

# KING'S THORN & THE BIRCHES NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch— November 2010

## *Hereford Rail Male Voice Choir*

Will be giving a concert on **SATURDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER** at 7.00pm. in Much Birch Church. Tickets are £7.00 and are available from John Jones - 01981 540980 and Committee members. Proceeds will go towards the M.B. Hall Development Fund

## *Pub Night*

**SATURDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at Little Birch Village Hall – 7.30pm. - midnight. Save The Castle Inn Campaign Committee would like to invite everyone to another Pub Night. Come and meet new and old friends and neighbours for a chat with a few drinks and nibbles. Entry is free. With the Castle Inn being closed for nearly a year now, this is a great evening to catch up on village life.

## *Whist Drive*

The next Whist Drive will be on **TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at Little Birch Village Hall. It will start at 7.30pm. Entrance fee £1.50. Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players always welcome.

## *WI*

The next meeting is the AGM, in Much Birch Community Hall on **TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm.

The Programme Secretary has been busy on our behalf choosing speakers for 2011. Hopefully we shall be able to secure the bookings we favour to put together a varied programme for next year.

## DIARY DATES FOR NOVEMBER 2010

30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER – Hereford Rail Male Voice Choir  
3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER – LB Parish Council Meeting  
6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Pub Night  
9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Little Birch Whist Drive  
16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – W.I.  
17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – LB Community Plan Meeting  
20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Flicks in the Sticks  
24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Gardening Club  
25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – History Talk  
26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Village Market  
26<sup>TH</sup> & 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Cities of Song – Halfway Theatre  
27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – Pruning Demonstration

## ADVANCE NOTICES

1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER – Gardening Club Christmas Social  
2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER - Christmas Bingo  
8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER – Light up a Life - St. Michael's Hospice  
14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER – Little Birch Whist Drive  
17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER – Village Market  
21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER – W.I. Christmas Festivity  
31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER – New Year's Eve Party Little Birch

**Volunteers Wanted!** Especially if you are UNDER 18

Little Birch Community Plan Steering Group would like more people to join in and offer their opinions on the creation of a Community Plan for Little Birch, especially the youth of the Village. Please come along to the next meeting which is to take place on **WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm. in Little Birch Village Hall. We need all members of the community, especially our younger citizens, to give their future wants and needs for Little Birch. If you want to get more information, please contact Liz on 540081.

## *Flicks in the Sticks*

**SATURDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm — **THE BLIND SIDE 12A**

The true story of Michael Oher, a homeless African-American young lad from a broken home, taken in by the Touhys, a well-to-do white family who help him fulfill his potential. At the same time, Oher's presence in the Touhys' lives leads them to some insightful self-discoveries of their own.

## *Gardening Club*

Mr. Frank Hardy will give an illustrated talk on 'Herbaceous Perennials' in L.B. Village Hall on **WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm. New members are always welcome.

## *History Talk*

Little Birch and King's Thorn History Group are presenting a talk on **THURSDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

in Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30pm. We are very fortunate to have Graham Wren as our speaker. He is an expert photographer who has spent many years photographing wildlife and has also been involved with farming. His talk will be 'Our Changing Countryside' in which he will look at the history of farming from the 1920s and the way it has shaped our countryside and its wildlife. Entry will be £2.50 which will include light refreshments.

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### ***Much Birch Village Market***

The Village Market will take place on **FRIDAY, 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**, in Much Birch Community Hall, between 2.30pm and 4.30pm.

The market has just had its 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and seems to be more popular than ever. It is encouraging to welcome people from the local villages, and beyond, who show their support for local suppliers.

There are some new suppliers, bringing jams, chutneys and preserves, and a lovely Galanthus Blue cheese, made at Wormbridge.

As usual there is a Fair Trade stall and refreshments are sold in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support.

**The December market will be a week earlier at the usual time, usual place on FRIDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER.**

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### ***Halfway Community Theatre***

The members of the Halfway Community Theatre are delighted to announce their Autumn Show.

We are presenting 'Cities of Song' - a world-wide musical tour of some of our best loved and most exciting cities - on **FRIDAY** and **SATURDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> AND 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm. in Much Birch Community Hall. Ticket prices remain at £10 (£5 for under 14's) and can be booked by ringing Audrey on 01981 540432. As usual, supper is included, but remember to bring your own drink and a glass! We look forward to seeing you there.

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### ***Pruning Demonstration***

On **SATURDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER** a pruning demonstration will take place at Treberva Farm, Much Birch by kind permission of Mr. George Snell. There will be pruning of apples and bush and cane fruits, with members also having the opportunity to participate. Meeting time on that morning to be advised.

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### ***Christmas Lunch***

The Annual Gardening club Social will take place at 7.30pm. on **WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER** in the Village Hall, when the usual menu of Cottage Pie (or Vegetarian Option) will be served followed by Apple Pie. This is always a fun evening. Please bring plate, dish and cutlery and your own drink.

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### ***Special Christmas Bingo***

**TUESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER** at Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30 for 8.00pm.

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### ***Christmas Fayre***

Unfortunately the Christmas Fare that was due to be held in Much Birch Community Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> December to raise funds for the Hall and Much Birch Church has had to be cancelled.

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### ***St. Michael's Hospice***

On **WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER** you are invited to attend a special Wormelow Hundred Benefice **Light up a Life Service** at St. Mary & St. Thomas à Becket Church, Much Birch at 6.30pm. Dedication forms to enable you to have a light lit for a loved one and their name listed in the Book of Memories will be available in all the churches in the Benefice, St. Michael's Hospice or on line at [www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk](http://www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk) *St. Michael's Hospice Registered Charity Number 511179*

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### ***Whist Drive***

The next one will be held on **TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER** at

7.30pm. in Little Birch Village Hall. Entrance fee £1.50. Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players always welcome.

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### ***Much Birch WI***

On **TUESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER** it is the member's Christmas Festivity. Watch this space.

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### ***New Years Eve Party***

Little Birch Village Hall - 'Mad Hats and Glad Rags' - with 'SOFA' + Disco. Bar & refreshments available.

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### ***Local News***

A very warm welcome is given to four families who have recently moved into the area. CLAIRE and JAMIE LANGFORD with sons, OLIVER and ARCHIE have moved into Church Farm. LYNN and STEPHEN MASON are now occupying their newly built dwelling, Hill Barn House, King's Thorn together with ROSIE, the dog and donkeys and ducks. VIVIEN and HARRY ROUSE and son, MATTHEW, have moved into Page House, 'Pages Pitch', near the bottom of the Barrack Hill and A warm welcome to the Parish to WIEKE MARTIN and her daughter EBBE who have recently come to Orchard Cottage, Much Birch. Wieke has just joined the Hereford Steiner Academy as an Infant Teacher. We trust that they will all quickly settle and be happy in their new homes and make new friends in the area.

Congratulations are extended to SARAH and GRAHAM DEAN on the recent arrival of their second son, HARRY JAMES, a brother for TOM. It sounds as though he might become a fine trumpeter or a great actor.

MRS ADDIS of No. 2 Tump Lane had an unfortunate accident in her garden in the middle of October, we wish her a good recovery. A number of other friends in the community have been having treatment in hospital recently and

we send our best wishes and prayers for their recovery.

It is sad to report the passing of Major DICK HAIG of Hill Farm in Low Lane, just near the Monmouth Road junction with the A49 at the top of the Callow. Dick was born into a 'military' family in Gosport in 1920. His father was a high ranking officer and gave distinguished service in the Royal Artillery in WW1. Dick followed in the family tradition including his education at Winchester and joining the Royal Artillery in 1937. He was captured in Italy in 1943 during WW11 trying to make his way through enemy lines and spent the remainder of the war as a Prisoner of War in Bavaria. After the war, he served both at home and overseas. He then met Anthea and they were married in the cathedral at Bury St. Edmunds in 1955.

Dick retired from the army in 1957 and with Anthea, who trained in horticulture at Waterperry, Oxford, decided to take up fruit growing. In 1958, Anthea and Dick decided Herefordshire would be most suitable and Dick spent a year training with Capt. Kenneth Barter on his fruit farm at Linton, Ross on Wye, while the family lived near Newent. In 1959, Hill Farm was purchased and the first apple trees planted later that year. Strawberries and Blackcurrants were also planted and so these provided seasonal picking work for many wives in this area. Other orchards were established and when all the fields had been planted, the strawberries were grubbed out and later the blackcurrants were replaced by cider apples, under contract to Bulmers. In the 1980's the opportunity came to purchase the 'Dairy Farm', which was adjacent to Hill Farm and this area was also planted up with dessert apples with some Kingston Black cider apples in the low, potentially frost prone areas.

Dick and Anthea had 2 sons, Richard and Robin and they also

were educated at Winchester. Richard studied languages at University but suffered ill health soon after and sadly died in the mid-1980's. Dick and Anthea were stalwart members of St. David's at Much Dewchurch, with Dick being on the PCC and Treasurer for many years.

He opened the orchards on many occasions at blossom time in aid of Church funds and provided trays of fruit for the draw at the annual fete. He was also treasurer for the larger group of parishes for many years. He was also a founder member of the fruit cooperative, Wye Fruit, when this was set up in the 1960's in Ledbury.

The mix of apples changed during the 1990's, with some of the Cox orchards being grafted over to cider varieties and later, other orchards were grubbed up and the Cox trees replaced with cider varieties. Unfortunately, John Biggs, who with his father, Robey, had been on the farm for many years, damaged his ankle when getting down from the tractor and was unable to work again. Some 8 years ago, Dick was walking the dog, Poppy, in the dark one night and unfortunately fell in the lorry loading bay, breaking his leg. Being then well into his 80's and with his manager, Ralph Rich, suffering an horrific accident with the tractor powered pruning shredder, Dick decided to withdraw from the day to day running of the business and went into a share farming arrangement.

Dick was in hospital on several occasions over the last 2 years but celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup>. birthday with family and friends at home in April. He was a very determined man and used his walking frame to get up into the garden to see the 'Holy Thorn', which he had grafted from the original in Little Birch, some 10 years ago. He also kindly donated another tree to replace the original which had died and this is now growing alongside the site where the first 'Holy Thorn' grew.

Dick had another spell in hospital and came home on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>, but sadly died 5 days later. Anthea gave him the utmost care and was well supported by Robin and her sister, Jill.

The Funeral Service was held at St. David's, Much Dewchurch on 7<sup>th</sup>. October and was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson and Rev. Patrick O'Ferral, husband of Anthea's sister. The service was followed by burial in the Churchyard. We send our deepest sympathy to Anthea and Robin and the wider family in their sad loss.

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### ***A Note of Thanks***

Just to say thank you to everyone who came to my leaving party on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> and a very big thank you to everyone who was involved in the organisation. I was not expecting it and was certainly not expecting the cheque and all the cards and gifts I received so again a very very big thank you to everyone who made a contribution.

I will miss seeing everyone but the time was right to move on and I'm just hoping that the next 25 years (although I've only got another 18 to go until I can draw my pension) will be as happy and as rewarding. I hope to see many of you either when I'm out your way or around town. Once again thank you from both Sylvia and myself.

Best wishes to everyone – Steve (ex postie).

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### ***Editor***

It is with regret that following many years of service to the Newsletter our Editor Mrs. Sarah Mathews has given notice of her resignation to take effect from December 2010. On behalf of the readership in the communities of King's Thorn, Little Birch and Much Birch I would like to thank Sarah for producing our valued newsletter and thereby keeping us in touch with events and one another.

This means that we urgently need to recruit the services of a willing volunteer to take on the baton of Editor for the New Year. If you feel you have the skills or potential to become Editor, or know of someone who would rise to this challenge then please would you contact me a.s.a.p. on Tel 540316 or by email:

[john.bryant479@btinternet.com](mailto:john.bryant479@btinternet.com)

Thank you.

**John Bryant** - *Chairman Little Birch Village Hall Committee*

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### ***MB 100 Club Draw***

The October draw took place on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October at Much Birch Community Hall

The winners were:

1. No. 42 - Mrs. P. Eggerton, Much Birch
2. No. 44 - Mr. P. Dymott, King's Thorn

The next draw will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7.15pm. in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones, *Chairman/Promoter*

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### ***MBPC***

Report on the Parish Council Meetings in September & October

#### ***MB School Parking Problems***

The Parish Council, along with Much Birch Primary School are in talks with Amey Herefordshire with a view to easing the parking problems outside the school.

Once again parents are asked to be considerate when setting down and picking up their children at and from school. There have been a number of complaints made to the Parish Council since the return to school in September.

The Parish Council, once again would encourage all parents parking outside the school to drop off their children and then **leave promptly** to help alleviate the congestion that is caused by parents' cars being parked for long periods during the start and finish of the school day.

### ***Lengthsman***

Ditching work has been carried out at a number of sites in the parish along with some grass cutting on some sections of the verges. Further clearing back of overgrown vegetation along the pavement towards Much Birch School is required to allow those children who walk to school to do so safely.

**Note to hedge owners:** The parish Council would draw to parishioners and landowners attention their responsibility with regard to the cutting of hedges as outlined in Herefordshire Councils leaflet "Landowners & Occupiers required by law to trim any hedge next to a road, footway, cycleway or public right of way where growth is preventing the passage, or affecting the safety, of the highway user, including cyclists and pedestrians". The debris from cutting must also be cleared away.

### ***Footpaths***

Councillor Glen Sims and parishioner Mo Ross continue to undertake the regular inspection of all footpaths within the parish and ensure that repairs are carried out where necessary, resulting in the footpaths remaining open and safe for use. If you wish to report a problem on the footpaths in the parish please contact Glenn Simms or Mo Ross

### ***Parish Plan Meeting***

There will be a Steering Group meeting on **THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER** in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.30pm. The first Parish Plan for Much Birch was completed in the Autumn of 2004 and is due to be reviewed in order to revisit matters such as planning issues, play areas, public transport and to consider for inclusion any other issues which will influence the future of the Parish. Parishioners are encouraged to come along to this important meeting and to take part. For further information please contact Kath Greenow, Parish Clerk

### ***Planning Permission Granted***

**Church View Barn, Minster Farm** - Approval of Non - Material

amendment to planning permission.

### ***Planning Applications Commented on:***

**Newcroft Farm Much Birch** - Proposed detached garage - Application supported.

**Rosslea Much Birch** - Proposed conservatory - Application supported.

### ***Finance***

The Parish Council has adopted a Grants & Donation's Policy. The policy outlines requirements that need to be met by a charity organisation when they submit a request for a donation or grant. The Parish Council, upon receiving the request, will consider it based on the policy. This is considered good practice under guidelines set out by the external auditors.

### ***Correspondence***

Parish Councillors had previously been given the correspondence list, the contents of which were noted.

### ***Date of Next Meeting***

**THURSDAY 4TH NOVEMBER** at 7.30pm. in Much Birch Community Hall.

### ***Parish Clerk***

If you have any queries on Parish Council matters please telephone the Clerk on 01432 870874 or write to: Mrs Kath Greenow, Hackford House, Dinedor, Hereford, HR2 6PD.

For more information on Much Birch Parish Council please visit our website at [www.muchbirchparish.org.uk](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk)

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### ***Report***

**Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th September** No interests were declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th July were read and signed as a true record.

### ***Matters Arising***

**Village Hall** - Loft insulation is now complete. There are numerous activities planned for the following months. The three year electrical safety certificate has been received. The Clerk has contacted the Inland

Revenue and they are still working on the VAT Claim.

**Parish Lengthsman** – Almost all of the items displayed on the list of outstanding work have been completed by the lengthsman and an invoice has been received. No further work to be completed until next year.

**Parish Initiative** – No further defects reported.

**Parish Plan** – The Parish Council agreed to contribute a total of £1,000 plus required volunteer hours to match Herefordshire Council's requested grant for £1,500 for the creation of a Little Birch Community Plan. The £1,000 will be funded with £500 from the 2010-11 financial year and £500 from the 2011-12 financial year. A Steering Group has been created to lead the Community Plan. The meeting of the Steering Group took place on 15th September.

**Parish Field** – Justin Usherwood to be contacted to discuss the start of the clear-up work.

**Emergency Planning Co-ordinator** – Mr Morley attended a training session on 21st September and gave feedback.

### **Planning**

**Planning permission** granted for land at or near **Windmill Hill, Pencoyd Court & Trevasse Farms**, also **Court Farm** at Much Birch, for the proposed erection of polytunnels (retrospective).

### **Planning application**

**Bromley Court, Hoarwithy** - new porch and verandah, removal of existing porch – returned with no objections.

### **Any Other Business**

Little Birch Parish Council has requested to see the Newsletter Accounts to ensure that the annual payment of £200.00 is still needed. The external auditors have requested that on-going internal audits are now conducted by an internal auditor. John Penrice to be asked to fill this role.

A request was made to insert an article into the newsletter to promote the next PACT meeting.

Clerk to write to Herefordshire Council in response to the 1df consultation.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

**WEDNESDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER.**

### **Parish Clerk**

Please contact the Parish Clerk with any issues concerning Little Birch Parish. Contact details are: Liz Callwood 540081 or [littlebirchpc@googlemail.com](mailto:littlebirchpc@googlemail.com)

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### **Report**

Little Birch Parish Community Steering Group held on Wednesday 15th September.

**Confirmation of Officers** - The following Steering Group members were confirmed:

Elaine Godding – Chairman

Annette Whistler - Secretary

Liz Callwood – Treasurer

Mike Morley – Parish Councillor

Alison Clarke – Parish Councillor

Richard Riddell – Parishioner

### **Parish Statistics and basic info pack**

The current statistics received from Community First give totals for both Little Birch and Aconbury. Community First rep. Sophie Pryce to investigate if Little Birch only statistics can be obtained. Further census figures to be received from Community First.

### **Time Plan & Budget**

The grant application was read out and discussed. Further work has to be completed including creating a separate expenditure spreadsheet and obtaining quotes for creating a website, 'Planning for Real' maps from Herefordshire Council and the printing of the completed Community Led Plan, the latter using a list of suppliers from Community First and all to be obtained by the next meeting. A draft copy is to be discussed during the next meeting.

### **Constitution and Standards**

A model constitution is available from the Community First website which is to be used to create a draft version for Little Birch.

**Grant Application** - The current draft copy is to be sent to

Community First personnel for feedback.

### **Planning for Real Event**

A first estimate for this event to take place is 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2011.

### **Meeting Dates and Frequency**

The last Steering Group meeting took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> October to further discuss and agree the grant application ready to submit by the end of October. A further meeting is to take place in 17<sup>th</sup> November with Sophie Pryce from Community First to discuss the Planning for Real Event in more detail. The Steering Group agreed to continue meeting monthly.

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### **Neighbourhood Watch**

#### **Crime trends**

#### Crime Prevention

We have had a few reports of a male calling himself Alan King phoning businesses and farms stating that he is the local community police officer, and asking them to contribute financially towards a community magazine. He gets quite rude and aggressive when challenged, or if the person he has called states they are not interested. If you have had a similar call, please let us know.

The following information has been received from Shropshire Ringmaster:-

There have been two vehicles stolen in the past 24 hours on our area, so please keep an eye out for them -

A black Peugeot 306 Rally 3 door saloon S253JBT was stolen between 10.00am and 4.15pm on 14<sup>th</sup> October from the verge opposite Locks Garage at Allensmore on the A 465 and that evening a red and silver Massey Ferguson tractor with a fork lift and a loader attached was stolen from Didley between 5.30pm last night and 11.30 this morning, the registration number is PMW272H, and the keys had been left in the vehicle.

Last year we had a number of thefts of staddle stones and garden ornaments reported across rural Shropshire. In the last few weeks we have received reports of the theft of staddle stones and stone planters and troughs from a number of locations in Shrewsbury. And lately a report of a theft of large stones from a driveway in the Alveley area of Bridgnorth. These thefts are occurring overnight and due to the

weight of items being stolen at least two persons with a vehicle are likely to be involved. It is unlikely that the thieves are being opportunist and it is more likely they are spotting targets during the day and returning at night.

In one incident it was reported that a 4x4 vehicle with two males had been seen in the area earlier in the day.

Please keep a look out for suspicious callers in your area, suspicious vehicles in your area or anyone delivering flyers for gardening or maintenance services and call us as soon as you can with any details we can check out.

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**Your Officers based at Peterchurch**

**Local Police Officer**

PC 799 Andrew Bundy

Mobile **07855 385 844**

**Community Support Officers**

CSO 6173 **Fiona Witcher**

Mobile **07779 141 232**

CSO 6993 **Kevin Powell**

Mobile **07779 141 232**

**E-mail**

[herefordruralsouth.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:herefordruralsouth.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

Answer phone - **01432 346756**

**Local Police Officer**

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**Your Local Representatives**

**East –**

**JOHN BULBECK            540178**

**Central –**

**BOB PETERS                540670**

**West –**

**ETTY PHILPOTT            540614**

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**Martha Trust**

With signs of Christmas already in local shops, Martha Trust in Hereford, a nursing home for profoundly disabled young people, hope to get a head start and also raise awareness by selling their own Christmas cards this year.

The very attractive range of cards has been chosen and funded by parents with 100% of the proceeds going towards the proposed new home to be built in Holywell Gutter Lane, Hampton Dene next year.

If you would like to purchase cards, please telephone Martha Trust on 01432 279314. If any local business or shop is able to help us by providing an outlet for the sale of the cards, please also contact us on the above telephone number.

**Items/Copy**

Please may I have items for the **NOVEMBER** issue via email attachment in Word format to:

[semathews@btinternet.com](mailto:semathews@btinternet.com) or by hand or post to Mrs. S.E. Mathews, Folly Cottage, Little Birch, HR2 8BD. by

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**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

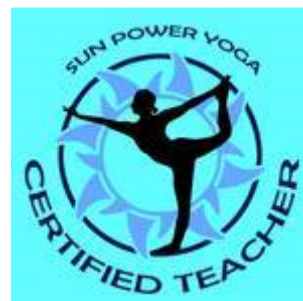
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**Amanda Hamilton**

**01981 255094 / 07985 252166**