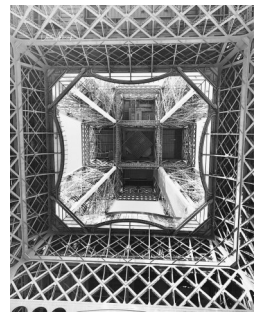


The Birches

Community Matters Newsletter

**Kingsthorpe, Much Birch, Little Birch,
Aconbury & Wormelow June 2025**



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



Photos from some of Birches Talented Photographers—Sally Nichol, Janet Gwinnett and Nick Daly. Mystery photo next to the birch tree. Can you tell us what it is?

Calling all Book Lovers

Coffee Morning with Book Exchange
Little Birch Village Hall
Thursday 5th & Saturday 21st June
10-12 noon

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

Little Birch Book Exchange has had some
interesting new books donated recently by a
very kind person in Much Dewchurch. Most of
them are non-fiction, which is a great addition
to our wide choice of fiction.

Featuring this month is "Journeys to Impossible Places" by Simon Reeve, which is actually
about him becoming a father.

We also have some classics - such as "The Mayor of Casterbridge" by Thomas Hardy. If
you are like me, trying to make up for all the
great books which I feel I should have read,
then come and see what we have.

And while you're here, 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 welcome.

Art and Craft Space

Have an Art and Craft afternoon away from the
hustle and bustle of life every Thursday at Little
Birch village hall! 2-4.30pm. Bring your WiP or PhD
in whatever Art or Craft you are working on.
Or start something new. £3 per session includes
refreshments. For more information contact Sally
01981 540001 or 07803032928 or email
sally.nichol@btinternet.co.uk All welcome

Photography Group

Friendly local group Please contact Sally Nichol.tel. 07803
032928 or 01981 540001 sally.nichol@btinternet.com

Little Birch Lent Lunch

Once again we had a lovely lunch in aid of Sight Savers
Charity. Thank you to Pauline Rogers for organising every-
thing. The home made soups were delicious, thank you to
the ladies who made them, also for the donations of bread
and cheese. A total of £175 was raised and sent off to Sight
Savers. It is always an enjoyable community event
supporting a very worthwhile charity.
Thank you to everybody who came.

Join us at the Community Café @ Much Birch Community Hall

Saturday 14 June 2025

10:00 - 12:30

and every 2nd Saturday of the month
12 July

No Café in August

13 September

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.*

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
01981 540001 or 07803032928
or email sally.nichol@btinternet.co.uk

The Birches Newsletter is also available
online www.birches.news
www.muchbirchparish.org.uk

Can We Rebuild Trust?

One of the things that makes us like someone is authenticity. We are drawn to those who present as trustworthy and true, not fickle, and whose words convey a lived experience with which we can resonate. But it applies not only to people but also to films, brands and TV programmes too.

Of course, this gets exploited in all sorts of ways! From con artists who run Ponzi schemes to the stories about how a particular restaurant chain came to be (I'm looking at you, Frankie and Bennies!).

We like to feel that we are getting what has become a true experience. We are quite willing to hold that even when things don't seem right! We enjoy magic and magicians, even though we know it is fake – the woman is not really cut in half, and the balls do not really disappear! And this trust, this quest for the authentic, can lead us to find our tribe, people outside our family who provide a safe place.

When this authenticity gets broken, trust is lost. We have seen this in institutions from the police to the Church to our political system. And rebuilding When this authenticity gets broken, trust is lost. We have seen this in institutions from the Police to the Church to our political system. And rebuilding that trust is not easy. In the church, for example, the training that ministers and others undertake to keep people safe has led to the revealing of many serious situations, but I believe the worst is behind us. We are getting to grips with the damage done. We are not perfect in our support of those who have suffered sexual abuse, but we are listening to their stories and responding. And, I hope, building a church that is authentic and worship and a safe space for everyone. **Revd Mark**



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Services across the Birches Area for June

Sunday 1st June – Sunday after Ascension

9.15 a.m. at Llandinabo – Matins

9.15 a.m. at Much Dewchurch – Holy Communion

11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion

Sunday 8th June – Pentecost

9.15 a.m. at Much Birch – Holy Communion

11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Morning Worship

Sunday 15th June – Trinity Sunday

9.15 a.m. at Much Birch – Morning Worship

11.00 a.m. at Little Birch – Holy Communion in
Traditional Language

Sunday 22nd June – Trinity 1

11am Llanwarne Old Church St John the Baptist, benefice communion
open air service followed by lunch

Sunday 29th June—Trinity 2

9.15 Llandinabo Holy Communion in Traditional Language



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WE ARE FARMING MINDS



We are Farming Minds registered charity has been set up by farmers for farmers to tackle mental health in the farming community within Herefordshire.

How can we help?

24 Hour Support Line:

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.



Call our Support Line:

0808 802 0070

Or text:

07786 203 130

General enquiries: wearefarmingminds@gmail.com

www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk

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

Registered charity number: 1191461

WeAreFarmingMinds

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gabrielle@gnlaccountancy.co.uk

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07480830305

MEL'S MUSINGS

Well, I feel refreshed after a long winter's break and am thoroughly enjoying the waking up of the earth. Trees are coming into leaf and bloom, bulbs are showing their vibrant colour after the drab winter, and, most excitingly, tadpoles have hatched and birds are laying eggs in their beautifully made nests. Due to the wonderful weather we have been having throughout April and into May everything seems well advanced and today my peonies are flaunting blowsy blooms with a gentle but intoxicating evening scent, wafting around the garden, together with the heady scent from the climbing roses.

I have been identifying many birds from their song, but quite frustrated at hearing a few who I could never see; blackcaps, skylark and bullfinches to name a few. However, this morning, having been woken up early with a major scuffle between a group of magpies and crows, I sat down in the bedroom window and my attention was taken by quick movements from half way down our garden. After watching for a while I realised that it was a pair of bullfinches feeding upon the clocks of the spent dandelions I had deliberately left at the edge of the fruit trees. They were trying to balance on the heads to eat the seeds, but as the stems were now weak and dying they were not holding the bird's weight, hence all the flapping. A remarkable sight that I had not seen before – it made my day.

Incidentally, the solitary bees had been feeding on these dandelions and collecting pollen for the building of their egg tubes in the bee hotels I had put up. One of the boxes contained over 150 holes for nesting, either from drilled, untreated wood, kindly donated by a local builder, or cut up bamboo canes. There are now only around 10 vacant 'properties' left as the bees have been extremely busy. I must admit to having wasted several hours standing watching them.

The most amazing news is that I was woken up last night to the sound of hedgehogs. I jumped out of bed but my night vision was not good enough to see them, but it was definitely the sound of amorous hedgehogs. I am thrilled – hopefully the female will find somewhere safe to have her hoglets. I will keep you posted if I have any more news on that score.

Now back down to the polytunnel to carry on potting up my plants to take to our wonderful Plant Sale at LBVH on 7th June, starting at 9.30 for plant donation, all very warmly received, and open to general public at 10am. Plenty of tea and cake available. Do come, we are a friendly bunch.



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Send items for July/August newsletter to
editorial@birchesnews.org.uk by 8th June



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**Send items for Birches Newsletter to
editorial@birchesnews.org.uk by 8th June**

Much Birch Parish Council

The parish council held their Annual Statutory Meeting, following the Annual Parish Meeting on Friday 9th May. The parish council elected the Chair and Vice Chair for the forthcoming year, the Footpath Officer and also made the appointments to the various parish working groups. The parish council discussed the support question relating to the Much Birch memorial clock, mounted at the Much Birch Church building, and agreed that they were in support of the proposal to renovate the clock and look at the timbers supporting it. They did not commit to financial support for the project, but rather just the aspirations to get the clock restored. This topic would be reviewed at a later date. There were no new planning matters for discussion at the meeting.

The dates for meetings in the year 2025, are advised as follows: June 5th, July 3rd, no meeting in August, September 4th, October 2nd, November 6th, December 4th. The next ordinary meeting of the Much Birch Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 5th June 2025 from 7.30pm** at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend.

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!

Little Birch Village Hall Annual General Meeting

Thursday 12th June 7pm

All members of the local community are welcome to come and hear about all we have done in the past year and plans for the future

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook 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, Wrigglebrook, 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 and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. 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

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



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Jobs to Do in the Garden during June

We have been enjoying some fantastic weather during the last few weeks. A complete contrast to last year. It does, however, have a downside, that being lack of rain to get everything growing whether in the garden or in tubs, pots or trays, and of course for farmers growing large acreages of crops. Additionally, plants are confused by extremely hot days and cold nights - quite often temperatures have reached 34 degrees in the greenhouse and then fallen to 4 degrees during the night. I suspect that birds that nest early may well be having problems finding enough food for their broods. The Cuckoo is in good voice in the area.

A Few Jobs

- *Cut back early flowering perennials to encourage a second flush of blooms.
- *Feed containers with a high potash fertiliser.
- *Plant out Dahlias.
- *Remove to the compost heap fading bulb foliage.
- *Tie in climbing and rambling roses.
- *Dead head roses as they should be blooming this month.
- *Keep birds off fruit with secure and taut netting.
- *Tomatoes grown as cordons - train main stem to supports and pinch out side shoots. Allow up to 7 trusses indoors and 4 outdoors. Stop growth by pinching out growing tip.
- *Feed tomatoes and peppers with a high potash fertiliser weekly and water regularly.
- *Plant out Brussels sprouts, calabrese (green broccoli) autumn cabbage and cauliflower.
- *When flowers open on early potatoes, carefully draw soil away from plant to see if they are ready to eat - ideally about the size of a small egg.
- *Keep sowing catch crops of radishes, mixed salad leaves (or lettuce), Spring onions, dwarf beans, kohlrabi, beet, peas and/or mangetout.
- *Deal with aphid and caterpillar severe infestation as required. Minor infestation can be left for ladybirds, lacewings, ants and wasps.
- *Keep bird bath or a receptacle topped up with water.
- *Let herbs such as oregano, thyme, chives and borage to flower as this will provide pollen for bees.
- *Record wildlife in your garden and the plants visited and choose future plants accordingly.

Derek Scrivens

Little Birch Parish Facebook Group

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

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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

Walking in the Birches

A new gate has been installed on Ruff Lane footpath by Walkers Are Welcome, from Ross, making access to walks easier for all walkers and dogs by replacing stiles with gates.

The next Parish Walk will be on Sunday 29th June at 2pm, led by David Irwin from Little Birch Village Hall, (not Much Birch) and ending back at Little Birch Hall for coffee, tea and cake afterwards to raise money for our local Hospice with Sophie Morgan.



King's Thorn & Little Birch Garden Club News

The programme for 2025-26 is really exciting with visiting speakers, local trips and afternoon tea serving scones, jam & cream in July, in one of the committee member's gardens. All events will be posted in this newsletter, so keep an eye out for the details. If you would like a copy of the programme please contact me on 07834 771838 or Lesleychapman55@sky.com and I will email one to you. You can now find us on Instagram and Facebook too!

We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at LBVH from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Refreshments are available from 7.00pm. The talks are free to members with a small fee of £5 for any visitors.

Our recent talk from Mick Poultney, "The Compost King", was most informative. We learnt a lot about different methods of composting and how to best utilise the waste we produce in the kitchen. We were given tips on how to make the best compost. Mick was very entertaining and obviously knows his compost! You can check him out on Youtube if you missed the talk and want to know how to make the very best compost - which you can then enter into the Show in September!

Saturday 7th June (not the date given in the previous newsletter!) is our Plant Sale in LBVH from 10.00am to 12.00. if you have any donations of plants to sell please bring them to LBVH between 9.00 and 9.45. Refreshments will be available. All funds go towards our guest speakers and the Annual Garden Show which is on the 6th September.

New members are always welcome so do come and join us.

Happy Gardening! Lesley, Garden Club Secretary



Diary Dates June 2025

Coffee & Books Thurs 5th LBVH	p2
Art & Craft LBVH Thurs: 2-4.30	p2
Table Tennis LBVH Tues 6th	p2
LBPC Wed 5th LBVH	p7
MBPC Fri 9th MBCH	p7
Community Cafe MBCH	p2
Coffee & Books Sat 21st LBVH	p2
Garden Club LBVH	p9

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

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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



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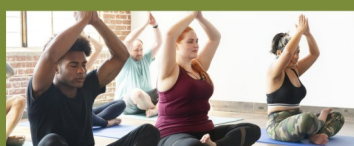
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Friday 4th October

Early start, bags must be outside our door by 07.30. But most are up and having breakfast and on the road at 08.00 back across the reserve, the Rift Valley and back to our first hotel

"The Tamarind Tree" at Nairobi. The weather is still in the 30's

It's amazing how soon we become used to the animals we see, no more oh's and Ahs, it's just, seen that, done that, that's another one, as we speed out of the reserve.

We had a long way to go. Doe and I had a bit of competition between our selves. "who could take the best picture of the lone acacia tree". Result is still pending, there were lots of them.

Arriving at the exit from the reserve we have the same crush of trinket sellers, we used the toilets at the gate, not impressed.

We are still in Maasai country as we drive across the rift valley, once again I am surprised at the numbers of cattle, sheep and goats that are being herded by Maasai people across such poor ground, most of the cattle look so fit and healthy. The biggest surprise was the amount of litter in the villages and towns we drive through, so much.

Interestingly they sell water from tankers here, I saw two tankers sucking water up from a dirty shallow river, I hope that was not sold as drinking water.

One area we travelled through was very cultivated and there were stalls along the road selling all sorts of fruit and vegetables.

At one place they were drying maize on huge sheets or tarpaulins, I did see a few small combine harvesters which seem to have come from the arc, but they were doing the job.

The other strange thing to see was what could be carried on motor bikes, this one chap actually had a three seater settee across the back of his bike taking up half the road, others carried the full family, two or three sacks of grain was quite common.

The towns were very busy, with huts as shops for every thing, hotels, churches, chemists etc.

Every where the biggest businesses seemed to be lorry repairs and tyre changes. But the litter was terrible at times just filling the gutters. And, yet, we had seen the occasional man with a sack on his back picking up what I thought was old plastic bottles.

In some areas that had been ploughed we could see about four or five men breaking freshly ploughed ground with mattocks, and yet it had been ploughed with a tractor? Why not use the tractor.

The other oddity was to see so many men sleeping along the roads and in the villages, why aren't they working, yet every where we see women carrying heavy loads or doing hard manual work!!!

Along the road there were occasional communal stores that sold mainly the craft of the area, mainly animals supposedly all hand crafted locally.

Every one was so friendly, but pushy in a gentle sort of way. 15

Doe (as she does) got chatting to one of the ladies, in no time they were laughing together and suddenly they were