

# The Birches

Community Matters Newsletter

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



The Easter Bingo evening was well supported and was a very enjoyable evening. A big thank you to Robyn Hodges and her helpers. Amongst the contestants was a team from the Drama Group who managed to collect a few prizes.



**Much Birch  
PTFA presents**



**Saturday 11th May**

£10 a ticket  
Under 2's FREE

**1.00pm**

**2.30pm**

**4.00pm**



Scan me!

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<https://www.ticketebo.co.uk/much-birch-school-ptfa>

**Table Tennis Tuesday 7th May**

**Little Birch Village Hall £3**



Much Birch Paris Walk report on page 2

**Coffee Morning With Book Exchange  
at Little Birch Village Hall**

**Thursday 2nd & Saturday 18th  
May 10.00-12.00 noon**

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 & well behaved dogs welcome.**

## Much Birch Parish Walk

On a glorious Spring day in March, 12 walkers and 1 dog met outside Much Birch Village Hall to walk along part of the Herefordshire Trail past Little Birch Church and into Athelstan's Wood. The wood anemones had just come out and we heard the first chiffchaffs of the year.

Athelstan has been a woodland since before the Norman Conquest so is very ancient and now managed by the Duchy of Cornwall. Despite the incessant rain we have had this year the footpaths were not too muddy. I'm told we had more rain in February and March than in any recorded year! I was pleased to have Chris [Little Birch FPO] as our backmarker so no-one was left behind.

We walked back down Ruff lane before crossing the fields to get back round a 4 mile loop. We were welcomed to tea and homemade biscuits in the village hall. Next walk in a few months' time. If you have any issues with footpaths do please report to me in Much Birch on [mbfoot-paths@btinternet.com](mailto:mbfoot-paths@btinternet.com) or to Chris in Little Birch on [chrisfowler1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chrisfowler1@hotmail.co.uk) I understand that HCC have some funds specifically for footpaths in the 2024/25 budget so lets try and improve our local paths.

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

**Saturday 11 May 2024**  
**10:00 - 12:30**

and every 2nd Saturday of the month

**8 June**

**13 July**

**14 September**

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.*

## HEARTSTART TRAINING

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DATE

**SAT 1ST JUNE 2024**

TIME

**11:00AM TO 1:00PM**

LOCATION

**LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL**



REFRESHMENTS

Tea, coffee and fresh homemade biscuits provided



HOW TO BOOK A PLACE

Contact: Steve Coles  
E: [Stevencoles.lbpc@gmail.com](mailto:Stevencoles.lbpc@gmail.com)  
M: 07831162011



at Much Birch  
Community Hall

**Thursday 23 May - WICKED LITTLE LETTERS 15**

A 1920s English seaside town bears witness to a dark, absurd scandal in this riotous mystery comedy. Based on a stranger-than-fiction true story, "Wicked Little Letters" follows two neighbours: deeply-conservative local Edith Swan (Olivia Colman) and rowdy Irish migrant Rose Gooding (Jessie Buckley). When Edith and fellow residents start to receive wicked letters full of unintentionally hilarious profanities, foul-mouthed Rose is charged with the crime. The anonymous letters prompt a national uproar, and a trial ensues. However, as the town's women, led by Police Officer Gladys Moss (Anjana Vasani), begin to investigate the crime themselves, they suspect that something is amiss and Rose might not be the culprit after all.

**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)

# The Mystery of Faith

Part of our Easter Service, in the section where we remember the Last Supper there is a congregational response to the words "Great is the mystery of faith". The gathered community says "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again".

It is a fundamental tenant of our faith – and the key word here is faith. How do we know that Jesus has died, risen and will return? We don't – we take it on faith, a faith handed down, like family stories, in the Bible and in the traditions of the Church. But faith is something that we also must own for ourselves. Then the faith, mysteriously, becomes real. When we have a moment that moves us from the recitation of a formula into accepting something we can't prove in our hearts. That doesn't mean we shouldn't question or interrogate it. We should because we need to to know our faith, to understand it and so to let it shape our

lives, but it will always remain a mystery. There will always be bits we don't understand, bits we struggle with, bits we argue about with family and friends. However, in the end we all recognise the mystery and learn to live with it and use it to shape our world for the better. **Revd Mark**

## Little Birch Lent Lunch

Thank you to everybody who supported the lunch, generously donating a total of £165 for Sightsavers charity. A lovely lunch of delicious homemade soups, bread and cheese was shared and enjoyed by those who attended. Thank you to all of you who donated food & helped on the day.



## Services for May

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b> | 9.15 a.m. at Much Dewchurch – Holy Communion<br>11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion                           |
| <b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May -7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b> | 9.15 a.m. at Much Birch – Holy Communion<br>11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Morning Worship                              |
| <b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May – Pentecost</b>                      | 9.15 a.m. a.m. at Much Birch – Morning Worship<br>11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion in Traditional Language |
| <b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Trinity Sunday</b>                 | 9.15 a.m. at Llandinabo – Holy Communion in Traditional Language  |

## Joseph Cooke Charity

The Trustees of the Joseph Cooke Trust (also known as the Old Charities of Much Birch) are seeking anyone who lives in the parish of Much Birch who may need some additional support. The Charity was set up to help "The poor of the Parish" and aims to help those who are struggling. If you are a student who needs a book grant, someone who needs a particular piece of equipment that you cannot afford or something similar, then the Charity may be able to help.

Please email Revd Mark at revmark100@yahoo.co.uk or contact him on 07882410759 for an application form. All applications will be treated in confidence. Closing date 30th June 2024

**Revd Mark**

## Little Birch Drama Group

**11th, 12th & 13th July**

***A Minor Operation, Summer Show***

***details to follow***

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## Geoff Young

Geoff, who had lived in Little Birch with his wife Julie for the last 9 years, had become an almost indispensable part of village life. From the events he threw himself into, such as coffee mornings, to the support behind the scenes, becoming the treasurer of Little Birch Hall Committee, he made a positive impact on the village and all those he met.



Geoff was always a teacher at heart. His love of education and of helping young people expand their horizons shaped everything he did in his teaching career. Starting in London, he was involved in taking students to Morocco and Turkey on a double-decker bus – a bus which had a number of accidents and which had to be nursed by Geoff back to England at the end of its final trip. He then developed the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme at two schools in London,

helping young people from the city find peace and confidence exploring the Brecon Beacons. For his services to outdoor education, Geoff was awarded the BEM. Retirement didn't slow him down either. He pursued further education through the U3A and Open University, acquiring knowledge to go with his great personal skills.

Julie, his wife, met him at one of his London schools when he loudly announced in the staff room that he "needed a woman" - for purely practical reasons of course, taking mixed groups away. However, love blossomed and they later married. On Geoff's retirement from teaching, they moved to be close to the Brecon Beacons and became part of everyday life in Little Birch, Julie taking on editing the parish magazine and Geoff printing and helping to distribute it.

Over the last 2 years, his health had not been great and eventually, poor health caught up with him which led to a final but brief stay in hospital. His warmth and enthusiasm for getting things done will be missed.

**Community  
Spring  
Sing**

**Sunday 19 May 2024**  
**2:30-5:00 pm**  
**Much Birch Community Hall**

*Come along to a fun singing afternoon led by Kay Garlick.  
Open to all ages - children must be accompanied by an adult.  
No need to read music, just come along  
and enjoy a fun sing and a cuppa!*

**Free event - just turn up!**

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[stay@holidaysaundersfoot.co.uk](mailto:stay@holidaysaundersfoot.co.uk)  
Tel: 07885 604720**



### Much Birch Church Compost for Still Available for free

If you would like some for your garden please help yourself.  
It is in the front churchyard under the trees to the left of the shed.



## Photography Group

We are a friendly local group who are keen and enjoy our imaging skills. 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 email [sally.nichol@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.nichol@btinternet.com)



## 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. We bring along our own projects and have a monthly theme. The theme for May for Art and crafts is, "Spring has sprung ." 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)

## PIILATES

with Alison Allan

### LITTLE DEWCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

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General/Intermediate Level

Monday 11.15am -12.15pm  
Seniors/Gentle Level

Wednesday 7pm - 8pm  
General/Intermediate Level

Thursday 9.30am -10.30am  
General/Intermediate Level



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#### Join Alison Allan for Pilates

Pilates sessions are taught as small group classes and as individual one to one sessions.

Pilates is a great way to keep your body feeling agile and energised. The movements focus on posture, alignment, core strength, balance and flexibility.

## The Jolly Gardener

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

Kyle - 07850921889



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**Spring Foraging** Wild garlic, also called ramsons, flowers through April and May. Its flavour is good in cooking and also as pesto.



### Sausage Making Courses

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Is it time to learn some simple relaxation tools to let go of unhelpful learned behaviours?

Is it time to change your relationship with yourself?

My work led me around the world teaching individually and as a course leader offering WorkShops (or maybe RestShops!) to slowly soften, unwind and return home to ourselves, allowing our bodies to rest and our minds to slow down through profound yet simple relaxation practices. Maybe it's time to give yourself these easily learned gifts?

I hold regular small afternoon groups as well as individual sessions in my Garden Studio in Little Birch.

If you know you need to dial down please get in touch 07985 252166

**Upcoming events : Deep Relaxation afternoons @ Little Birch Village Hall 10 Feb, 4 May, 3 August, 2 December.**

Areas of interest and training include Yoga, Yin Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga, Reflexology, Fascia Release, Wheel of Consent, Shamanic Practices including Sweat Lodges



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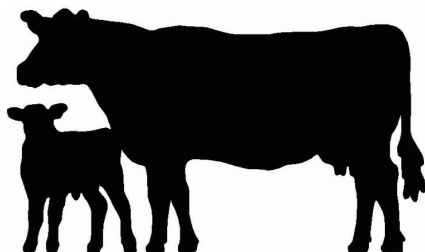
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or email [lucymason@hotmail.com](mailto:lucymason@hotmail.com)  
Merrivale Farm Little Birch  
Hereford HR2 8BA



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

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## Jobs for the garden in May

The ground is still saturated at the time of writing (8<sup>th</sup> April) having just endured storm Kathleen, following day after day of rain. Our grass is getting longer, and so far the only work on the veg. patch has been to prepare our runner bean and sweet pea trenches.

The “hungry season” is upon us. This is so called because much of the winter veg. has been harvested and there will be a couple of months until the new year produce is ready. We have potatoes in store and quite a few carrots left in the garden, plus a few leeks, and some spring cauliflower nearly ready. We have not been able to plant out January sown cauliflower, calabrese and cabbage so they will be late this year, as I suspect will a lot of other crops. I suspect what will happen in a few weeks time, we will have a heat wave and plants will be gasping for water. The cuckoo was heard today – nearly a fortnight earlier than usual – perhaps he knows something that we don’t.

### Here are a few ideas for May

- \*Keep weeding.
- \*Slug watch!!
- \*Spring clean’ house plants by wiping dust off smooth leaves with a damp cloth and use a soft brush for hairy leaves, group them together to keep cool and mist them.
- \*Tender plants and young plants raised under cover can be gradually hardened off.
- \*Divide large clumps of daffodils and snowdrops.
- \*Plant up hanging baskets and containers. If you have a greenhouse, and have room, keep them in for a few days to help them establish. In any case keep them sheltered.

## Little Birch Gardening Club

### May 29<sup>th</sup> Propagation workshop led by club members

An interactive evening of demonstrations, hints & tips for successful propagation. Nichola Salter will also demonstrate/ sharpen secateurs as time allows.

There will also be a chance to join the Club - £15 pa individual ; £25 per pa for couple; £5 for visitor. Tea and coffee will be available with donations to the Club.

### Advance notice: June 8<sup>th</sup> PLANT SALE in LBVH

following on from last year’s wonderful array of plants, generously donated by members, friends, family and local garden centres and nurseries. Donations for the sale gratefully received from 9.30am with the sale starting from 10.00 – 12.00. Come early to avoid disappointment! A great way to spend the morning!

### More advance notice: June 22<sup>nd</sup> – OPEN GARDENS

starting at 2.00pm at LBVH. £5 per person. Join us for an afternoon exploring the delights of local gardens, ending with tea and cake at the last garden.

- \*Sow hardy annuals.
- \*Feed Spring flowering bulbs.
- \*Thin seedlings when they have their first true leaves.
- \*Sow runner beans, dwarf beans, cucumbers, courgettes and squashes (not forgetting that heaviest marrow for the horticultural show).
- \*Earth up potatoes.
- \*Protect soft fruit from birds netting if you do not have a fruit cage.
- \*Sow quick maturing veg. baby carrots, radish, salad leaves and spinach. None of these need large expanses of ground; you could even try them in amongst flowers in borders – beetroot look quite attractive too.
- \*Protect carrots from carrot fly with insect proof mesh or a barrier at least 600mm high.
- \*Keep bird baths clean & topped up with fresh water.
- \*Plant up hanging baskets and containers. If you have a greenhouse, and have room in it, keep them in for a few days to help them establish. In any case keep them sheltered.
- \*Check ponds for tadpoles. Provide a shelf/ramp for them and of course other wildlife to escape. Whilst examining ponds clear off duckweed and blanket weed.
- \*Plant scented flowers such as nicotiana, evening primroses and buddleia to attract moths, butterflies and bees. In fact any mauve/purple flowers will attract a wide range of insects.
- \*When buying plants, single flowers are better than double flowers, as food is generally more accessible for insects from singles.

## Derek Scrivens

## Calling all Book Lovers

Little Birch Village Hall has an good collection of fiction as well as some non fiction which can be borrowed during **Coffee and Books** on the first Thursday and third Saturday of the month from 10-12. **Everyone welcome**

**You can also enjoy tea, coffee, cake and good company**





## Much Birch Parish Council

At the Much Birch Parish Council Meeting held in Much Birch Community Hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> April the Parish Council discussed the parish land again and would be discussing ideas for the future use of the part of the land near to "Valley View". There was also a discussion about the ongoing issues of flooding in the parish. The parish council resolved to raise the appropriate concerns about the flooding, and the potential resultant environmental impact, with the appropriate authorities.

The dates for the forthcoming meetings, in the year 2024, are as advised below:

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, the Annual Parish and Annual Statutory Meetings, will be held concurrently on **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 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.

### Much Birch Parish Councillors

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

**CLlr Andrew Crum** Tan-y-coed, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, 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 [josephgoldsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:josephgoldsmith@hotmail.com)  
07967 728590

**CLlr Michael Agyeman** Little Willow, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe 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.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

### Little Birch Parish Councillors

CLlr Steve Coles CLlr Tom Palfrey  
CLlr Chris Atkinson CLlr Nick Deacon  
Neil Barrington, clerk [lbpcclerk@gmail.com](mailto:lbpcclerk@gmail.com)

**Website [www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org](http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org)**

### 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 Kingsthorpe: David Irwin**  
[david.irwin13@btinternet.com](mailto:david.irwin13@btinternet.com) 07766 135068

### 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*

## ALLANGAS AND OIL

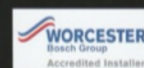
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**Steven Allan**



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## Diary Dates May 2024

|                           |                    |           |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| <b>Table Tennis</b>       | Tues 7th LBVH      | <b>p1</b> |
| <b>Coffee &amp; Books</b> | Thurs 2nd LBVH     | <b>p1</b> |
| <b>MBPC</b>               | Thurs 9th MBCH     | <b>p9</b> |
| <b>Flicks</b>             | Thurs 23rd MBCH    | <b>p2</b> |
| <b>Community Café</b>     | Sat 11th MBCH      | <b>p2</b> |
| <b>Coffee &amp; Books</b> | Sat 18th LBVH      | <b>p1</b> |
| <b>Spring Sing</b>        | Sun 19th MBCH 2.30 | <b>p4</b> |
| <b>Garden Club</b>        | Wed 29th LBVH      | <b>p2</b> |

## 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

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## 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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