

ABOUT LONGSTOWE

Longstowe is a civil parish of some 86 homes and almost 200 residents. Situated to the west of the A1198 and along the B1046 towards the Gransdens. Some 10 miles west of Cambridge City, it is bordered by Huntingdon in the north and Royston to the south and neighbours Bourn, Caxton, Arrington and the Gransdens.

Longstowe gave its name to the Hundred of Stowe and its very name means 'Village in the deeps'. In Domesday it had but 17 persons (1086). It was mainly woods, heath and scrub land. Most of this had been cut down by the 1300's. Longstowe had to maintain two foot soldiers for the 100years war in the eleventh century.

The parish has an area of 1537 acres and ranges in height from 50 metres above sea level in the east to 79 metres in the South West. The soil is heavy with clay over gault; there was a definite lack of good water. It mostly came from odd ponds and dips situated along the High Street. Farming was concentrated in three 'open' fields and remained so until inclosure in 1799.

The living was owned by Ramsey Abbey, who also administered the Hospital of St Mary run by nuns and situated by the old Fox Inn crossing (A1198/B1046) still known as Nun's Close. Its square moat can just be made out today.

The Church was originally thatched and the Tower built of Carrstone (local to the area). Over the centuries the church fell into disrepair – once it caught fire but was always replaced. The final time being 1864 when it became the warm red bricked, attractive Victorian building that it presently is. The North Chapel contains monuments to the Bovey family (Lords of the Manor of Longstowe circa 1600's) and also the Stanley families (1800's) plus several to the Ruston family (former rectors). The ancient plate belonging to the Church is lodged with the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The living now, of course, is owned by the Diocese of Ely.

Longstowe is proud to have a 'pound'. This was the site of the ancient lock-up in 1772 where errant persons served their penance – each family looking after their own if the mood so took them. Drovers could also pen animals for night shelter as they journeyed through the Parish. There are only five or six in the County. The 'pound', next to the Old School House, is situated on what was the Town Green, now known as the Church Green.

An Ancient Round Hill can still be picked out in the field behind Middle Farm (formerly Gt Papworth).

Two Constables were kept in the village – the last two were Stanley Pettit and Harold Benstead, recorded in 1942.

Almshouses were in Longstowe in 1600 -1900 and fields given to a charity which is in most parishes and named Town Lands Trust. This saw that the poor were looked after and orphans educated. The local church was also to be kept in good repair. The local rector ran a school of some 25 girls and 15 boys two evenings per week and on Sundays. Those able to paid towards this, others were educated for free. However, the School Act of 1844 brought parliamentary grants which enabled parishes, with church help, to build schools and Reading rooms as in Longstowe.

Longstowe once had three pubs although only the Red House now remains. The Three Horseshoes Inn, built in 1865 and closed in 2001, was renamed after **Golden Miller**, the Cheltenham Gold Cup and Grand National winning racehorse which was trained by **Basil Briscoe** .

Longstowe has five Parish Councillors and is also represented on South Cambridgeshire District Council by two Councillors in the Gamlingay Ward and one Councillor on Cambridgeshire County Council. The Village is in the parliamentary constituency of South Cambridgeshire represented at the House of Commons by Andrew Lansley MP.

Note: The Parish Council hopes that you have found this brief history of Longstowe interesting and informative but if you have any additional facts or interesting history you would like to be considered to be added - please contact the Clerk at margaret.sharp@ntlworld.com