

# The Birches

## Community Matters Newsletter

Kingsthorpe, Much Birch, Little Birch,  
Aconbury & Wormelow January 2024



## Beauty and the Beast

Comes to Little Birch Village Hall

Friday January 26<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 7:00pm

Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 – 2:00pm & 7:00

A tale (almost) as old as time... Packed with songs, side splitting jokes and even a tear or two. Not only does Beauty finally get her Prince – but her fast talking French poodle also finds love in the topsy turvy world of the Beast's palace - where even the furniture can talk!

### TICKETS

Under 16s - £5

Adults - £10

Available from Geoff or Julie on  
01981 541 080 or every Friday  
at the Little Birch Village Hall  
7pm to 7:30pm

Come down to our family  
pantomime 2024! Little  
Birch Village Hall is  
presenting you with  
**Beauty and the beast!**

## New Year's Celebration

Little Birch Village Hall  
8 pm - 1 am



Ticket Only Venue £10  
14+ Come & have a Great Time

Fully Licenced  
Bar

Disco Music



Light  
Refreshments

Prize Draw

All Proceeds in aid of  
St Michael's Hospice Charity # 5111709 & The Village Hall

Contact Margaret Stringer 07485 209604  
Or Julie Green 01981 541080

## Coffee Morning With Book Exchange

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January 10.00-12.00 noon

Little Birch Village Hall

Come and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, some cake or biscuits.

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 all welcome

## Parish Walk

There will be a parish walk on Sunday 28th January, starting from Much Birch Community Hall at 1.45pm. The walk will be approximately 4 miles long and will be led by David Irwin, Much Birch Footpath Officer.

The Community Hall will be open after the walk for a cup tea and a piece of cake. We hope you can join us.

### MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council is seeking to appoint a new Lengthsman for the Parish. Duties will include mowing, strimming, clearing ditches and gullies, digging grips, cleaning signs, trimming overgrowth of plants and general minor roads upkeep and maintenance. Relevant experience and appropriate insurance are essential.

If you are interested in applying for the post an application form can be obtained by contacting:

**Alison Wright (Parish Clerk)**

**E mail: [muchbirchclerk@gmail.com](mailto:muchbirchclerk@gmail.com)**

**Tel: 01981 250860**

### The Jolly Gardener

[TheJollyGardener2502@gmail.com](mailto:TheJollyGardener2502@gmail.com)

Kyle - 07850921889



\* Senior Citizen Discount & Free Quotations  
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Join us at the

## Community Café

@ Much Birch Community Hall

**Saturday 13 January 2024**

**10:00 - 12:30**

and every 2nd Saturday of the month

**10 February**

**9 March**

**13 April**

For more information or if you are in need of transport contact Lydia on 01981 540323 or [socialfabric@hotmail.com](mailto:socialfabric@hotmail.com)



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



at Much Birch Community Hall

**Thursday 25 January - MY SAILOR, MY LOVE 12**

My Sailor, My Love is a heart-warming drama on timeless love and forgiveness by Director Klaus Härö. Howard, a retired sailor and widow, lives in a house by the sea. His adult daughter Grace hires a carer for her father, a lady in her mature years, Annie. Recluse and stubborn, Howard rejects Annie's company, but eventually opens his heart and gives his last love a chance. Grace has her own crisis to unravel and finds her father's romance difficult. Her father's new love reminds her of the affection she missed, as a child and now again as an adult. My Sailor, My Love is a story about a guilt-affected daughter-father relationship. But it's also a love story between two elderly people, proving that a new beginning is never too late.

**Tickets £5 (£4 under 16s)**

**Refreshments including hot dogs and ice cream available from 7pm**

*Tickets available in advance or on the door (cash or card payments accepted)- 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)*



## Hi Everyone,

As 2024 rolls around, we find ourselves in a time of tension and confusion. There may well be an election later this year, which the polls predict could lead to a change of government and a new Prime Minister, the conflict in Ukraine seems to have become more like WW1 than we ever expected and the Middle East, often a place of high tensions, continues to promote conflict and have repercussions over the whole world.

We are not the first people to worry about the future. If you go back into the Old Testament, you find plenty of examples where political and military forces were arranged against God's people. Sometimes these armies melted away – like Sennacherib in II Chronicles 32 – and sometimes they

triumphed, such as the fall of Jerusalem brought about by Nebuchadnezzar (II Chronicles 36).

Even though God's people were taken into exile, they retained the hope of a better future. The captives in Babylon asked of the Lord's prophet, Jeremiah, what should they do. And he said, rather than mourn for the past, they should plant gardens and marry off their children!

So, even when the darkest of night seems to be at hand, there is always that part of us that hopes for a better future, a peaceful one. It might not happen next week or next month or even next year but it will come. So for 2024, we must remain bearers of hope, carriers of light in a darkened world.

**Revd Mark**

### Services across the Birches January 2024

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> January (Epiphany)	11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Holy Communion
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> January (2nd Sunday of Epiphany)	9.15 a.m. Much Birch – Holy Communion 11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Morning Worship
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> January (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany)	9.15 a.m. Much Birch – Morning Worship 11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Holy Communion in Traditional Language
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> January (Candlemas or Presentation of Jesus in the Temple)	9.15 a.m. Llandinabo – Holy Communion in Traditional Language

## Mel's Musings

By the time you are reading this Christmas will be over and everyone will be heartily sick of turkey, well most anyway – I love it. If you make the usual curry do you use your own curry powder, or a shop bought one?

I have a recipe I have used for many years, given to me by a colleague who used to be a professional chef.

I always put it in a dry pan with some oil and gently heat and stir for a couple of minutes to cook the spices and enable them to release their oils before adding any other ingredients.

I mainly use whole spices and grind them down, as they keep their flavour for much longer, but using pre-ground spices is fine, just make sure they still smell delicious or you will get no flavour to your final spice mix. I put in 2 teaspoons of each of the Curry Spice Mix, and that will make enough mix for three or so meals. Keep in a sealed jar in the dark to preserve the wonderful flavour. This will give you a moderate heat, so change the amount of chilli to suit your personal taste.

## The First Snowdrop

The snowdrop flower has enjoyed a rich history that includes several legends about how the flower came to be. In one old tale, Eve was distraught after God had cast her out of the Garden of Eden amidst unending snow. At this moment of despair, the angel caught a snowflake and breathed upon it. The snowflake fluttered to the Earth and gave birth to the snowdrop. This delicate bloom came to symbolize hope and rebirth.



**Happy New Year, Mel**

## Mel's Curry Spice Mix

Coriander, turmeric, chilli, cumin, paprika, ginger (dried not fresh), garam masala, mixed spice, fenugreek, 16 cardamom pod seeds, or 1 ½ tsp dried). Also a small amount of ground cinnamon (approx. 1 tsp.)



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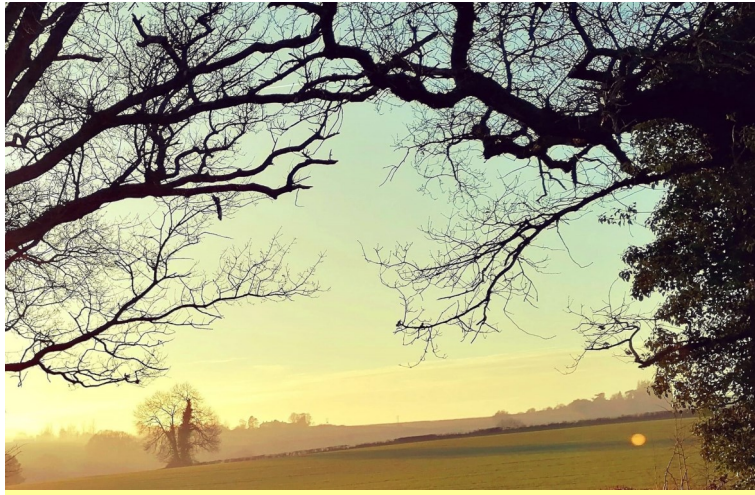
**Renovations**

**Landscaping**

**General garden maintenance**

**Oliver - 07780 718736**





## Photography Group

We are a friendly local group who are keen and enjoy our imaging skills. We are meeting together to set out a program for next year on Saturday 20th January 2024 from 10-12am.

Venue: Fayre View, Kingsthorpe, HR2 8AU

We invite anyone who has an interest in taking photos to come and join us. You will be made very welcome.

For more information contact Sally Nichol 07803 032928 or 01981 540001



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walkerspetcare@outlook.com

07842966678

Facebook - @Walker's walks and pet  
care

## Art and Craft Space



### Friendly Art and Craft Group

We meet every Thursday afternoon 2 until 4 at Little Birch Village Hall at the top of Barrack Hill HR2 8AZ  
The first meeting in 2024 is Thursday 11th January.

We bring along our own projects and have a monthly theme. The theme for January is Winter. Feel free to do your own projects. You don't have to follow the themes if you would rather do something else.

For more information please contact Sally Nichol  
tel. 07803 032928 01981 540001  
email [sally.nichol@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.nichol@btinternet.com)

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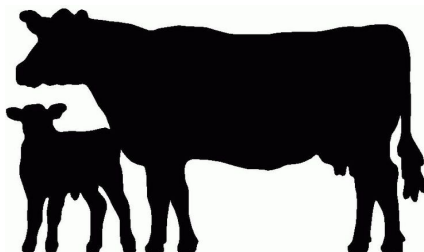
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on 07974 053804  
or email [lucymason@hotmail.com](mailto:lucymason@hotmail.com)  
Merrivale Farm Little Birch  
Hereford HR2 8BA**



**Items for February newsletter to  
[editorial@birchesnews.org.uk](mailto:editorial@birchesnews.org.uk) or paper  
copy to Elisabeth Taylor 07854 629193 by  
**8th January****

## **Ping's Hairdressing & Barbers**



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## **Hereford Microsuction Specialist**

**EAR WAX REMOVAL**

It is very common for ears to become blocked with  
wax, which leads to discomfort, pain and hearing  
loss.

Make an appointment and have your ears checked at :-

**The Maple Room  
Much Birch Community Centre (next to Drs surgery)  
Hereford  
HR2 8HT**

**HOME VISITS ALSO AVAILABLE.**

**CONTACT:-  
Anita Phillips mobile 07930145273**

## Jobs in the garden for January

Walking around the garden ( or maybe squelching is more appropriate ) I see jobs that should have been done a while ago, but the ground has been too wet to work on. The greenhouse was bubble-wrapped towards the end of November and tender plants 'tucked up' for the winter, just in time to protect them from the 3 or 4 nights of hard frosts which we had at the end of November and the beginning of December.

The grower from whom I have bought sweet pea seeds for almost 20 years is about to retire, thus his seeds will not be available after this year. In a leaflet accompanying my purchases this year I was informed that they have a lot of seeds in stock and that it is possible to store them in a freezer. I have since bought some extras, enough for a couple of years, and am going to give it a try. Just got to be careful not to eat them!!

### Here are a few things to do

- \*Prune young deciduous trees while leafless to improve the structure, and, with mature trees, thin the branches, and if desired, raise the canopy.
- \*Destroy spotted/blotched leaves of Pansy/Viola as this is probably a fungal disease.
- \*Cut back the foliage on Hellebores so flowers aren't obscured by old leaves. This will also help to control Hellebore leaf spot disease.
- \*Pinch out tips of Autumn sown sweet peas.

Provide protection if adverse weather occurs.

\*Sow summer brassicas – cauliflower calabrese and cabbage – in a propagator or on a warm window sill. Grow on in a frame or greenhouse.

\*Buy seed potatoes and onion sets.

\*Begin forcing rhubarb by placing a large inverted receptacle over the crowns.

\*Do the monthly check of stored apples, pears, potatoes and onions, removing any rotten fruits.

\*Keep bird feeders stocked with fresh food, birdbaths clean and with fresh water, and clean out and re-hang nesting boxes.

\*If there is snow shake it off tree branches and shrubs.

\*Prune grapevine if not already done.

\*Top up mulches around tender perennial plants to at least 15cm.

**Derek Scrivens**

## Hope Spring eCards

**Anniversaries Birthdays Christmas  
Easter Father's Day Mother's Day  
New Year Valentine's Day**

**Send greetings for any occasion online  
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**[www.HopeSpringCards.co.uk](http://www.HopeSpringCards.co.uk)**

Little Dewchurch hall:  
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Wednesday 7pm  
Thursday 9:30am

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## Much Birch Parish Council

At Much Birch Parish Council Meeting held in Much Birch Community Hall on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 the Parish Council discussed, and agreed to comments, in regard to four local planning applications: firstly Planning Consultation 232938 – Wenallt, Kingsthorne, Hereford HR2 8AL, this being for new access to main road from driveway, proposed first floor to bungalow and new rear raised decking area. The parish council commented that there were no objections to 232938, with additional comments.

Secondly, Planning Consultation 233376 – Land at Highbury, Parish Lane, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AT - proposed 3 bed dwelling house. The parish council commented that there were no objections to application 233376 but also highlighted that the agent had erroneously referred to the Little Birch Neighbourhood Development Plan in their application comments as opposed to the Much Birch NDP.

The third application discussed was for Planning Consultation 233331 – Land at Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Herefordshire. This was an application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval of 200884 (Proposed site for erection of a single dwelling) - to formalise the adjustments in the scale and layout of the proposed scheme. The parish council commented that there were no objections to application 233331.

The fourth application discussed was for Planning Consultation 233211 - Chamonix, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorne, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AW – This was for a proposed single storey side extension to provide guest room, en-suite and utility. The parish council commented that there were no objections to application 233211. The dates for the forthcoming meetings, in the year 2024, are: Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, Feb 8<sup>th</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, April 4<sup>th</sup>, May 9<sup>th</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>, July 4<sup>th</sup>, No meeting in August, Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nov 7<sup>th</sup> and Dec 5<sup>th</sup>. The next Parish Council Meeting of the Much Birch Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 from 7.30pm** at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend.

### 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](http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org)**  
**next meeting January 3rd at 7pm LBVH**

### Footpath Officers

If you have any queries about footpaths, contact:

**Little Birch and Aconbury: Chris Fowler**  
[chrisfowler1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chrisfowler1@hotmail.co.uk) 07931 292998

**Much Birch including Kingsthorne: David Irwin**  
[david.irwin13@btinternet.com](mailto:david.irwin13@btinternet.com) 07766 135068

## Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club

Our January meeting will be a talk on Winter scent in the garden. Gail Plant will bring samples from her own garden to tantalise and entertain us.

**January 31st, 7.30, Little Birch village hall.**

**All welcome**

**Free to members; £5 for non-members.**

**Any enquiries: Lesley 07834 771838**  
**or Janet 01981 540651**

**Advanced notice: February 28<sup>th</sup>: David Cropp –**  
**Defensive Gardening in a Time of Climate Change.**

## Little Birch Parish Facebook Group

Find the latest news, events & 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 local area.

*Little Birch Parish Group on Facebook*

### Much Birch Parish Councillors

**Cllr Alison Cook** (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorne HR2 8AW, [thecooks@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecooks@wyenet.co.uk)  
01981 540703

**Cllr Andrew Crum** Tan-y-coed, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorne, HR2 8AX, [a.crum@btinternet.com](mailto:a.crum@btinternet.com) 01981 540002

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

**Cllr Chris Pickering-Grey** 4 Court Farm Barns, Much Birch HR2 8HT [chris@pickering-grey.uk](mailto:chris@pickering-grey.uk) 07712 813218

**Cllr Joseph Goldsmith** Quantock House, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, HR2 8HX [josephagoldsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:josephagoldsmith@hotmail.com)  
07967 728590

**Cllr Michael Agyeman** Little Willow, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorne HR2 8AU 01981 540840  
[magyeman92@gmail.com](mailto:magyeman92@gmail.com)

**Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright** Longfield House, Gooses Foot, Kingstone HR2 9NE [muchbirchclerk@gmail.com](mailto:muchbirchclerk@gmail.com)  
01981 250860 Minutes of meetings

[www.muchbirchparish.org.uk](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk).

<https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC><https://www.facebook.co/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>



## Making Kefir

You can buy ready made kefir in any supermarket these days but it is cheaper and easy to make at home. Like natural yoghurt, it is made with milk but Kefir has a sharper taste and it is made with kefir "grains" which resemble pieces of cauliflower! When you cover the grains with milk they ferment the milk, breaking down the lactose into lactic acid. Kefir is rich in probiotics that are good for gut health.

Kefir is now eaten throughout the world, but for centuries it was said to be a closely-guarded secret of the Northern Caucasus region where people were renowned for their longevity, with one of the highest proportions of centenarians. Apparently everyone in the region drank kefir!

Traditionally kefir was made by combining fresh milk and kefir grains inside goatskin bags. During the daytime, the bags were hung in the doorways to catch the warmth of the sun. The bags were prodded by each person who went through the doorway. Presumably this helped the fermentation!

As the kefir was consumed, more fresh milk was added to the goatskin bag, forming a continuous cycle of fermentation and feeding all the family.

I find it easier to use a jam jar! Put the grains into a clean jar and cover them generously with milk. We are lucky to have this most important ingredient readily available—delicious fresh milk - at Merrivale Farm. Merrivale milk makes excellent kefir! Thanks, cows.

Leave the jar somewhere warm but not hot and in 24 hours (maybe less, depending on the temperature) there will be kefir. Straining the grains through a sieve is recommended but I often just suck the milk from them as I drink the kefir and drop them into a glass of water to rinse them before starting the process again. Creamy kefir on porridge is great!

I believe you can buy kefir grains online, but I have always been given grains by friends and, as they continue to reproduce themselves, I often hand on spare grains to others. If you would like some kefir grains I am happy to give some to you to try making it.

**Elisabeth Taylor 07854 629193**

## Ring out, Wild Bells

Ring out wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind  
for those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care the sin,  
the faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out the shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
the larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

**Alfred Tennyson**

## Diary Dates January 2024

<b>New Year's Party</b> 31st Dec LBVH	<b>p1</b>
<b>LBPC</b> Wed 3rd 7pm	<b>p8</b>
<b>Coffee &amp; Books</b> Thurs 4th Jan LBVH	<b>p1</b>
<b>Art &amp; Craft</b> Thurs 11	<b>p5</b>
<b>MBPC</b> Thurs 11th	<b>p2&amp;8</b>
<b>Community Café</b> Sat 13th MBCH	<b>p2</b>
<b>Coffee &amp; Books</b> Sat 20th	<b>p1</b>
<b>Photography Group</b> Sat 20th	<b>p5</b>
<b>Flicks</b> Thurs 25th	<b>p2</b>
<b>Panto</b> Fri 26 & Sat 27 LBVH	<b>p1</b>

## Happy Anniversary!

After the excesses of Christmas perhaps it is a relief to embrace Dry January, though Diehards may be celebrating Bloody Mary Day on 1st just as the vegans are diving into Veganuary! If that all sounds too much, take a deep breath and embrace World Introvert Day on January 2nd, though their website seems to have gone missing so you'll be on your own with it.

6th January— Epiphany—what a relief, a celebration, with a long tradition, of the visit of the Three Kings, bringing gifts to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Good to leave behind all the madness of made up anniversaries.

## FIREWOOD

Seasoned apple logs for sale  
£85 for a large bulk bag  
Free delivery in local area  
**Please phone Robin Haig  
on 07827 587442**

## Advertising Rates

11 editions per year (no August newsletter)

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

1/8<sup>th</sup> 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 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











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