



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

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

January 2017. First published 1977.. Happy 40!



COMPOST HEAP

Invite you to their annual

WASSAIL

At Little Birch Hall

SATURDAY



JANUARY 14TH

Starting at 7.30 p.m.

In aid of the HOPE CHARITY

Come and dress up warm, with noise-making equipment, to process to the orchard and make a traditional Wassail around the apple trees, followed by a MUMMERS PLAY and entertainment in the Village Hall.

There will be FOOD available
Tickets (£6 & £4 u12) from:
Bob and Sue Chance 01981 540725
Bob Mason 07771574490

There will be a BAR

See page 10 for further information. Ed

Diary Dates

January 2017

- 4th LB Parish Council Meeting LBVH 7.30pm
- 7th Book Exchange Methodist Chapel 10am
- 10th Whist Drive LBVH 7.30pm
- 11th LB&A Steering Group LBVH 7pm
- 17th WI Meeting MBCH 7.30pm
- 25th Gardening Club LBVH 7.30pm
- 27th
- &
- 28th Panto LBVH 7.30pm

Much Birch Village Market

A quick update regarding the future of MBVM, as of 2017 the Community Hall's Management team is taking over the running of the monthly Market and John Jones the chairman or one of his team will be advising shortly the 2017 market dates.

There will not be a market in January.

Best wishes

Mark Goddard.

Church Services January 2017



1st Jan	11am	LBirch CW Communion
5th Jan	9.30am	MBirch Holy Communion
8th Jan	11am	LBirch Morning Worship
	11am	MBirch Sunday Mass
12th Jan	9.30am	MBirch Holy Communion
15th Jan	11am	LBirch CW Communion
	11am	MBirch Sunday Mass
19th Jan	9.30am	MBirch Holy Communion
22nd Jan	9.30am	MBirch Sunday Mass
26th Jan	9.30am	MBirch Holy Communion
29th Jan	11am	MBirch Sunday Mass



Please send copy for the February Newsletter to editorial@birchesnews.org.uk or written contributions to John Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury Close, King's Thorn.

—by 18th January please.

Local News

There is very little local news this month. In early December, we said farewell to Caroline Powell of Hollybush Lane who has moved to Weobley. Caroline was 'steeped' in the WI and gave many years of service in various capacities, most recently as President of Much Birch WI over some 6 years. She also was a 'Meals on Wheels' distributor for many years. We shall miss her and send our best wishes for her settlement in her new home.

A number of friends in the community have been in hospital recently and we wish them all a speedy recovery.



Little Birch Village Hall Committee Newsletter notices for January 2017

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The Book Exchange will be on the morning of **Saturday 7th January** at the former Methodist Chapel opposite the Village Hall **10am – 12pm**.

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

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

Whist Drive

We guarantee a warm welcome and a fun evening with good company at our monthly whist drive whatever your ability. Excellent prizes and refreshments too.

Our next **Whist Drive** is on **Tuesday 10th January** at Little Birch Village Hall. We start at **7.30 pm** and the entrance fee is just £2.00.

Little Birch Pantomime 2016

"Ali Baba & The Forty Thieves"

Friday and Saturday **27th & 28th January 7:30pm**

Saturday matinee 2:30pm

Adults - £6.50

Under 14 - £4

Tickets available from:

Jackie - 01981 541027

Margaret - 01981 540374

Andy and Sue Welcome you to **THE AXE AND CLEAVER** Much Birch



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King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club

Our New Year meetings starts on January 25th, when Sue Russell will give an illustrated talk entitled '50 Shades of Green'.

In February, Helen or Phillip Mugridge will give a talk on 'A year in the life of a wildlife photographer'. This takes place on February 22nd.

All meetings take place on the last Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm in Little Birch Village Hall

Further details from John Bryant 01981 540316.



Aconbury orchards help boost Hereford's organic cider

Late Autumn may be the time of 'mist and mellow fruitfulness', but it is also the time to be picking cider apples.



Mike Leigh, who lives in Aconbury, met Steve Williams and Seb Hughes, partners in Williams and Hughes, cider producers in Cradleigh when they were busy in one of Aconbury's orchards. Steve told Mike that the beauty of organic orchards is that they are never sprayed with chemicals. Mike was there to take photos when they were simply shaking the trees with their hands, hand picking the best apples off the ground and bagging them in preparation for fermentation. One 15 kilo bag will produce 7 litres of cider Steve told Mike.

Whilst there is a very wide variety of cider apples, Steve said that four are grown in Aconbury: Ashton Bitter, an Early Bittersweet, Major, another Early Bittersweet - sweet, fruity and juicy, Brown's Apple, an Early Sharp - makes a very good, slightly scented sharp cider and the final of the four varieties is the most popular – the Dabinett. Full bodied and a Full Bittersweet, an excellent single variety cider for the connoisseur.

Steve told Mike that organic cider orchards, like the ones in Aconbury, are worth preserving as they are also wildlife important areas – particularly for moths.

Many ciders, like beers have evocative names like Brown Snout, Bulls Bitter Sweet and Chisel Jersey. I've always preferred cider to beer says Mike and now that I know more about the varieties and the skill in blending I shall be looking out for these labels.

These orchards are part of Merrivale farm, the Organic Farm in Aconbury.

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ALIBABA AND THE
FORTY
THIEVES
Friday, 27th. Jan, 7.30pm
Saturday, 28th. 2.30pm
Saturday, 28th. 7.30pm

Tickets: Adults £6.50, Children U14 £4

from: Jackie 01981 541027

Margaret 01981 540374



Make a Will, Make a Difference Will Writing Fortnight 2017

We all know we should make a Will. But how many of us put off doing so without realising the implications for those we will leave behind? Making preparations in your lifetime about what should happen to your possessions or assets after you die may save your loved ones difficulties and cost in the future. Young people, as well as those of more advanced years, can make their wishes very clear by writing a Will.

In partnership with the Royal National College for the Blind (RNC), two solicitors firms are offering to help local people get their affairs in order whilst also supporting the College's work with people who are blind and partially sighted.

From 6th to 17th March 2017, Chartered Legal Executive, Sally Smith of Harrison Clark Rickerbys Solicitors, Hereford (01432 349670) and Adrian Jones, Paralegal at Gabbs Solicitors, Leominster (01568 616333) are offering to waive their Will writing fee in exchange for a donation to RNC. This opportunity relates to basic Wills i.e. where the instructions outlined in the Will are not complex.

The suggested donation is £95 for a basic single Will and £150 for basic mirror Wills. The money raised will give students at the RNC the chance to live independently and the opportunity to prepare for university or the workplace. Demand is likely to be high so booking an appointment for Will Writing Fortnight as early as possible with one of the two participating solicitors is recommended.

For more information, call 01432 376 371 or email: fundraising@rnc.ac.uk

Yoga

In Much Dewchurch and Steiner Academy
Mondays 6.00—7.15

- ⇒ Tension and stiffness?
- ⇒ Back ache, backache, general aches and pains?
- ⇒ Difficulty sleeping?



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For more info contact Mike 01981 250341

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To find out more, please contact Rachel Entwisle on 01432 851 000 or rentwisle@st-michaels-hospice.org.uk to book a St Michael's Hospice talk.

Wishing you all joy in 2017,

Rachel Entwisle

St Michael's Hospice

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Dinner	£ 16.95	£20.95

Xmas Murder Mystery Dinners

December Events now SOLD OUT

Extra Night Now Scheduled

Saturday November 26th

Professional Actors

3 Course Dinner, Death & Prizes
£37.50

January Murder Mystery Dates

Saturday January 21st & 28th

Professional Actors

3 Course Dinner, Death & Prizes
£35.00



Senior Citizens Xmas Lunch

Monday 5th 12th & 19th

2 Courses	3 Courses
£ 9.95	£13.95

Boxing Day Brunch

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£14.95

Christmas Day Lunch

4 Courses

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New Year's Day Brunch

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at Much Birch Community Hall

**Tuesday 24th January 2017, 7.30pm - OUR
KIND OF TRAITOR 15**

While on holiday in Marrakech, an ordinary English couple, Perry (Ewan McGregor) and Gail, befriend a flamboyant and charismatic Russian, Dima, who unbeknownst to them is a kingpin money launderer for the Russian mafia. When Dima asks for their help to deliver classified information to the British Secret Services, Perry and Gail get caught in a dangerous world of international espionage and dirty politics. The couple is propelled on a perilous journey through Paris and Bern, a safe house in the French Alps, to the murky corners of London and an alliance with the British Government via a ruthless and determined MI6 agent (Damian Lewis). This taut thriller twists and turns its way around the world with dramatic consequences.

Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm.

At Much Birch Flicks our ticket prices have remained the same for the past 7 years. However, from January 2017, our prices will increase just a little, by 50p.

Tickets £4.50 (£3.50 under 16s)

Coming up this season...

Thursday 23rd February - **LEARNING TO DRIVE 15**

Tuesday 28th March - **THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS 12A**

Thursday 27th April - **A UNITED KINGDOM 12A**

Tuesday 23rd May - **ALLIED 15**

*Tickets available in advance or on the door –
for further info or to book tickets call 01981 540097
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LB&A NDP Steering Group

At the last meeting of the Steering Group for Little Birch & Aconbury's Joint Neighbourhood Development Plan Dr David Nicholson, our planning consultant, gave an excellent slide presentation with analysis of the recent questionnaire.

247 questionnaires had been hand delivered to all residents with 190 completed – nearly 80% of the population of both parishes. David said that the high return is exceptional – as the higher the number, the greater the representation of the community. The full results of the questionnaire can be found at :- <http://littlebirchparishcouncil.org/neighbourhood-development-plan/>

There were five main topics – HOUSING, TRAFFIC, EMPLOYMENT, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT.

On 'Housing' it came as no surprise that a large majority preferred to see 2/3 bedroom properties and also would like new dwellings to be privately owned. Self-build and live/work homes were also highly supported. 84% would like to see new homes within the 'village' areas with little support for large developments.

New housing should not be built in open countryside or farmland and many wanted homes for young families or young people.

Top priority on 'Traffic' was wishing improvements to road, ditch and verge. Pedestrian safety was high on priorities too. The biggest comment on 'Transport' was for traffic speed reduction on both parishes' roads and support for local buses.

When asked about 'Employment' the two largest responses were for farming and forestry related activities, many people would like to see a shop and post office.

On 'Community Services' and 'Environment' there was quite a diversity of comments - from many seeing no need to change anything, to many wishing to see improvements to Little Birch Village Hall and facilities for tourism in the area. The biggest response however was a hope to see children's play facilities. In terms of 'Environment' the greatest wish was for any new dwelling to be in keeping with its surroundings whilst also protecting views. Finally, many wished to protect local woodland, green lanes, BOATs, footpaths and the open countryside.

Of course, anyone who filled in the questionnaire will realise that the devil is in the detail. Anyone wishing more information or inspired to come along to the next Steering group meeting, then this will be on Wednesday 11 January at 7pm, at Little Birch Village Hall. All are welcome.

For more information please contact Sophie Glover, Clerk to LB&A Steering Group on 01432 270499

Little Birch Parish Council

Your Little Birch Parish Council Councillors are:-

Little Birch Parish Council			
Cllr Ben Roberts	Chairman	01981 540100	b3nroberts@gmail.com
Cllr Elaine Godding	Vice Chair	01981 540607	ecgodding@hotmail.co.uk
Cllr Steve Naylor		01981 541323	steve.naylor5@btinternet.com
Cllr Mike Morley		01981 541027	morley04@globalnet.co.uk
Cllr Annette Wissler		Contact through the clerk	
Sandra Cameron	Volunteer Foot Paths Officer	01981 540397	shcameron@hotmail.co.uk
Sophie Glover	PC Clerk	01432 270499	littlebirchpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk

Now that they are meeting monthly, Little Birch Parish Council had a meeting in December, at which the planning application for the land adjacent to Prospect Cottage, 163716, was discussed. The PC decided to submit a comment to approve the application with a request for a limit on the size of lorries servicing the build to be place in the requirements.

The PC and the Village Hall Committee have purchased a defibrillator, and this will be mounted on the wall outside the village hall. We hope to have training on its use early in 2017.

Sand bags have now been placed at Castel Nibole.... But be warned, they come to the Parish empty, and the PC provide a ton of sand, so if you need sand bags, you can get them – for free - from Castle Nibole, but you will need to fill them yourselves. On the plus side, this should mean that they last longer and are less likely to split when you pick them up!

The Ward Cllr David Harlow, attended the meeting and he talked about the fact that BT were looking at removing over 180 under used phone boxes across Herefordshire. The one outside Little Birch Village Hall is on this list, and the Parish Council have asked if any one has an idea for using the box. The PC have been given the opportunity to buy the phone box, and they would then donate it to a community group who had a suitable idea for its use, and were prepared to look after it. If you do have an idea, please contact the clerk in the first instance.

The Parish Council wanted to pass on their thanks to those involved in the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, who they felt were doing a fantastic job in progressing through the process of drawing up the NDP. A report from their last meeting is attached separately.

Mrs Sophie Glover, Little Birch Parish Clerk, The Orchard, Ridgehill, Hereford HR2 8AG

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Much Birch WI

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

On January 17th Carrie Francis, from Harts of Monmouth (sellers of Lingerie, Swimwear, Clothes and Accessories) will be joining us with a talk entitled 'Uplifting Experience'.

On February 21st the subject of the evening will be Self Protection when the speaker will be Roger Sparkes.

A note for the diary:... The **Open Meeting** this year is in April with a talk, 'Every Object tells a Story', by Althea Mackenzie from the Hereford Museum Resource Centre.

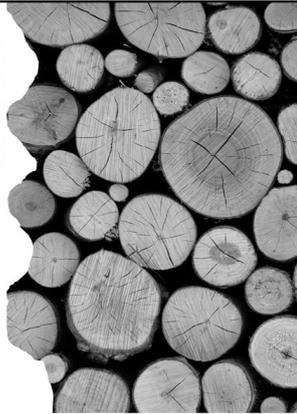
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Just in case you have not Wassailed before!

This is an ancient practice of feeding one of the apple trees in an orchard with cider and then putting toast in the boughs to feed the robins. All to encourage fertility and a good harvest. We also light fires to represent Christ and his disciples, stamping out Judas, (not very nice). Then after some music and dancing we go back to the warmth and shelter of the hall for food, drink and entertainment, which includes a Mummers' Play and a variety of songs. A Mummer's Play? Well, if you come along you will find out! So, warm clothes, torches and boots for the mud, and just book your tickets.

A reminder, please, that all new articles or advertising copy for inclusion in this Newsletter should now be sent to editorial@birchesnews.org.uk or written contributions to John Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury Close, King's Thorn.

Application for new advertising and rates should be directed to birchesnews@gmail.com

PILATES

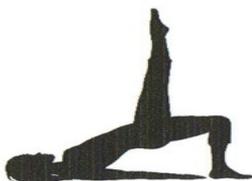
NEW BEGINNER CLASSES STARTING SEPTEMBER 2012

**Mondays 9.30am & 10.30am
Much Birch Community Hall**

**Wednesdays 7pm & 8pm
Little Dewchurch Hall
£7 per class**

PRE-BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL AS CLASS NUMBERS ARE LIMITED TO ALLOW FOR INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

**Phone Alison Allan
01432 840491**



Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club

The December draw took place on 11th December 2016 in Much Birch Community Hall at 10.30am and the results were as follows:

1st prize – No 89 2nd prize - 27 3rd prize – 120

Mrs. Celia Brown Mrs. S. Dymott Mrs. N. Salter
Llanwarne King's Thorn Much Birch

The next draw will take place on 8th January 2017 in Much Birch Community Hall.

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People may recall a presentation in the past at the Village Hall and the DVD of my father's war experiences. I mentioned that there would be an English edition to complement the Welsh one and would inform everyone who might be interested.

It has now been published and is called

"All for Freedom" by D T Davies.

Very best wishes,- Mike Davies

This book is available from Amazon and other book sellers. One review is below.... Ed

All for Freedom - A True story of escape from the Nazis
Paperback – published 10 Nov 2016

by [D.T.A. Davies](#) (Author), [Ioan Wyn Evans](#) (Author)



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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@hotmail.co.uk

16th December 2016

PARISH MEETING - at the Parish Council Meeting held on the 8th December at the Much Birch Community Hall.

The Meeting heard that the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish was progressing further and the next Steering Group Meeting would be held on 2nd February 2017, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall. The Steering Group would be pleased to see new members to join in with the Neighbourhood Planning process, this need not mean attendance at all meetings but could involve one off jobs, such as delivering leaflets to households etc.

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 5th January 2017 from 7.30pm** - at The Much Birch Community Hall.

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

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW,
email thecooks@wyenet.co.uk Tel. 01981 540703

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

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

Cllr Tim Jones Swiss Cottage, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW
email tjsj@me.com Tel. 01981 540242

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

Cllr David Baldwin The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS
Email 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. You can also find us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

South Hereford Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

Lowri Anderson PCSO 40247

Hereford City Southside and Rural SNT

West Mercia Police

Get in touch

101 to talk to your local SNT or report a crime
herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
www.westmercia.police.uk

Herefordshire Cops / @southsidecops

Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger.

Make the difference

For more information about becoming a Special Constable, please visit,

Warwickshire Police: www.warwickshire.police.uk/specialconstables

West Mercia Police: www.westmercia.police.uk/specialconstables



Where we work South Wye SNT is based at South Wye Police Station, Goodrich Grove, Newton Farm, Hereford, HR2 7DB, we work around the areas of Rural: Aconbury; Allensmore; Ballingham; Bolstone; Callow; Dewsall; Dinedor; Garway; Grafton; Harewood; Haywood; Hentland; Holme Lacy; Kenderchurch; Kentchurch; Kilpeck; Kingstone; Little Birch; Much Birch; Little Dewchurch; Llandinabo; Llanwarne; Lower Bullingham; Much Dewchurch; Orcop; Pencoyd; Pontrilas; St

Your team

Sgt Emma Freer, PC Roger Bradley, PC Jim Phillips, PCSO Lowri Anderson, PCSO Adam Westlake, PCSO Christina Howard, PCSO Christopher Yarwood.

About your team.... Safer Neighbourhood Teams work with local people and partners to identify, tackle and solve issues that matter to the community where you live.

Making neighbourhoods safer by cutting day to day crime and anti-social behaviour is at the heart of keeping people in West Mercia safe.

