



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

A newsletter for the villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury.

January 2016. First published 1977.

COMPOST HEAP

Invite you to their Annual Wassail

At Little Birch Hall

January 16th Saturday

Starting at 7.30 p.m.

In aid of the Hope Charity

Come and dress up warm, with noise-making equipment, to process to the orchard and make a traditional Wassail around the apple trees, followed by a Mummers Play and entertainment

in the Village Hall.

There will be food available

Tickets (£5 & £3 u12) from:

Bob and Sue Chance 01981 540725

There will be a bar

Diary Dates

December 2015

31st New Year's Eve Party

January 2016

6th Little Birch Parish Council LBVH

7th Much Birch Parish Council MBCH

12th Whist Drive LBVH

16th Book Exchange Old Methodist Chapel

16th Wassail from LBVH

19th WI MBCH

26th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

27th Gardening Club LBVH

February 2016

5th and 6th Pantomime LBVH

16th WI MBCH

24th Gardening Club LBVH

Church Services in January



- Jan 3rd. 11.00am LBirch CW Communion
- Jan 10th. 09.15am MBirch Family Communion
11.00am LBirch Morning Worship
- Jan 17th 09.15am MBirch CW Communion
11.00am LBirch BCP Communion
- Jan 24th. 09.15am MBirch Matins
- Jan 31st 10.30am Archenfield Group Services
In St Weonard Benefice

Mr D T Davies' Wartime Escapes – When the BBC Wales film was shown on 19th November in Little Birch Village Hall over 50 people came to see it. It was wonderful to see so many people who obviously were quite gripped by the film and found it most moving. Mr Davies' experiences must have been horrific, terrifying but also exciting as he escaped no less than five times. The film showed him returning to the sites of these escapes, accompanied by his three sons, where he met people who knew those whom he had been with in the war and also spoke German to them. Dr Michael Davies introduced the film and answered many questions about the trip he made with his father.

Please send copy for the February 2016 Newsletter to birchesnews@gmail.com or written contributions to John Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury Close, King's Thorn.
—by 18th January please.

LOCAL NEWS



The recent local news is in the main not good.

Sadly, Sid Hitching our erstwhile long serving milkman has been in hospital twice following falls at home but we wish him a speedy recovery.

Since writing this we have heard that, very sadly, Sid Hitching died in hospital last Sunday. A full tribute will be given next month

Roger Thomas has also had an overnight operation and is now back at home and feeling more comfortable.

There have been 5 deaths in the community and Mrs. Peggy Newman's passing was notified in the last Newsletter but unfortunately her funeral service was delayed until Dec 12th and a full tribute will be given next month.

In the second of two accidents on the A49 near Much Birch, tragically Joe Mayers, son of Chris Mayers of Kings Thorn, was killed in collision with a lorry on 19th Nov. He was just 30 years of age and leaves a son, Cameron, aged 7. Cameron is now living with his grandfather Chris and his partner, Amanda, and attends the Steiner Academy. We send our deepest sympathy to Cameron, Chris and Amanda and also to grandfather, Eric.

Don Ingram of the erstwhile Post Office and Stores sadly passed away on 19th. November in the County Hospital, a few weeks before his 87th birthday. A Service to celebrate his life was held in a packed out St. Martins Church on 1st. December.

Don was born in South Wales and had 7 brothers and sisters. The family moved to Cardiff when he was quite young and thence to Pontrilas eventually settling in Hereford. Don's first job was as a butcher's delivery boy cycling around Hereford. He had an older brother who had joined the Royal Navy and Don wanted to join up as well but was refused because he was too young and WW2 was still raging. However he did join the Royal Navy straight after the war and was based in Portsmouth representing his ship in boxing and gymnastics. He married Joan in 1951 and Ray was born in 1952. After his naval discharge, Don joined the staff of Brook Bros. garage in Blueschool Street Hereford, where a number of young men took apprenticeships to be motor mechanics.

In 1963 Don founded his own private hire firm which began his long association with taxiing and driving jobs. In 1964, a second son, Mark was born and later in 1964 the family set sail for Australia, where Richard was born. They returned a few years later and Don continued his taxi work. In 1971, the call to return to Australia was very real and the Ingram family set out with one of Don's brothers to make the journey overland. There were conflicts going on in the Balkans and when the van engine overheated for the second time in Greece, despite Don's optimism they took the advice to return to England. My first recollection

of Don, although I didn't know him at the time, was in 1973 when I saw him running up the Callow with a group of younger men, he was very fit.

Don and Joan took over the PO and Stores in 1983 but immediately Joan was invited to represent Hereford Midwives at a Conference in Australia and Don paid for himself to go along privately. After the Conference, they took a 3 week tour to catch up with old friends.

Tragedy hit the family in 1997 when Mark fell from his motorcycle landing on the back of his head near to the Skippit on the Kings Thorn road and was killed.

In 2003, Joan became very ill and in April, she passed away. Don and Ray carried on the business as best they could but the Post Office wanted to reduce the number of hours making it unviable and so the shop closed in 2005. Don had angina and was fitted with a stent giving him a new lease of life. Don and Ray continued the taxi service and Don was able to play more golf on the slopes of Kington Golf Club. He lived life to the full and was very active until the last 6 months of his life when aches and pains began to take their toll. Sadly, Don lost his sight completely some 2 months before his death but even in hospital he was laughing and joking with the family but slipped away peacefully at the end. He will be missed by a wide circle of friends and we send Ray, Richard and their families our sincere sympathies.

Colin Swift of King's Thorn passed away on Nov. 27th at home after a lengthy illness bravely borne. His funeral was attended by neighbours, friends and family at Hereford Crematorium on Friday, 4th December on what would have been his 87th birthday. The service was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson and the entry and exit was accompanied by the music of Glen Miller. The tribute to Colin was given by daughter Jill from which these notes have been taken.

Colin was born in Coventry on 4th Dec. 1928 and remained a loyal supporter of Coventry FC for all his life. Most of his schooling occurred during World War 2 and he left in 1942 aged 14. His family came through the bombing relatively unscathed but a house opposite was badly damaged. In the air raid shelter along with the other boys he used to frighten ladies by releasing frogs to jump around their feet. On leaving school his report described him as a well mannered, intelligent boy who should make good progress. He achieved a 'Very Good' standard in all subjects, Maths, English, Science, Art, General Studies and Manual Work.

In 1946, Colin joined the Royal Navy and served on many ships and aircraft carriers in his 8 years of service. During this time he was able to indulge in his love of sport, particularly football and hockey.

He sustained a nasty knee injury in Malta in 1948 which necessitated knee surgery in later life.

On leaving the Navy Colin enlisted with the Royal Naval Reserve for 4 years. His quiff of long blonde hair turned

heads in the town as he could easily be mistaken for Danny Kaye.

He took a trip up to the West End Ballroom in Birmingham where he met Menna who also loved dancing to Big Band music especially, Glen Miller and their romance blossomed. Exactly a year later Colin proposed to Menna and they were married on New Year's Eve 1955 enjoying a long weekend in London for their honeymoon. In due time Sue and Jill were born. Colin always instilled into the girls the need for qualifications which duly paid off with Sue qualifying as a medical doctor and Jill graduating as a microbiologist, making their parents very proud. He put his engineering skills to good use in civilian life first joining Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft as a Rocket Inspector and then as a Guided Missile Inspector at Hawker Siddeley, followed by a long career in the motor industry with the Rootes group in Coventry.

Colin loved football which he played in local teams and then managed one of them. The highlight of his 50 years of support for Coventry City was rewarded when they won the FA Cup in 1987, beating Spurs 3 - 2.

After Sue and Jill left home, Menna and Colin enjoyed peace and quiet once more and settled into a whole new rural life in Kings Thorn. Colin got stuck in to creating, with Menna, a new garden, planting trees and shrubs and a vegetable and fruit patch, and then enjoying the fruits of his labours. Menna and Colin thoroughly enjoyed their grandchildren, Jamie, Heather and Adam and the 3 generations took holidays together when the children were young.

In retirement, Menna and Colin were able to indulge their love of travelling enjoying holidays on Baltic cruises and St. Petersburg, South Africa, Thailand and Florida.

One dream they fulfilled was to visit Canada, Niagara falls and ride the famous Rocky Mountaineer train. Latterly, as he became frail, Colin kept his mind active watching quiz shows, solving crosswords and reading history and adventure books. He bore his failing health with patience and fortitude and made clear his wishes 'not to be messed about'. He was also determined to die at home in his own bed and with the utmost care from Menna and the local doctors and carer's teams. At the end Colin passed away peacefully in his sleep.

Family and neighbours will sorely miss a gentle, kind, reliable and intelligent man who in a way had the last laugh in that his brother in law, Robert Hughes, sportingly wore a sky blue ribbon at Colin's funeral, Rob being an avid Birmingham supporter.

We send our deepest sympathies to Menna, Jill, Sue and grandchildren, Jamie, Heather and Adam and to Eryl and Rob Hughes.

It is also sad to record the death of Mr. David Rogers of 'Sunnybank Farm', Little Birch and we extend our condolences to son, Guy and Carmen and the family.

Meetings, Fundraising and Activities

Much Birch WI

Much Birch WI meets on the third Tuesday of each month in Much Birch Community Hall, just off the A49. The Hall is situated next door to the surgery and both are signed from the road.

Meetings begin at 7.30 pm.

The subjects for the first three months meetings are as follows:

January 19th 'A Syrian Journey' by Gill Suttle
February 16th 'A Fascination for Hats' by Lenette Isko
March 15th 'Decoration the Royal Barge' by Brenda Crump

Visitors and potential new members are always welcome. Please contact **Caroline on 01981 540422** for further details.

Much Birch Village Market.

Much Birch Village Market takes place on the 4th Friday of the month in Much Birch Community Hall between 2.30 pm and 4.30 pm.

There will be no market in January. The Market resumes on Friday, 26th February.

Subsequent dates are as follows:

March 25th, April 22nd, May 27th, June 24th, July 22nd. There is no Market in August.

September 23rd, October 28th, November 25th and December 16th (Third Friday)

Please join us in supporting local suppliers of food and crafts.

For further information please contact **Mark on 01432 278026**

All information is correct at the time of going to press.

Little Birch and King's Thorn Gardening Club.



The first meeting of the New Year takes place on Wednesday January 27th with a talk by John Arnfield on 'Attracting more birds into the garden'. On Wednesday February 24th, the ever popular and enthusiast, Duncan Coombs, is the speaker and his illustrated talk will feature 'A Spring visit to Japan's gardens and countryside'

All meetings are held in the Little Birch Village Hall at the top of the Barrack Hill.

New members are always welcome.

Please contact John Bryant 01981 540316.

Christingle service on Sunday 20th December, 2015 (next Sunday) at 4.00pm.

The Christingle is the absolute highlight of our year. As a church, we aim to be at the very heart of the community, and every single year, we just love to put this event on which is geared very much towards children. At the Christingle service, you will hear your precious child sing unaccompanied the first verse of 'Away in a manger' by candlelight. You will see them collect and light a Christingle, and you will learn all about what the Christingle actually means. As a church, we really do love putting on this truly magical event which really does kick off Christmas in our community.

Please don't be put off by the thought of religion. Religion is a very off putting word that has caused many problems in the world - at Little Birch, we absolutely appreciate and understand that - and we promise we will not thrust anything down your throats. All we want to do is to provide a welcoming atmosphere to you and your family and make your Christmas season really special.

To add to the child friendly atmosphere, we have a dedicated children's area where your children are free to play with many toys and games on offer. The church will be decorated with a Christmas tree, which will be situated near the Kidz Zone (children's area).

Little Birch Church is not your stereotypical boring church where everyone is being boring and spending all their time on their knees. Together with our fairly friendly family orientated Vicar, Reverend Mark, we are really seeking to build a progressive child friendly church that has something for everyone, and that includes any visitors you may welcome into your home. Please be assured they will be welcome too.

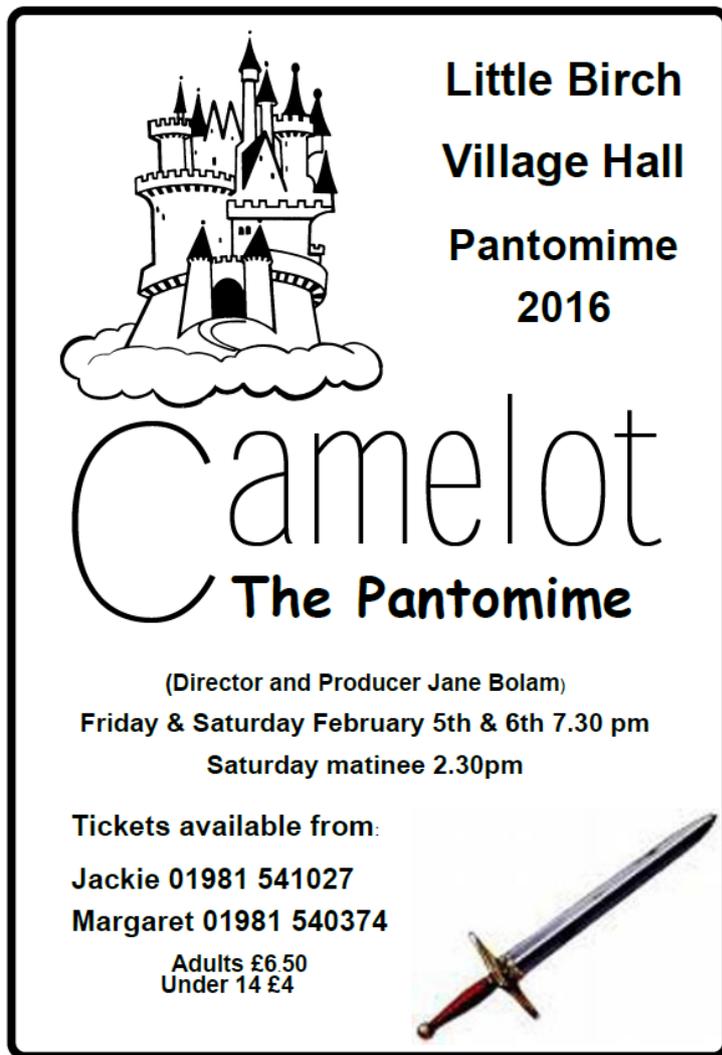
Please consider joining us at some point this Christmas, and together, let's make this Christmas a Christmas to remember.

Best Wishes,
James Gould.

James Gould's Organ Services provides quality Organ music throughout Herefordshire for Sunday services, Weddings and special occasions. visit <http://www.jgos.net>.

Editors Note

Although the specific event highlighted in this article has passed, it has been included in this publication to advise on the many attractions offered by Little Birch Church



**Little Birch
Village Hall
Pantomime
2016**

**Camelot
The Pantomime**

(Director and Producer Jane Bolam)
Friday & Saturday February 5th & 6th 7.30 pm
Saturday matinee 2.30pm

Tickets available from:
Jackie 01981 541027
Margaret 01981 540374

Adults £6.50
Under 14 £4

Little Birch Village Hall Committee

Whist Drive

We'd love to see you at our monthly whist drive whatever your ability. We guarantee a warm welcome and a fun evening with good company excellent prizes and refreshments.



Our next **Whist Drive** is on **Tuesday 12th January** at Little Birch Village Hall. We start at **7.30 pm** and the entrance fee is just £2.00.

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The next **Book Exchange** will be on the morning of **Saturday 16th January** at the former **Methodist Chapel 10am – 12pm.**

All members of the community are invited to join us for this enjoyable event which offers not only a wide range of books and DVDs (to suit all ages and interests) but also an opportunity to meet others and exchange recommendations for "a good read".

A warm welcome, tea, coffee and refreshments will be provided and we look forward to meeting up with regular and new visitors to the Book Exchange.

There is a charge of just £1 per adult towards the cost of the hire and refreshments.

Little Birch Village Hall Pantomime 2016

Our 2016 Pantomime is **Camelot** and will be held on **Friday & Saturday February 5th & 6th 7.30 pm with a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm**



This is always a thoroughly enjoyable performance and our 2016 Panto promises to be the best yet.

Tickets are available from: Jackie 01981 541027 or Margaret 01981 540374

Adults—£6.50

Under 14—£4

Please book your tickets early to avoid disappointment.

Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club

The November draw took place on 13th December 2015 in Much Birch Community Hall at 11am and the results were as follows:

1 st prize – 28	2 nd prize - 66	3 rd prize – 63
Mrs. P.Powell	Mr & Mrs Dowsett	Mrs. C. Powell
Lower Bullingham	Little Birch	Much Birch

The next draw will take place on 10th January 2016 at 10.30am in Much Birch Community Hall.

MUCH BIRCH CHURCH

We are making an appeal for people to join the rota for cleaning the Church. At present there are 5 people on the weekly rota but the more people we have the less demand there is on those 5 who also undertake other tasks for the church. The cleaning takes about an hour anytime between Thursday and Saturday. Cleaning materials are stored in the church. If you think you could help please telephone Sylvia Jones on 01981 540980.

Much Birch Fundraising Committee

We would like to thank Ros Atkinson for arranging the fundraising Promise Auction held recently when £600 was raised! This was shared between the Tower Fund and the Community Hall development fund. We do appreciate the hard work Ros put into this venture and extend our heartfelt thanks to the many generous people who donated the 'lots'.

The Committee recently organised a Christmas Theme Flower Arrangements Demonstration by Sandra Snell of The Flower House, Ross-on-Wye. This was a very successful evening, thoroughly enjoyed by the audience who were shown very different displays from the usual arrangements and which were raffled afterwards for the lucky winners to take home to further enjoy. This event raised £300 for the Church Fabric Fund.

Advance Notice

The Rhayader Male Voice Choir, with soloist Jayne Swann, will be presenting another concert for us in Much Birch Church on 23rd April 2016

Thanks

I would like to thank all those kind people who sent messages, cards and flowers during my recent illness. The caring thoughts were very much appreciated and I am pleased to say that I am now well on the way to recovery. My best wishes for the Festive season and the New Year.

Sylvia Jones

South Hereford Rural Police Briefing



About your team

Safer Neighbourhood Teams work with local people and partners to identify, tackle and solve issues that matter to the community where you live. Making neighbourhoods safer by cutting day to day crime and anti-social behaviour is at the heart of keeping people in West Mercia safe. Thanks to an investment in mobile tablet style computers, these will enable officers to spend more time on patrol on the street and in neighbourhoods. Officers will continue to come to people when they need them and provide a high quality service however you contact us – in person (on the street, at community bases and at partners and communities together [PACT] meetings), on the phone or online.

Kind regards

Lowri Anderson

PCSO 40247

Hereford City Southside and Rural SNT

West Mercia Police

If you would like to receive this Briefing via email, please email herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Your nearest public service counter is at Hereford Police Station, Bath Street, Hereford, HR1 2HT:

Opening hours of: Monday to Saturday: 8am to 8pm

Sundays and Bank Holidays: 10am to 4pm

Herefordshire Road Safety Hotline

01432 364582

Website: www.westmercia.police.uk

The West Mercia Police area and especially South Herefordshire remains low crime. That said a number of incidents have occurred and I would ask you to have a look at these to see if you could help with any information which may assist us in bringing the offenders to justice. Let me know if you need any crime prevention advice.

For daily updates on incidents in your area register for our Dotmailer service via www.westmercia.police.uk.

Should you wish to review crime and anti-social behaviour trends in your area over a longer period this can be done by visiting www.police.uk.

Do you know what Anti Social use of a Motor Vehicle is?

Think, does how you're parking effect others?

Can an Ambulance get through? As a Safer Neighbourhood Team parking issues are always a priority.

Think about your parking and how it could affect others.

Don't let a Burglar think no one is home!

As the nights are getting darker earlier, burglaries tend to increase so leave lights on inside your house when you are not home. Leave a light on in more than one room. Use a timer if you have one. Make sure your front door is well lit. Police recommend dusk to dawn lighting that automatically comes on as it gets dark. Keep shrubbery and hedges at the front pruned to below one metre to remove cover for a burglar and allow visibility for neighbours. Keep your curtains closed at night, if you are away, ask a trusted neighbour to close them for you. Check existing lighting is in good working order and remember to check batteries in your torches and smoke alarms.

Incidents of Note

Holme Lacy

0133S 231015 Between 2045hrs 22nd October and 0500hrs 23rd October Containers have been broken into at Holme Lacy College, Chainsaws, Hedge trimmers and Strimmers have been taken.

Broad oak

0644S 231015 On 23rd October a white van was seen leaving a property. It was later noticed Lead had been removed from the property.

Marlas

0221S 251015 Between 22nd October and 25th October a garden chair was taken from a garden. This is an ongoing issue that the SNT are dealing with. 0494S 241115 between 1100hrs 17th November and 0900hrs 23rd November a padlock which was attached to a chained gate, was removed. This is an ongoing issue that the SNT are dealing with.

St Owens Cross

0294S 311015 Over night of the 30th/31st October an outbuilding was broken into and a ride on lawn mower was taken.
0073S 031115 Over night 2nd/3rd November a property has been entered and 2x Apple iPhone 5's, an Apple iPad, various bottles of champagne and spirits from a cupboard, a Nikon Digital Camera and, 2 debit cards from a purse along with £15.00 cash have been taken.

Much Birch

0742S 061115 at 2121hrs on 6th November there was a fatal RTC outside the Pilgrim Hotel involving 2 vehicles.
0192S 191115 at 1057hrs 19th November there was a fatal RTC on the A49 at Much Birch involving a lorry and a car.

Dindor

0074S 091115 Between 1700hrs 8th November and 0735hrs 9th November the front windows of a Mitsubishi have been smashed. Nothing was taken from the vehicle.

Aconbury Wood

0338S 111115 Between 1345hrs and 1425hrs on 11th November The rear windscreen of a vehicle was smashed and tools and a laptop were taken from the boot.

If you have any information regarding any of the above you can contact Hereford Police on 101, in an emergency please dial 999. Please be aware that any information provided within this letter is to inform you of incidents of note and to request possible assistance. We do not want to worry you in any way. Any incidents stated are infrequent and spread about a wide area. Herefordshire is a safe place to live!

Christmas Teaser.....

Which significant events in history, all of them happened on 1st January, could be depicted by these images?



Answers to Lizhall100@btinternet.com by 18 January 2016

No prizes but everyone who gets it right—and the first to the post—will be announced next month.

Extra accolade if you also get the years!

FLICKS IN THE STICKS at Much Birch Community Hall

Tuesday 26th January 2016 - JERSEY BOYS ¹⁵

Jersey Boys is a musical biography of the Four Seasons—the rise, the tough times and personal clashes, and the ultimate triumph of a group of friends whose music became symbolic of a generation.

*Refreshments including hotdogs
available from 7pm
Tickets £4 (£3 under 16s)*

Coming up...

*Borderlines Film Festival screenings Saturday 27th
February, 2.30pm & Friday 4th March, 7.30pm.*

*Tickets available in advance or on the door –
for further info or to book tickets call 01981 540097 or
email bryonyconnolly@hotmail.com*

*For further information about films and screenings visit
www.artsalive.co.uk (online booking available!)*

“Politeness” has become a rather old fashioned concept in our “modern society”. But there is an organisation who still promote those values and would welcome your support. Originally the “Polite Society” and now renamed “The National Campaign for Courtesy”, the aims are to fight obscenity, selfishness and greed and to promote good manners, respect (for yourself and others) and rejection of anti-social behaviour.



If you are interested in learning more about this please visit our website www.campaignforcourtesy.org.uk or telephone Peter Foot 020 8330 3707

Much Birch Parish Council
Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright
Longfield House,
Gooses Foot,
Kingstone,
Herefordshire HR2 9NE
Tel. 01981 250860
Email: muchbirchclerk@hotmail.co.uk

17th December 2015

PARISH MEETING – at the Parish Council Meeting held on the 3rd December at the Much Birch Community Hall. The Meeting heard about local road issues, including the A49, and was attended by members from the West Mercia Police Force. Follow up actions regarding the meeting are in progress.

The Parish Council were very pleased to welcome a new parish councillor.

She is Mrs Roisin Burge and she was co-opted and signed her papers at the December 3rd Meeting. Her contact details are below. A big welcome is extended to Roisin.

The Parish Council is going to be communicating with the community further in the New Year regarding the possibility of engagement in a Neighbourhood Plan for Much Birch Parish. Further information and details will follow.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be an Ordinary Meeting and this will be held on **Thursday 7th January 2016 at 7.30pm** - at The Much Birch Community Hall. Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

A reminder that:-

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair) , e mail thecoops@wyenet.co.uk
Tel. 01981 540703

Cllr Steve Turner (Vice Chair) , e mail turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com Tel. 01981 540090

Cllr Andrew Crum e mail a.crum@btinternet.com
Tel. 01981 540002

Cllr Tim Jones e mail tjsj@me.com Tel. 01981 540242

Cllr Ben Roberts b3nroberts@gmail.com Tel. 01981 540100

Full minutes of the meetings and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. www.muchbirchparish.org.uk.

You can also find us on Twitter at
<https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC>

and Facebook at
www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish