



THE **Birches**

Community Matters

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

First published 1977 **December 2021**



Carols at The Tump

Tuesday 21 December 2021

6:30 pm

Come and join us for some festive carol
singing outside The Tump Inn, Wormelow

For more information contact Lydia
on 01981 540323 or socialfabric@hotmail.com



LIVE MUSIC - BAR - FOOD



NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

**DECEMBER 31ST | 8PM
LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL**

Tickets £10 (under 12's £5)

Buffet included

**UNDER 18'S MUST BE ACCOMPANIED
BY AN ADULT**

Tickets from:

Julie: 01981 541080 or Alison: 01981 540791
& from Rob at the Nightmare Bar

Advance purchase only. Tickets WILL NOT be sold on the door

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGHTMARE
MOBILE EVENTS BAR**

Christmas at Little Birch

Carols on the Pendant at the Nightmare Bar

Friday December 17th at 7pm

Carols and Christingle in the church

Sunday December 19th at 4pm





Jobs to do in the garden during December

Surplus green tomatoes? There's only so much green tomato chutney you can eat but you can store green tomatoes in a cool room in a dark drawer.

Wrap in paper or set in egg trays so they are not touching, in case one goes mouldy. Many of them will slowly ripen and even provide your own ripe tomatoes at Christmas.

I understand that tomatoes can be ripened quickly by putting them into a bowl or large saucepan along with a banana. Put a clear lid (or a Pyrex plate) on the top. This will allow light in but hold the ethylene gas released from the banana to concentrate and encourage ripening. This apparently also works to redden chilli and sweet peppers. I have yet to try it.

Have you cleaned and oiled your mower (and in one case that I know of, locally, ROBOTIC mower) and put it away for the Winter? Shame – I can see another cut (or two) this side of Christmas, thanks to the mild weather we have been enjoying. Hedges all neatly trimmed? All dead foliage on perennial plants cut off, fallen leaves cleared up and composted? A pat on the back!!

What else can we do?

In mild dry weather, and only if necessary, cut lawn with blades high leaving 35 – 50 mm of grass.

Dahlias and Agapanthus left in the ground to over winter will need a thick mulch of compost and/or chipped bark.

Move Orchids to an East facing window. Other indoor plants may benefit from being put in a lighter position but away from radiators.

If not already done bubble wrap the inside of the greenhouse at the beginning of the month (in case we have a winter!!!).

All tender potted plants should be in a greenhouse or shed by now.

Protect Figs with fleece.

Vent the greenhouse on warmer days to reduce condensation.

Rhubarb can be split. Leave the crowns on the surface so that they get frosted and then plant in early Spring.

Salad crops can be sown in a greenhouse but will be slow growing due to the low light levels.

Watch out for slugs – I have already lost a few plants.

Check stored potatoes, and also apples – dispose of any rotten potatoes and put rotting apples out for the birds.

Parish Walk Sunday 19 December at 9am

Join us on a 5-mile circular walk from Little Birch Village Hall. Walking down to Athelstans Wood, up towards Little Dewchurch, along the valley and back up to the woods and Little Birch.

Refreshments available at the hall afterwards. All welcome!

Angela Middleton voluntary Footpath Officer for Little Birch

ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk or 01981 540377



Hereford Cathedral Christmas Events

Christmas through the ages. 6 – 31 December £7.50

Christmas Sparkle Organ Concert 4 December 1.15
Lunchtime organ recital. Free but **booking required.**

First Celebration of Nine Lessons with Carols Lecture 8 December, 7 pm Howard Tomlinson £8

Ex Cathedra: Christmas Music By Candlelight 9 December 7.30. Much-loved favourites and readings.

Handel's Messiah, candlelit 11 December 7.30 Hereford Choral Society with Marches Baroque. Tickets available from: herefordchoralsociety.org/tickets

ABF The Soldiers' Charity Christmas Concert 14 December, 7 pm with school choirs, bands and guest appearance by members of a former rock band.

Hereford Cathedral Christmas Fair 18 December, 9.30-4. Over forty stalls of festive produce. Admission free. Carols in the Cathedral Close at 12 noon.

St Michael's Hospice 'Light Up A Life' Service 19 December, 5.30. st-michaels-hospice.org.uk for info.

Holy Innocents' Day 28 December, 3.30 pm A quiet service of remembrance for parents and families who have suffered the loss of a child, whether recently or long ago. All welcome.

Epiphany Carol Service 9 January 2022, 3.30 pm

Hereford Cathedral Voluntary Choir,

details and tickets all events www.herefordcathedral.org



**FLICKS
IN THE
STICKS**

**at Much Birch
Community Hall**

Tuesday 7 December 7.30 pm
Little Women (U)

Writer-director Greta Gerwig has crafted a LITTLE WOMEN that draws on both the classic novel and the writings of Louisa May Alcott, and unfolds as the author's alter ego, Jo March, reflects back and forth on her fictional life. In Gerwig's take, the beloved story of the March sisters – four young women each determined to live life on their own terms – is both timeless and timely.

Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm

Tickets £4.50 (£3.50 under 16s)

Tickets available in advance or on the door - for further info or to book tickets please email muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com or call 01981 540097

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

Join us at the

Community Café

@ Much Birch Community Hall



Saturday 11 December 2021



10:00 - 12:30

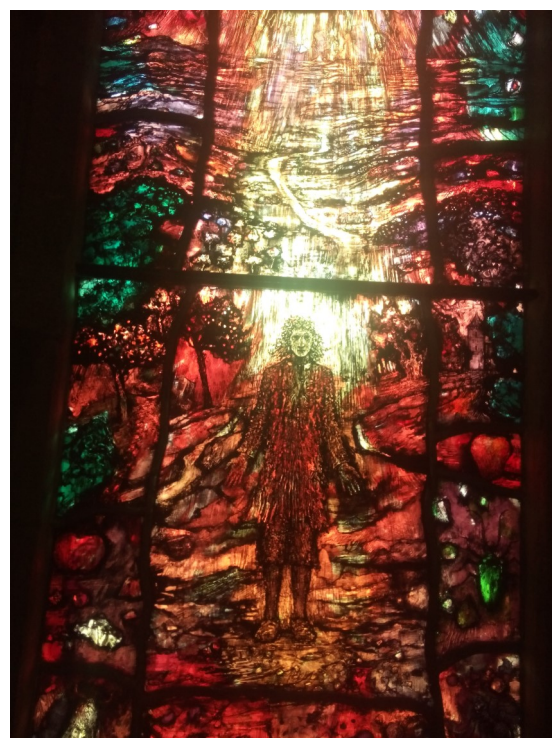
and continuing every 2nd Saturday of the month

8 January 12 February 12 March

For more information or if you are in need of transport contact Lydia on 01981 540323 or socialfabric@hotmail.com



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



Thomas Denny's window inspired by the writings of Thomas Traherne. Audley Chapel.

Christmas Market

Much Birch Community Hall

Friday 10th December

from 2-4.30 pm



Much Birch Community Hall Management Committee is holding a Christmas Market on Friday 10th December. We have our usual stalls booked plus a few additional one-off tables. Refreshments will be available.

Please do come and visit us to support the stallholders, particularly as this is the first market since before the pandemic.

What do you call Santa's little helpers?

Subordinate clauses



CHRISTMAS PRIZE BINGO

LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL
FRIDAY 10TH DECEMBER
EYES DOWN AT 7PM

Festive fun for the whole family
Refreshments available



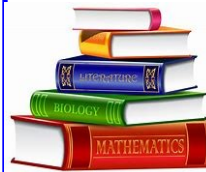
Coffee Morning with Book Exchange

Thursday 2nd December

& Saturday 18th December

10.00am - 12.00 noon

Little Birch Hall



Come and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, some cake or a biscuit. Make new friends or catch up with old friends.

Take a book, leave a book, or both.

Exchange recommendations for a good read. Families and well behaved dogs very welcome.

looking forward to
seeing you





Much Birch Parish Council
Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright
Longfield House
Gooses Foot,
Kingstone
Herefordshire
HR2 9NE
Tel. 01981 250860
Email: muchbirchclerk@gmail.com
10th November 2021

PARISH MEETING – at the Parish Council Meeting held in the Much Birch Community Hall on the 4th November 2021 from 7.30 pm.

The Parish Council looked at another planning application and agreed on comments to be made. The Parish Council also heard updates on the work of Herefordshire Council, in relation to a number of issues which included the Great Collaboration and seeking to help address the climate emergency, from Ward Councillor Toni Fagan.

The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 2nd December 2021 from 7.30pm** at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Dates for the 2022 Parish Council Meetings will be published in December.

Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend the meeting 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 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 rois-inburge@hotmail.com Tel. 01981 540724

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

Cllr Chris Pickering-Grey 4 Court Farm Barns, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HT chris@pickering-grey.uk Tel. 07712 813218

Cllr Joseph Goldsmith Quantock House, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX josephag-oldsmith@hotmail.com Tel. 07967 728590

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>

Hi Everyone,

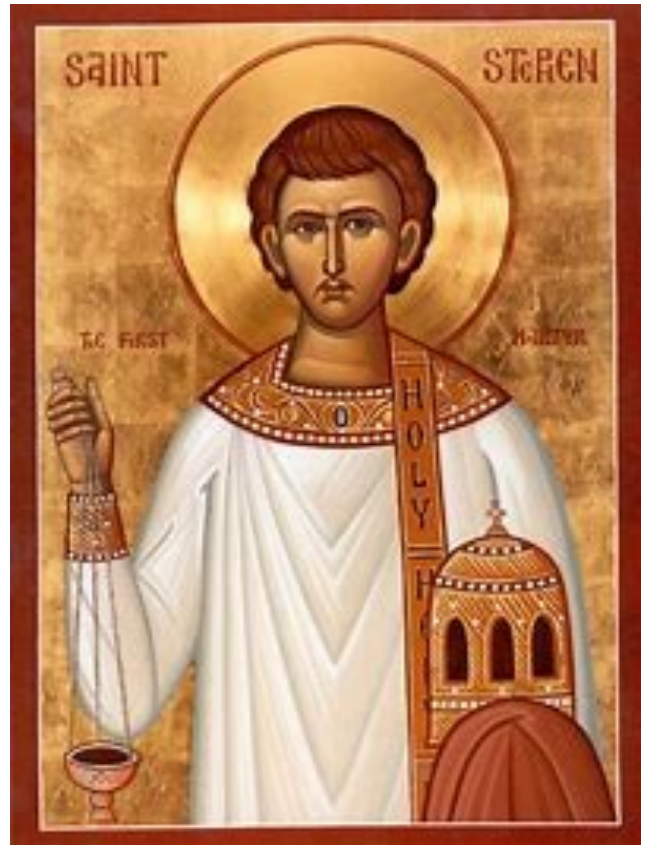
Unusually this Christmas we get to celebrate St. Stephen. Normally, as his feast day falls on 26th December, he gets lost among the post-Christmas horse-racing, trips to the sales and cold turkey sandwiches. But this year, his feast day falls on a Sunday and so we get to remember him.

Stephen was the first martyr and his death is recorded by St. Luke in the Book of Acts. Before that, though, is the story of his calling. The early church is suffering from rapid growth! Some of the widows are being overlooked for the distribution of food and so the 12 Apostles decide to add to their number. Stephen is listed first along with 6 others.

Stephen comes from the Greek “Stephanon” meaning wreath. In this case, the wreath that is referred to is the one given to the winners of the games, so I guess we would call him “Champ!” Stephen then serves with distinction, argues for this faith against the Jews in Jerusalem and, of course, gets into trouble leading to his stoning to death – the first martyr of the Church.

As Luke records it, though Paul’s letters never mention it, one of the people who witnesses Stephen’s death for blasphemy is Saul – later to be Christened Paul!

SO come and join us for our service of remembering St. Stephen on Sunday 26th December at 10.30 a.m. at St. Junabius Church, Llandinabo – you will be given a warm welcome and you won’t have the crush of the Boxing Day sales to contend with. Reverend Mark



Service for December 2021

Sunday 5th December – Second Sunday of Advent

11.00 a.m. Little Dewchurch – Holy Communion

Sunday 12th December – Third Sunday of Advent

9.15 a.m. Much Dewchurch – Family Communion

11.00 am. Little Birch – Morning Worship

Sunday 19th December

9.15 a.m. Much Birch – Celtic Morning Prayer

4.00 p.m. Little Dewchurch – Carols and Christingles



I would like to say a very big thank you for all the kindness and help that I have received after the death of my husband John Bryant.

Thank you, Betty Bryant

Service for December continued

Thursday 23rd December

6.30 p.m. Much Birch – Carols and Readings for Christmas

Friday 24th December – Christmas Eve

3.00 p.m. Much Birch – Carols and Crib service

11.30 p.m. Dewsall – Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Holy Communion

Sunday 26th December – St. Stephen's Day

10.30 a.m. Llandinabo – Holy Communion

Sunday 2nd January 2022

11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Holy Communion



MUCH BIRCH SURGERY

Seasonal Flu vaccines This year we, along with much of the country, have unfortunately been affected by nationwide delivery issues of the flu vaccine. Despite sufficient flu vaccines being ordered over a year ago, we did not receive the flu vaccines we were due to ready for our flu clinics. This unfortunately meant we had to cancel some of our flu vaccine clinics at very short notice. These issues have made the flu vaccine roll-out very difficult to manage and of course very frustrating for both patients and staff. We are expecting further delivery of flu vaccines at the end of November so we will be able to contact those patients who remain on our waiting list to book them in for their flu vaccination. We apologise for any inconvenience this has caused and assure you we are doing everything we can to reach eligible patients who wish to have a flu vaccine.

Covid Booster Vaccines We are not involved in booking or delivering the Covid Booster Vaccines at the surgery. Patients become eligible for their booster vaccine 6 months after the date of their second vaccine and can book through the National Booking website or by ringing 119.

Patients will receive a text/phonecall/letter invitation directly from the NHS when they are eligible for their booster (at least 6 months from second vaccine). We would be really grateful if patients could refrain from ringing the surgery about their booster vaccine. We are receiving a huge number of calls regarding it and we can only give the information above.

Immunosuppressed patients have been identified and contacted separately to offer a third primary dose (same dose and vaccine as booster). These patients will then be eligible for a 4th dose (booster) 6 months following their 3rd dose. Patients eligible for a 3rd dose due to immunosuppression will have received a letter from either the practice or their consultant and should use this as evidence of their eligibility to book a 3rd vaccine dose or when attending a walk-in centre (please take your letter with you).

The Practice continues to work extremely hard to meet the needs of our patients while coping with unprecedented demand. While we have increased the number of face to face appointments many patients are recognizing the benefit of phonecall appointments for some conditions that do not require a face to face appointment. We are working with other health professionals such as advanced clinical practitioners, physiotherapists and pharmacists to direct patients to the best professional to meet their needs, in the most timely fashion possible.

Dispensary is working extremely hard in very challenging conditions due to ongoing staff shortages and recruitment difficulties. Thank you for your support in ordering repeat medication with sufficient notice to enable it to be dispensed on time.

In the run up to Christmas please do not order your medications early or order more than normal, as this will slow down the dispensary. Please continue to order your medication as you normally would. Over Christmas the Practice is only closed for the 3 bank holidays (27th, 28th Dec and 3rd Jan), and our staff do not take any other annual leave over the Christmas period to make sure it is business as usual!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our patients for their understanding and patience whilst we continue to navigate our way through the ongoing covid pandemic.

We wish you all a very peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.



Little Birch Parish Council

Your Little Birch Parish Councillors are:

Cllr Peter Rees Chair

Cllr Janet Gwinnett Vice Chair

Cllr Kate Dillon

Cllr Michael Davies

Cllr Kate Robbins

Angela Middleton Volunteer Footpath Officer

Sophie Glover Clerk 01432 617306

*For updates and notifications of future meetings
please check out the website –*

www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org.

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

Please send copy for the January Newsletter to editorial@birchesnews.org.uk or contact Elisabeth Taylor 07854 629193 if you want to send in paper copy. Deadline 18th December.

The Nightmare

Bar and Events

We are a mobile bar set up on a semi permanent basis opposite the closed country pub The Castle Inn in Little Birch. Offering a range of cask ale and Draught products as well as a wide variety of hot and cold drinks.

Whether you want a quiet drink in our fairy light grotto or a good old chinwag with our friendly patrons, you can come and relax after that stressful week in one of our heated gazebos. Let all worries float away in to the night sky because you and I know we all need it after the last two years. We welcome all here.

Friday 1800 till 2200

Saturday: 1500 till 2200

Sunday 16.30 till 2100



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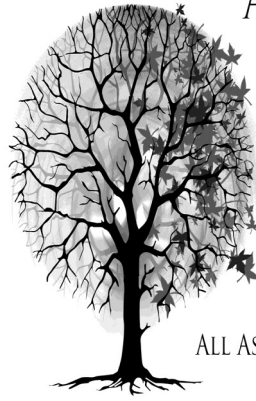
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Sally.nichol@btinternet.com

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MUCH BIRCH
07774 805369 / 01981 541109

Table Tennis Tuesdays Little Birch Village Hall

7 December 2021

ALL WELCOME

7:00 - 9pm



Bereavement Counselling

The Counselling and Bereavement Team from St Michael's Hospice can offer support to anyone in Herefordshire who has experienced loss, whether or not their loved one was cared for by the hospice. This could include a listening ear, coming along to a pub meal, an art group or joining in with one of our walking groups embracing our fine country air. To find out more please contact Sarah on 01432 852627 or email

PILATES

with Alison Allan

Alison Allan is back!

I have been Zooming away in the summer but am now back at Little Dewchurch

Social distancing is a must and we can do this with 10 people per class – which means I can keep my eye on everyone!

Rollers, soft balls and circles makes for a varied and fun workout whatever our ability.

After our Lockdown Blues we all need to get moving with Pilates for our physical well-being and our mental health - and while we do this, we will improve our posture, balance, strength and general fitness.

My clients are aged between 18 and 95 so there is no excuse! Just give me a call!

Tel: 01432 840491 Mob: 07947 011707

Email: Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com

Or on Facebook



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from 1st December

Or

Phone 01432 840826 to come and select a
growing tree for cutting
closer to Christmas.



Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club – Exciting News

After a long gap in our activities the gardening club are getting organised for a new season of talks and visits and of course the highlight of the year, the Annual Horticultural Show. We will start up again in January 2022 and hope that all previous members will return and of course we extend an open invitation to anyone who may be interested in one, some or all of our talks and activities.

On January 26th we will welcome Alun and Gill Whitehead from Aulden Farm, Leominster. They are going to talk about the **‘Hidden Gardens of Herefordshire’**. This will get us all in the mood for getting out and about again after such a long period where many of us have not gone very far at all.

On February 23rd we will welcome Kevin Alviti who will talk to us on **‘Unusual Fruit and Vegetables’**. Kevin is an enthusiastic grower who will entertain us with his amusing anecdotes of how he attempts to be as self sufficient as possible with his young family. He will also inspire us with new ideas and I am sure that we will all be trying out some of his ideas in the new season ahead.

On March 30th we will be holding our AGM when the new program will be revealed. We will also be hearing a short talk from Derek Scrivens, our local gardening guru, who we all admire for his lifetime of knowledge and experience.

All of our meetings take place in Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30pm. We always have refreshments and time for a chat and usually we have a bring and buy stall where members can bring surplus plants etc. There will be no charge for the first two meetings (Yes, free entertainment) but we will be charging our bargain fees after that.

For further information phone Janet Gwinnett 01981 540651 and leave a message.
All are welcome to attend.



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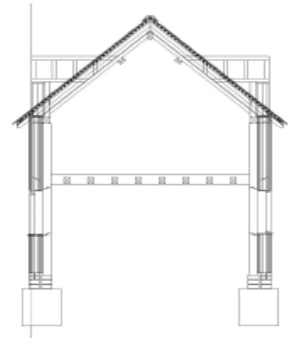
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I wish that I could be a cat...

I wish that I could be a cat
And spend each day upon the mat
Or sleep all day atop the bed
With both my paws around my head

A cat is what I wish to be
Just prowl around to get my tea
While my servants all run after me.

A quick trip out, then back to base
Asleep again - the same old place
My humans still are on the case.

A feline life is best of all

No screens to see – no one to call
Just in and out through all the doors
And lovely food from off the floors.

Constant strokes from different
folks

No knife, no fork, no need to talk
Just sleep a lot – don't give a jot.

Oh, I wish I had been born a cat
But I am human – so that's that!

By Catullus, local poet



A big thank you to all our contributors, regular and occasional for your articles, information and photos which are much enjoyed.

Thanks also to the printers and the distributors who walk the lanes to bring the newsletter to your door..

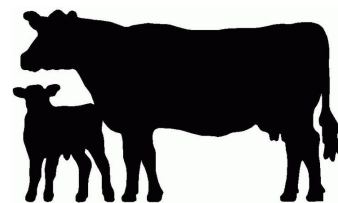
If you prefer an online version of the newsletter send an email to editorial@birchesnews.org.uk

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

The Editorial Team

MERRIVALE ORGANIC BEEF

We have quality beef available direct from our farm in Little Birch to your doorstep.



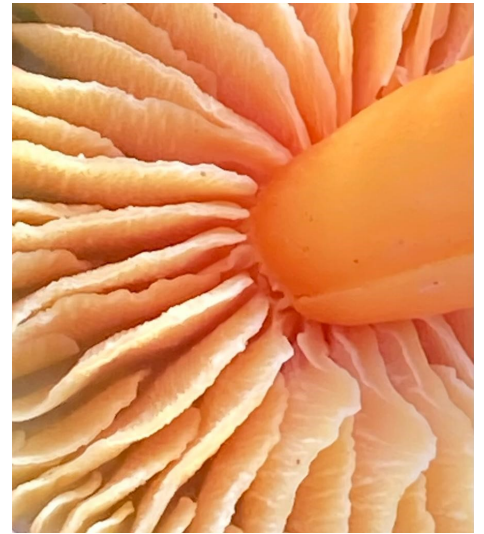
It is organic grass fed Wagyu Cross beef which has been born and raised at **Merrivale Farm**. The Wagyu breed is known for its beautiful marbling which gives a delicious flavour and texture to the meat.

The beef is available in mixed boxes which start at £65. Individual cuts and packs are also available.

Contact Lucy for more information on 07974 053804 or lucymason@hotmail.com



The Birches Photography Group



Fascinating photos by members
of the Photography Group.

For more information contact
Sally Nichol.

sally.nichol@btinternet.com

