

Long Stratton History

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Introduction

Long Stratton is a large linear village standing on the A140. It is 10 ½ miles south west of Norwich on a boulder clay plateau which was deposited during the Ice Age, it conceals underlying solid rock which produce its gentle undulating landscape. The A140 is a Roman Pye road between Caistor St Edmunds, a large settlement and the Roman city of Colchester.

It has a conservation area stretching from Hill Farm road to Hall Lane along either side of the road as defined in the L.S.A.A.P

At present there are 3428 adults on the electoral roll.

Long Stratton History

History/Timeline

- Roman Settlement 100-400 AD

The Romans had a large settlement at Caistor St Edmunds and they built a paved road to Colchester which was a capital settlement.

The Roman name for Stratton was STRATUM, meaning paved road or street. It covered the area of the parishes of St Marys and St Michaels.

The name was later changed to ESTRATUNA meaning street by the water (perhaps the River Tas or the beck which is a small stream running parallel to the main road).

There have been several Roman finds in Long Stratton. In August 1773 urns and pots were found in what is believed to be a crematorium hearth. There were also coins found at this site which is where South Norfolk Council offices now are. Finds were also made 1849, 1887, 1948 and in the 60's and 70's.

- Saxon 400-1000 AD

The Saxons were the next settlers. They changed the name to ESTAETTUM.

Saxon settlements are often on a triangular pattern and village life centred around the hall.

In Long Stratton we have a triangular plain and several halls.

St Mary's church may have been of Saxon origin as they built round watch towers to protect the settlers from invaders.

- After the Saxons came the Normans

In **1086** the Domesday book tells us that St Marys, St Michaels, St Peters, Wood Green and Rhees Green had a population of 220.

The records of St Mary's church date back to **1547**. In the early **1300's** some reconstruction work was done to the church by the de Bourne family.

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- **1207** - King John granted a Charter to Roger De Stratton for a fair to be held on 15th August each year at the back of the church. The fair was so popular that it was extended to be a two-day fair.
- **1257** - Long Stratton was granted a Charter to hold a weekly market every Tuesday at the Angel Inn (now the Pharmacy). It also had two fairs a year, most probably on the Plain – one on Whit Tuesday and one on 12th October. On the 11th October (Michaelmas in Norfolk) in nearby Shotesham there was a hiring day for the changeover of farm lettings and farm labourers.
- **1300's** - There were 5 or 6 Manorial Halls, the oldest is Stratton Hall which stands up Hall Lane, also known as Stratton St Mary Manor. It is a moated hall but over the years it has been re-built and the original old hall has disappeared.

Other halls were SAYE'S near St Michaels Church, Rhees also in St Michaels, Sturmy, Snape and Welhomes (there are lots of different spellings for each of these halls).
- **1758** - Long Stratton men marched to the River Tas and pulled down the bridge that was recently built over the river.
- **1774** - Methodism came to Long Stratton, services were held in Church House next to St Mary's Church.
- **1785** - A post office was established in Long Stratton.
- **1786** - John Wesley came to preach to the Methodists. The church house was packed.
- **1797** - A house was purchased on Wood Green to be used as a poor house.
- **1836** - The poor house was no longer required as Pulham Union workhouse had been built by the Depwade Guardians as the poor of Long Stratton had been sent there.
- **1830** - Methodist Church built (later extended 1845).

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- **1840** - Congregational church built.
- **1850** - National school (on main road opposite the church) was built at a cost of £300 raised by public subscription. It was enlarged in 1877 and again in 1892 at a cost of £100.
- **1876** - The Justice Rooms were built by John Hotson esquire, who lived at the Guild House. Court sessions were held here on alternate Tuesdays. This building was used as a Magistrates Court until the **1970's**. Before the Justice Rooms were built court sessions were held in an upstairs room at the Swan Public House.
- **1892** - Congregational Church Manse built.
- **1896** - School holds 180 children from the ages of 5 to 14. Average attendance 126.
- **1896** - Fire Brigade as we know it was formed (although there had been a form of a fire brigade before this) when the village purchased a Merryweather pump for £150 raised by local tradesmen and villagers.
- **1905** - Village Hall built using money from an anonymous benefactor given to the Reverend D Jessop of Scarning.
- **1906** - 30th May village hall officially opened by Prince Frederick Duleep Singh.
- **1912** - 12th August Long Stratton flooded.
- **1916** - Bomb dropped by a Zeppelin on Parkers Lane.
- **1920** - War memorial erected.

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- **1927** - 12th October Women's Institute inaugural meeting held.
- **1932** - Electricity came to the village.
- **1935** - St Marys and St Michaels became one civil parish.
- **1938** - Mains water and sewerage came to Long Stratton.
- **1939** - January – Long Stratton flooded.
- **1947** - March – Long Stratton flooded.
- **1959** - Secondary modern school built, took children aged 11-15. Officially opened **1960**.
- **1965** - Swimming pool built at secondary modern school.
- **1968** - September – Long Stratton flooded again.
- **1970** - Playing field opened 30th May by Miss Sybil Harker.
- **1971** – Infant school on Manor Road opened took children aged 5-7.
- **1972** – Health Centre on Flowerpot Lane opened.
- **1972** – Building on Harker House begins. Officially opened September 1974.
- **1974** – Depwade Court opens.

Long Stratton History

- **1976** – Plain was registered as Village Green.
- **1977** - Middle school built (now St Mary's C of E Junior School).
- **1977** - The building of South Norfolk District Council was begun.
- **1978** – Plain confirmed as Village Green.
- **1978** – Middle school officially opened.
- **1978** – Secondary modern becomes a high school with 600 pupils and 34 staff.
- **1978** – Village sign erected on Plain 25th November by Women's Institute to commemorate their Golden Jubilee.
- **1980** – Library opens.
- **1980** – South Norfolk House officially opened by Princess Alexandra.
- **1982** – Leisure centre opens.
- **1989** – 14th December tornado hits Long Stratton.
- **1996** – Nursery opened at Manor Field School.
- **1997** – Methodist Church moved to Manor Road.
- **2004** – Doctors move to Swan Lane Surgery.

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- **2005** – Co-op opened.
- **2006** – High school extended.
- **2010** – Ice House collapses – December.
- **2013** – Adults on Electoral Roll 3468 adults.
- **2015** – September 18th Barclays Bank closed after being in the village for over 100 years.
- **2016** – Neighbourhood Plan begins.
- **2018** – Adults on Electoral Roll 3428.

Long Stratton continues to grow.

Long Stratton History

Education

- **1850** - The Public Elementary School (on main road opposite St Marys Church) was built at a cost of £300 raised by public subscription. In **1864** 50 children attended the school – these children had to pay for their education. In **1876** Education was made compulsory but families still had to pay for their children's education. It was enlarged in **1877** and again in **1892** at a cost of £100. The average attendance is 160.
- **1951** - Swan Lane School opened to take children 11-15 years old (known as the new school).
- **1959** - The Secondary Modern School was built on Manor Road with 213 pupils from Long Stratton and surrounding villages. There were 13 members of staff. The school was designed to hold 300 pupils and was built at a cost of £105,000. Mr Philip Carter was Head Master. It was officially opened on 16th May **1960** by Elfed Thomas B.Sc. Ph.D. In **1978** Secondary Modern becomes a High School with 600 pupils and 34 staff. In **2006/2007** the High School was extended and had 650 pupils and 50 staff. In **2017** there were 579 pupils and 76 staff.
- **1971** - Manor Field Infant School opened to take 5-7 year olds. It was extended and a purpose-built Nursery was added but this was not used as a Nursery until **1989**.
- **1977** - Middle School opens – it became a Junior School in **2006**. In **2011** the school became an Academy.

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Religion

Churches

At one-time Long Stratton had 3 churches, St Marys, St Michaels and St Peters.

St Peters

St Peters was built after the Norman Conquest in **1100** by Roger Bygod. In **1444** Thomas Martin the last Rector of St Peters died, and on the 10th September **1449**, it was consolidated to St Michaels Church but continued as a separate church until the dissolution of the monasteries, when it returned to being a chapel only. It was then demolished in the 16th century.

St Michaels

St Michaels Church has a square tower which dates to around **1400**. The Nave and the Chancel date from around **1320**. It has a connection to France and the Normans as the living for St Michaels was given by the Prior of Longeville in Normandy. This connection was severed in **1347**. In **1509** the Reverend John Cowan (Cowell), who was rector of St Michaels left a cottage and garden for the use of the poor and 6 acres of land for the benefit of the church. The cottage is now called PEPYRS and is now a private house. The land left to the church is now used as allotments.

St Marys Church

The round tower of St Marys Church is similar to many more in East Anglia and dates from the 11th century. The earliest round towers are believed to have been Saxon watch towers and many of them had churches built on as an addition in Norman times. St Marys tower, which is the oldest part of the church, may have been one such watch tower. The ancient church attached to the tower was in a poor state of repair at the end of the 13th century, but then the wealthy de Bourne family who lives in Long Stratton undertook the reconstruction of the church.

In **1293** the rector was Thomas de Bourne.

Long Stratton History

Religion continued

In **1319** Rector Richard de Bourne undertook the building of the present chancel, but it was his brother Sir Richard de Bourne who saw to the main work. In **1330** the remains of the old church were demolished and then the Nave built to link the tower and the Chancel to complete the building of St Marys virtually as it is today.

6 bells hang in the bell tower. The oldest bell dates from around **1320**.

On the tower is a one-handed turret clock that was made in the late 17th century.

One of the most interesting things in the church is the Sexton Wheel which was used to determine the day a person had to fast in honour of the Virgin Mary on lady day. There is only one other in England.

The church registers and records date from **1547**.

Methodism

Methodism was introduced to Long Stratton in about **1774**. Services were held in a rented cottage next door to St Marys Church.

John Wesley came here in December **1786** to preach; the cottage was packed. The Methodists used this building for over 50 years.

In **1829** the Methodists purchased a piece of land and in **1830** a new church was built for £245.17.8 (which included the price of the land at £7), on the west side of the village going up the hill.

In **1997** the Methodist church moved to Manor Road when they converted a village shop into the building it is today.

Congregational

Congregational religion was formed in June **1826** although it had been known in Long Stratton in some form since **1645**. In **1840** two acres of land were purchased by congregation subscriptions and a church was built on the site to hold 150 worshippers. In **1892** the Manse (next door to the church) was completed and the Reverend W. Bayley lived in it.

In 1961 the church closed but in **1966** it was re-opened and is used today.

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Health

In **2004** the present Long Stratton Health Centre was opened in Swan Lane. Before this the health centre was on Flowerpot Lane in a purpose-built building, which opened in **1973**. Before this surgeries were held at the doctor's private houses e.g. the Parsonage in St Michaels and before this at the White House in St Marys.

The Flowerpot Lane Health Centre is now known as Norfolk Community Health and Care Flowerpot Lane Surgery. It offers a range of services. The district nurses and midwives are based here as is the Community Therapist.

Clinics held here are:

Physiotherapy

Dietitian

Podiatry

Leg Ulcer

Continence

Newborn hearing

Neuro-rehab

Norfolk Voluntary Befriending Service is also based here.

Social Care

In **1797** a house was purchased on Wood Green for the Overseer of the Poor and some cottages for the poor. The Overseer decided weekly how much and to whom help should be given. There was a stock of parish linen which was used for the poor.

In **1836** the house on Wood Green was no longer needed, as the Depwade Guardians had built Depwade Union Work House at Pulham to house the poor of Long Stratton and surrounding villages. This building remained in use as a work house then a care home until the **1970s**.

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Health Continued

In **1972** at a cost of £136.000 building began of a purpose-built care home in Long Stratton on Flowerpot Lane. Residents moved in in June **1973**, with 45 people able to live there.

This building was officially opened in **1974** by Miss Sybil Harker, who was a former Depwade Councillor and Norfolk County Councillor for almost 20 years, after whom the building was named. It was run by Norfolk County Council until **2011** when Norse took over the running of the home. It has 38 residents and 50 staff and is divided into five units, 4 main ones and 1 dementia unit.

The Mayfields

This is a private residential care home. It opened in December **2012**. It takes 60 residents over 2 floors, the top floor housing dementia patients.

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Village Hall

The Village Hall was built in **1905** using money from an anonymous benefactor given to the Reverend D. Jessop of Scarning to benefit and improve the life of working countrymen. The benefactor was a Mrs Evans whose name was only revealed on her death.

There was a grand official opening in May **1906** by Prince Frederick Duleep Singh. It has been used by the village for many events over the years. At present a strong committee of volunteers raise money for the upkeep and repairs and the Parish Councils awards grants for projects such as replacing the windows.

- **1920** – The War memorial was erected.

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Playing Fields

Long Stratton has a large playing field situated on Manor Road. The Parish Council purchased the land in **1954**. They then sold some of the land to Norfolk County Council for the Infant School to be built on in **1971**. This raised the money for the playing field to be constructed. The playing field was officially opened on May 30th, 1970.

In **1981** the Parish Council bought some adjacent land from South Norfolk District Council to extend the playing field. Since then play equipment, skate park and a multi-use games area have been added and there are plans to build a new pavilion.

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Leisure Centre

The Leisure Centre was opened in **1982** and has been renovated at a cost of £2,000,000 in **2018**. It is used by the public for many things and the High School has use of it.

Long Stratton History

Library

Long Stratton has a purpose-built library which opened in **1980**. It was open 4 days a week. Before the library was built the village was served by a mobile library, and prior to this there was a volunteer run library in the Justice Rooms.

- **2018** – The library opens 7 days a week, both staffed and unstaffed.

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Fire Brigade

The Fire Brigade as we know it was formed in **1896**. It has been suggested that some sort of fire fighting equipment was kept in the church before this.

In **1896** Long Stratton Volunteer Fire Brigade purchased a Merryweather pump for £150, using money raised by local tradesmen. There were 12 members of this brigade. The pump was kept in a shed off the main road and 2 farm horses from Stratton Hall were used to pull it. The pump and fire engines were kept at various sites in the village. The present fire station in Swan Lane was built in **1960**. The present crew of Retained Fire Fighters consist of 12 men, with 1 Watch Manager, 2 Crew Managers and 9 firefighters.

Long Stratton History

Plain

In the centre of the village is a space known as the Plain. This piece of the village was registered as a Village Green in **1976**. This was confirmed by the office of the commons commissioners in **1978/1979**.

It is owned and maintained by the Parish Council. The village sign that stands on the Plain depicts the Sexton Wheel, which is kept in St Marys Church. It consists of two revolving metal wheels. The purpose of the wheel was to determine which days the worshipper was to fast to honour Our Lady.

The village sign was presented to the village by the Women's Institute to commemorate their Golden anniversary in **1977**. It was carved by Peter Pearman. And it was erected in **1978**.

Long Stratton History

Employment

There is a large industrial estate in the adjacent village of Tharston.

Some of Long Stratton's employment consist of:

South Norfolk District Council

Co-op

Saffron Housing Trust

Arable farming

Hair dressers

Butchers

Village stores

Dentists

Funeral directors

Estate Agents

Poultry Farm

Garage

Cafes

Chip Shop

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Clubs

Long Stratton has many clubs, some of these are:

Football
Toddler Group
Bowls
WI
Bell ringers
Thursday club
Lions
Brownies
Guides
Rainbows
Beavers
Cubs
Scouts
Walking group
Community choir

Long Stratton is a fast-growing thriving village with many facilities both in leisure and employment. It has a good bus route to Norwich and a limited route to Diss.

Long Stratton History

This information has been taken from the following:

Blomefields Norfolk 1806

Whites, Harrods and Kellys Directories 1845-1936

Rod Cookes 1977 History of Long Stratton

Various newspaper reports