



THE Birches

Community Matters

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

First published 1977 **March 2021**

A note from the Editorial Team.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, we must thank, once again, the marvellous contributions for the Newsletter which we have received this month. We have all sorts from very funny to thoughtful to beautiful to just plain interesting!

I am sure the Community join us in our best wishes to Margaret Scrivens. And to Derek who has, again, sent us gardening tips for the month

And, just for a change(!) anyone who is willing to help us save resources by looking up the newsletter online on either Much Birch or Little Birch Parish websites, and/or would be happy to receive your Newsletter in PDF format please let the editor know;

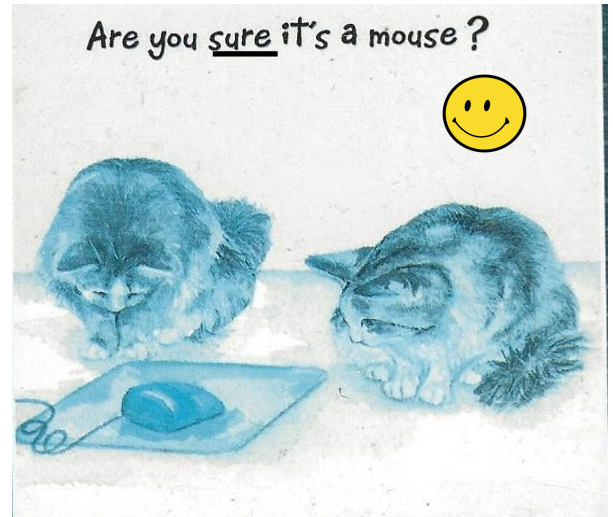
editorial@birchesnews.org.uk.

Also Mike Leigh so you can be removed from the paper distribution list. With your full address, please.

michael@seychelles91.plus.com>

Best wishes
Editor

What is always in front of you but can't be seen?
What has to be broken before you can use it?
What question can you never honestly answer yes to?
What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks,
has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps?



Jobs in the garden for March from Derek Scrivens

Apply a general purpose granular fertilizer to hungry plants such as roses and clematis and fork in lightly. Lift and divide clumps of snowdrops as foliage yellows. Pot up dormant dahlia tubers and canna rhizomes. Protect from cold but in good light – water sparingly. Prune woody herbs, Hyssop, Lavender, Sage and Santolina to 1.5 -2.5 cm. of previous years growth.

Sprout or 'chit' seed potatoes in doors, placing the potatoes in trays or egg boxes with the 'rose' end (small indentations from where spurts will emerge) uppermost. Sow tomato seeds in pots in a propagator or on a window sill.

When the soil feels warm to the touch and is not saturated, Parsnip seeds can be sown.

When the soil has dried out sufficiently to walk on, if not already done, prepare trenches for Runner Beans, Peas and Sweet Peas. Put a good layer of manure or compost plus grass cuttings and vegetable peelings in the bottom and leave open to the elements until nearer planting time.

This month is the start of the breeding season for our garden birds. If you have any waste wool, hair from brushes (your own, the dog, cat or horse), hang it on the branches of shrubs or wire fences, and leave strands of vegetation thatch which may be lying around the ground. Do not leave man made fibers around. Keep bird tables and water baths clean.



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.

Much Birch Surgery

To date 1600 patients from Much Birch Surgery have now received a first dose of the Covid vaccine.

The practice achieved the government's target of vaccinating all patients in the first 4 priority groups ahead of schedule and was able to begin vaccinating some patients aged 65-69.

Further to updated government guidance we are now required to focus on Group 6 'at risk' patients. The remaining patients aged 65-69 will be invited by NHS letter to attend one of the local mass vaccination centers.

Any patients over the age of 65 can also ring 119 to book for their vaccine or visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/ to book directly.

To improve the efficiency of the booking process Much Birch Surgery is now using a text message system to facilitate Covid vaccine appointment bookings. The text will say it is from Much Birch Surgery inviting you to book your Covid vaccination. It includes a link to an 'accurx' booking site from where you can choose your appointment. The practice will continue to contact patients without mobile phones, using their landline.

Appointments for 2nd doses will commence at the beginning of March. Once vaccine delivery dates are confirmed we will be contacting patients who had their 1st doses through the surgery (at either the Larruperz Centre in Ross on Wye, or at the practice), to book their 2nd dose appointments.

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

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



I think we all need to say what a fantastic job is being done by our local GP Surgery and the vaccination programme generally including all the NHS staff and volunteers who are involved in that.

They are busting a gut (so to speak!) to keep us all safe and well. We are all indebted to you.

Editorial Team



Jab at Our Surgery

I was beginning to become impatient for the jab, having heard of many people of my age group who had had it. At last I had a call from my Surgery offering me a jab in three days time – wonderful! It was at Much Birch Surgery which was a nice surprise as I had anticipated having to go to Ross. At the appointed day and hour I arrived at the car park and was met by someone in a woolly hat and face mask – no help in recognising them! I was asked to park in the Hall car park and wait to be collected. I was soon taken to the main entrance and invited to sanitize my hands then asked to stand on a blue blob in the passage.

A nurse soon came out of the vaccination room and called a name, but not mine. As I was the only person waiting she took my name and date of birth and I entered the room and was quickly given the jab painlessly. I left the building by the north door and asked to sit in my car for a while. I felt perfectly well, collected my pre-ordered prescription and left for home. About a week later my arm felt a little sore for 24 hours. I had the Astra/Zeneca vaccine.

Well done everyone for the smooth-running organisation.

Evelyn





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

Much Birch Flicks Team

The Axe & Cleaver Much Birch

Contact us at 01981
540 203 or on our
Facebook page.



What a whirlwind of a year! Like many, I don't think anyone was predicting the challenges last year was going to present. But, with the support of our incredible customers, we adapted and powered through. Now this year we feel more prepared to deal with whatever comes our way. Whilst we can't be doing what

we do best (and what we love) in serving all of our wonderful community, we certainly feel like we're on to the next best thing. We just hosted our first Valentines Day takeaway and whilst we were initially disappointed that we couldn't put on our usual service for the evening, we were astonished at the response. Reading through the

STARTERS	
Soup of the Day	- £4.50
Prawn Cocktail	- £6.00
Whitebait with Tartare Sauce	- £5.50
Breaded Mushrooms with Garlic Dip	- £4.95
MAINS	
6 Oz Sirloin Steak with Chips, Onion Rings & Peas	- £13.95
Steak & Ale Pie with Chips	- £10.00
Hunter's Chicken with Chips	- £11.00
Sausage & Mash with Onion Gravy	- £9.00
Beef Lasagne with Chips	- £10.00
Sweet & Sour Chicken with Rice	- £10.00
Curry of the Day	- £10.00
Beef Bourguignon with Mashed Potato	- £12.00
Hand Battered Cod & Chips	- £10.00
Scampi & Chips	- £9.00
Yankee Gammon with Chips & Salad	- £9.00
Cheeseburger & Chips	- £9.00
Ploughman's Burger & Chips	- £10.00
VEGETARIAN	
Vegetable Lasagne and Chips	- £10.00
Mushroom Stroganoff with Rice	- £9.00
Cauliflower Cheese with Garlic Bread	- £9.00
Cheese, Leek & Potato Bake with Chips	- £10.00

feedback we've received for all of our Takeaway services has been incredibly heart-warming and makes all of this worthwhile. We've just launched our new takeaway hotdog, The Weobley Whopper and can't wait for people to give it a try, and have some interesting plans for Mother's Day coming together as I type this. The main thing we learnt last year was how to adapt to the unpredictable state of the

world, and we wouldn't have managed it at all without all of our amazing customers who through lockdowns, tier changes and all the uncertainty, have been just incredible. Without their loyalty and support we really would be nothing. So, to everyone who's bought a takeaway, or popped in these last 16 [years](#), from everyone here at The Axe – THANK YOU and STAY SAFE, we can't wait to see you when we're back open! Contact us at 01981 540 203 or on our Facebook Page.

CHILDREN'S MENU	
Breaded Chicken with Chips	- £5.50
Breaded Scampi & Chips	- £5.50
Sausage & Mash with Gravy	- £5.50
SIDES	
Garlic Bread with Cheese	- £3.95
Chips	- £2.95
Salad	- £2.95
Onion Rings	- £2.95
Baked Beans/Mushy Peas/Gravy	- £2.00
DESSERTS	
Homemade Baked Cheesecake	- £5.50
Homemade Apple Crumble	- £5.50
Homemade Sticky Toffee Pudding	- £5.50
Custard/Ice Cream	- £1.00

Update from Herefordshire Advanced Drivers

Safe driving as we head towards Spring

The extremely cold weather, mainly in the second week of February, caused hazardous driving conditions with significant snowfall in places and icy road surfaces almost everywhere. Since then temperatures have risen considerably and with lengthening hours of daylight both in mornings and evenings there are real signs that spring is just around the corner. However, much field water continues to drain onto roads in many places and all drivers need to be aware of deep puddles, hidden potholes, loose gravel and soft verges all of which necessitate good observation, anticipation and matching speed and gears to the conditions. Quite apart from the possibility of further snow and ice, sunny mornings can mislead drivers into overlooking ice and slippery conditions caused by low overnight temperatures.

It seems probable that there may be some loosening of the Covid-19 restrictions before long which will probably lead to an increase in road traffic including drivers who have not used their cars for some months. There is a risk that such drivers will be relatively out of practice and may be late in making decisions and in undertaking manoeuvres. All drivers need to be aware of this possibility. Keep yourself and others safe through good observation and anticipation. Maintain the stopping distance from the vehicle ahead and show patience and courtesy to others.

Any vehicle which has not been used for some time should be checked and cleaned thoroughly before being driven. Is the licence and MOT still valid? Walk round the vehicle to check there has been no damage or loosening of components. Are the wheels secure and in roadworthy condition? Are the tyres (Including the spare) in legal condition and correctly inflated. Do all the lights and horn work? All the fluids should be checked – oil, coolant, brake, ABS and windscreen washer. Are the windscreen wipers in good condition and working effectively? What is the condition of the battery (or batteries in the case of electric / hybrid vehicles)? Is servicing up to date?

The current Covid-19 restrictions prevent us from undertaking almost all our normal activities at present. Once these restrictions are lifted, in-car observed drives, driver refresher days and advanced driver courses will recommence. All of them aim to improve 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

Hey, would you look
at that—a meerkat!



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Hereford Computer Help



Tip 2 - March 2021

Learn about Phishing, Vishing, and Social Engineering

This month, I had intended to continue the passwords theme, by looking at Multi-Factor Authentication, (MFA). However, I will now cover that in April.

Instead, have a break, sit back, and learn about some of the scams which are doing the rounds. You may have been on the receiving end yourself!

These **bite-size videos**, produced by the City of London Police, explain clearly and concisely what to look out for. Although they are called Home Working Guides, I feel that we can all benefit from the advice given.

Please start here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoWZUquVJo4SLWKD5A96znBNi23UzOjiG>

The videos are FREE to watch; you do NOT need to sign-in to view them, just say "No Thanks" if you are prompted to sign-in, and then the video will play.

To discover more about Cyber Griffin, founded by the City of London Police, please visit:

<https://cybergriffin.police.uk>

Find out more about the many ways I can help by visiting my website:

<https://herefordcomputerhelp.co.uk>

Call 01432 268883 for a friendly chat about how I can provide computer help, technical support and training.

Mark Giles

Owner, Hereford Computer Help

Email: mark@herefordcomputerhelp.com

I'm also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hereford.computer.help>

Geoff Nicoll finds a job during Covid!

Geoff and I have lived in Kingsthorpe for 30 years. After he retired from BT Madley Satellite Earth Station Geoff then volunteered with Herefordshire Headway, a charity for adults who have suffered a brain injury. He assisted the tutor Geoff Dutton in the Wood workshop for 10 years. Then came Covid and the headway centre at Credenhill had to close in March 2020. In October Geoff was offered employment with Headway as part of a team Providing outreach to isolated and needy individuals via Zoom sessions. The Headway team provide installation of specially adapted Android tablets, and the tuition on how use the Zoom sessions, in the users own homes. These online sessions include Speech therapy, Pottery, Woodwork, Keep fit, Yoga , Art , Singing and a mutual support chat group all lead by qualified tutors. There are currently no ongoing plans to expand the number and diversity of the sessions offered but time will tell.



The team also distribute specially made kits which include all materials and tools required for the online sessions to members homes across Herefordshire. They also monitor the many Zoom sessions and assist members who may have trouble accessing the system. This lifeline has helped members keep in touch with each other via the sessions and Headway enabling them to have an enriched quality of life in the safety of their own homes. Some members are clinically very vulnerable and have seen only their carers since lockdown began. These sessions have become very popular and some now have waiting lists.

So Headway has managed to adapt and continue to provide support to its members during these difficult times.

Little Birch Village Hall Renovations

Although the village hall has been closed to the public and events, it has not been unused. Many of you will have seen the comings and goings and maybe wondered what is happening in the hall.



Well, since last summer, a group of local volunteers have been completing some maintenance, both inside and out. The main hall and entrance hall has had a fresh lick of paint and does look much fresher. The exterior also benefited from some paint to the soffit boards and window sills, as well as a general cut back of the extensive vegetation. The gutters and rainwater down pipes were also cleared. Some remedial work is ongoing with the soakaways to prevent a recurrence of the damp in the walls.

In doing these works we uncovered a lot of damp in the walls to the north east end of the building and a small area where the sub floor had been damaged. This had substantially damaged the kitchen units and left the flooring uneven. As a consequence the committee took the decision to replace the kitchen and insulate and damp proof this area. So after a period to allow the walls to dry out, after the down pipes were fixed, the committee secured a small grant to do the works and a few volunteers are currently working to get things ready for when the new kitchen arrives in mid-march.

The floor has been repaired, damp proofing and insulation have been installed to the walls, ready for plastering and tiling.

If you have a few spare hours and are interested in helping your community facility to be reopened later in 2021 looking much smarter then please get in touch with Bob Barnett on 540898.

If you are interested in the role of the committee then please contact our Chair Ben Robert's on 07702 760789

A thought about driving (and walking!) at this time of year by J.J.

Apart from the usual problems of snow and ice, I have noticed that there are more pedestrians on local roads, probably taking their daily permitted exercise. It's noticeable that many don't seem to know the rule about walking facing the oncoming traffic, i.e. on the right-hand side. The reason for this became "blindingly" (pardon the pun) obvious the other day when driving south towards Kings Thorn from the turn-off to the A49.

The sun was shining directly in our eyes and reflecting off the tarmac. Although we were driving at a sensible speed we didn't see the pedestrian until the last moment and had to swerve around her. She was wearing khaki-coloured clothing, blending into the hedgerow.. I dread to think what would have happened if a car had been coming in the opposite direction!

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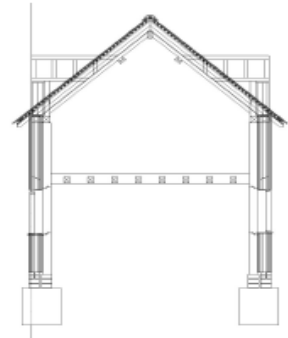
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Cllr Janet Gwinnett Vice Chair

Cllr Kate Dillon

Cllr Michael Davies

Cllr Kate Robbins

Angela Middleton Volunteer Footpath Officer

Sophie Glover Clerk 01432 617306 lbpcclerk@gmail.com

*For updates and notifications of future meetings
please check out the website –
www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org.*

**Please send copy for the April 2021
Newsletter to
editorial@birchesnews.org.uk or
written contributions to Liz Hall at
Walmere, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe
HR2 8AW.
—by 18th March please.**

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

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Got an old tablet or laptop you are not using?

Right now there are hundreds of children across Herefordshire without the technology needed to do their school work remotely. We believe that in these challenging times no child should be left behind just because they need to isolate or stay at home during the lockdown. This is a big issue in Herefordshire - but it can be fixed by us. Locally.

The devices we need are already here. There are thousands of old, unused laptops or tablets sitting on shelves or at the back of an office gathering dust. These are just what we need. And this is where we can all help.

We have brought together a small, enthusiastic team of local organisations and charities, supported by industry-leading technology companies, to provide the skills, expertise and capability to make this real. Local businesses. Local task force. Helping local schools.

We will ensure all of your personal or business data is securely erased. For free. And then make sure the devices go to the schools and on to the children who need them most. And you can be assured that your generous donation will go directly to helping the children in your local Herefordshire schools.

So how do you help? Please visit our website at www.laptops2kids.co.uk [1] where you can contact us and find out more about how the donation process works. And if you are not able to donate, please support us by sharing information about the scheme with your family, friends and within your workplaces. The more people who know about this, the more children we can help.

Best wishes
Philippa
07850 979026



Carrot and Wine Store Wormelow

Christmas was more frantic than usual this year, especially in Post Office terms. Covid meant many people were sadly unable to visit friends and families or follow their usual rituals. This meant lots of gifts needed posting!



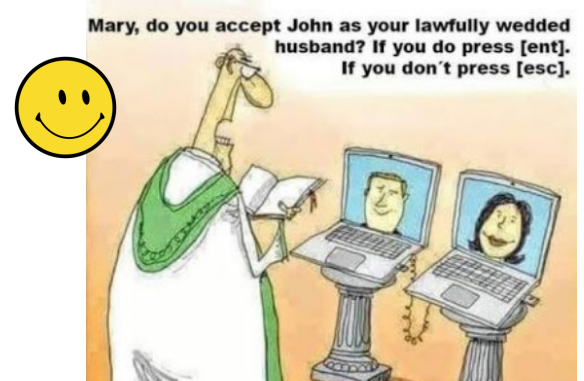
We were privileged just before Christmas to be able to give to about 500 people in need their Christmas Dinner. We couldn't have done this without the help of volunteers, suppliers and of course our lovely customers.

The post Christmas lockdown has kept us busy with deliveries again. We are really pleased to hear from lots of customers that they have had their vaccination or will be soon. Fingers crossed this is the start of the end and we will get back to something like normal soon.

Everyone at C&W is looking forward to Easter and we have lots of chocolate goodies in, not that of course anyone should need an excuse for chocolate...

Don't forget that we can deliver to you, Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

You can reach us on [01981 540126](tel:01981540126) or by email: gordon@carrotandwine.co.uk



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Just give me a call!

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07947 011707

Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com

Pilates with Alison Allan on Facebook.

Pilgrim Hotel—Much Birch

The Pilgrim Hotel and Restaurant, in Much Birch, is in advanced preparations to re-open as soon as the Government gives them the green light to do so. The last lockdown has given them the opportunity to expand upon their existing takeaway service and give local clients the chance to enjoy a delivery service, which is very busy and well received. It is the intention to continue with at least the takeaway service when things return to some sort of normality.

The last year has been a particularly challenging time financially for all businesses in the hospitality sector and the Pilgrim has been hit hard by the lockdown. The good news however, is that all staff have been retained and are ready to go as soon as the lockdown is eased.

The Bar & Restaurant areas have benefited from a full redecoration and their carpets given a refreshing wash and brush up as well. Several Hotel bedrooms and corridors have received similar treatment and the building is in tip top shape for the return of guests and diners. The Garden Room on the decking is ready to be used as "outside dining space" in expectation that such dining is the first to be allowed to return.

The team at the Pilgrim are looking forward to seeing customers back shortly and are very grateful to those who took advantage of the takeaway service, as it directly helped to ensure that the business could remain viable and be ready for the re-opening.

Steve Boyle—Pilgrim Hotel, Much Birch



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Tribute: Gerald Skyrme



Gerald was “One of the best dairy farmers in the county; possibly country”. This was what I was told when I had the pleasure of visiting Dot and her sister-in-law Jill a couple of weeks ago.

Gerald was born on the 1st August 1930, to Sidney and Dora of Norton Cannon. Gerald joined an older brother Sidney and an older sister Doreen, and the family was complete when his younger sister Freda came along soon afterwards.

Gerald was a typical boy getting into many scrapes. When he was about five years old, it had been a particularly wet season and Gerald decided to go swimming in a ditch. As a result, he unfortunately managed to get pneumonia. He must have been extremely ill because his sister Doreen, can remember the nurse visiting and saying, in an understated way, “poor little chap, he has been poorly”.

In about 1943 or 4, the family relocated to Little Birch where dad (Sidney) rented a farm. In Little Birch, Gerald attended the local school, finishing his final year under the tutelage of a Miss Nellie Pritchard.

The farm was hard work for the whole family; even more so when, in 1949, Gerald’s father sadly died.

Sidney Junior and Gerald eventually took the farm on together. Not long after, Gerald began managing the farm on his own. This though, was a good thing for Gerald, because he excelled in dairy farming, ending up with a first-class herd of Friesians. Gerald was often sought after by other farmers for his advice. He also became a judge in various dairy competitions.

Farming was to have another significant effect on Gerald’s life. At the local Young Farmers group, he met a certain young florist called Dot Thomas. After a “very long” courtship, the couple were married at Commercial Road Baptist Church on Thursday 4th April 1974 by the Rev Bill Copley. They then spent a honeymoon touring Devon and Cornwall.

Dairy farming was a very time-consuming job, but Gerald did get to travel to Canada on a couple of occasion. Dot was able to go with him on the second trip, and despite Gerald’s aim being primarily to look at livestock, Dot still managed to have a wonderful time.

The couple also hosted the Annual Church Fete on several occasions. They worked hard to ensure its success.

Gerald and Dot continued to live at Lower House Farm, Little Birch until 1992 when Gerald decided to sell his herd, and with Dot, move to a bungalow they had built just across the road. They named their new home “Sycamores”. Gerald and Dot especially loved having family to visit, and Dot spoke affectionately about having nieces and nephews around.

Gerald kept active in retirement. He became a great walker and with Meg, his sheepdog, thought nothing of walking five to ten miles each day through woods and meadows, picking up branches to fashion into walking sticks.

No longer owning a herd, Gerald would often still be found on market days looking at livestock and chatting to old friends. He would also go round to farm sales to meet up with his old pals.

Together with Dot, Gerald took up indoor bowling at Wormelow and then outdoors at St Martins Bowling Club. Gerald was especially attracted to the social side of the game. He also supported Dot in her role as Captain of the team and then as County President.

Just over ten years ago Gerald and Dot moved to Hereford, where they settled into their lovely bungalow on Hazel Grove.

There they continued to live happily together, until sadly, a few weeks ago, on the 24th January, Gerald died after a short illness. We give God thanks for our memories of Gerald.

Hi Everyone,

What do you know about AI? That’s artificial intelligence to you and me. It is part of that dark world of computer-tech that influences our lives in ways we don’t know. AI is running in the background of all your web searches! It is how Facebook or Google carry ads for something you thought you might like and took a quick search on, from moving house to what teabags you use.

AI takes that information and creates a profile of you so that advertisers can sell you stuff you didn’t even know you wanted! But there is a positive side to AI. Trained the right way, AI can pick up anomalies in cancer scans that humans miss, can predict traffic chaos and suggest slight tweaks to road layouts and traffic lights that help cars and lorries travel more smoothly and so waste less fuel.

Like a lot of things AI is morally neutral, it is how we use it that makes it a force for good for evil. And these things are being decided a long way away and in backrooms! We need to hold these tech companies to account, ask them hard questions and get some answers. Not easy, I know, but let us at least try via our MP and our councillors and make the system work for everyone.

Revd Mark

Thanks—Mark

Revd Mark Johnson

Rector - Wormelow Hundred Benefice

&

Rural Dean - Ross and Archenfield Deanery Diocese of Hereford

&

Prebend de Bullinghope



Newspaper misprints to brighten your day.....! (with apologies to anyone who has seen them before)



The bride, who was given away by her father, wore a dress of white figured brocade with a trailing veil held in place by a coronet of pearls. She carried a bouquet of rose buds and goods vehicles, leaving free access to all private vehicles not built for more than seven passengers

Too often is a birthday made nothing more than an occasion for present giving and a party. It should have another side to it, if it is truly to be the subject for congratulations, small balls, flour, and fry in boiling fat.

She was a pathetic figure as she stood in the box wearing a blue coat and a dark straw hat, with a spray of artificial trousers.

Fog and smog rolled over Los Angeles today, closing two airports and slowing snails to a traffic pace.

Auctioneers Catalogue

No. 69 One pair unique 18th century candlesticks. No. 70 Another pair, ditto

The Prime Minister said it was a loose classification by the Board of Trade. "Locomotives, ships and aircraft" should have read "Wire mattresses, tacks, nails and manhole covers"

Q. What is the proper way to address the mayor of this city?

A. Speaking to him: 'Mr Mayor'; on an envelope: 'His Honour the Mayor'; and the salutation in formal letters is 'Dear Sid'.

The bride wore a gown of heavy Oldham Corporation Gasworks

Golden Labrador Dog for sale, 4 years: good driver, clean licence

When the wives are bottled they are put into a cool cellar and kept there for some time.

It is necessary, for technical reasons, that these warheads should be stored with the top at the bottom and the bottom at the top. In order that there may be no doubt as to which is the top and which is the bottom for storage purposes, it will be seen that the bottom of each head has been plainly labelled with the word TOP.

I went into the woods and
got it



I sat down to seek it

I brought it home because I could not
find it

What is it?

Answers on a postcard please



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*Tea Cups, Saucers & Tea Plates
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Much Birch Parish Council
Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright
Longfield House, Gooses Foot, Kingstone,
Herefordshire HR2 9NE
Tel. 01981 250860
Email: muchbirchclerk@gmail.com

14th February 2021

PARISH MEETING - at the Parish Council Meeting held on the Zoom Platform, during the Covid 19 Virus pandemic, on the 4th February 2021 from 7.30 pm.

The Parish Council heard further updates about the budget and local planning from the Ward Councillor.

The Parish Council talked about the self help gritting scheme and the importance of people spreading the grit from the bins thinly when required and also to keep the use for the highway only please.

There was a further discussion about the importance of land owners keeping the ditches by their properties clear of debris. This is partly because the water needs to drain off the road to try to prevent standing water icing over and becoming a potential slip/skid hazard. It is the responsibility of land owners to keep the ditches by their properties clear and your help to keep the do this will be greatly appreciated.

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 4th March 2021 from 7.30pm** - on the Zoom Platform. All are welcome to attend.

Dates for 2021 Parish Council Meetings are as follows:- March 4, April 8, May 6, 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 thecooks@wyenet.co.uk Tel. 01981 540703

Cllr Steve Turner (Vice Chair) The Underhills, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX, e mail turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com and Tel. 01981 540090

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

Cllr Roisin Burge The Old Hall, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AX roisinburge@hotmail.com Tel. 01981 540724

Cllr David Baldwin The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS baldwin79@btinternet.com Tel. 01981 541198

Cllr Veronica Thomas 4, Queens Close, Wormelow, Hereford, HR2 8FD Tel. 01981 540646 (no e mail)

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 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

You have two cows...



Socialism: You will give one cow to a neighbour and keep one for yourself

Communism: The Government takes both cows and gives you milk

Fascism: The Government buys both cows and then shoots you

Democracy: The Government buys both cows, shoots one, milks the other, throws away the milk and imports butter from another country.



MERRIVALE ORGANIC BEEF

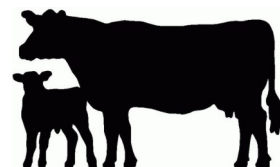
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The Birches Camera Club and Photography Group

Have been out and about during the cold weather and send us these wonderful pictures to prove it!

Any ladies interested in joining our group please contact Sally Nichol at sally.nichol@btinternet.com



"Lockdown workout "



POSTIES DELIVERY THROUGH LOCKDOWN

Many times I'm asked out on delivery for Royal Mail, "How are you coping with mail and parcel delivery during Lockdown?" Where do I start to give you a glimmer of what it's been like since March 2020? Initially we were unprepared like everyone else, how it would affect us in our everyday lives. As a Postman of 34 years with Royal Mail, I've seen the busy periods during Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day etc.... But as I stated, we were unprepared for the impact of closing non-essential retail and implementation of social distancing in the Delivery Office was going to have.

In Normal (before COVID19) times mail arrives into Hereford from the main Mail Centre based at South Aston in Birmingham, at various times during the night and early morning. It arrives split into the postcode areas of HR1,2,3,4,5 & 7 which is delivered by staff based at Hereford Delivery Office at Station Approach. Staff then from each postcode section sort into the individual Delivery Walks/Rounds. But this not being in Normal times means that space in the workplace is a priority.

To allow the flow of mail arrivals into the Delivery Office, we now have to stagger how mail is stored before sorting to create space; each postcode section has had to be split into Town & Rural Section as we no longer can have up to six postal staff sorting parcels in the one area. This has been reduced to just two staff. Thus it now takes extra time to sort the parcels. Same goes for the letter mail where the 2 meter spacing has had to be created between letter sorting frames. Thus reducing the amount of staff sorting at any one time. Same applies to the individual Delivery Walk/Round frames. Space in the Delivery Office has had to be managed also by staggered start times so we do not have all 200 postal staff in at once as has always been the case. Introduction of hand sanitizers and face masks in this hectic environment has been hard to get used to but essential.

Lockdown forced the retail buying public on to online shopping, along with all our Delivery Office adjustments made the deluge of parcels rise to what we call 'Christmas Pressure' period non-stop since March 2020 and still continuing. With Earlier than normal start times and later finish due to the mail volume, this has been exhausting and we as Postal staff have looked forward to our rest weeks (even though there's nowhere to go). Sanitizing of the inside of Delivery Vans on a daily basis has now become second nature, and keeping safe with Customers on Doorsteps.

I was asked to try and be humorous in this account. I haven't succeeded, but I will always know that the service I provide along with my fellow Royal Mail colleagues is appreciated by my customers in Kingsthorpe & Little Birch. I get to see everyone else's frustrations and difficulties as you've all got your heads around restrictions, home working and those of you who are having to 'Home School' your Children. My respect goes out to you all.

My Best wishes to you all for a brighter 2021

Martin Davies Postman for Kingsthorpe & Little Birch

Martin has asked me to include a warning regarding scam text messages being received by some people, apparently from the Royal Mail, stating that they've tried to deliver a parcel/item that day, and to arrange for re-delivery. It then asks for a fee for this, and asks for your card details. This is a scam, as all re-deliveries are FREE of charge, and you would only be notified of a missed delivery by way of the Royal Mail card posted to you by the Postman. You would never be charged for re-deliveries with Royal Mail

Let's hear it for Martin and all our local "posties". They are doing a vital job under extremely difficult (and recently very cold) circumstances.

We owe them all a great deal



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Tim searched everywhere...



...but still couldn't find
the annoying leek