

Newsletter for Kings Thorn, the Birches & Aconbury

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

LITTLE BIRCH COMMUNITY PLAN STEERING GROUP

The Community of Little Birch are in the process of creating a Parish Plan. This is an exciting and important community-led project, and your involvement will be most welcome! **Please look out for the full page ad in this month's newsletter** that gives details of the special event being organised, at which, you can 'have your say' in matters affecting your parish. **Saturday 5th March 11a.m. to 4.p.m and Sunday 6th March 11a.m. to 2.p.m.**

EVERGREEN CLUB - REMINDER

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Much Birch Community Hall on **Tuesday, 8th March, 2011, at 2.30pm** - followed by tea, biscuits a chance to chat. Anyone is most welcome to attend.

PANCAKE EVENING AT LBVH

Monday 7th March at 7.p.m. Delicious pancakes with a choice of fillings. Entrance £ 2 which includes 2 pancakes. Additional pancakes 50p each. We look forward to seeing you there!

WHIST DRIVE

Our next Whist Drive is on **Tuesday 8 March 2011** in Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30pm. The entrance fee is £1.50 Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players are always welcome.

DIARY DATES FOR MARCH 2011

4th MARCH - Howden Jones in Concert at MBCH
5th MARCH - Little Birch Planning For Real Event LBVH
6th MARCH - Little Birch Planning For Real Event LBVH
7th MARCH - Pancake Evening LBVH
8th MARCH - AGM Evergreen Club MBCH
11th MARCH - Coffee Morning Much Birch Parent & Toddler Group MBCH
15th MARCH - W.I. Open Meeting MBCH
17th MARCH - Much Birch Parish Plan Meeting MBCH
18th MARCH - Little Birch Village Hall Quiz Evening LBVH
19th MARCH - Flicks in the Sticks 'The Social Network' MBCH
23rd MARCH - Reminiscence Evening Little Birch History Group LBVH
25th MARCH - Much Birch Village Market MBCH
25th MARCH - Lent Lunch LBVH
30th MARCH - Gardening Club AGM LBVH
ADVANCE NOTICES
15th & 16th APRIL - Halfway Theatre Company MBCH

LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL QUIZ EVENING

Friday 18 March 2011 7.30p.m.

Entrance £5

Teams of 4. Note. If you would like to come but can't raise a team of 4, come anyway and we will be pleased to "team you up" with others in similar situation.

Please book in advance by Friday 11 March 2011
Bookings: Robyn Hodges tel: 01981 540264

MUCH BIRCH PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

Coffee Morning (coffee, tea, cakes & raffle) **Friday 11th March 10am-12 noon** at Much Birch Community Hall
In aid of Much Birch Parent & Toddler Group.

MUCH BIRCH PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

Meets **every Friday 10am-12 noon** at Much Birch

Community Hall. Newborns to preschool - all welcome!
Indoor & outdoor play; art & craft; songs; outings; parent social events. For more info. call Kate Dawson 01981 540580

MUCH BIRCH W.I. OPEN MEETING - 'From Bewdley to Beijing by bicycle'

The March meeting is the Open Meeting and takes place in Much Birch Community Hall at **7.30 pm on Tuesday, March 15th**, when Chris Smith will be entertaining us with the tale of his bicycle ride from Bewdley to Beijing.

At this meeting we extend a welcome to husbands, friends and neighbours who would like to join us to hear a more broadly interesting talk, which we think you would enjoy.

As WI business is somewhat hurried on the Open Evening, we would ask that guests are at

the hall by 7.15 pm. As usual refreshments will be available. We look forward to seeing you on 15th. For more details of Much Birch WI, please ring Kath, 01981 540382 or Caroline, 01981 540422.

MUCH BIRCH VILLAGE MARKET

The market takes place at Much Birch Community Hall on 25th **March** when hopefully, all the usual stallholders will be there. Obviously, people do not like to let us down, but, on occasion, there are unforeseen difficulties which prevent someone attending at short notice. Please come to show your support for local producers. **USE THEM OR LOSE THEM.** For more information please contact Kath 01981 - 540382

HEREFORD ADVANCE MOTORISTS

Hereford Advanced Motorists is a Charity, affiliated to The Institute of Advanced Motorists, which runs three courses, at Much Birch Community Hall, throughout the year. The aim of the group is to promote road safety within the county and beyond.

Each course consists of three evening meetings, at the first of which each Associate is assigned a personal Observer, who goes out, on a 1 to 1 basis, with the Associate, at mutually convenient times, until they are ready for their Advanced Motorists test, usually about 6 weeks, although this can vary from person to person.

The 2011 courses are on March 10th, 17th and 24th; June 28th, July 5th and 12th; October 13th, 20th and 27th at 7 pm. It is necessary to book a place on a course.

In addition to the main courses, HAM puts on courses specifically designed the for

young drivers, 17 to 30 years of age, 'mydrivealive', for which there is no charge.

In the first instance please contact Mary Bevan on 01874 - 712267 for further details or to enrol.

LITTLE BIRCH & KING'S THORN HISTORY GROUP

Reminiscence Evening

Little Birch and King's Thorn History Group are organising a reminiscence evening in Little Birch Village Hall on **Wednesday 23rd March at 7.30.** Do come along and hear about what life was like in the area in the 1940s, 50s and 60s from those who have lived here through the period. Previous evenings have been most enjoyable and, as before, John Bryant will act as master of ceremonies. If you have any old photos of events, transport, housing etc. do bring them along for people to enjoy. Entry will be £2.50 to include light refreshments.

THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

Will be held this year on **Friday, 4th March at 11.a.m.** at The Old School, King's Caple to remember the women of Chile. This will be followed by refreshments with Chilean breads. All are welcome-men, women and young people.

KING'S THORN AND LITTLE BIRCH GARDENING CLUB

The next meeting will be the Club AGM on **30th March at 7.30pm** in Little Birch Village Hall.

The business part of the meeting should be quite short and after refreshments, it is proposed to hold a 'Brains Trust' type of discussion when any gardening topic or problem can be raised.

New members are always welcome and the season's programme will be announced. More details from Helen Fox 541004 or John Bryant 540316.

LENT LUNCH IN AID OF SIGHTSAVERS INTERNATIONAL

Will be held in Little Birch Village Hall

On **Friday, 25th March from 12.30pm.** There will be a choice of at least 4 soups, with French bread or brown bread and butter. Cheese, tomatoes and celery also provided.

There is no set charge but donations will be gratefully received. Everyone welcome with a chance to have a chat to friends who you might not have seen for some while.

Further information from Pauline Rogers 541203 or John Bryant 540316.

HALFWAY COMMUNITY THEATRE - ADVANCE NOTICE

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

Join us for an evening of nostalgia and good fun!

Tickets cost £10 (£5 for under 14's) from Audrey on 01981 540432 to include a light super.

BOOK EARLY! We sold out and had a waiting list for our November show!!!

MUCH BIRCH 100 CLUB DRAW

The February draw took place on Tuesday 8th February 2011 in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.15pm. The winners were:

1. No 81 - Mrs.M. Pritchard, Much Birch
2. No 7 - Mr. D. Pennington, Much Birch

The next draw will take place on **Friday, 11th March 2011** at 12 noon in Much Birch Community Hall

John Jones – Chairman

MUCH BIRCH CHURCH ORGAN REPAIR FUND

We would like to thank all those people who very kindly donated to the above Organ Repair Fund and especially to Andy and Lesley Lowe who held a fund raising Tea Party on 2nd January 2011 at their house to donate to that fund. This was a very kind gesture by them and they raised £250, but not only did it raise a very welcome addition to the fund but it was also a very pleasant social occasion as we all enjoyed delicious scones and cakes chatting and sitting around a lovely open fire, enjoying the lovely views across the countryside. We are very grateful to them both, and to their helpers on the day, who worked so hard to make it such an enjoyable and rewarding occasion.

On Friday 18th February, Much Birch School held a fundraising day for the fund and we are very grateful to them for joining in the effort by the community to preserve the organ for the Church services. All in all we will then have raised enough to meet the repair bill and will have a little extra, we think, in case of any further necessary repairs as that money is being ring fenced for the upkeep of the organ.

Thank you all so much
Sylvia Jones and Janet Thomas,
Churchwardens

HELP WITH FAMILY TREE

My name is Michelle Stapleton & I am currently researching my husband's family tree. His Great

Great Great Grandfather, Charles Stapleton moved from Whitminster around 1865 to Much Birch where he lived until his Death. He worked at Birch House as a gardener & groom, and was the Church Clerk at St Marys Church Much Birch. He lived at Church Cottage for many years with his wife & children. I wondered if you may have any records of him & his family? We visited the area recently but there was no-one at the Church. I would be grateful for any information that you may find. Many Thanks
Michelle,
bigpetestapleton@sky.com

CAUTIONARY TALES

This report was sent by one of our readers:

I have no idea if this might be of interest to our readers, but I would like to just mention something about my last telephone bill from BT.

On looking through the calls costing over 40p. I was horrified to find the following:-

Date: Weds 10 Nov, Time 13.34

Number 01981 – 540325

Other: (Operator)

Duration: 0.52

Cost: £ 5.94

It appears that either my daughter or myself (pretty sure it wasn't me) made a call through the operator to a local number and the 52 seconds cost the princely sum of £5.94.

That works out at around £12 per minute, £720 per hour, and I could go on but won't!

Maybe everybody knows that if you place a call through the operator it costs a fortune. I didn't. Happily for me, I rang BT and the cost has been cancelled and will be credited to my next account.

Similarly I rang to cancel my Broadband Talk account which I had inaugurated when my daughter came back to this country and was living with me until she found a cottage to rent. When she left at the end of last month, I rang to cancel the service. I was told there was nothing I had to do. This month I have been billed for the service. When I rang to say that I had cancelled it on 29th January it appears that no record was made of my call and as a result I have to pay for three weeks of non use. It is only £6.20 but it is obviously important that when you make adjustments to your service that you get email or hard copy confirmation that what you think you have arranged has actually been carried out.

LOCAL NEWS

Congratulations are sent to HEATHER WATHEN and her partner, WAYNE WHISTANCE, on the birth of their second daughter, ELLA ROSE, a sister for CHLOE and the second granddaughter for proud grandparents, ROSE and DES WATHEN.

Mr. GEOFF TOWNSEND of New Mills recently celebrated his 90th. birthday with family and friends at a party in Little Dewchurch Village Hall. Geoff is the oldest surviving member of the family and we wish him many more years in his bungalow and the surrounding countryside, which he so loves. Much Birch Church was full for the Thanksgiving Service for the life of DENNIS MASON on 9th. February. Rev. Mark Johnson led the service and the eulogy was given by his son in law, Derek

Preece, from whose address these notes are taken.

Dennis was born in Handsworth, Birmingham, the eldest of 3 boys. The family were bombed out of their home in WW2 and they moved to Menithwood in Worcestershire where Dennis started his first job with J.P. Harvey, Agricultural Merchants. In 1942, Jean started secretarial work for the same firm and so began a romance that was to last for 63 years. In 1945, Dennis was called up for Army Service and was demobbed at the beginning of 1948.

Jean and Dennis married in Feb. 1948 and with scarcity of houses, started married life in a 1-room bed-sit. Social concerns were different then and when Dennis caught Chicken Pox, they had to move. Jean's great aunt came to the rescue with a room for £1 per week! And it was only a sad loss in the aunt's family that later enabled them to have extra rooms – but still no children were allowed. In 1954, Dennis took a job in Bishop's Castle and they moved into a brand new council house. In 1955, their first son, Jonathan was born and later, the family moved to nearby Clun and Steven was born in Ludlow hospital in 1958. Dennis was not very happy in his work so, to progress, a farming friend, Bryn Jones, recommended him to Bibby's and he became an Agricultural Feed Sales Rep., a post which he enjoyed for 25 years. There was a period of concern when he was sent to establish a new sales area based in Doncaster. Although Jean and Dennis managed to buy and furnish their first new home there, near the Race Course, Dennis liked

'clean country air' and could not settle with the smoke, dust and fog associated with coal mining in the area. In 1965, the opportunity arose for a move to Herefordshire and the family moved to 'Burcot', King's Thorn in 1965.

Sarah was born in 1967, the family was complete, Jean worked as a dinner lady at the school, the garden was fully planted and maturing and Dennis continued and progressed with Bibby's. Everything seemed to be going along nicely but sadly, Bibby's cut back on their staffing level and Dennis was made redundant at the age of 57.

Jean and Dennis then committed themselves to looking after their elderly neighbours, Evelyn and Roger Humphries. Unfortunately, Evelyn had a long illness and Jean and Dennis spent many hours making her as comfortable as possible until she passed on.

Then the caring continued with Roger for several years until he went into hospital and died aged over 90.

Dennis was a fine gardener and worked on several gardens in the area at this time and in the evenings, he and Jean would often be seen walking around King's Thorn and Little Birch or up to Aconbury Woods. In the summer months, they took the opportunity to cycle further afield through Much Dewchurch and Kilpeck. Jean has worked tirelessly at the Hospice shop in Hereford and Dennis gave her great support in taking car loads of items for sale several times per week.

Jean and Dennis were faithful and regular attenders at Much

Birch Church ever since they came to live in the parish. Dennis had a very caring nature towards everyone and strove to understand the concerns of anyone in trouble and helped many in his voluntary work with the Samaritans. They also worked together for many years in delivering Meals on Wheels and stopping for a chat with many elderly and infirm people at a time when the need was greatest and deliveries were made as far afield as Saddlebow Common. Dennis possessed several artistic skills and he drew sketches, painted and enjoyed his tapestry work. He was a great lover of all nature and the garden was a landscape of wild and decorative flowers, shrubs and trees, many of which he had propagated himself. There were goats, sheep, a vegetable plot and a croquet lawn complete with moles. Dennis loved his family and willingly spent as much time with them as possible, playing, encouraging them in their studies and transporting them to school, work and dances. He was always immaculately dressed and was rarely seen without a tie and breast pocket handkerchief. Holidays were usually taken in their caravan, but if it rained they would soon be on the way home, even if they had arrived only 2 days before.

Dennis loved his cars and driving and he was very sad to have to give up driving with the onset of mini-strokes. When his mobility became difficult, he enjoyed many hours at the table in their large kitchen looking out on the garden and watching the great variety of birds at the feeding table.

Jean gave her utmost in caring for him at home but after a series of falls, Dennis moved into Charnwood last year, where he was lovingly looked after. He had an unshakeable faith and even when he had difficulty in communicating, he looked forward to the visits of Rev. Mark and receiving Holy Communion.

On the front of the funeral service sheet is a typical photograph of Dennis, 'The gentle man with a lovely, warm smile'.

He will be sorely missed but not forgotten by his family and many friends.

We send to Jean, Jonathan, Steven and Sarah and their families our sincere sympathies. It is with great regret that the death of VICTOR MANNING is also recorded. Victor was born at Dippers Moor Farm and for many years farmed next door, New House, Kilpeck, in partnership with his brother, Joe. Victor and his wife, Mary, retired to 'Quercus' in Wrigglebrook Lane some 40 years ago but sadly, Mary died a few years later and she was buried at Peterchurch. Victor was absolutely devastated and spent a lot of time in the garden. He had a very good garden containing many unusual plants, shrubs and trees. His constant companion was 'Shadow', a black Labrador and later, 'Tara', a Jack Russell terrier. He walked for miles around the area with the late Walter Bevan from 'Linnet', the bungalow in the fork between Wrigglebrook Lane and Upper Wrigglebrook Lane. They spent hours 'looking after' John Brook's cattle on the banks at Ladywell and could often be

heard chatting well after dark. On one occasion, they were walking on a dreary winters day and so engrossed in conversation that they did not observe where they were heading and when darkness fell, realised they were 'lost'. They found some farm buildings and eventually, the farmhouse. They knocked on the door and were told this was 'Merrivale Farm' and were set on the right way for home. Mrs. Bevan was very worried as they had been gone a very long time and Walter probably got a tongue-lashing when he eventually arrived home.

Victor was a real countryman through and through and had a great rapport with the birds in his garden. If he was late in feeding them in the morning, they would tap on the feeding tin or the window to attract his attention. In later years, when asleep in the garden deckchair, a robin would sit underneath out of the sun. Victor was very fit for his age and at 92, was found on his garage roof removing the pebbles before new felt and tar were applied. These were not wasted but carried, 2 buckets at a time, and spread on his driveway. Kerri and Richard Lowe came to be his neighbours and kept a good eye on Victor. They got on extremely well and Victor enjoyed the children, Shaun and Emily. When old age finally caught up, Richard and Kerri were more than good neighbours and provided regular meals each day. Eventually, Victor went into hospital and then to Brockhampton Nursing Home where, at first, he was very unhappy and wanted to return

to his home. After a few months, he settled down and made good friends with a lady resident. His health then deteriorated and for 5 weeks he hardly took any food. Kerri and Richard, who had visited 2 or 3 times a week, then saw him every day and were very sad when he passed away at the age of 95. His funeral was a private cremation and his neighbours and friends in the village were devastated that they could not attend. He will be greatly missed.

A number of residents will be sad to hear of the deaths in adjacent parishes. Frank Lee of Little Dewchurch and Blanche Williams of Elvaston, Llandinabo were both well known in farming circles and we send our deepest sympathies to their families.

Mrs Jean Mason and her family wish to thank those who kindly sent flowers, cards and messages of sympathy and to all who attended Dennis's funeral service. Rev. Mark Johnson has given them valued support and will say prayers when Dennis's ashes are interred in his beloved garden at Burcot. She also wishes to thank the doctors and staff at the Surgery and the staff at Charnwood for their kindness and care.

THANK YOU

Betty Bryant would like to thank everyone who donated some 30 shoeboxes for children in the annual Samaritan's Purse appeal. It is good to report that 12,000 boxes were collected in Herefordshire with 1 lorry load sent to children in Ukraine and the remainder to Bosnia. A remarkable effort! A number of generous donations have been

received recently for the Newsletter and a gift of a projector stand from Mr. John Pearl. These are gratefully acknowledged.

LITTLE BIRCH PARISH COUCNIL
Report of the Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12th January 2011

No interests were declared. Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2010 were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Village Hall –The Management Committee Meeting was held on 16th December and a number of forthcoming events were discussed together with the appointment of the new newsletter editor. A possible grant is being sought for a community celebration of the 2012 Diamond Jubilee.

Parish Lengthsman –A request for the lengthsman to perform a general tidy up around the village, clearing ditches and grips, after the recent bad weather prior to the end of the financial year.

Parish Initiative – Clerk to contact Herefordshire Council with the appearance of loads of pot holes along Little Birch Road and Kingsthorn.

Community Led Plan – Steering Group Meeting held on 17th November 2010 where the Planning for Real Event was discussed in more detail. Next meeting scheduled for 19th January. Provisional rescheduled dates of 5th & 6th March for the PFR Event.

Parish Field – A quote has been received from The Wye Wood Enterprise which the Parish Council has agreed to.

Planning - Planning application for Acontree House for proposed demolition of existing block and render garage and re-siting and replacement with oak framed and weatherboard garage – DMS/102539/FH (returned with no objections).

Any Other Business

CSO F. Witcher notified the Parish Council of the theft of heating oil within Little Birch and the retirement of PC Andy Bundy on 31st January 2011.

Clerk to write an article for the newsletter about the parking around Kingsthorn Bus Stop during the recent bad weather.

Correspondence was received on the night concerning the disrepair of some of the salt bins (blue variety). Clerk to contact Herefordshire Council.

Correspondence received from WSE Ltd concerning the reconductoring of 11,000 volt overhead line in Little Birch. Clerk to reply with a wish to position the pole in the hedge rather than in the green lane.

Chairman to update the Public Rights of Way Defect Database after a request from Herefordshire Council.

Mr. M. Morley attended the last PACT meeting and complained about the validity of the notes/minutes made.

Mr. M. Morley to reply to Cllr Richard Smith's emails about consultation on budgets with Parish Clerks.

Mrs. A. Clarke to join Mr. M. Morley in attending the next SAM meeting.

Clerk to organise a 'Parish Walk' with Amey representatives in February or March 2011.

Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 2nd March 2011

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

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

Proposed bus stop near the Old Shop King's Thorn

The Parish Council have been in discussions with Herefordshire Council regarding a request for a bus stop near the Old Shop, King's Thorn. Herefordshire Council have indicated that although a stop could be provided in that area, they have some road safety concerns.

It has been advised by parishioners that there was a stop at the location of the Old Shop some years ago. To prove the existence of the stop the Parish Council ask parishioners that if they recall a stop existing at this location would they please write to the Parish Clerk with details to help compile a report for submission to Herefordshire Council advising them of that past existence.

Dog Fouling problems in Parish

During the past few weeks it has been noted that there is an increase in the amount of dog fouling in the Parish. The issue has been reported to Herefordshire Council.

The Parish Council ask that parishioners / people clear up their dog's mess when taking your dog for a walk and to "scope the poop" and take it home with you for disposal. There are dog control orders in place:

Order 1: Removal of Dog Faeces- This Order makes it an offence if any person in charge

of a dog does not clean up and remove faeces deposited by that dog. This order applies to all land within the administrative area of Herefordshire Council and which is -
(i) Open to the air (which includes land that is covered but open to the air on at least one side); and
(ii) to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access with or without payment.
2. Excepted from land that is placed at the disposal of the Forestry Commissioners under section 39 (1) of the Forestry Act 1967.

Exemption:

There are exemptions for blind people with guide dogs and disabled people using trained assistance dogs (trained by a prescribed charity).

Fixed Penalty Notices:

Herefordshire Council will issue fixed penalty notices to enforce the dog control orders as prescribed by Section 59 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The fine will be £80 (unless paid within 10 days of receiving the notice but will be reduced to £50 if paid within 10 days of the fixed penalty notice being issued. Failure to pay the fixed penalty notices may result in prosecution with a maximum fine of £1000. (**Herefordshire Council online 2011**)

It has been brought to the Parish Councils attention that there are a number of vehicles being incorrectly parked at night time in the parish.

Parking issues still remain out side Much Birch Primary

School. We would like to remind motorists of the **Highway Code** concerning parking.

Parking at night

248

You **MUST NOT** park on a road at night facing against the direction of the traffic flow unless in a recognised parking space.

[Laws CUR reg 101 & RVL R reg 24]

249

All vehicles **MUST** display parking lights when parked on a road or a lay-by on a road with a speed limit greater than 30 mph (48 km/h).

[Law RVL R reg 24]

250

Cars, goods vehicles not exceeding 1525 kg unladen weight, invalid carriages, motorcycles and pedal cycles may be parked without lights on a road (or lay-by) with a speed limit of 30 mph (48 km/h) or less if they are at least 10 metres (32 feet) away from any junction, close to the kerb and facing in the direction of the traffic flow, in a recognised parking place or lay-by.

Other vehicles and trailers, and all vehicles with projecting loads, **MUST NOT** be left on a road at night without lights.

[Laws RVL R reg 24 & CUR reg 82(7)]

251

Parking in fog. It is especially dangerous to park on the road in fog. If it is unavoidable, leave your parking lights or sidelights on.

Parking Outside/Near School

243

DO NOT stop or park;
Near a school entrance

Anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services

At or near a bus stop

In front of an entrance to a property or on a bend

242

You **MUST NOT** leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road (**The Official Highway Code online 2011**)

Correspondence.

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

Next Meeting will be on Thursday 3rd March at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

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

For more information on Much Birch Parish Council please visit our website at :-
www.muchbirchorg.uk

ROAD MARKINGS

School Keep Clear Markings:-

These restrictions are provided for safety reasons *to ensure clear sight lines for both motorists and children outside schools.* They are identified by yellow zig-zag lines.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

23/01/2011 approximately 500 litres of heating oil was taken from a premises in Dinedor. It is believed the theft took place between 18:00 and 23:00.

25/01/2011 A large Cambridge Roller was stolen from a farm in Much Birch. The roller was placed behind a gate out on the A49. It is believed a large vehicle with a hi-ab must have been used.

Sometime in the last 2 weeks approx 100 litres of heating oil have been taken from a property in Green Crize. Clearly we are having a lot of oil thefts in the area. Please keep an eye on your levels and please report any suspicious activity to us asap.

We have also received numerous calls regarding a company offering to sort out "problems" on your computer. They gain access to your computer and inform you of numerous problems which they then offer to clear for a price.

I would advise anyone to seek any help with computers themselves rather than letting a company find you. Use someone local and you think you can trust. I would definitely not pass any credit details to anyone that "cold calls".

Suspicious Vehicles

Can you help find this car? Around 00.15 this morning just outside Clehonger a farmer disturbed four males

on his land - he had been alerted by seeing high power torch lights - as he approached a white estate car drove at him, he managed to jump out of the way, but he smashed the windscreen on the passenger side. He did not get the registration number, or the make of the vehicle. If you see any cars matching that description with a smashed windscreen, please let us know immediately.

Two males in a white VW Van with sign writing on the side and ladders on the roof called at a house in Much Birch at the beginning of this month offering roofing services. The males were very persistent, both in their twenties, with 'traveller' accents. They left a home-made 'flyer' with the name 'Affordable Rooflines' and a mobile contact number, but no business address. Have you had similar callers?

Crime Trends

Yesterday morning (Friday 11th Feb) at around 6am, two tractors were stolen from neighbouring farms just outside Clehonger. One was a Kubota 3 cylinder orange and blue tractor with a serial number of 40759. It has car wheels on the front which have been painted to match the rest of the bodywork, and the steering wheel is bent and broken, so is quite distinctive. The tractor was driven across a field to a

roadside gate which had been padlocked, but the lock was missing and the gate, onto the B4349 between Kingstone and Clehonger, was open.

The second vehicle was a red Massey Ferguson tractor, registration number LVJ925F, which had been taken from a barn. There had been a 400wt concrete counter balance on the rear of the tractor and a loader bucket on the front, but these had been removed and left at the scene. The tractor had been taken across two fields and out onto the main Kingstone to Clehonger Road. A neighbouring property has CCTV and from that it appears that the theft occurred around 6am, when there would have been several vehicles on the road - we are hoping for witnesses to come forward.

Last weekend a farm building at Wormbridge was entered and a quantity of parts from two 1950's Fordson Major tractors were taken. The parts, which included badges, wipers and wing mirrors had been behind a quantity of timber and had been there for over 20 years

Between 3rd and 5th February a quantity of scrap metal, mainly copper piping, was stolen from a field behind a house in Harewood End.

Overnight on 4th/5th February an agricultural building in Pencoyd was broken into but nothing

appears to have been taken. The doors to the ex-pig unit were forced open and further doors inside were also forced. Diesel was stolen from a lorry in Pontrilas village at around 8.15 pm on the evening of Thursday 3rd February, this was not the first time the same vehicle has been targeted recently.

As you can see from the crime trends, old tractors are the flavour of the month at the moment - if you own one, please do all you can to secure it. Removing the battery won't necessarily deter the thieves, a couple that have been stolen have had no batteries, but they have come prepared for that! Again, if you spot an old tractor on the back of a trailer, please note the registration number of the towing vehicle and let us know. It may well be an legitimate vehicle but it's something we can confirm, and the owners of such old tractors are only too happy for checks to be made.

That's it for now - thanks for your time, keep your eyes peeled and your property secure!

Hereford Rural South Local Policing Team

CSO 6173 Fiona Witcher
 CSO 6993 Kevin Powell
 Team mobile no 07779 141232
 Non - emergency number
0300 333 3000
 herefordruralsouth.lpt@west
 mercia.pnn.police.uk



AT MUCH BIRCH COMMUNITY HALL

Coming up - two films that are expected to sweep the boards at this years Oscars - how many awards did they win?...

Saturday 19 March at 7.30pm — THE SOCIAL NETWORK ¹²

This film chronicling the founding of Facebook, the social-networking website, has already won many awards and has been nominated for 8 Oscars including Best Picture.

Thursday 28 April at 7.30pm - join FLICKS on the eve of the Royal Wedding for THE KING'S SPEECH ¹⁵

Tickets £4 (£3 under 16's Refreshments served from 7pm

Tickets available in advance or on the door -

for further info or to book tickets please call Bryony Connolly 01981 580298

VIOLETTE SZABO GARDEN

Please note that voluntary help is urgently needed in the garden of Violette Szabo G.C. Museum, following the retirement of a wonderful supporter of Violette - Derek Smith, who for the last 9 years, has given all his time and support to caring for the grounds, in a completely voluntary capacity, in true love and respect for Violette, for all she has meant to our nation.

I am now desperately looking for new helpers in order to keep everything in fine condition for Violette, and all visitors from far and wide.

Violette's special open day this year is **Sunday 26th June**, when, had she lived, she would be 90

years old! She was executed in Ravensbruck in 1945 age 23. It is my hope to have a big Birthday Party for her in the garden, where I hope guests will enjoy, Jelly, Blancmange, Tinned Fruit, Spam, and Jam sandwiches etc. Please keep the date and come and join us.

There is already now much work needed in the garden - pruning, tidying the flower beds, 3 garden seats to paint, the bird table, and the pond area also need checking.

With special anticipation - please phone the owner/founder Thank you

Rosemary E. Rigby
 01981 - 540477

ITEMS/COPY

Please would you send items for the newsletter to **birchesnews@btinternet.com** or deliver by hand to the post box at Bramleys, Aconbury Close, King's Thorn by:-

18th MARCH

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW ADVERTISERS THIS MONTH