



# THE **Birches**

## **Community Matters**

**NEWSLETTER FOR KINGSTHORN, MUCH BIRCH  
LITTLE BIRCH, ACONBURY & WORMELOW**

First published 1977 **June 2021**

### A note from the Editorial Team.

Now we are, hopefully, moving into a less “locked down” lifestyle. Caution is still the watchword but our local businesses, hostelrys and services are starting to come alive again. Our sincere thanks to all of them, and all the Community, for the tenacity, patience and understanding that this step has taken.

The Editorial team wish all safe and well .

Keep your contributions coming in—without those there is no Newsletter!

*Best wishes to all*

*Editor*

*Editorial@birchesnews.org.uk*

### **Little Birch Village Hall Committee AGM**

All members of the community are invited to join us at our 2021 Annual General Meeting.

We look forward to welcoming you at 7:30pm on Wednesday 9th June at Little Birch Village Hall

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### **The Birches Camera Club and Photography Group....**



Have, once again, sent us some wonderful photographs of views and wildlife which you will see scattered around this publication. Many thanks to this marvellous group.

For further information about the group please contact.....

*Sally Nichol at [sally.nichol@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.nichol@btinternet.com)*



# Much Birch Surgery

## Covid Vaccine Update

74% of our practice population 16yrs of age and over have now received their 1<sup>st</sup> dose and 52% have had both doses of the vaccine.

All patients aged 50 and over who have had their first dose of Covid vaccine through the practice should have had their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose by the end of May. If any patients have not and they had their first dose either at the practice or the Larruperz centre in Ross on Wye, please contact the practice as soon as possible.

All further vaccines for under 50's should be booked through the National Booking Service online <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/> or by phoning 119.

## Covid Vaccine 'passports'/evidence

The practice is unable to provide evidence of Covid vaccine status. For patients wishing to demonstrate their Covid vaccination status, proof of vaccination is available on the NHS App. The NHS app can be downloaded from the relevant App store for iPhone or android devices. For patients who are unable to use the app, call the NHS helpline on 119 and ask for a letter to be posted to you. This must be at least 5 days after you've completed your course of the vaccine, the letter may take up to 5 days to reach you.

## Access to appointments

The practice been open throughout the pandemic and we are now busier than ever. It may take longer to get an appointment than normal but if you have an urgent matter the GP will speak to you on the day you phone. Appointments are either telephone consultations, video or face to face. Many patients have found remote consultations have worked well throughout the pandemic. The GP or nurse is able to take a full history, arrange any preliminary tests, e.g. blood tests and follow up with the patient with the results. If the GP decides on speaking with the patient that it is necessary to see them in person, a face to face appointment will be arranged, often on the same day. Patients are also able to book face to face appointments in advance if they prefer however, for a routine face to face appointment there may be a wait of 2 to 3 weeks.

If the GP has requested an appointment they will determine its urgency and inform the receptionists. If you require a medication review and it is not booked before your medication runs out, you will not go without. The GP will be happy to issue another prescription if they can see an appointment in the diary.

Please rest assured that everyone is working extremely hard to maintain services and prioritise access to GP's and nurses. We appreciate your continued support and understanding.

## Patient Participation group meeting with the practice 7<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30pm by Microsoft Teams

The Patient Participation Group is meeting remotely by Microsoft Teams with the Practice. We would like to invite up to 25 patients to join the meeting to hear Dr Horne and the group discuss the agenda. Places are limited to 25 and will be based on a first come first served basis.

Questions from patients can be submitted before the meeting by email.

Please email the secretary: [e.l.e@btconnect.com](mailto:e.l.e@btconnect.com) for a place at the meeting. The Teams joining link will then be sent to you. If you aren't familiar with Teams - it is an easy to download free online video service, any problems the secretary can help you.

Website: <https://www.muchbirchsurgery.co.uk/website/M81024/files/newsletter.pdf>

Facebook: [Much Birch Surgery Patient Information Page](#)





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## Jobs for the garden in June



From Derek Scrivens

Keep weeding.

Cut back early flowering perennials to encourage a second flush.

Tubs and containers that have been planted up with tender bedding plants should now be ok to move from shelter to their display position – but with our crazy weather, listen out for frosts in the early days of the month.

Dead head roses, regularly, cutting to a leaf beneath the flowers.

House plants can spend a bit of time outside in a shaded place so that they do not get scorched by the sun. Needless to say, inspect for slugs and other pests regularly.

Tomatoes grown as cordons – train the main stem to a support and pinch out the side shoots which will grow from leaf joints. The flower trusses will grow from the stem between leaves. If growing indoors allow a maximum of 7 trusses and outdoors 4 trusses when the growing tips should be pinched out.

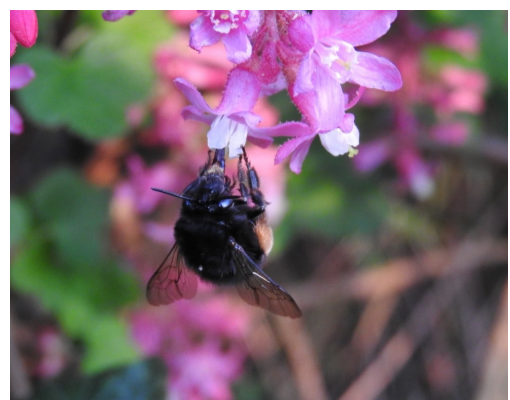
Keep sowing small quantities of radish, lettuce, salad leaves, spring onions, beetroot, peas and/or mangetout to provide young sweet veg. and salad. Water tomatoes thoroughly and regularly. This will both stop them splitting and help prevent blossom end rot.

Plant out calabrese, Brussels sprouts, summer cabbage and spring cauliflower.

Keep birds off berries with secure and taut net.

Remove blanket weed from ponds leaving on the side of the side of the pond for 24 hours before composting – this will give small creatures an opportunity to get back in the pond.

Deal with severe aphid and caterpillar infestations how you choose. Minor infestations can be left to birds, ladybirds, lacewings, hoverflies, ants and even public enemy number one, wasps.



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**A big 'Thank You' to the Much Birch Community**

**We have our Neighbourhood Development Plan**

On 6 May, following almost 5 years of local research and consultation, the Much Birch Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was tested at the Official public referendum. In order to get the result as quickly as possible I attended the official count at the Hereford Leisure Centre on the following day. Whilst always being optimistic that the result of the vote would be a positive one, I did have a mild sense of trepidation that something might go wrong! I am pleased to report that this was not the case and 92.1% of those who voted were in favour of the plan. Total votes cast were 278 with 256 in favour and 22 against. The turnout was around 39%.

The Parish Council have been advised that the plan will be formally adopted by Herefordshire Council in mid-June and will then become part of the statutory development plans for Herefordshire. This means that future planning applications within the Much Birch Council must be considered against the policies of the NDP and objections citing non-compliance with NDP policies carry considerable weight in the decision-making process by the planning authority.

Our thanks to David Goldsmith who chaired the NDP Steering group, all who worked on the development of the plan and everyone who responded to the consultations on the way. Thank you, your contributions have been much appreciated,

Alison Cook, MBPC Chair

## Settling into life in the countryside— and all the strings attached!

I guess many of us have been saying "this time last year we were...." and you can insert here... 'doing the garden', 'cleaning out the garage', 'decorating the spare room'... or any of the numerous jobs that we never found the time to get round to doing until 'lockdown' gave us the time.

This time last year I was making plans to move from Wolverhampton to Little Birch. We were surrounded by cardboard boxes and keeping our fingers crossed that the government would allow removal companies to operate during the pandemic. Thankfully everything went to plan and we moved into 'Uplands' in the summer of 2020. So how has the first year been for this 'city boy' and his family in Little Birch? One of the biggest changes has been for my boys Leo (17) and David (15). They have had to adapt to a completely new way of life. New schools/colleges, new friends and a new home. In their own words they say "it's just another home" but I know they are in a much better (and safer) environment.

My wife, Geraldine, has come "home". Having grown up in Kingsthorpe the transition for her has been seamless. Having spent most of her adult life working and living in a city environment I knew she would adapt quicker than the rest of us when we moved to Little Birch. She could easily spend a whole afternoon watching the bird feeders that we have erected around the property and her knowledge of nature is growing by the day. Seeing her so happy more than justifies our decision to move. She is now close to her parents and we are happy to be available should they need us for anything, but if I'm being honest I've probably needed their advice and



support more than they have needed mine. All of this just leaves how the move has affected my life. From a business point of view I have been able to maintain an online teaching presence thanks to "Zoom" and "Skype" and I am now teaching a few local students face-to-face in my studio at 'Uplands'. Going forward I am hoping that I will be able to develop my one to one teaching business here in Little Birch so I make no apologies for any promotional material that you may see popping up on social media or in local bus shelters. As a musician I am hoping that Hereford will offer me the opportunity to continue where I left off some 14 months ago. I have performed online on a handful of 'virtual open mics' and I will be attending the real thing when restrictions allow. I am also looking forward to performing at Hereford City Sports Club in July. Do I miss the city? A few weeks ago we went back to visit some friends. It was great to catch up as you can imagine, but Geraldine and I both agreed that it was nice to get back home... to Little Birch.

*Rick Hampton*



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# Little Birch Village Hall Renovations

*Bob, Peter and many others are  
doing a fantastic job renovating  
Little Birch Village Hall*



The new kitchen is now fully installed and fitted out. There is a small amount of tiling to finish (Our thanks to Chris) and second fix woodwork to fix and paint then the kitchen will be fully operational.

Floors have been levelled and are ready to paint once all the dust has been cleaned up.

The back room, is insulated and plaster boarded out and plastered – our thanks to Tim. This will be painted this coming weekend and some cupboards installed for storage.



Our next jobs are to build a storage cupboard in the main hall for all the tables and chairs to go in and move the stage lighting.

Our hope is that the hall will be ready for full opening in the next few weeks.

If anyone is free to help with painting the floor, or the area behind the stage and corridor area, then please can they contact Bob Barnett on 540898.



**Thanks**

**Bob**

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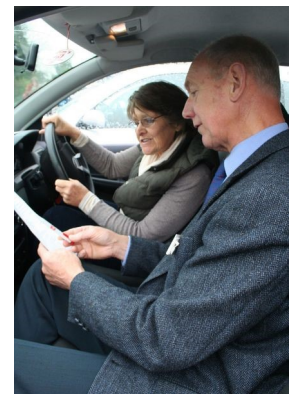
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## Update from Herefordshire Advanced Drivers

### Resumption of Activities

Only two weeks ago it seemed highly probable that the relaxation of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions would proceed in accordance with the Government's timescale. Unfortunately, that is now being thrown into some doubt due to the increasing numbers of cases of the Indian mutation and everyone will be hoping that no new restrictions will be necessary.

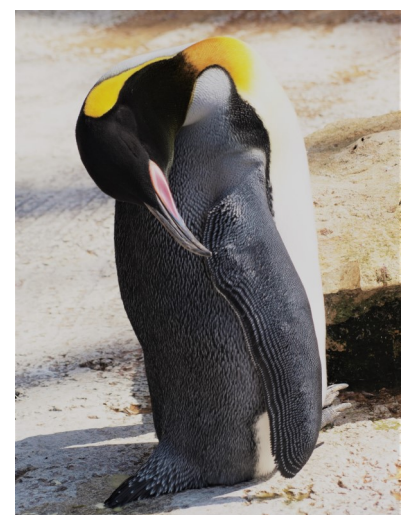
As can be imagined, a backlog of candidates awaiting training for the advanced driving test built up during the lockdown and starting from 12<sup>th</sup> April we were able to implement a programme of peer reviews for our Observers. This was vital to ensure that their observing and mentoring skills were refreshed and reinvigorated to the required standard before beginning any training. From 17<sup>th</sup> May we were able to recommence in-car observed drives and to meet outside. The next significant step will be from 21<sup>st</sup> June when, provided there is no further disruption from the virus, we will be able to hold meetings indoors as well as outside. This will include driver refresher days for members of the public and we are currently finalising a programme for the remainder of the year. Of course, all these activities are dependent on the agreement of the parties involved and we are ensuring safety measures are in place to minimise any risk of infection from the virus. Our activities are all aimed at improving safe driving and anyone who would like further details should contact Stella Boyd-Carpenter on 01432 840835 or by email: [group-contact@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:group-contact@advanced-drivers.org.uk)



The very unusual weather in April and May has caused a variety of hazards for motorists. In April the frequent heavy night frosts caused slippery road surfaces which often lasted until mid-day. From the beginning of May we have experienced heavy rain almost every day which has resulted in many roads being flooded. Braking distances are lengthened, aquaplaning is a risk, potholes can be hidden and depth of water may be much greater than imagined in gutters and low-lying areas. Driving at an appropriate speed in such conditions is essential combined with concentration, awareness and maximising visibility through clean windows, use of lights and efficient windscreen wipers.

 **FLICKS IN THE STICKS** at Much Birch Community Hall

**Flicks in the Sticks Update**  
Unfortunately Flicks will not be returning just yet - we plan to return in the new year - watch this space for updates.  
If you have suggestions of films you would like us to screen in the future you can email them to [muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com](mailto:muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com)  
**Much Birch Flicks Team**





We hope that you are all keeping safe and well. The shop still remains very busy, but what a difference between today and this time last year in terms of both weather and day-to-day life. As we are hopefully approaching the light at the end of the tunnel, we have moved deliveries to a Friday alone and are so pleased to see so many of our customers back in the shop.

Local seasonal produce is now beginning to come in - we welcome our first strawberry delivery of the year this week from Windmill Hill. We have also recently refreshed our range in general and have now got lots of new, exciting products as well as the usual favourites.

We would like to say thank you again to all of you who contributed to our 'Christmas Party' funds - we were finally able to get together at The Viking Games for a fun, socially-distanced afternoon of activities. As always, if we can ever be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,  
Ella Davies  
Manager

Carrot&Wine Stores Ltd  
1 Queens Close,  
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Hereford  
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01981540126



### Little Birch Parish Facebook Group



Find the latest news, events and business listings all in one place.

You are welcome to promote your local business, advertise a local event or post news or information of interest to the village and surrounding area.

Search for *Little Birch Parish Group* on Facebook

Your Little Birch Parish Councillors are:

Cllr Peter Rees                      Chair  
Cllr Janet Gwinnett                  Vice Chair  
Cllr Kate Dillon  
Cllr Michael Davies  
Cllr Kate Robbins

Angela Middleton                      Volunteer Footpath Officer  
Sophie Glover                          Clerk                  01432 617306

**Little Birch Parish Council**

*For updates and notifications of future meetings please check out the website – [www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org](http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org).*

[lbpcclerk@gmail.com](mailto:lbpcclerk@gmail.com)



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## A poem for June

Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,  
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)  
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,  
Each secret fishy hope or fear.  
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;  
But is there anything Beyond?  
This life cannot be All, they swear,  
For how unpleasant, if it were!  
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good  
Shall come of Water and of Mud;  
And, sure, the reverent eye must see  
A Purpose in Liquidity.  
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,  
The future is not Wholly Dry.



Mud unto mud! -- Death eddies near --  
Not here the appointed End, not here!

But somewhere, beyond Space and Time.  
Is wetter water, slimier slime!  
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One  
Who swam ere rivers were begun,  
Immense, of fishy form and mind,  
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;  
And under that Almighty Fin,  
The littlest fish may enter in.  
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,  
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,  
But more than mundane weeds are there,  
And mud, celestially fair;  
Fat caterpillars drift around,  
And Paradisal grubs are found;  
Unfading moths, immortal flies,  
And the worm that never dies.  
And in that Heaven of all their wish,  
There shall be no more land, say fish.



Rupert Brooke  
1913.

# PILATES

with Alison Allan

## PILATES ZOOMING AGAIN

Wednesdays 7pm

Due to Covid19 restrictions Pilates is back on Zoom.

In the comfort of your own home you can still get a great workout and you don't even need to leave your front door! Zoom works well. We can see each other clearly and I give teaching instructions so you are still benefiting from my guidance – it's not like following a video.

If you are unsure about how to get started or want to ask any questions, I am happy to help.

Just give me a call!

01432 840491

07947 011707

[Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com](mailto:Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com)

Pilates with Alison Allan on **Facebook**.

Please send copy for the July 2021 Newsletter to [editorial@birchesnews.org.uk](mailto:editorial@birchesnews.org.uk) or written contributions to Liz Hall at Walmere, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe HR2 8AW. —by **18th June** please.



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07739953864

I'm Richard, and I offer IT support around rural Hereford.

I have 25 years' experience of working with technology, supporting a vast range of people, from technophobes to technogeeks!

I aim to specifically support the more senior users within our community, who often appreciate a completely different approach. I won't burden anyone with jargon and will offer only gentle and compassionate support. This can help the user feel more comfortable with tackling technology and lead to a growing confidence.

Sometimes, the tech issue might be the initial reason for contact and all that's really required is someone to sit patiently and share a cuppa. I can do that too, I'm a great listener!

If you need a friendly chat over a cuppa, whilst I sort out your IT issues, get in touch using the info above.

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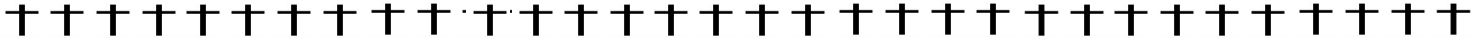
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Hello Everyone,

The recent surge of COVID-19 cases in India and the detection of the variant in the UK raises some interesting challenges. Not least is the question of international travel. Back in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, it was expected that if you went abroad, especially to say India or Africa, there was a significant chance that you would not come back. There were diseases that haunted those areas that the indigenous population had found a way to live with. For example, sickle cell was one way in which the effects of malaria could be mitigated, though at quite a cost!

The dreaded yellow fever or dysentery or similar cast a long shadow over missionaries and civil servants for the British Empire.

Of course, we also exported diseases from Western Europe to Africa, South America etc. as we went empire building, so it wasn't a one-way street.

We have become a much more global community, the spread of COVID-19 from Wuhan to the whole world was speeded up by air travel. And the price we paid for not closing our borders early enough could well be quite high.

So, if global travel is under pressure, what happens next? Well, we could find airlines going bankrupt, hotels struggling to be filled, holiday destinations dropping off the list at Tui and other travel agents. We would, though, be all the poorer if that is the case. Just think of the things you have enjoyed on holiday and still enjoy. It might be a particular meal, or maybe a wine or cocktail. It might be a piece of art or other culture hanging on the wall. Perhaps we struck up a friendship with a local guide, helped out with a small token (for us) that changed their world?

We risk becoming more isolated and more inward looking. Given the global problems we have to face – from the climate emergency to ocean acidification to space junk, anything that helps us build friendships across cultures and continents is to be encouraged, for we all know that much more gets done through friendship and co-operation than through nationalist one-upmanship!

With every blessing,  
Revd Mark

Thanks  
Mark

Revd Mark Johnson  
Rector - Wormelow Hundred Benefice  
&  
Prebend de Bullinghope



**Much Birch Parish Council**  
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3<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**PARISH MEETING** - at the Parish Council Meeting held on the Zoom Platform, during the Covid 19 Virus pandemic, on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 from 7.30 pm.

The Parish Council heard further updates from the Ward Councillor.

Voting was in progress on the 6<sup>th</sup> May to determine the outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum. Results would be published as soon as known.

A reminder please: When cutting your verges etc. please do not place the clippings in the ditches where they can block the drainage systems, and potentially cause flooding issues on the highway, when water cannot get away.

The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 from 7.30pm** - medium/ location to be advised via Agenda. All are welcome to attend.

**Dates for 2021 Parish Council Meetings are as follows:-** June 3, July 8, September 2, October 7, November 4 and December 2.

Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend on Zoom and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

**Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-**

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, e mail [thecoops@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecoops@wyenet.co.uk) Tel. 01981 540703

Cllr Andrew Crum Anfield House, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, e mail [a.crum@btinternet.com](mailto:a.crum@btinternet.com)  
Tel. 01981 540002

Cllr Roisin Burge The Old Hall, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AX [roisinburge@hotmail.com](mailto:roisinburge@hotmail.com) Tel. 01981 540724

Cllr David Baldwin The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS [baldwin79@btinternet.com](mailto:baldwin79@btinternet.com) Tel. 01981 541198

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](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk).

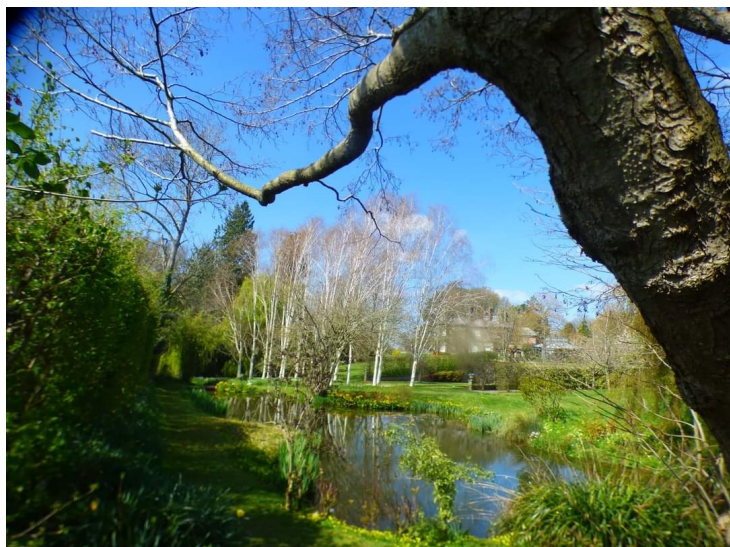
You can also find us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

How many dogs could you fit into a handcart?



What is the next number in this progression?

1 1 2 3 5 8 ?



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ALL ASPECTS OF TREE WORK UNDERTAKEN

**Community Café  
@ Much Birch Community Hall**

We had hoped that the Community Café might be up and running again by now, but here we are in another lockdown so we will have to wait!

In the meantime, if anyone is struggling with shielding or isolating and needs help collecting prescriptions or shopping, please ring Kay on 01981 540666 and she will ask one of us to help.

And if all you need is a chat on the phone, that's fine too!



*A local group who want to bring people together, strengthen community links and provide relaxed and fun events for all ages.*



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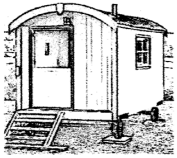
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**HEREFORDSHIRE  
Walking Festival 2021**

**We are  
Good to Go!**



We are very happy to announce that the 2021 Herefordshire Walking Festival will be going ahead from Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June.

Get your walking boots at the ready... Herefordshire Walking Festival is back!

Herefordshire Walking Festival takes place over 9 days with over 50 walks, all in 1 beautiful county.

This year walkers can take part in a variety of walks, including: Duchy Woodland, Orchards, Cider, Hops, Wildlife, River walks, Canary Girls, Suffragettes, Poets, Knife Angel, City walks, Church visits, WW1 Memorial Walks, 20+ mile Challenges, Book Walks & Dragons! ... To name a few and many more.

Festival Co-ordinator Liz Hill said: *"During lockdown, many have been able to explore new areas on their own doorstep. We would like the festival to encourage more people to continue to find new 'hidden gem' walks and join like-minded people at a social distance during this annual event."*

She continued... *"Our sincere thanks go to all who lead, back-up and work together voluntarily to enable Herefordshire Walking Festival to carry on successfully, as it has done since its inception in 2002 and to Steve and Sue Dennis for their important contribution to its future."*

Herefordshire Walking Festival offers so much variety for walking, catering for all levels and interests - from 2 mile to 25-mile walks, on different terrains accommodating people with all levels of ability including wheelchair friendly and visually impaired.

The committee work together in partnership with Herefordshire Ramblers and Disabled Ramblers in ensure the festival is accessible for all on one walk or another.

So, if you would like to join us and would like to find out more, please visit the Herefordshire Walking Festival website – [www.herefordshirewalkingfestival.co.uk](http://www.herefordshirewalkingfestival.co.uk)

Tickets will be available online from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April at [www.herefordshirewalkingfestival.co.uk](http://www.herefordshirewalkingfestival.co.uk)

For further information please contact:  
Liz Hill  
t: 07966 378170

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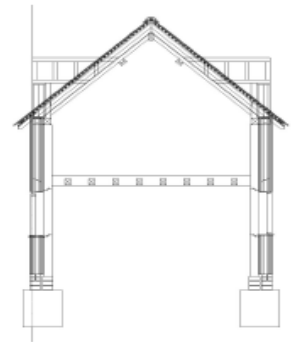
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## Random poem



Yesterday, upon the stair  
 I met a man who wasn't there  
 He wasn't there again today  
 I wish that man would go away.

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