



# THE *Birches*

## Community Matters

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

First published 1977   **September 2021**

### A note from the Editorial Team.

We trust and hope everyone is well.

How wonderful to see so many local events starting to take place again in September. Maybe we are getting back to "normal". Caution is always recommended, of course, but community is important and we should all support the events which are planned and give many thanks to those who have made these possible.

### **NEW EDITOR NEEDED**

The Editor is going to have to step down after 8 years due to relocation.

If there are any budding "publishers" out there who would be able to take on producing this Community Newsletter in the future we would be most pleased to hear from them. It is not a big task but requires some understanding of creating a publication. The current Editor would be more than happy to give guidance to anyone interested.

It is a VERY rewarding role and gives much insight into the local community. There is also an "editorial" function to include (or exclude, on rare occasion!) items which are most suitable and to make them fit into the format.

If anyone can help please contact the Editor as below

**Best wishes to all  
Editor**



**[Editorial@birchesnews.org.uk](mailto:Editorial@birchesnews.org.uk)**



**Saturday 4th September - 2pm  
Castle Nibole Farm**

Just off Barrack Hill towards the Castle Inn



Cake stall, Refreshments, Skittles, Plant Stall, Welly Wanging, Children's Games including 'make a vegetable monster', Bottle Stall, Raffle and much much more.

Donations for stalls would be much appreciated  
contact John Caton 540415

**All proceeds to Little Birch Church**

**Join us at the  
Community Café  
@ Much Birch Community Hall**



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

## Much Birch Surgery

For all information regarding treatment, consultations and vaccinations  
please contact the surgery

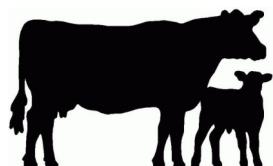
**01981 540310**

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

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

## MERRIVALE ORGANIC BEEF

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

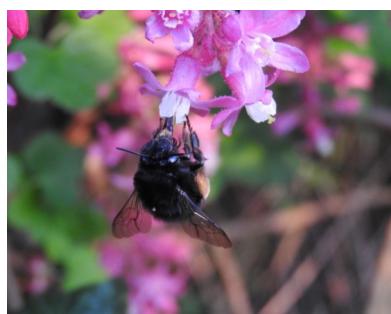
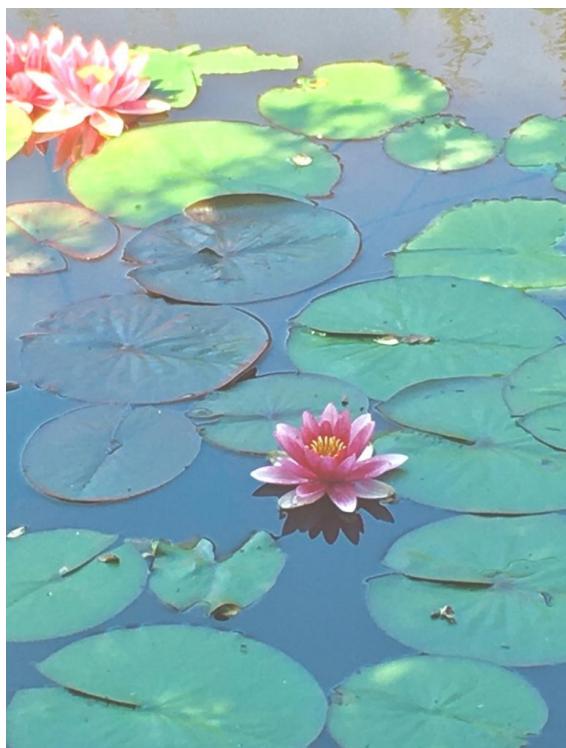


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### Aconbury and Cream Tea Walk

What a wonderful day! It was lovely to see so many people on our walk on Sunday 8 August. We walked up through Aconbury Woods and down across stunning wheat fields to Aconbury village with far-reaching views to Hereford and even Clee Hill. It was a pleasure to see everyone enjoying the afternoon and taking delight in making new friends and catching up with old ones.

We returned to Merrivale Farm where we enjoyed a sumptuous cream tea, homemade by Emily Mason and family. The happy hubbub of chatter was accompanied by the sweet mooing of the neighbouring cows!

Sue Mason was so grateful for all the donations towards her Macmillan sponsored walk in September. We raised over £400! Thank you for your generosity.

Thank you to the Masons for hosting us, and to all the walkers for coming along!



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**The Nightmare**

Situated opposite the Castle Inn pub, nestled in the heart of our beautiful village, a new bar.

I don't know about you, but the months of isolation, the decimation, the lives lost and our ways of life, it has been difficult, to say the least.

I'd like to welcome you all to my little venture, to bring something back to the village that I grew up in. This idea eventually transformed in to the mobile events bar known as, The Nightmare. Part of The Eternal Void Ltd and the first stage in hopefully a bright future.

Whether you come for the draught products, the outdoor air, the night sky or even just the company, we are here.



**Opening hours**

**Fridays: 3pm till 10pm.**

**Saturdays: Noon until 10pm.**

**Sundays: Noon until 10pm.**

These may differ from week to week, but I'll always let you know! Even in person or you can find us on Facebook. Feel free to get in touch.

All enquiries please email: [voidalive@outlook.com](mailto:voidalive@outlook.com)

Or ring: 07463761744



**at Much Birch Community Hall**

*Flicks in the Sticks returns to Much Birch Community Hall this Autumn with 4 films to bring some much needed light relief and entertainment!*

**Thursday 23 September 7.30 pm**

**The Personal History of David Copperfield (PG)**

A fresh and distinctive take on Charles Dickens' semi-autobiographical masterpiece, The Personal History of David Copperfield, set in the 1840s, chronicles the life of its iconic title character as he navigates a chaotic world to find his elusive place within it. From his unhappy childhood to the discovery of his gift as a storyteller and writer, David's journey is by turns hilarious and tragic, but always full of life, colour and humanity. Starring Dev Patel, Hugh Laurie and Tilda Swinton.

*Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm*

*Coming up in the rest of the season...*

**Tuesday 12 October, 7.30 - 23 WALKS 12A**

**Thursday 18 November, 7.30 - LOVE SARAH 12**

**Tuesday 7 December, 7.30 - LITTLE WOMEN u**

*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](mailto:muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com) or call 01981 540097*

*For further information about films and screenings visit [www.artsalive.co.uk](http://www.artsalive.co.uk) (online booking available!)*



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### Colin Dymott

Colin Dymott from Wrigglebrook Lane died in June of this year and we held his funeral service at Much Birch. Colin was a long time resident of the village and contribute in lots of ways to the village. However, his great passion was the Hereford to Gloucester Canal Trust and he spent many years working with the Trust in fund raising and looking at the restoration of the canal as a leisure facility for people to enjoy. It might seem like an impossible task – to restore a working canal, as parts have been filled in, locks have fallen into disrepair and land taken for other uses.

However, he had a great vision that the canal could, one day, be restored so that everyone could use it, from those who love the canal boats through to runners and cyclists using the canal towpath.

Although the project is still far from complete, we need people like Colin with drive and vision to help restore such wonderful treasures and give them a new life. Our thoughts and prayer go to Sally and her family at this time.

### John Bulbeck

John Bulbeck, long time resident of Little Birch at Crow's Nest died in July and had a funeral at St. Mary's, Little Birch in August. John was known to be both kind and generous and, on occasion, a little grumpy! He was often seen strolling around Little Birch with his thumb stick on his daily constitutional. He and Alwyn (who died back in September 2020) had retired to Little Birch after a career in both banking and farming and their love for animals and stray cats meant that their home was always busy. John loved to feed the wild birds in his garden as well – though keeping the cats from the birds was almost a full time job in itself.

In the last year or so, both Alwyn and John struggled with dementia and were residents of Charnwood in Much Dewchurch where they received excellent care. We shall miss them both and prayers for their family; daughters Debs and Nicola and granddaughter Annabelle at this time.



### **From Reverend Mark.**



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## Little Birch Village Hall

As you will have read in our previous updates, a large amount of work has been carried out at the village hall over the last 18 months including a brand new kitchen, improved storage, plastering, internal and external painting, improvements to the bar area and much more. The majority of this work is now complete (although volunteers would be very welcome to help with a few last finishing touches) As such the hall is now back open and available to hire. Our regular groups should be re-starting shortly and If you would like to enquire about hiring the hall for your own events then please contact Linda Maden on 07849 637242 or [lindamaden@btinternet.com](mailto:lindamaden@btinternet.com) or visit the website <http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org/village-hall/>



Please send copy for the October 2021 Newsletter to [editorial@birchesnews.org.uk](mailto:editorial@birchesnews.org.uk) or written contributions to Liz Hall at Walmere, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe HR2 8AW.  
—by 18th September please.



### Holistic I.T. Support for Senior Surfers

[www.teaandtech.co.uk](http://www.teaandtech.co.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/TeanTech>

[richard@teaandtech.co.uk](mailto:richard@teaandtech.co.uk)

07739953864

I'm Richard, and I offer IT support around rural Hereford.

I have 25 years' experience of working with technology, supporting a vast range of people, from technophobes to technogeeks!

I aim to specifically support the more senior users within our community, who often appreciate a completely different approach. I won't burden anyone with jargon and will offer only gentle and compassionate support. This can help the user feel more comfortable with tackling technology and lead to a growing confidence.

Sometimes, the tech issue might be the initial reason for contact and all that's really required is someone to sit patiently and share a cuppa. I can do that too, I'm a great listener!

If you need a friendly chat over a cuppa, whilst I sort out your IT issues, get in touch using the info above.

## The Birches Camera Club and Photography Group....



We are most grateful to receive some "September" photographs from the group which you will see in this publication. Many thanks to all those who have contributed.

For further information about the group please contact.....

*Sally Nichol at [sally.nichol@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.nichol@btinternet.com)*



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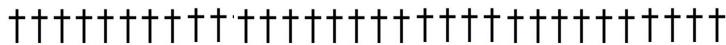
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## Services for September



5<sup>th</sup> September – 11.00 a.m. Holy Communion at St. Mary, Little Birch

12<sup>th</sup> September – 9.15 a.m. Family Communion at St. Mary and St. Thomas a Becket, Much Birch

11.00 a.m. Morning Worship at St. Mary, Little Birch

19<sup>th</sup> September – 9.15 a.m. Celtic Morning Worship at St. Mary and St. Thomas a Becket, Much Birch

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion in Traditional Language at St. Mary, Little Birch



Can you name four Countries which begin with the letter A..... And do not also end with the letter A?



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## 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

## 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      [lpcclerk@gmail.com](mailto:lpcclerk@gmail.com)

For updates and notifications of future meetings please check out the website – [www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org](http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org).

Little Birch Parish Council

# Pilgrim Hotel & Valley Restaurant

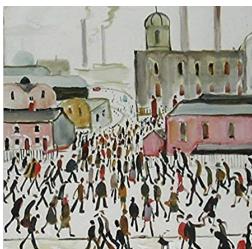
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## KILPECK ART CLUB.

The club's autumn season begins in Kilpeck Village Hall on 13 September and continues each Monday from 2 until 4pm until 29 November. New members are very welcome, just come along to any meeting. The hall has good natural light and there is plenty of room for social distancing. Contact [jen64davies@gmail.com](mailto:jen64davies@gmail.com) for more details.



Herefordshire

Advanced Drivers



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## Update from Herefordshire Advanced Drivers

Since the 17<sup>th</sup> May when we were able to recommence in-car observed drives we have prioritised those whose mentoring towards becoming an advanced driver had been disrupted by the restrictions due to Covid-19. Good progress has been made and several will be taking the advanced test in the next few weeks. This will enable us to undertake driver refresher days for members of the public during the autumn, leading to more taking the advanced driver course and we have also offered a free observed refresher drive to all our members so that their driving is maintained at a high level.

Recent research by IAM has shown that many motorists during the last eighteen months have lost confidence in their driving with 33% feeling stressed by the prospect of driving on busier roads and 27% expressing concern about drivers being out of practice. These, together with other concerns emphasise the role that our refresher days, in-car observing and advanced course mentoring can play in restoring confidence and developing safe driving for the benefit of all road users. Anyone who would like further details should contact Stella Boyd-Carpenter on 01432 840835 or by email: [group-contact@advanced-drivers.org.uk](mailto:group-contact@advanced-drivers.org.uk)

A further finding from the research was that many people were concerned that their vehicles, often little used during the last year or more, might breakdown particularly on lengthy journeys. The validity of this was demonstrated on the weekend after schools had closed in July for the summer holidays when breakdown services reported huge volumes of traffic and record numbers of breakdowns. This highlighted the need to ensure that servicing is up to date and that vehicles are checked before use, particularly before long journeys.

Recently, the Department for Transport announced a summer cycling and walking campaign. Linked to this will be new rules based on the requirement that road users who have the potential to cause the greatest harm should take the greatest share of the responsibility for road safety. These will include new rules for cycling and giving way to pedestrians at side road junctions. The proposals will be debated by parliament during the autumn and, if approved, will then become law with an updated Highway Code.

There will be considerable changes in road conditions together with reduced hours of daylight in the next few weeks as we move from summer into autumn, so do take account of the changes and we wish you all continued safe driving.

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## Parish Walk

Sunday 12 September at 1.45pm

Alison Clarke will lead an informative history tour around Little Birch and stop and talk at various points on the way.

We will start at the Parish Field (opposite the village hall) and walk to Athelstan's Wood, returning to LBVH by way of the church and Higgin's Well.

About 3 miles and takes 2 hours approx.

Refreshments available in the village hall at the end.

Please let me know if you would like to come as we are limiting places to 25 max so everyone can hear Alison.

Angela Middleton

Little Birch Voluntary Footpath Officer

01981 540377

[ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk)



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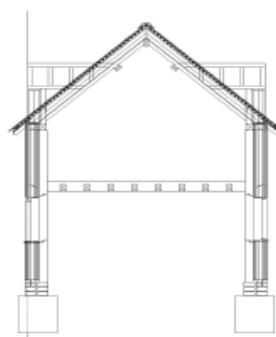
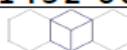
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**Much Birch Parish Council**  
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Longfield House, Gooses Foot, Kingstone,  
Herefordshire HR2 9NE  
Tel. 01981 250860

Email: [muchbirchclerk@gmail.com](mailto:muchbirchclerk@gmail.com)

September 2, October 7, November 4 and December 2.

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

**Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-**

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, e mail [thecooks@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecooks@wyenet.co.uk) Tel. 01981 540703

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

Cllr Roisin Burge The Old Hall, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AX [roisinburge@hotmail.com](mailto:roisinburge@hotmail.com) Tel. 01981 540724

Cllr David Baldwin The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS [baldwin79@btinternet.com](mailto: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](http://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>

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You can also find us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

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## Value of Churchyards

Churchyards are a vital place in our communities, both rural and urban. They provide much that is needed, a sense of history, a green place, somewhere to go and remember, somewhere to contemplate our lives!

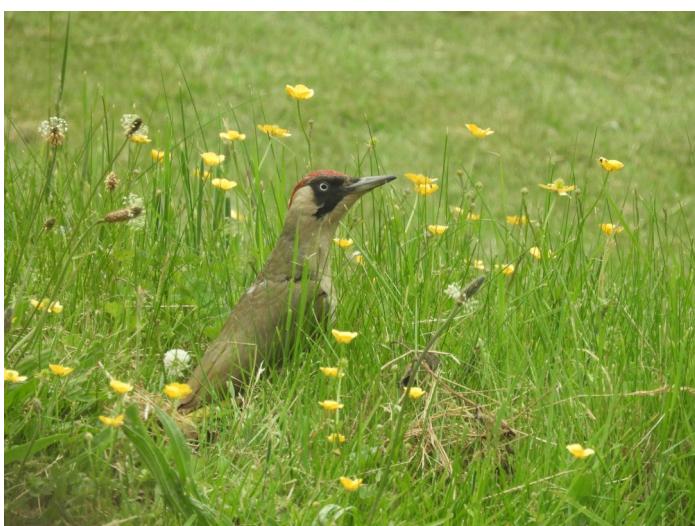
If it sounds like I am being dramatic, well, perhaps I am slightly. But if you live in a place of concrete and street lights, of cars and fast-food outlets, there isn't much that is green around you and a churchyard in the middle of an urban environment provides not only a green space but also somewhere for nature to thrive.

In a rural context, they are also very valuable. They are places where the names powerful families from the past live on, they give an insight into life of the times – you only need to see how many children died to be reminded that we live in something of a golden age. They are places to sit and contemplate. They are also places where we can encourage nature – they all don't have to mown to within an inch of their life – we can have bird boxes (at Little Birch and Much Birch) and wilder, less cut areas (again at Little Birch) that

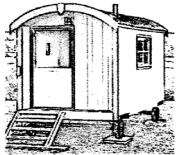
encourage a range of wild flowers. Yes, they may not look as "nice" as we would like, but they do provide homes for flowers, voles, mice etc.

So support your local churchyard, volunteer to help keep parts of it tidy, give a donation if you can, encourage your Parish Council to support the costs of keeping them, they are vital areas for this generation and those to come.

Revd Mark



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## **Christmas Market**

Much Birch Community Hall Management Committee is planning to hold a Christmas Market on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 from 2pm until 4.30pm. (doors open for setting up from 1pm) Our usual stallholders have said they are interested but we would welcome anyone else who might like to hold a stall at £5.00 per table. If you would like to book a stall would you please contact the Secretary Sylvia Jones by telephone on 01981 540980 or email at [john.sylvia.jones@gmail.com](mailto:john.sylvia.jones@gmail.com)



A priest, a minister and a rabbit walk into a bar.

"What will it be" says the bar tender.

"Don't ask me" say the rabbit. "I am only here because of autocorrect."

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## Mason's of Merrivale

Firstly, for those who don't do Facebook, a big thank you to those who supported the walk and cream tea. We made lots of money towards the Macmillan mighty hike that I'm doing in September. Very grateful to Angela and everyone who made it such an enjoyable afternoon. I can't wait for the Dawn Chorus walk now that we will be holding next April – all being well.

Now back to the farm. We have just completed our third cut of silage so, along with the pit full of whole crop silage done in mid July our fodder stocks are looking so much better than last year.

Our crop of fodder beet is also looking very promising, apart from the abundance of weeds. Next year we think we need to drill it later and hoe it twice which will hopefully control them better.

It hasn't been a particularly wet summer for us but there has certainly been enough rain to keep the grass growing well. All the paddocks are being topped as the cows come off them to freshen up the grass for autumn growing.

Our next big task is to fill the barns with straw for bedding during the winter. So far nothing has been combined and although a latish season, the weather is not good for the arable farmers. Hopefully the forecast warm, dry spell arrives at the end of the month to help everyone. A dryish autumn would now help so that we can keep all the cattle our for as long as possible.

A first for us in the last week is to have a calf with a broken leg (photo attached) We assume her mother trod on her. Not having happened before we were unsure of the outcome but very pleased to say having been plastered by the vet, all looks good. Being so young means she should mend well and is getting plenty of attention from the family.

Bob and I are busy with the vegetable growing, I'm not sure why everyone moans about a lack of insects as our patch seems to have masses of them – good and bad! Cabbage whites are a big problem this year, the weather obviously suits them perfectly.

The milk vending machine is progressing nicely, all the equipment and vending machines are now here. We're still installing the electrics and are waiting on doors and a roof, so nearly there. You can now follow our progress on Facebook and Instagram@merrimilk.

In the next instalment I should have plenty to write about with the new Milk Hut in operation. Enjoy the rest of the summer/autumn, it's wonderful to be out and about again.

Zorro Patty – our little calf with a broken leg



The Milk Hut

