

NEWSLETTER FOR KINGS THORN, THE BIRCHES & ACONBURY

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury – APRIL 2011 – First published in 1977

LOCAL ELECTIONS

The next Local Government Elections for both County and Parish will take place on 5th May 2011, when every seat in Herefordshire will be up for re-election. However, Parish Council Elections will only take place if more people apply than there are available Parish Councillor places, The two local Parish Councils for this area are, Little Birch and Much Birch, and nomination papers for each can be obtained from Herefordshire Council on 01432 260107/260191. **Nomination papers must be delivered in person to the Deputy Returning Officer, Electoral Services Office, Town Hall, Hereford, HR1 2PJ by no later than noon on Monday 4th April 2011.**

DIGITAL SWITCHOVER

The switchover from analogue to digital television signal, will happen in our area in two stages. **Stage 1. 6th April and Stage 2. on the 20th April.** There are three main ways to switch to digital TV:-

Convert your existing analogue TV using a digital box (e.g. Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision).

Have a digital TV service, such as satellite, cable or broadband TV, installed for you. Providers include Sky, Freesat, Virgin Media and Tiscali TV.

Buy a TV with digital (Freeview or Freesat) built in.

Remember, that virtually any TV set, including black and

DIARY DATES FOR APRIL

6th April – 1st Phase Digital Switchover
7th April – Special Easter Bingo LBVH
12th April – Evergreen Outing
12th April – Whist Drive LBVH
15th April – Much Birch Village Market MBCH
15th & 16th – April Halfway Theatre Company MBCH
19th April – W.I. MBCH
19th April – St. Matthew Passion, Hereford Cathedral
20th April – 2nd Phase Digital Switchover
27th April – Gardening Club LBVH
28th April – Flicks in the Sticks 'The King's Speech' MBCH

ADVANCE NOTICES

5th May - Local Elections
7th May - Kinderly A Cappella Group – Much Birch Church
7th & 8th - May Dawn Chorus Walk
14th May - Flicks Matinee – 'Tangled' MBCH
18th May - LBVH Committee AGM

white ones, and those without scart sockets, can be converted using a digibox.

Viewers watching Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision will need to retune their equipment at both stages of the switchover in order to continue receiving services.

There is an official Help Scheme, run by the BBC under an agreement with the government which makes switchover easier for older and disabled people, by giving practical help to switch one television in their home. The scheme is available to people who are:

- *Aged 75 years or over.*
- *Eligible for Attendance Allowance, or Mobility Supplement, or Disability Living Allowance.*
- *Registered blind or partially sighted.*
- *Having been living in a care home for six months or more.*

All you need to do to get this help, is respond to the information pack that should have been sent to every eligible person's home. But you must respond as the scheme closes in our area on **October 28th 2011.** General information about the switchover is available from **digitaluk.co.uk** or you can phone **08456 – 505050.**

PARISH FIELD

The piece of land opposite Little Birch Village Hall and adjacent to the footpath is called the Parish Field and is classed as common land. Little Birch Parish Council have recently paid for the land to be cleared of all overgrowth etc. After this clearance, a number of logs were left. The Parish Council would appreciate if those people who helped themselves to the logs would willingly give a donation to the Village Hall and leave it in Little Birch Village Hall's post

box. If you have any specific ideas on how this common land could be utilised with minimal maintenance and cost, please contact the Parish Clerk on 540081.

LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

LBVH Valentines dance.

The dance was a great success despite not so many people attending as had been expected for a charity event. The 70's music was very good to dance to and not too loud so people could chat easily. It was a lovely friendly evening and we raised a good sum for our chosen charity so thanks to all who participated.

"Up Little Birch" LBVH

The pantomime was very different this year and enjoyed by all. Where does Hilary get her ideas? It is a huge commitment to agree to write and produce the show and both Hilary and Rob Gould spent many weeks at rehearsals and making scenery (masterminded by Bob Chance)

The cast also have to be dedicated and most of all enjoy taking part-they certainly did that! Thank you all for such a great performance. Also a big thank you to all those who helped behind the scenes. It could not be done without them.

What a shame it fell over half term when many were away and so missed the opportunity to see this unusual and enjoyable pantomime.

Pancake Evening LBVH

The Brownies were there in force to assist and help devour the pancakes made for us by members of the committee and friends. Mandy Williams spent all evening making more and

was kept very busy. We were pleased to see so many of our faithful supporters in the hall too. We hope you enjoyed all the pancakes. A good evening!

QUIZ EVENING

Another very successful quiz evening was held on 15th March. 14 teams did battle for the Village Hall Challenge Cup and this was won by 'Roports' consisting of Gill and Ian Porter, and Pauline and Terry Rogers, who scored 118 out of a possible 130 points.

A great deal of work was done behind the scenes by Alison and Des Clarke, Jackie and Mike Morley, and Robyn Hodges. The professional graphics devised and displayed by Mike Morley, contributed to the very smooth running of the quiz and Jessica Hodges and Josh Williams were very efficient in their distribution of the question papers and collection of the answer sheets. Kath Watts gave out the questions in her usual clear and concise manner. Excellent refreshments were provided by Jackie Morley and Robyn Hodges.

The amount raised for hall funds was £ 180. Thanks to everyone who attended.

BOOKING AGENT LBVH

After five years as key holder and booking agent Jackie Morley will not seek re-election to the Hall Committee at the AGM in May. Jackie thinks the time has come for "younger blood" with more modern ideas to keep the hall well funded and in good shape.

This voluntary job is very rewarding and would suit a local person with time to spare. If you are interested please

contact John Bryant or Roisin Burge (sec. LBVH committee). Jackie will be pleased to help the new key holder to settle into the job

SPECIAL EASTER BINGO

Thursday 7th April, at LBVH. "Eyes down" **8.00p.m.**

There are very good prizes and refreshments will be available.

WHIST DRIVE

Our next Whist Drive is on **Tuesday 12th April** in Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30pm. The entrance fee is £1.50 Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players are always welcome.

EVERGREEN CLUB

Our first trip this year is to **Birmingham on Tuesday 12th April**. There is the choice of visiting the Jewellery Museum or the National Trust's Back to Back houses. There is not yet a waiting list for this trip but there is currently only one seat still available on the coach.

The cost will be £8.50 (£10.50 for non-members).

The number to ring with queries is **01981 540932**.

The pick-up times are:

Brandon Coach Depot	8.45
The Park, Wormelow	8.55
Tump Lane (bungalows)	9.00
Poor Clares Convent	9.10
Kings Thorn bus shelter	9.15
M. B. Church bus stop	9.20
Axe & Cleaver bus stop	9.25
Peterstow	
(Broome Farm lay-by)	9.35
Fontaine Court	9.45

MUCH BIRCH VILLAGE MARKET

The market this month is on **Friday, April 15th** (to take into consideration the date of Good Friday.) between **2.30pm and**

4.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

'Chocoholics' will be there with goodies for Easter and Helen, a new supplier, will bring her felted textiles and gifts.

For anyone new to our market there are suppliers of rare breed pork and beef, free range chicken, duck, and lamb, a cheese supplier, Chocoholics, Mr. G's chutney, jams and marmalade (depending on the supply of ingredients), and fresh bread. You can also find greeting cards and other embroidered items, and a Fair Trade stand.

Much Birch WI have a book stall, selling books for their two charities for 2011, The Hereford Talking Newspapers and the Hereford Eye Scanner Appeal. Refreshments, and 'take home cakes' are locally made and sold in aid of McMillan Cancer Support.

For further details, please contact Kath, 01981 540382

REMINDER FOR HALFWAY COMMUNITY THEATRE GROUP

We are delighted to announce their forthcoming concert 'When We Were Young' at Much Birch Community Hall at **7.30 pm on Friday and Saturday 15th and 16th April.**

Join us for an evening of nostalgia and good fun!

Tickets cost £10 (£5 for under 14's) from Audrey on 01981 540432 to include a light super. **BOOK EARLY!** We sold out and had a waiting list for our November show!!!

MUCH BIRCH W.I.

The April meeting takes place in Much Birch Community Hall on **19th April at 7.30pm.**

The speaker will be Joyce Ronson, whose subject is 'Intimate Apparel through the

Ages'. Potential new members and visitors are always welcome.

For further details please contact Kath, 01981 540382, or Caroline, 01981 540422

BACH'S ST. MATTHEW PASSION

Hereford Cathedral Choir, Marches Baroque and soloists.

Hereford Cathedral **19th April at 7.p.m. doors open at 6.15p.m.**

Tickets priced £ 16 and £ 22 from Outback Records, The Cathedral Shop, or at St. John's door on the night. Telephone sales 01432 - 374261. Details at www.herefordcathedral.org

KING'S THORN AND LITTLE BIRCH GARDENING CLUB

On **Wednesday 27th April**, our speaker will be Mr. REG MOULE, Hereford and Worcester's Gardening 'Guru'. This should be an entertaining and informative evening. Everyone is welcome at **7.30pm** at Little Birch Village Hall Helen Fox 541004. John Bryant 540316.

FLICKS IN THE STICKS AT MBCH

Thursday 28th April 7.30p.m.

Join Flicks on the eve of the Royal Wedding for a truly majestic evening!

Refreshments, including hot dogs, will be served from 7.p.m.

Tickets £ 4 or £ 3 for under 16s.

The film -'The King's Speech'.

For further info or to book tickets please contact Bryony Connolly 01981 - 580298

LITTLE BIRCH PANTOMIME

I would like to express my thanks publicly to all the cast and many helpers who contributed to this year's pantomime. It takes much commitment and practical expertise to present such an

event to the best of our abilities. Our purpose is to entertain our audiences and to provide funds for the upkeep of Little Birch Village Hall. The importance of the latter is particularly important when other village facilities are dwindling. Our thanks go also to all those who came to see the pantomime. We hope you enjoyed it and the social interchange which it affords. It would have been nice to have seen more of you there, as we have during the last few years, because participation in village events cements relationships and friendships.

There are other events which could have been better supported, the Valentine's Disco, for example.

Do we want to become dormitory areas for Hereford, or do we want our communities to have a vibrant village ethos? The choice is ours.

Hilary Gould

COMMUNITY LED PARISH PLAN WEEKEND 5TH AND 6TH MARCH

I would like to congratulate all the Steering Group for putting on an extremely successful weekend.

A special thank you goes to all those lovely people who kindly donated some gorgeous cakes over the two days.

We had 176 attend from Little Birch and the surrounding areas, offering very valuable ideas, and making the two days fun with great community spirit. It was especially good to see the young folk taking such an interest, as this is their future too.

Now the hard work starts for us as we have to collate the information from the flags and construct a questionnaire which will go out everyone in Little Birch Parish. The results from this will then be used in the Parish Plan and to form an action plan of how to deliver requests, or to document what we don't want, in the future. We are an intertwined complex community and those who shared their points of view from outside the Parish of Little Birch are very welcome. Those views will be incorporated in the overall plan of action and the statistics.

We will continue to publish our progress in the newsletter, organize future community meetings, and set up a web-site to keep everyone informed, so please watch this space. Thank you once again

Elaine Godding
Chair Person.

MUCH BIRCH CHURCH ORGAN REPAIR APPEAL

We would like to say a big thank you to Mr. Howard, the Headmaster, and the children of Much Birch Primary School for holding a non-uniform day on 18th February to raise funds towards the Organ Repair Fund. We would also like to thank their parents for supporting the event. They raised a great sum of £215 and a further £10.50 will be raised through some Gift Aided donations.

We do appreciate the great effort in raising the money and put together with the other donations made by members of the congregation, we were able to pay for the necessary repairs

so enabling us to continue to use the organ, which is around 120 years old, for our church services.

Sylvia Jones and Janet Thomas,
Churchwardens

MUCH BIRCH 100 CLUB

The March draw took place on Sunday 13th March 2011 in Much Birch Community Hall at 10.30am. The winners were:

1. No 7 - Mr. D. Pennington,
Much Birch
2. No 64 - Mr. P. Bamford,
Much Birch

The next draw will take place on **Sunday, 10th April 2011 at 10.30am** in Much Birch Community Hall

John Jones - Chairman

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL Report on the Parish Council Meetings in March 2011

Resignation of Cllr John Jones was noted by Council.

A vote of thanks proposed by Vice Chair DD and supported by Councillors was given for JJ's efforts and commitment as a Chairman and Cllr of the Parish Council over the last 3 ½ years which was appreciated.

Police report

C.S.O Fiona Witcher of West Mercia Police reported on crime in the area - 2 incidents reported over the last 2 months. It was also reported that restructuring of police in the rural areas has been deferred until Sept 2011

Grit Bins

Amey have sited the 2 grit bins requested - Gilston and Pages Pitch.

Planning

Application for comment:

Court Farm Much Birch
Hereford

Description: variation of condition 13 of planning application DCSW2009/0091/F to allow 4 existing poultry units to be retained for storage
Council Comment; Application Supported

Planning application granted by Herefordshire Council

DMS/103162/F- The Granary Minster Farm Much Birch Hereford

Proposed variation of condition 9 of approved planning permission DCSW2005/3085/F- conversion of and alterations to a group of period barns to create two residential dwellings
Planning applications Refused by Herefordshire Council.

DWS/101994/FH

Firethorn, Much Birch, Hereford
Application to regularise works to include extensions to lounge and bedroom (including wardrobe) and conservatory to bungalow. Regularisation of position of garage and the conservatory to the side of the garage

Correspondence.

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

Parish Clerk Vacancy as of 01/04/2011

See advert in ads section of this newsletter.

Next Meeting will be on Thursday 5th April at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

If you have any queries on Parish Council matters please telephone the Vice-Chairman Cllr. Dave Davies 01981 540592.

For more information on Much Birch Parish Council please visit our website www.muchbirchparish.org.uk

LITTLE BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL
Report of the Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 2nd March 2011

No interests were declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2011 were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

From Previous Minutes – The Parish Council were informed, after two Parish Councillors attended the last SAM Meeting where the proposed Localism Bill was discussed, should the Bill be passed in Parliament, Parish Councils may be responsible to approve Planning Applications.

Village Hall – The Valentine Disco was poorly attended but still raised £105 which was donated to charity. Plans and quotes are currently being sought and discussed to extend the stage, due to Health & Safety concerns. The Pantomime was also poorly attended although about £1000 was raised.

Parish Lengthsman – A full day was completed by the lengthsman and invoice received. A further day may be necessary before the financial year end.

Parish Initiative – Clerk to contact Herefordshire Council again to arrange a Parish Walk.

Community Led Plan – The Planning for Real Event is confirmed for the weekend of 5th & 6th March.

Parish Field – Maurice Clothier of the Wye Wood Enterprise has confirmed that work will be

taking place on 3rd and 4th March.

Elections – Nomination papers handed to all Parish Councillors except Mrs. S. Jones who does not wish to continue with her seat. Clerk to contact Herefordshire Council to see if it is necessary to purchase poll cards for Parish Council Elections at a cost of 40p each. A Parish Council meeting must be organised by law within 14 days of an election. It was decided that if there was no election then the next Parish Council meeting to be postponed until after the election, Wednesday 11th May. If a Parish Council Election goes ahead there will be two Parish Council Meetings.

Planning - Planning permission granted for Acontree House for proposed demolition of existing block and render garage and re-siting and replacement with oak framed and weatherboard garage – DMS/102539/FH

Any Other Business

A lack of drain cover in School Lane needs to be discussed during a 'Parish Walk' with Amey representatives.

Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 4th May 2011 (Wednesday 11th May 2011 is an alternative date if there is no Parish Council Election. Otherwise Parish Council Meetings will take place on both dates)

Please contact the Parish Clerk with any issues concerning Little Birch Parish. Contact details are: Liz Callwood 540081 or lizcallwood@googlemail.com

LETTER FROM A RESIDENT

Bus Stop King's Thorn

We are sure some you have noticed, that the No. 38 Bus from Hereford to Ross-on-Wye now attempts to stop north of The Thorn junction – its correct stopping point.

We have written to the Stagecoach Bus Company, and also politely asked the drivers to stop here, for the following reasons, the first being very important. It is very worrying that dubious-looking persons on the top deck have been taking photos on their mobile phones, which give a complete overview of our property. This has happened more than once and we feel it is a security risk. There have also been many times when we have been unable to exit or enter our own driveway due to the No. 38 stopping there. We have put up with noise, fumes, the lack of privacy and rubbish thrown or blown into our garden. With this combination, we at last decided to contact Stagecoach - who concede they should not be stopping in front of Corner House, but north of The Thorn junction.

So for the sake of harmony, please alert the driver of your stop in plenty of time, and those travelling to Ross, stand at the correct stop area.

We hope this answers any questions why the No. 38 bus no longer stops outside Corner House, but north of The Thorn junction.

Bob and Ros Preece
Corner House

CAUTIONARY TALES

I too have a cautionary tale about BT. My last bill had over two pages of calls to mobiles, all dated, timed, and priced. Total cost about £ 35. I identified those belonging to 'Friends and Family', and others, but there were still about twenty I could not place. Meantime, BT had doubled the amount of my monthly direct debit.

I had two long 'phone conversations with BT, represented by a very patient man. Sounded Indian. He confirmed that many calls to landlines are diverted to mobiles. Thinks tradesmen etc. out and about.

Eventually the BT rep. 'rooted' about in his 'bag' of special offers, and announced that the broadband charge would be reduced by 75%. This brought the direct debit down by over 50% - back where I started!

I shall certainly try and contain my calls to evenings and weekends.

NEW BOOK GROUP

I would like to set up an informal and really friendly book group for the area, initially meeting at my home in King's Thorn to discuss books to read, and how often we want to meet etc. If you are interested please ring Jane Rodd on 01981 541353. I look forward to hearing from you.

I must say I find television very educational. The minute somebody turns it on, I go to the library and read a good book.

GROUCHO MARX

LOCAL NEWS

A very warm welcome is given this month to 3 families, who have moved into the community recently. Rather belatedly to TONYA and ROB BARNETT and daughters, PHOEBE and MILLIE, who have moved into 'Highridge' Wrigglebrook, from Little Dewchurch; RUSSELL and MELANIE BUTT, with their 2 dogs, DIESEL and VEYRON, are now in 'Waterloo Cottage, Barrack Hill and TIM BETTS and LIZ HALL have moved into 'Walmere', Wrigglebrook Lane. We trust that they will all be very happy in their new homes and be made to feel very welcome.

Congratulations are extended to DENISE and CHRIS DAVIES on the birth of PRESTON THOMAS, who weighed in at 6lb. 14oz. and is the fifth generation of the Davies family to be brought up at 'Rock View'. Needless to say that grandparents, Judy and David, are delighted. Congratulations also go to LAURA and MARK SIMNITT of 'The Barn', King's Thorn on the birth of their son, LUKE, a brother for ALANA.

It is sad to record the death of Mr. Bob Walker of Claypitts Lane, Much Birch. The funeral service took place at Much Birch on Tues., 15th. March and was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnston. The following notes were taken from his address. Bob was born in Cardiff in 1923 but the family moved to Ludlow when he was quite young. After finishing school, he got involved in gardening with his brother and had a keen interest in cars and motorbikes, so it was natural for him to get into repairing and driving cars later on.

In the early 1940's, he was conscripted into the Army and because of his background in car mechanics he was drafted into the REME Corps and he also chauffeured his Colonel to and from London. Just before D-Day, his base camp was attacked but the bombs missed their target and hit a row of nearby cottages. Bob being a first-aider, immediately ran to the cottages and rescued a young baby from the rubble.

At D-Day plus 14, he was sent to France to work on tank recovery and stayed with the Army till the end of the war and was demobbed in 1947. When he returned to Hereford, most job vacancies had been filled but he found work with a dry-cleaning firm. Unfortunately, he reacted badly to the chemical fumes and so went to Prails and then Ravenhills garages in the city.

It was at Ravenhills where he met up with Joan, his future wife who was a telephonist there. They married on August Bank Holiday Monday in 1953 and were together over 50 years. Of course there was no chance of them getting a house and so they took rooms in Whitecross. Then Bob moved into being a storeman for various companies in and around Hereford, including West Midland Farmers, Dairy Supplies and then, for the last 15 years of his working life, with Gunns, the JCB dealers.

By this time, he and Joan moved to a house at Ridgehill, where they stayed for a number of years before moving to Leominster to run a B&B. This was quite successful until they heard that a new ring road was planned, which would take away the passing traffic and so

they sold their business and in 1980 moved to a bungalow in Much Birch. They were both keen on gardening and the bungalow was perfect for them. When they were not busy in the garden, they had stalls at car boot sales, which they obviously enjoyed. However, stock acquired and bought from other stallholders, accumulated at home and the levels never seemed to diminish.

For holidays, they enjoyed taking their caravan away and without any children, they could go away at week ends at any time of the year, without any hassle, but this tailed off when they retired.

Both enjoyed good health for many years, but in 2000, Bob had a major operation and over that decade, Joan's health deteriorated. Bob was a very independent man, some would even say stubborn, and he didn't take up the help that was on offer until quite late and in July 2007, Joan sadly died. Bob was devastated but with the support of Helen Marshall and other neighbours, he was able to go on living independently right up to the end.. Physically he became more and more frail though mentally he was very alert. He died peacefully in the best place for him, at home. The bungalow had been home for him and Joan for over 30 years and so it seemed appropriate that he should pass away peacefully there.

Bob's body was interred in the churchyard at Much Birch immediately after the service. He will be sadly missed by his neighbours and friends.

HEREFORD MOTORISTS

If you are interested in becoming a better driver, (and which of us has not got into bad habits?) you can sign up for a Skills for Life course, held in Much Birch Community Hall, by contacting Mary Bevan, 01874 712267 or emailing Mary on: marybevan@dsl.pipex.com

LATE COPY

ARE THERE ANY BOYS AGED 6 -8 IN THE AREA WHO LOVE TO SING?

There is a Chorister Open Morning on **Saturday 2nd April 10.00 - 11.30a.m.** At Hereford Cathedral. Come along to hear the internationally renowned choristers. Further details from Geraint Bowen (Director of Music) 01432-374238 or at organist@herefordcathedral.org

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Suspicious Incidents

The theft of 2 horses from a field behind Newton farm, St Owens Cross, was prevented recently by a vigilant owner. Interestingly the owner noticed that these two horses had two plaits in their mane which she could not account for. At this stage no explanation for the plaits has been established.

We'd like to give reassurance to the community and encourage them to report these incidents immediately. By reporting these incidents to the Police we can plot the incidents and pick up any trends or patterns. We would like to stress the importance of having a photograph taken

of the plait as well, with photographs we have the evidence required to collate the different appearance of the plaits and identify any similarities.

Our advice to anybody who discovers a plait is to -
Check your horse's/pony's mane and tail for any signs of a plait.

Take a photograph of the plait

Remove the plait
Inform the Police - supply the photograph

Move your horse/pony to alternative location for a night or so if this is possible
Inform neighbours, local residents and ask for them to keep any eye out

We'd like to ask all horse owners to remain vigilant, be suspicious and report all matters causing concern to the Police and Horse Watch (Herefordshire Horsecatch Co-ordinator Tara Heinemann on 01544 318038). If you sight a vehicle acting suspiciously around your yard or horses please take a note of the registration number, vehicle make and model and also a description of driver/passenger if possible.

Finally, a sheep was killed and its butchered remains were found in a black plastic bag near the road in Dorstone on 4th March. The carcass had been professionally butchered and the meat left

inside the bag, whilst the other remains had been thrown over the hedge, and the fleece and head were missing altogether. If anyone can shed any light on this strange incident, please get in touch.

Tarmaccers

There have been two teams out calling door to door, one in the Orcop, St Weonards and Garway area, and one in the Hoarwithy and Carey area., but both from the same company calling themselves 'Express Tarmac' from Birmingham.

In Orcop a male wearing high visibility clothing in a white Ford Transit van NA56AUP was calling on addresses with the usual story of having some tarmac 'left over' from a job nearby.

In Hoarwithy it was a white Fiat Scudo panel van BF04ZFM, with the same tale of 'left over tarmac'

This is a complete lie, they are not working for the Highways Agency, in fact what happens is they go to a quarry first thing in the morning, buy a load of tarmac, and then find someone to sell it to at an exorbitant rate. The lorry will be parked up in a layby somewhere while a man and van go round the rural area until he finds a 'victim', when he will then call the driver of the lorry to the address.

The tarmac has to be used on the same day, which is why they are very pushy with potential customers. They have very official looking business cards, which gives details of their business address and even a web-site, but do not be fooled.

Having spoken to Trading Standards, they confirm that this company is operating fraudulently and they are all rogues.

By law, they have to give a written quote, and give the customer 7 days to decide whether or not to go ahead - clearly these guys are not keeping within the law.

We would stress to everyone **not** to deal with these individuals, or **any** cold callers and please keep an eye out for an elderly or vulnerable neighbours who may be intimidated by them and agree to have work done.

Please report any incidents to us on 0300 333 3000

Census 2011

Sadly the 2011 Census provides opportunities for criminals to commit distraction burglaries and other related doorstep crimes and the attached poster is provided to assist householders when they receive callers to their doorstep. Please feel free to retain a copy of this poster and to print off as many copies as you wish. If you know of someone who would

benefit from receiving such help and advice feel free to provide them with a copy.

Collection from residential households will take place between 21st March and 6th May 2011. The majority of census field staff will be active from mid-March until mid-August and all census field staff will carry identification and have been instructed not to enter a house unless invited to do so.

Many thanks - and keep the calls coming in! (When reporting sightings, incidents etc, it's best to use the 0300 333 3000 number, our mobile numbers are not for ongoing incident reports)

Golden Valley & Hereford Rural South Local Policing Teams

PC 2368 Chris Lea

07855 785080

CSO 6173 Fiona Witcher

07779 141232

CSO 6993 Kevin Powell

07779 141232

CSO 6366 James Cooke

07779 141223

CSO 6482 Katie Middleton

07779 141223

E-mail

- goldenvalley.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk or

E-mail

- herefordruralsouth.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Non - emergency number
0300 333 3000

DO WATCH OUT - OLYMPIC GAMES TICKET SCAMS

With the ticketing process for the Olympic Games opening this week, new advice has been launched to make sure it's the criminals who miss out. The increasing use of the internet to purchase tickets and accommodation packages online, coupled with the huge expected demand, give criminals new opportunities to sell non-existent tickets and steal personal and credit card details to use in other crimes. More than eight million tickets will be made available for the Olympic Games and a further two million for the Paralympics. The ticket process for the Olympic Games opens on 15 March and runs until 26 April. By taking some simple steps anyone buying a ticket can help prevent them becoming a victim.

Detective Inspector Mark Glazzard, head of West Mercia Police's Economic Crime Unit, said: "The 2012 Games will be one of the biggest sporting events this country has ever hosted, with nearly 11m tickets available for events right across the country. This includes a venue in the West Midlands area.

"Criminals will be looking for ways to exploit this, either through selling fake tickets or setting up professional looking sites which may look honest, but could leave you a victim. "There is some easy-to-follow advice which will help keep you safe and ensure you can enjoy the Games next year." If you're buying a ticket for the Games:

The London 2012 ticket application process opens on the 15 March and you have until

26 April to apply for tickets through LOCOG as tickets are not allocated on a first come first served basis. The only way to apply for a ticket in the UK is at www.tickets.london2012.com. This is London 2012's official site. You can also get a postal application from any Lloyds TSB branch, or from any public library in Northern Ireland. Don't buy a ticket from an unauthorised website or to ut. You risk being scammed, and not getting the ticket you wanted and paid for. If you get a ticket for an event you can't attend, you can return your ticket to get a refund through the London 2012 official ticket exchange. Your ticket will then be officially resold. Details of this will be announced in due course. There are only three official providers for Games Breaks and Hospitality Packages in the UK these are:

Thomas Cook -
www.thomascooklondon2012.com

Prestige Travel -
www.prestigeticketing.london2012.com

Jet Set Travel -
www.jetsetsports.com

Other websites or companies will not be authorised to sell you a ticket as part of a package in the UK. Always check the terms and conditions to see exactly what you are being sold. Outside of the UK London 2012 tickets are sold through the country's National Olympic Committee, or their authorised retailer.

If you find tickets for sale before the 15th March 2011 or available from any

unauthorised source at anytime, don't buy them. They are not genuine. Report it to your local police, or London 2012 via brandprotection@london2012.com.

Reply using our website

If you have any information that you would like to pass on to us please call on 0300 333 3000 or dial 999 if it is urgent. If you would like to report anything anonymously please call CRIMESTOPPERS on 0800 555 111.

If the information you are giving refers to an incident number that you have please make sure you give this number to the Call Taker - thank you. Dee Naylor, Hereford Community Messaging Service Administrator
denise.naylor@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Thanks to all who have sent in copy, it is much appreciated.

Just a reminder - that this is your newsletter and it will be as interesting as you make it.

Our youngsters are seriously under-represented so where are you??? We want to hear from you.

Send items for the newsletter to birchesnews@btinternet.com or deliver by hand to 'Bramleys' in Aconbury Close, King's Thorn.

**COPY DEADLINE
FOR MAY ISSUE**

18th April