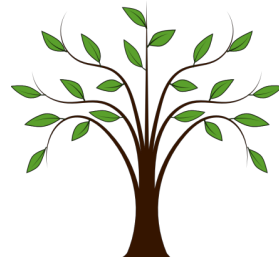


The Birches

Community Matters Newsletter

**Kingsthorpe, Much Birch, Little Birch,
Aconbury & Wormelow July/August 2025**



Birches Newsletter online: www.birches.news & www.muchbirchparish.org.uk



Photos clockwise from top right

Sunset Over Hereford by Sally Nichol

Treberva Orchard Parish Walk

Beautiful skies over a pond in the orchard

Pond dipping for water creatures

Read Angela Middleton's report on page 5



LITTLE BIRCH CHURCH FETE FUN DOG SHOW AND SCURRY

SATURDAY 19TH JULY 2025 AT 2.00PM

CLASSES

1. BEST PUPPY, 6-12 MONTHS OLD
2. DOG IN BEST CONDITION
3. MOST HANDSOME DOG
4. PRETTIEST BITCH
5. BEST VETERAN 7 YRS AND OLDER
6. DOG WITH BEST MOVEMENT
7. DOG WITH THE WAGGIEST TAIL
8. BEST CHILD HANDLER 12 YRS AND UNDER
9. BEST CROSSBREED/'HEINZ 57'
10. BEST LOCAL DOG - to reside in Kingsthorpe / Little Birch
11. BEST RESCUE DOG
12. DOG THE JUDGE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE HOME

ENTRY FEE £1.50 PER CLASS

SHOW OPENS FOR ENTRIES FROM 1.30PM - JUDGING STARTS AT 2.00PM.

SCURRY - STARTING AT 2.15PM - GET OUT YOUR RUNNING SHOES AND START PRACTISING!!

PLEASE BRING OWN CHAIRS AND, CASH FOR PAYMENT IF YOU CAN AS SADLY OUR CARD READER STRUGGLES WITH SIGNAL ON THE FARM

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE ALL AFTERNOON.



LITTLE BIRCH
GARDEN FETE and DOG SHOW

AT THE HOME OF
KATE AND JOHN DILLON
CASTLE NIBOLE
LITTLE BIRCH.

SATURDAY JULY 19TH 2PM

GRAND PRIZE DRAW

CAKE STALL

TOMBOLA

GAMES FOR CHILDREN

PLANT STALL

AND MORE...

WE ARE LOOKING FOR HELPERS ON THE DAY,
RAFFLE DONATIONS, CAKES, BOTTLES FOR TOMBOLA, PLANTS, JAMS AND
CHUTNEYS ETC, BOOKS.

PLEASE COME ALONG AND JOIN US

PLEASE CONTACT JOHN CATON ON 01981 540415.

Join us at the
Community Café
@ Much Birch Community Hall

Saturday 12 July 2025
10:00 - 12:30

and every 2nd Saturday of the month

No Café in August

13 September

11 October

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.

Celebrate 80 Years of Peace & 25 years
of the Violette Szabo Museum
Sunday 13th July
Parade Leaves the Park at 1.30
walking to the Museum

Visitors will include members of the family of Lilian Rolfe who was executed with Violette Szabo. They are flying from Australia. A new book has been brought out and they will talk about it. A representative of the French Embassy will also attend. Everyone is welcome to join in the celebrations and to bring along a picnic.

Little Birch Village Hall Chairman's Report

2024/25

It seems I've created a bit of a tradition by starting these reports with a reflection on how positive I felt the previous year and, true to form, I'm not about to break that habit. We've had another fantastic year, and I'm incredibly proud of the committee for their continued work to improve the hall, safeguard its future, and maintain its place at the heart of our community.

Our regular hirers, including Table Tennis, Coffee Morning & Book Club, the Art & Craft Group, and the Gardening Club (with its much-loved annual Horticultural Show) have continued to provide activities and events that bring people together. These are all run by volunteers, giving their time for the benefit of others, and I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved.

The committee has hosted four prize bingo evenings over the past year, thanks in no small part to Robyn Hodges, the organisational force who sources prizes, calls the numbers, and keeps the fun rolling. Thank you, Robyn.

The 2025 Drama Group pantomime was *Cinderella* and, while I know I also say this every year, it really *was* the best yet. The sheer amount of work put in by the cast and crew and the quality of the production never fails to amaze me. Demand was so high that two extra performances were added with proceeds from one show generously donated to charity. Huge thanks to everyone who made it happen.

The newsletter remains a much-valued source of local news and updates. My thanks go to our brilliant editor, Elisabeth Taylor; to John Caton, who devotes a day each month to printing nearly 500 copies; and to our dedicated delivery team who brave all weathers to ensure every household gets a copy through their letterbox.

We've had a few changes to the committee over the last 12 months. Julie Green stepped down after many years of dedicated service as Minute Secretary. We welcomed back Linda Maden though, truth be told, she never really stopped tackling the endless jobs even while 'off' the committee! Two new members also joined us: Lesley Chapman as Gardening Club representative, and John Ellis-Braithwaite as Treasurer. Both have quickly become real assets, and I want to thank them for stepping up. As you know, this is my final meeting as Chair after 11 years on the committee and 8 in this role. It's been a journey with plenty of ups and downs, but I've enjoyed every minute. As Chair, I've also mastered the art of nodding knowingly while secretly wondering if we're talking about the treasurer's report or a new

a few tears) and learned more than I could have imagined. The hall's always been a part of my life from birthday parties to Christmas celebrations and community events and I'm proud to have contributed in some small way to its ongoing success. I often say it's the role of the committee to leave the hall in a better position than we found it... I hope I've lived up to that.

Thank you to every committee member who's shared this journey with me, including those we've sadly lost along the way. You've given your time and energy freely, and I'm so proud of what we've achieved together. You won't be getting rid of me entirely. I'll still be helping as newsletter proofreader and assistant printer, and of course I'll be at plenty of hall events. So, just as I began this report, I'll end it the same way I always do: I feel incredibly positive about the future of the hall and look forward to seeing what comes next. **Ben Roberts, Outgoing Chairman – Little Birch Village Hall Committee.**

Thanks to Ben Roberts for 11 years of Steering Little Birch Village Hall Committee

We would like to extend a huge and very genuine thank you to Ben Roberts who resigned this month after over a decade of chairing Little Birch Village Hall committee.

He has worked with so many different members of the committee over this time, always with respect and kindness and has shown great support to all. He said, when he stepped down, that he hoped he had left the village hall in a better place than when he first took the chair, and we are sure everyone would agree that he certainly has.

Ben was born and bred in Little Birch, then moved to Much Birch when his family moved to Lynwood on Wrigglebrook Pitch in the early 1980s.

He has always enjoyed the 'village life' and both he and then his son, Oscar, attended Much Birch School. Although he now lives a little further away and works in Stroud, he still has strong family connections here and we know we will still be enjoying his company for many years to come!!

Kate Dillon

on behalf of Little Birch Village Hall Committee.

Little Birch Village Hall Committee June 2025

Lesley Chapman; Chair, John Ellis -Braithwaite; Treasurer, Linda Maden; Booking Secretary, Kate Dillon; Parish Council Rep, Geoff Nichol; Maintenance, Iris Lloyd, Rick Hampton, Jane Bolam; Drama Group, Elisabeth Taylor; Birches Newsletter Editor, Cathy Ellis-Braithwaite; Minute Secretary, Sam Davies.



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We run a **FREE 24 hour Support Line 7 days a week** for farmers and their families within Herefordshire who are feeling distressed and need someone to talk to anonymously.

Counselling:
We provide **fully funded counselling to anyone in the Herefordshire farming community** who may be in emotional distress.

Training:
We offer **FREE mental health awareness training** to anyone living or working in or with the farming community in Herefordshire.

Social Events:
We run a series of **FREE social events throughout the year** to break the isolation often felt by the farming community in Herefordshire.

Befriending:
Befriending volunteers offer companionship and support to people who are isolated and lonely – they may visit you at home and/or phone for a regular chat. A befriender can offer conversation and a listening ear to those that need it.



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Or text:
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General enquiries: wearefarmingminds@gmail.com
www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk

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Facebook: WeAreFarmingMinds

'Taking the bull by the horns' to tackle Mental Health in the farming community



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Parish Walk Round Treberva Fruit Farm Ponds

What a treat! On Sunday 1st June Andrew Nixon, wildlife expert, together with Sarah and George Snell led us through the orchards to visit their four ponds. The ponds are a vital part of the farm and are used for much needed irrigation and at the same time full of wildlife that we were on our way to investigate. Along the walk George showed us 'pollinators' - cherry trees used to cross pollinate the apple and some pear trees. We saw relatively newly planted Jazz and Pink Lady/Cripps Pink apple trees all correctly positioned ready for when robotic machinery is available in the UK. Phenome traps were put out to catch codling moth and one other – over- night large numbers were caught, far more than usual, without these the whole crop would be damaged.

Once we had reached the first pond, which had been restored from an older pond only about four years ago, Andrew commented on the bull rushes and other mainly native plants. He then dipped his net in the water to show us a bowl full of pond life - amongst he identified sticklebacks, newt tadpoles, toad/frog tadpoles, a water boatman and explained to us about the caddisfly larvae. On the water we saw Canada geese, a swan and some ducks.

Walking through the orchards and passing the ponds was a delight, with care for conservation and ecology. Swathes of ox eye daisies and red campion were happily growing next to the apples, there were also bee hives and we came across a 'bug hotel'!

Thank you for all those who organised this walk - Andrew Nixon who explained everything so well, Sarah and George Snell for allowing us to walk in the orchards, Wendy Fowler and Cathy Ellis- Braithwaite for baking the cakes and organising refreshments and finally Chris Fowler who put it all together. **Angela Middleton**

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The Birches Newsletter is also available online

www.birches.news

www.muchbirchparish.org.uk

King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club Visit to Allensmore Nurseries



For our May meeting 25 of us went to the Allensmore Site in Madeley, and had a very informative and pleasant afternoon seeing how the Company works. Jake gave us plenty of information about the types of compost they use, and we saw how the potting process works – not high technology - but a very effective machine rather than a robot! The display of plants was stunning, and we only saw a tiny section of the 60 acre site in our 2 hours! We are hoping that Jake will come to the Club next year and give a talk that we will look forward to and you are welcome to join us.

Plant Sale 7th June Although the weather was threatening to dampen the day, it didn't. The doors opened to the public at 10.00am and we had a steady stream of people coming through the doors and taking away copious amounts of plants. These plants were supplied by members of the Club, and our thanks go to Allensmore and Pengethley for their donations. The tea, coffee and delicious cakes were very popular and a big thank you goes out to all the people who donated the cakes. We managed to raise about £400 which will be used to pay our guest speakers and the Garden Show in September

Annual Show – Saturday September 6th

The Schedule for the Annual Show was attached to the last Newsletter – so have a look and see which classes you can enter. Come and join us for what is always a fabulous day. If you are not entering anything, then pop along at 2.00pm and see the displays for yourself. As always, there will be tea/coffee and cake available!

Oh yes....Look out for our new noticeboard by the bus stop each month..... See you all at the Show.

Lesley Chapman

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Much Birch Parish Council

Much Birch Parish Council Meeting held in Much Birch Community Hall on the 5th June 2025 from 7.30 pm. The parish council had received two planning consultations for discussion at the meeting.

The first was Planning Consultation 251148 - Land at Ladywell Cottage, Ladywell Lane, Wrigglesbrook, Kingsthorpe, Herefordshire, HR2 8AW. This was for a proposed new detached dwelling. The Parish Council discussed application 251148 and decided that there were no objections from the parish council.

The second application was - Planning Consultation - 251221 - The Maples, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AX. This was for a Full Householder application for a proposed single storey extension which also extends beyond the side elevation of the existing house. The Parish Council discussed the application 251221 and decided that there were no objections, to the proposals, from the parish council.

Dates for the forthcoming meetings, in 2025 are advised as follows: July 3rd, no meeting in August, September 4th, October 2nd, November 6th, December 4th

The next ordinary Parish Council Meeting of the Much Birch Parish Council will be held on Thursday 3rd July 2025 from 7.30pm at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend.

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.

Little Birch Parish Councillors

Cllr Steve Coles Cllr Tom Palfrey
Cllr Chris Atkinson Cllr Nick Deacon
Neil Barrington, clerk lbpcclerk@gmail.com

Website www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org

Little Birch Parish Facebook Group

Find news, events & business listings. Promote your business, advertise a local event or post news & information of interest to the village & local area.



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Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

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

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

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

Cllr Michael Agyeman Little Willow, Wrigglesbrook,
Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AU
email: magyeman92@gmail.com Tel. 01981 540840

Cllr David Irwin David.Irwin13@btinternet.com
Tel. 07766 135068

Cllr Steve Turner The Underhills, Hollybush Lane, Much
Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX, Tel. 07768 206296
email: turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com

Dates for the forthcoming meetings are advised as follows:
April 3rd, May 8th, June 5th, July 3rd, no meeting in August,
September 4th, October 2nd, November 6th, Dec 4th.

Clerk: Mrs Alison Wright: muchbirchclerk@gmail.com

Much Birch Footpath Officer: David Irwin on
MBfootpaths@btinternet.com Tel. 07766 135068

Full minutes of the meetings etc. can be found on the Parish
Council website following the link-
www.muchbirchparish.org.uk.

Footpath Officers

If you have any queries about footpaths contact:

Little Birch and Aconbury

Chris Fowler chrisfowler1@hotmail.co.uk
07931 292998

Much Birch including Kingsthorpe:

David Irwin david.irwin13@btinternet.com
07766 135068

Much Birch Facebook Page

It is not just about lost and found cats
and dogs, missing deliveries etc.

You'll find a wealth of information here
so Join Today!

Table Tennis 7-9pm

1st Tuesday of the month

Little Birch Village Hall All welcome

7-9pm £3, includes refreshments

For more information contact Sally

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or email sally.nichol@btinternet.co.uk

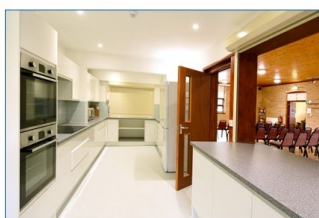


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For further information please contact the **Secretary Sylvia Jones** on **01981 540980** or email : mbchsec@gmail.com or visit the website: www.muchbirchcommunityhall.org

Jobs for the garden in July and August

by Derek Scrivens

The lawns look a bit scorched at the moment but flowers and vegetables are looking good, helped along by fertiliser and watering. It is a pleasure to see blue and great tits, sparrows and great spotted woodpeckers bringing their young to the bird feeders in our garden. We have not seen any young Robins or Blackbirds yet. Hopefully this is not a general trend. Certainly the adult birds have been observed struggling to find worms and other grubs in our garden. I am starting to have cursory glances at the progress of vegetables and flowers with the horticultural shows in mind - we can but hope. Enjoy your summer holidays and enjoy your garden. Take some time to look in detail at the many plants and animals that we have around us. They are far more interesting than what is on that little screen on the mobile phone.

Jobs that can be done in the Summer

Keep dead heading flowers - it can seem a boring task but will pay dividends.

Water any newly planted plants regularly to get them established.

Prune magnolias.

Feed hanging baskets and tubs every couple of weeks with high potash fertiliser (tomato feed).

Grow on biennials.

Clean foliage and remove dead leaves from house plants.

They will benefit from some time outside in shade.

Harvest courgettes regularly when 4-5 inches long.

Feed tomatoes, chillies, peppers and melons with high potash fertiliser and cucumbers with a nitrogen fertiliser.

Make new strawberry beds.

Lift garlic, shallots and onions when foliage turns yellow.

Cover brassicas with fine mesh to prevent butterflies laying their eggs on them.

Take semi-ripe cuttings of herbs.

Sow spring cabbage seed.

Early potatoes should be ready in early July if you haven't already had some in June.

Ensure frogs, toads, newts and hedgehogs can exit ponds.

Don't destroy wasps nests unless their location is dangerous.

Don't water lawns even if they are brown, they will recover with just a shower of rain.

Feed birds, keeping bird tables clean, top up bird baths with water and put out a little meat (not fish) based dog or cat food for hedgehogs if any visit your garden.



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**Coffee Morning with Book Exchange
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Thursday 3rd & Saturday 19th July

**Thursday 7th & Saturday 16th August
10-12 noon**

**Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee & cake or bis-
cuits. Make new friends, catch up with old
friends. Take a book, leave a book or both.
Families and well behaved dogs welcome.**

Book of the month is

Out of the Woods but not over the Hill

by Gervase Phinn

**This is an autobiographical collection of tales
told by an ex school inspector who fell in love
with the children of the Yorkshire dales. It's
full of gentle humour and amusing anec-
dotes, just the sort of book to wind down
with at the end of a busy day.**

**And while you're here, why not stay to have a
cup of tea or coffee and enjoy a chat? We sit
around and discuss anything, from local news
to world affairs. But always with kindness and
good humour. Come and join us - All are
welcome. Jennifer**

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What is the Future for Newspapers?

Over the last 40 years, the number of physical newspapers sold in the UK has been declining. The decline has been marked since the turn of the millennium, with a paper like The Sun going from 3.557 million in Jan 2000 to 700,000 (approx.) today. They are on their last legs, so it seems. Yet they still often set the agenda for discussion and arguments on TV and radio. But this cannot be sustainable. In the old days, newspapers relied on two things: advertisers and readers.

Advertisers have chosen to spend their pounds elsewhere – especially the internet and social media and a lot of readers have moved from buying a whole paper to reading single articles on-line, which cannot carry as much advertising. Revenue had fallen, reporters have been made redundant and a seeming spiral of doom entered! And yet, somehow, newspapers are surviving!

They are still very important for breaking stories, for giving background and for keeping people informed. But we don't want paper, we want digital and, although digital is cheaper to produce, it can't command the same advertising spend! It looks like digital subscription is the way forward. Do people want the news? Yes. Are they prepared to pay for it? Maybe! So here is the rub – what new model are newspapers going for? Are they filling their digital screens with adverts (here is looking at you Mirror and Sun) or asking people to support them (The Guardian) or putting up a paywall (Telegraph and Times). All have merits and problems.

Who knows how they will be resolved. But if we want to know the full story, then newspapers still have a great legacy and a long tradition of making us think. The future is uncertain but it is going to be challenging to keep the newspaper industry alive, relevant and breaking stories into the rest of this decade and beyond. **Revd Mark**

Services for July 2025

Sunday 6th July (3rd Sunday after Trinity)	9.15 a.m. at Much Dewchurch – Holy Communion 11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion
Sunday 13th July (4th Sunday after Trinity)	9.15 a.m. at Much Birch – Holy Communion 11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Morning Worship
Sunday 20th July (5th Sunday after Trinity)	9.15 a.m. at Much Birch – Morning Worship 11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion in Traditional Language
Sunday 27th July (6th Sunday after Trinity)	9.15 a.m. at Llandinabo – Holy Communion in Traditional Language

Children's Garden Show Workshop Friday 5th September at 4.00pm

Bring your children along to make a monster from vegetables for the Show the next day. Then encourage them to make a Garden on a Plate, or Create a Picture using leaves. Older children can decorate a cup cake, decorate any garden item, or make an object from natural material, or submit a painting or drawing of any garden subject, nature, wildlife or landscape. Prizes include money and trophies.



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**Send items for September newsletter
to editorial@birchesnews.org.uk by
5th July**

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www.birches.news

www.muchbirchparish.org.uk



**WALKER'S WALKS
AND PET CARE**

~DBS checked, qualified and insured~

**I offer stimulating dog walks and
enriching pet sitting around
Hereford/ Welsh border.**

walkerspetcare@outlook.com

07842966678

**Facebook - @Walker's walks and pet
care**

Diary Dates July/August 2025

Community Cafe MBCH 12th July	p2
LB Church Fete & Dog Show 19 July	p2
Coffee/Books LBVH 3rd & 19th July, 7th & 16th Aug	p9
Table Tennis LBVH 1st Tues LBVH	p7
LBPC Wed 5th July LBVH	p7
MBPC Fri 9th MBCH	p7
Gardening Club LBVH	p6
Church Services	p10
Children's Garden Show Workshop	p2
Parish Walk	p5
Gardening Club Show 6th Sept	p6



Advertising Rates

11 editions per year (no August newsletter)

1/16 page £4.20 per issue or £42 per year

1/8th page £4.80 per issue or £48 per year

¼ page £5.40 per issue or £54 per year

½ page £9.60 per issue or £96 per year

Payment by BACS through Santander

Account Name **Little Birch Village Hall**

Sort Code **09-01-54** A/C No. **65493289**

Put your business name as reference

Defibrillator Locations

IN A LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY CALL 999

AEDs available to use locally for those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. A defibrillator is an easy to use, medical device that analyses the heart's rhythm and, if needed, delivers an electrical shock (defibrillation) to help the heart establish an effective rhythm.

Allensmore Locks Garage

Backney on the garage wall at Market Gardens Cottage

Bridstow on the outside of the village hall

Garway on the wall outside the Garway Moon pub

Harewood End at Harewood End Inn on outside of the pub at the back in the beer garden.

Little Birch on the outside of the village hall

Llanwarne on the wall by steps leading up to the village hall

Much Birch on the outside of the church hall

Much Birch Axe & Cleaver on the side of the pub

Much Dewchurch outside Steiner School, first building after the church

Peterstow at the Yew Tree pub

Sellack on the outside of the parish hall (key code needed)

St Weonards old BT phone box off the A466 between the church and Forge Cottage

Wormelow at the Cricket Club & Carrot & Wine shop

Wilton on wall at the BP garage on the roundabout

Much Birchslow
flowyoga

Join us for

SLOW FLOW YOGA

Improve strength and flexibility & also benefit from the Relaxation

Tuesdays
6:00- 7:00 PM
at Much Birch Village Hall

£8 for drop in

£35 for 5 passes

For Booking: Follow QR code
Or email:
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A calming flowing yoga class with time for relaxation.
Suitable for beginners to more experienced yogis. You can gain flexibility, strength and a sense of relaxation in this welcoming yoga session.

More Information: Tel Arwen on 07503 199 972