YOUTUBE LINK](#)



[EMAIL LINK](#)



[INSTAGRAM LINK](#)

[TWITTER / X](#)

KNARESBOROUGH FOREST PARK



[FACEBOOK LINK](#)

[EMAIL LINK](#)

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WORK AND PLANNING AT LONG LANDS COMMON

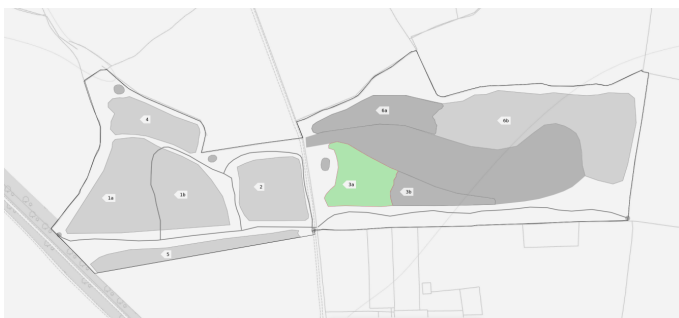


Keith Wilkinson and LLC Secretary Chris Kitson unveil Wilkinson Wood

WILKINSON WOOD

One of our newly planted woodland blocks (Block 3a) was officially unveiled at our Annual General Meeting, and now bears the name Wilkinson Wood.

Named for local Harrogate conservationist Keith Wilkinson MBE, the block contains 740 trees from nine species.



Block 3a can be found on the East field of Long Lands Common.

You might also recognise Keith from a sculpture made in his image that (literally!) stands on the Nidderdale Greenway between Long Lands Common and the Nidd Gorge (right).



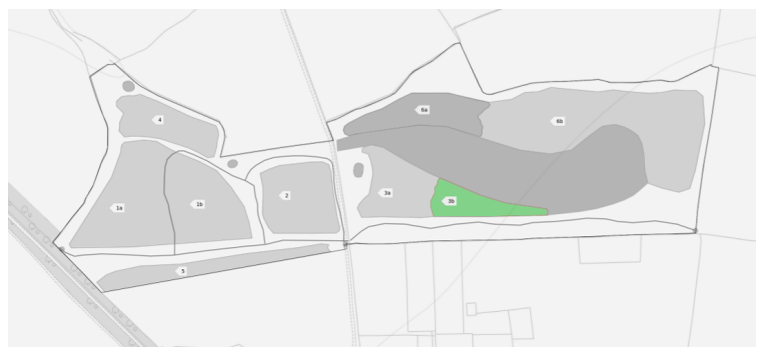
Photo Credit Ben Skinner

TREE NURSERY, AND OTHER UPCOMING WORKS

Work is due to begin within the next few weeks to establish our Tree Nursery. This will be planted on the East Field next to Wilkinson Wood.

It will involve earthwork ramparts, deer fencing, pathways, and many, many, many saplings!

Further tree planting days (and Pathlaying works) will take place throughout the Winter. Keep your eyes on our Social Media and your email inbox, for any invites to take part in our forthcoming Winter activities!



WORK AND PLANNING AT LONG LANDS COMMON

A TEENY TINY LAWNMOWER

We've acquired a large mower, to be used for tending paths and grassland in the more human-centric areas of our land.



Photo Credit Sandra Sweeney

HIMALAYAN BALSAM

As its name might imply, this species is non-native to the UK, and is considered an invasive weed as it often out-competes and suppresses native species, particularly on riverbanks and other wet areas.

Some of these plants have recently been seen growing on the north-western boundary of Long Lands Common.

As Long Lands Common is a nature reserve focusing on protecting and preserving primarily native species, these have now been removed.

TOOL SHED ON THE MOVE

Our tool shed - previously located near the lookout mound on the Eastern edge of Long Lands Common - has recently been moved down to the middle of the site next to Carl's Shed.

With the Winter planting season approaching, the "shedquarters" will be seeing a lot of use over the coming months, as we suppose volunteers will be wanting spades and mattocks to dig with, rather than just their hands...



Photo Credit Angela Jex



Photo Credit Angela Jex

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ON BILLY FOX

Name: Billy Fox

Age: 18

Occupation: Student

LLC: Hi Billy, many thanks for agreeing to chat to us today! How did you first hear about Long Lands Common and what inspired you to get involved with the project?

Billy : One day, I was just walking down through Mackintosh Park and Nidd Gorge and I saw all of these signs about a community project. I took a picture of it to have a better look later and I thought that it sounded like a fantastic idea; Getting shareholders to fund a community-minded woodland to replace potential housing land seemed a great concept for everyone, the environment and people alike, and in my opinion, these are the kind of the ventures that are going to make a difference in the long run, which is why I got involved.



LLC: What has been your favourite Long Lands Common activity or event so far?

Billy : To be honest, I've enjoyed all of the labouring ones quite a lot; A day's work in a field, planting trees or scything or whatever it's been, has consistently been perfectly serene. I suppose that the scything probably comes out on top because of its novelty.

LLC: What do you consider the most important actions the government and local leaders can take to address the loss of biodiversity?

Billy : Well, in relation to the government, the most major loss of biodiversity is already underway, so in order to rectify that, historic measures would really need to be taken. Major moves away from fossil fuel investment, for example, are essential in the immediate term if we're going to avoid the largest effects of global warming.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ON BILLY FOX

Billy (continued) :

As for local government, small-scale biodiversity projects like this need to be prioritised. Currently, the vast majority of land is only profitable and will only last in the long-run if it is either residential or monoculture agriculture and this really isn't sustainable. Therefore, investment into projects like Long Lands Common, which will render an area dedicated to biodiversity an affordable option, are primordial and a system where this could be maintained in a more widespread manner, I believe, would be a fantastic step in order to address the loss of biodiversity. At the moment, we're living in a system where short-run human benefit is the measure of worth, but there is more value to re-wilding than that.

LLC: Did you or your family take part on No Mow May? What are your thoughts on initiatives such as these and relaxed mowing of verges?

Billy : None of us have a garden, so no although I think that these are really good ideas. Unfortunately, Britain nationwide has over many centuries become largely domesticated and even rural areas are dominated by agriculture and human interference. While I don't think that we'll ever be able to go back fully in a lot of places, hedgerows and verges remain the last refuge of a lot of wildlife, so I think that leaving them to re-wild is essential. Of course, I understand the argument when people see the work on the Stray that they consider it just messy and it looks a bit like that in the short term; however, these marginal efforts will make a big difference so are totally worth it and in the long term, as we begin to see more wildlife in these areas, even people dismissing the view of it initially will hopefully see the benefits then.

LLC: Do you have another favourite local green space where you go to relax or try to see wildlife?

Billy : I'm not sure whether you can classify the entirety of the Dales as a local green space, but it's an area that I adore. I regularly enjoy hiking and running out there, all parts of it, and I consider myself extremely lucky that I can live in a place in such close proximity to a national park as beautiful as the Yorkshire Dales. There are just so many amazing spots.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ON BILLY FOX

LLC: What more can we at Long Lands Common be doing to engage young people with our project better?

Billy : Honestly, I think that there are a lot of young people out there who would be willing to take part in a project like this just because of its merit in itself, people such as myself, but I don't know to what extent a lot of them realise that it's happening. Certainly, some do because I'm aware that a lot of my friends' parents actually also go to the LLC events, but I would reckon that there are equally some who just need the outreach to places that they often go such as schools, which I recognise is hard to do with a volunteer-led organisation, but which I think would be key if attempting to attract more young people – showing them particularly the merit to them as they grow.

LLC: Fantastic, thanks again for taking the time to chat to us today Billy, and you have certainly given us some inspiration with your thoughtful answers. We look forward to seeing you at a Long Lands Common event again very soon!

Photo Credit Cate Quinn



SITE RANGERS' CORNER

The Site Rangers are our team of active volunteers, who form a combination of site wardens, wildlife monitors, and a friendly face to meet and greet with any site visitors.

So, what's been seen on Long Lands Common lately?!



Hawthorne Berries



Meadow Vetchling



Laughing Gym Mushroom



Inkcap Mushroom



Sloe Berries



Common Darter Dragonfly

SITE RANGERS' CORNER



Ivy Blossom



Field Maple Seeds



Speckled Wood Butterfly



Hazel Catkins



A tasty treat!

WE ARE RECRUITING!

We're looking for a volunteer Newsletter Editor!



Photo Credit Wikimedia Commons

Role description:

To produce editorial content and research and source images for The Longlander, our popular quarterly membership newsletter. The role also involves liaising with contributors in-house and externally - including setting editorial expectations, (such as deadlines and style) editing and proofreading copy and compiling the newsletter.

Skills and experience beneficial to the role:

- A real desire to make a difference to the Long Lands Common community by telling the stories that matter most, so that our 3,000+ members and supporters feel inspired and engaged, and our amazing volunteer workforce feels cared about.
- Good organisational skills.
- Good telephone and email manner.
- Knowledge of editing digital photographs would be useful, but not essential.
- Editing and proofreading skills.
- Design skills are desirable but not essential. Training can be arranged if an interest is shown!

Benefits:

- Being part of a growing movement of community-owned projects nationally to empower local people to take joint ownership of greenbelt land, and protect it for the good of all members of the community and nature.
- Gain experience working in a creative volunteer role, one that would look excellent on your CV for future employment in the PR and media industry.
- Feeling valued and supported as a volunteer in the work that you do, and meeting new people with shared interests, including a passion for the natural world.

What to do next:

If the person we are describing sounds like you, then we'd really love to hear from you! We're a friendly, down-to-earth, and approachable team - all volunteers, from different backgrounds. Send us an email to info@longlandscommon.org outlining why you think you are right for this role, and what being part of our community-owned project would mean to you.

If you would like to ask any questions about the role before applying, then drop us an email for an informal chat!