**East Keal**

**Annual Parish Meeting**

**Minutes of Wednesday 21st May at the Keal’s Village Hall**

1. **The minutes of the last Parish Meeting on 29th May 2024 were approved.**
2. **Sandra Smith who is the Community Development Officer with YMCA in Lincs gave the meeting a talk on how she could help the Council to engage volunteers and access grant funding for rural communities. It’s good to get several smaller areas to work together she said and mentioned that in the past Lottery Funding was much easier to obtain than it is now. There’s a huge ageing population in Lincolnshire and funders will be looking at helping with isolation, transport & mobility issues. If you can identify the issue then its key to getting the funding to help – the application has to ‘tell the story’.**
3. **Also the following were invited to attend and present reports at the meeting:-**
* **The Community Café** – the afternoon teas and puddings are very popular and the baking is donated also lots of helpers come to give their time and help out
* **The Art Club –** Eresby Hall carers bring their clients – the art is usually conducted in water colours as much cheaper and easier to work with. Sometimes they switch from art to cross stitch/crafts for a break.
* **The Local History Club** – Can have up to 24 people attending. The archives are building with a wide variety of records. Mention of a group in the 1970’s named ‘Keal’s Clowns’ who were a group of residents who entertained locally. There’s also a road sweeper’s diary from Victorian times who used a hand barrow and collected the horse manure.
* **The PCC** – the St Helens Church has had a positive year although the retired Bishop who led the Sunday Service and his wife moved to Derbyshire in the Spring. Regular Sunday Services have continued and attendance numbers have held steady at approx. 20. They have a card reader now for the collection as many people don’t carry cash around with them. New disabled toilets and kitchen facilities costing around £125k will be installed this year thanks to some grant aid and careful planning by the PCC.
* **The Gardening Club** – this club has over 60 members – it has speakers, days out and a few parties. There is a plant sale 29th June 2 – 4pm with a 60’s theme with proceeds to Garden Club/St Helens along with an art exhibition from Art Group.
* **The Wildlife Group –** since 2020 a record of all wildlife seen in the village has been kept. There’s 16 different mammals and 90 bird species recorded. Bird migrations are recorded and the swallows came in April this year instead of May. There’s a breeding colony of house martins in Fen Lane. Red Kite, Hawks and Buzzards have been seen but no signs of breeding. Several breeds of deer, grey squirrels, weazels and stouts have been seen.
* **The Friends of St Helen’s Church -** this is a charitable organisation which raises funds for the Church – there’s a pop-up pub on 20th June with a licenced bar, cocktails etc and serving hot food – puddings etc also ones on 5th September and 12th December.
* **The Keal’s Village Hall Committee** – keeping costs low by being eco friendly LED lighting used and heat pump was installed in April using £7.5k from a Government grant also solar panels help to reduce electricity costs. All these factors help to keep the cost per session of using the hall down to £20. It has many uses - there are birthday parties, corporate functions and elections held there. Currently its trading at a profit of £580.

1. **Chair’s annual report:-**

When Charlotte Mahoney took over the Chair this time last year she was very new to the job. She was carrying out the Clerk’s role too and getting to grips with the legislation. However there’s been lots of positives within the year such as the time capsule which is buried for 25 years and has its own plaque. The Memorial site has improved tremendously with a beautiful grassed area. The flag has been flying for VE day and various other events throughout the year. Our new Clerk has a solid financial grounding as an accountant previously with the District Council which is helpful. A community questionnaire went out unfortunately there wasn’t a great response – probably 20 odd back – hopefully that means that most of the community are relatively happy with what we are doing. There’s been a lot of change everywhere with the new Labour Government and the sweeping results for Reform in the recent Lincolnshire County Council elections. Currently we are two councillors down – so we are working with five out of a possible seven councillors – if anyone would like to join us please email the Clerk – she will be pleased to send you an application form (clerk@eastkealparishcouncil.gov.uk) – we are a friendly group.

 Meeting closed at 7.30pm