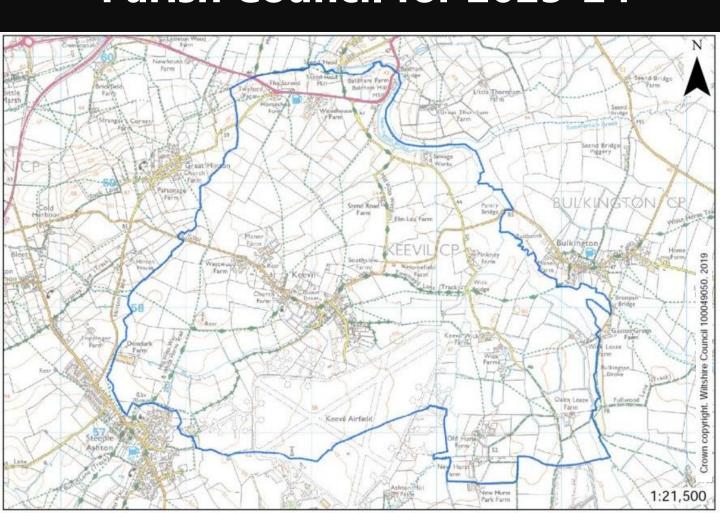


KEEVIL ANNUAL PARISH COMMUNITY MEETING 2024

Annual Report of Keevil Parish Council for 2023-24



ANNUAL REPORT OF KEEVIL PARISH COUNCIL for 2023-24

The Chairman's Report

The Parish Council is now three quarters of the way through its term of office with local elections 12 months away. I remain extremely grateful to all my fellow councillors for their continuing hard work and support.

A key point in the Council's year was the appointment of Sarah Dow to the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Sarah had performed in an exemplary role as the interim clerk alongside Rob Kevan the interim RFO; her attention to detail and work ethic has already served the Council well and she provides a backbone of experience that will only be good for future councils.

Mr Paul Adams was co-opted in November to fill the vacancy created by Councillor Dow following her appointment as Clerk/RFO.

Looking to the upcoming local elections I would encourage villagers who might wish to serve on the Parish Council to view the "get involved" page on the Parish Council website (keevilpc.com/get-involved/) - there is a lot of satisfaction in working in a happy team to the good of the Keevil community.

Councillors attended the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils Annual Conference in Market Lavington in June of last year; the day resulted in valuable networking and information and a realisation that Parish Councils all face the same challenges. Furthermore, and following a useful informal evening hosted by Bulkington PC late in 2022, Keevil PC hosted a follow-up meeting in July for members of Steeple Ashton, Great Hinton, and Bulkington PCs, and including Keevil's Emergency Volunteer team.

On the governance front all councillors have now completed GDPR training. All policies have been reviewed and updated, and a new Vexatious Complaints Policy introduced.

Well done to all who organized events over the Coronation weekend. In accordance with wishes expressed at last years APCM, we are in the process of installing a Coronation Commemoration plaque to join others in the wall at Stocks Green; our thanks go to Mr and Mrs Gough for their support and permissions. A portrait of King Charles III has been obtained under the government scheme to provide public authorities with a free portrait of His Majesty The King and, with the permission of the Village Hall Committee will be hung after the planned redecorations.

The Council has encouraged more open contact with the Wiltshire Constabulary, and welcomed PC Elliott Holdsworth of the Neighbourhood Police Team to several meetings. The Council was privileged that the Chief Constable Catherine Roper accepted an invitation to come and speak at an open forum. She reflected on her first year in office and discussed a variety of local policing matters with residents, including that recruitment levels at Wiltshire Police are good and the force was in a very different place to February 2023, with more officers in Neighbourhood Police Teams, improved shift patterns to create more availability/visibility, and the launch of a new targeted response plan. Inspector Andy Lemon accompanied the Chief Constable and explained the community messaging service is currently the most likely real-time information source for villagers.

About Keevil Parish Council

We are the first tier of local government, elected every four years. The current Council was elected May 2021, so this report covers their third year in office. Councillors work hard to represent the interests of parishioners, support and protect the community, and improve the local environment.

Although our powers are limited we try to squeeze the best out of the services available to us. Wiltshire Council and other bodies know that a Parish Council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something, and its views should be taken seriously.

We meet in the village hall, usually on the first Monday of alternate months, although more frequently if needed (usually to meet deadlines for consultee responses on planning applications). Members of the public are always very warmly welcomed.

About the Parish of Keevil

There are currently around 190 rateable properties and 350 electors.

Between April 2023 and March 2024 there were 8 planning applications (excluding those for works to trees in a conservation area), only one of which the PC objected to. All were Approved with conditions by WC Planning Authority. One previous application on appeal to the Inspectorate was supported by the PC and has finally been partially allowed.

About Keevil Parish Council

Although Councillor volunteer their time we are holders of public office, not volunteers in any legal sense. We are bound by the law and statutory duties, guided by a Code of Conduct and the seven Principles of Public Life, and as an employer must act as a corporate body. The principle governing documents that guide Keevil Parish Council are all available from the Councils website keevilpc.com/governance/ or from the Clerk.

Councillor Alex Goodwin: CHAIR 2023-24 | Personnel Committee, village hall rep, governance champion | 07836 355503 alex@keevilpc.com

Councillor Geoff West: VICE-CHAIR 2023-24 | School liaison, planning, defibrillator, Rights of Way, Personnel Committee 01380 870425 & 07778 144331 geoff@keevilpc.com

Councillor Paul Adams (from November 2023) | planning, Community Emergency Volunteer | 07726 446814 paul@keevilpc.com

Councillor Fran Banfield | 01380 871367 & 07703465326 fran@keevilpc.com

Councillor Rob Kevan | Banfield Recreation Ground, Airfield liaison, Interim RFO to Sept 2023 | 07503 212965 rob@keevilpc.com

Councillor Rodney Meatyard | 01380 828226 & 07513 435420 rodney@keevilpc.com

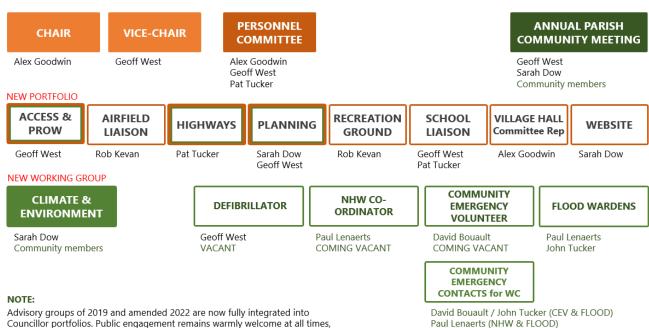
Councillor Pat Tucker | Highways & Parish Steward, school liaison, Personnel Committee | 01380 871601 pat@keevilpc.com

PARISH CLERK/RFO Sarah Dow (from June 2023) | 01380 871729 & 07870 909757 clerk@keevilpc.com

Council Portfolios and Representations 2023-24

and actively sought on a case-by-case basis.

Following his co-option to the vacancy left by Sarah Dow's appointment as Parish Clerk, Cllr Adams took her role on the Planning portfolio. He had also moved into the role of Community Emergency Volunteer, allowing David Bouault to hang up his clipboard after many years of tireless service for which we are all most grateful.



Vice-Chair's report

Liaison with Keevil School: Cllrs Geoff West and Pat Tucker met with Head Teacher Lindsey Hermon each term, establishing strong and harmonious links with the school and Friends of Keevil School (FOKS), leading to a more informative approach to the annual Keevil School Scarecrow Trail in the village.

Accessibility & Rights of Way (ROW): Although the village working group disbanded last year after successfully installing a new field gate and creating a map pack of local footpaths, we maintain strong links with local farmers to report any problems with stiles, accessibility or maintenance, and an excellent relationship has been developed with our WC ROW officer leading to support also from Wiltshire Ramblers.

Poo Bags: With financial support from the Parish Council and the help of one of our dog-walking residents Andrea Van Poeteren, dispensers have been placed at four locations by waste bins around the village - ideas for other sites and help keeping them topped up are warmly welcomed!

Defibrillator: The defibrillator is checked monthly to ensure the pads and batteries required to keep it active are in-date and functional, and replaced regularly as advised by WEBNOS who oversee its upkeep. Following relocation to it's new site at the village hall, a clear weatherproof sign provides instructions.



Keevil Airfield

Through Cllr Rob Kevan, the Parish Council maintain close liaison with the MOD regarding airfield activities, including advanced notification of exercises. Airfield Operator responsibilities transferred from the Royal Air Force (RAF Brize Norton) to the Army (Joint Aviation Command (JAC), although the Station Commander RAF Brize Norton presently remains Head of Establishment. A full handover to JAC is expected at some point.

With the transfer of airfield management from the RAF to the Army all motorsports events have been currently suspended, and there is still some uncertainty around the resumption of non-military activities at the present. A good working relationship has been established with the Keevil Airfield Manager (based at Middle Wallop) and any additional activity will involve consultation with local communities.

More details on the Village website at https://keevilvillage.com/information/airfield/



Highways

This is probably the most demanding portfolio, and Cllr Pat Tucker has maintained strong relationships with stakeholders at all levels to the benefit of us all. Here's what she's ticked off her list for the 2023-24 year:

- **Parish Steward**: several changes of Parish Steward this year, all of which Cllr Tucker 'inducts' by showing them around the village highlighting areas that need regular work, providing a map with road and property areas for reference point, and regular meetings. Works carried out included: -
 - > Hedge growth cleared at Wick Cross Roads and at end of path leading onto Butts Lane., cut grass by Village Hall and under railing by Old Chapel. Cleared fallen tree reported down Buzzley Bottom. Reduced tree and brambles at end of pathway in Butts Lane.
 - > Cut grass outside village hall, treated moss at Stocks Green and outside 18a Main Street, cleared gullies, filled potholes and asked for the leaf sweeper to clear the churchyard before Remembrance Day. Eruption of tarmac at end of Martins Lane reduced and flattened. Carried out flood debris clearing and prevention work on grips and gullies. Filled numerous potholes reported near Westwood Farm and by the badger sets going out to the A361 and cleaned all the road signs he could find.
- Verge erosion & child safety near 18a Main Street: following up on resident concerns and after many meetings with WC officers (and the support of our WC Jonathon Seed) this is now an active Highways improvement project and has just been approved at May's Area Board for completion probably in the autumn school holidays or early next year, depending on scheduling.
- **Wick Lane:** Patching repairs a lack of WC funds but surface dressing finally carried out in March. Regarding bollards requested by farmer to help define road edge that is hidden during flood conditions, worked with WC Highways technician to get them ordered. Finger missing on the Wick Cross Road sign has been replaced. Large potholes by Mere House assessed and scheduled for repair.
- Many discussions with stakeholders and landowner concerning the gate on the White Horse Trail near Mere Bridge. Landowner also agreed to strim the brook and Towmead Lane. Gates agreed and successfully applied for at LHFIG & MAB, however only one installed so far pending pipe repairs.
- Considerable tarmacking completed at Wick Cross Roads and down Buzzley Bottom.
- JCB visited Towmead Lane, another visit is planned. They also reduced the water ingress at Buzzley Bottom. Farmer approached to install more pipework to relieve excess water on the road.
- Bollard at Pyatts Corner cemented back in place again. Broken Bollard at Hobbs Hill reported, ordered
 and to be replaced imminently. Base of large bollard outside Old Chapel hit by vehicle and removed as
 considered dangerous. Attended to broken road closure sign following concerns of village resident.
 Villager concerned about the bollard marker outside his property had been hit by unknown vehicle. It will
 be replaced.
- Various conversations with residents to request trimming of overhanging hedges and shrubs onto paths and highways. A hedge removed during nesting season was reported: new hedge planted within 48 hours.
- Reported broken Bus Stop post outside The Old Bakery which is scheduled to be replaced. Attended to exposed cable in verge outside Old Bakery.
- Attended the regional NHW AGM as a result, the Chief Constable visited the PC in January.
- Together with the flood wardens, arranged for VACTOR to visit and carry out essential work by Beech
 Cottage, including return visit to clear drains by Box Tree cottage up to the Old Bakery, and outside
 Longleaze Farm. Several communications with Wessex Water re sewage and other flooding matters and a
 site meeting arranged between Flood Wardens, Parish Council, Wiltshire Council and Wessex Water. CCTV
 inspection of pipes only partially completed.
- Arranged to clear the tree outside East Barton opposite village hall as it obscured the street light.
- Various broken water meter covers reported and actioned, pothole outside 6 Main Street reported and attended to quickly, two derelict caravans reported abandoned removed within 48 hours.
- Liaised with Planning Authority regarding permitted development matters relating to a landowner.
- Made enquiries as to the feasibility of a street light at the top end of Main Street.

Banfield Recreation Ground

Named in memory of the late James Banfield who was instrumental in the purchase of the land for the community, the recreation ground is owned by the Parish Council who hold ultimate responsibility for its maintenance, insurance and all matters related to land and equipment which is publicly accessible. Cllr Kevan makes regular checks, and reports as follows:

- General maintenance including grass cutting and strimming is provided by the Community Shed.
- Monitoring and improving the safe use of the playing field and equipment is conducted on a regular basis, with the repair or replacement of equipment where necessary.
- Compliance with applicable government guidelines notices/risk assessments etc.,
- Annual RoSPA safety inspection and report.

With further deterioration of one of the Springers, and assessed as beyond economical repair, it was removed earlier this year. Following consultation with the community and school it is hoped to install an inground trampoline/rebounder. The overall cost is expected to be c. £5,000 and enquiries are ongoing for some financial support from the Area Board.

Footpath & access improvements between Martins Road and the Banfield Recreation Ground

Proposed by parishioners at the 2022 Community Meeting for use of our **CIL fund**, this project was prioritised because of its potential to improve life for so many residents.

Cllr Tucker has worked tirelessly the last two years with WC Highways, Local Highways & Footpath Improvements Group (LHFIG), the Area Board, and with the unstinting support of our Wiltshire Councillor Jonathon Seed, to bring the project to a successful conclusion and on budget despite a few setbacks last summer relating to the safety barrier.









Community safety and resilience

The hidden heroes of our community resilience work quietly behind the scenes, so a big thank you especially to Flood Wardens Paul Lenaerts and John Tucker who have really had their work cut out this winter, also our Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) team led by Paul Lenaerts, and our Community Emergency Volunteers (CEV) Dave Bouault (now gratefully retired), Paul Adams, and Geoff West who looks after the defibrillator.

CAN YOU HELP? Paul has been trying to retire from his role as **Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator** for the last three years, but so far a replacement has proved elusive! The duties really are simple and in no way time-consuming... for full details see keevilpc.com/get-involved/volunteer-roles/



Community Shed

Keevil is lucky to have the continued support of its Community Shed, a dedicated group of volunteers who help look after our village, and we know we speak for us all when we say THANK YOU for all that you do.

In 2023 there were 50 Shed sessions – including mowing the recreation ground 24 times and strimming banks and ditches 14 times. In other sessions the pond in Martins Road was cleared, blocked drains checked and cleared, equipment serviced, new signpost installed at Great Hinton crossroads, play equipment on the recreation ground repaired, and the annual village litterpick organised. In total, this amounts to 543 'personhours' volunteered with an average turn-out of <5 people per session. Do come and join in, an extra pair of hands is always very welcome! You don't have to commit to every week, just come whenever you can. More details at keevilvillage.com/groups-services/community-shed/

The Parish Council provides financial support for insurance and materials.



Neighbourhood Policing Team









Sergeant Gemma Rutter



Police Constable Elliott Holdsworth

Inmarsh Keevil Poulshot Seend Semington Seend Cleeve Steeple Ashton The Stocks

Bulkington

Community Support Officers (PCSOs): awaiting confirmation of change

Further information

You can find out more about Policing in our area by following any of these links:

- Local Crime Data: https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/wiltshire-police/
- Police and Crime Commissioner's Website: https://www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk/
- HMICFRS Website: https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/police-forces/wiltshire/

Follow local police updates on Facebook, search "Melksham Police" or visit <u>facebook.com/MelkshamPolice</u> and find more bespoke updates using "Community Messaging" <u>www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk</u>

www.wiltshire.police.uk | Facebook/wiltshirepolice | Twitter @wiltshirepolice



Financial Report

How we are funded

Funding for Keevil Parish Council, known as the precept, comes from your council tax and is paid annually by Wiltshire Council. The budget is limited and we are expected to contribute to the significant cost of many WC Highways and Rights of Way projects, and, now, the full cost of ALL Parish Council elections.

Bank Reconciliation at Year End (YE) March 31 2024

	£ 18,834.40
Lloyds Business Account (Deposit Account)	£ 17,585.05
Lloyds Treasurer Account (Cash Account)	£ 1,249.35

Income & Expenditure

The Parish Precept for 2023-24 was £8,411; our only other income relates to £227.13 of interest and an annual wayleave payment of £7.61.

We spent £9.5k against our budget for the FY of £14.5k. The budget made provision for several large projects, some of which, such as new playground equipment and accessibility improvements, have not yet materialised and will roll over into the current year in which we also have other major works like the verge repairs on Main Street to consider. Some of these will of course come from earmarked reserves, however we have also now improved our fiscal management and we budget to build-back reserves when we spend them.

All of which means that, although we are in a sound financial position, with a precept this FY of £9.6k, a budget of £15.5k, planned overspend from LY, and contingencies, all of the money we have is effectively 'earmarked', it is not spare.

Reserves & Assets

Earmarked Reserves of £11,000 are maintained to cover major developments relating to the Recreation Ground, Highways, Parish planning, Election costs, and War Memorial preservation works. Our Asset Register was completely re-evaluated last year and stands at £156,180.

2023-24 Payments over £100

Total		8,231.42
19/03/2024	Community Heartbeat (defibrillator battery)	357.00
27/03/2024	Wiltshire Air Ambulance (S137 donation)	100.00
27/03/2024	Alzheimers Support Wiltshire (S137 donation)	100.00
06/03/2024	DisplaysUK (display boards)	843.83
06/03/2024	Keevil Community Amenities Trust (KCAT) (S137 donation)	155.00
06/03/2024	Keevil Village Hall (S137 donation)	100.00
06/03/2024	Community Shed/KCAT (S137 grant - fingersign)	200.00
05/03/2024	Wiltshire Council (works to footpath to recreation ground)	2,750.23
10/01/2024	St Leonards Church (S137 donation)	250.00
10/11/2023	Playsafety Ltd/ROSPA Annual Inspection	140.40
10/11/2023	Community Shed/KCAT (Mowing)	510.00
15/08/2023	WALC (late invoices from previous FY)	108.00
25/07/2023	SLCC Training (GDPR)	216.00
17/07/2023	Keevil WI (S137 grant - Coronation event)	339.95
17/07/2023	Olivia Adlam (Internal Audit)	140.00
11/07/2023	Kitson Electrical (defibrillator re-location)	770.27
09/06/2023	Community First (insurance)	968.28
09/05/2023	WALC/NALC membership	182.46

Grants & Donations - LGA 1972 S137

The PC cannot just spend on anything, it must have legal power to act. In the case of discretionary expenditure (such as litter bins, lighting, recreation facilities) it does have specific powers, and Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables local councils to spend a limited amount for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory power. The limit is an amount set by Ministry for Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) x number of electors.

Section 137 expenditure may apply if the expenditure is "in the interests of and will directly benefit its area or any part of it and some or all of its inhabitants". The Council must be satisfied of a direct benefit to the parish or part of parish, or to some or all of the inhabitants, and is the body to determine whether or not such benefit will accrue. "some" means the power cannot be used to benefit a single individual. The council could however help an organisation to which an individual belongs, thus releasing funds for that organisation to help individuals. Examples of S137 grants and donations include village histories, plaques, prizes, flood relief, landscaping, flower shows, fundraising and community events, voluntary bodies etc...

Section 137(4)(a) Local Government Act 1972 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/137

Below is a summary of S137 expenditures made over the last four years, and our budgeted expectations for the current FY. Village groups may apply to the Parish Council at any time throughout the year although the main budgets are set between November and January.

.	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
Donations					(budget)
- Keevil Village Hall	200.00	100.00	250.00	100.00	100.00
- Parish Magazine	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
- St Leonards PCC	100.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00
- Keevil School (FOKS)	-	-	50.00	-	_
- Keevil Community Amenities Trust	-	-	-	155.00	100.00
- Village Christmas tree	-	-	-	45.00	110.00
- Royal British Legion - Wreath	25.00	25.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
- Wiltshire Air Ambulance	50.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
- Wiltshire Citizens Advice	-	50.00	-	-	
- Alzheimers Support (Trowbridge)	50.00	-	50.00	50.00	
- Music for the Mind	-	-	50.00	50.00	
- Bobby Van Trust	-	25.00	-	-	
- Carer Support Wiltshire	50.00	-	-	-	
Donations sub-total	575.00	550.00	800.00	800.00	710.00
Budget	550.00	550.00	550.00	800.00	710.00
Variance	-25.00	0.00	-250.00	0.00	0.00
Grants	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
Jubilee Community event 2022			185.00	-	
Coronation Street Party 2023 (WI)				£340.00	
Coronation Commemorative plaque				-	360.00
D-Day80 Commemoration events 2024				-	1,000.00
Community Shed insurance support				60.00	66.00
KCAT (new/replacement rec equipment)				-	1,500.00
Other community projects (Shed - Finger sign)				£200.00	400.00
Grants sub-total			185.00	600.00	3326.00
Budget			300.00	2410.00	2966.00
Variance			115.00	1,810.00	-360.00

All governance documents can be found at keevilpc.com/governance/ (completed AGAR documents for 2023-24 will be available there shortly). See keevilpc.com/meetings/ for financial information reported at meetings.

Welcome to the website of Keevil Parish Council

Digital assets: KEEVILPC.COM

As a Public Body, the Parish Council must meet statutory requirements of the Transparency Code 2015, plus ensure our website meets current accessibility standards and other best practice guidelines, and we continue with incremental improvements as needed.

Towards the end of last year, capacity limits of our hosting plan were being reached. In the short term the problem was solved by removing ex-member emails from the server, and all members did some basic email housekeeping which has also helped, however, the matter of capacity needs to be reviewed along with other digital infrastructure matters, in line with modern working practice.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) is responsible for proper practices in governance and accountability of smaller authorities, and its latest Practitioners Guide is far stronger in the drive for all tiers of local governance to use the .gov.uk domain. A dedicated support service has been created within the Cabinet Office to support local councils with the transition, and as it stands our current hosts are not on their list of approved Registrars. Furthermore, forthcoming changes in website accessibility compliance to WCAG2.2AA (which largely addresses accessibility needs on mobile devices) take effect in October 2024.

With these matters in mind, the intended review of the council's digital management will be considered in the context of the current financial year rather than 2025-26 as originally planned.

	Page views	Visitors	Page Popularity 2023
2021 (election year)	3,393	894	1. Home page
2022	1,775	708	2. Meetings & Minutes
2023	1,770	786	3. Councillors & Officers



About the Annual Parish Community Meeting

The Parish Council must report annually on its activities over the last financial year (FY) at a Parish meeting which, although organised and chaired by the Parish Council, is a meeting of the people of the Parish, not a Council meeting. Parishioners can vote on agenda items and express their views on matters they consider important to our community, which helps the Council set its priorities and plan ahead.

Since 2022 we've worked hard to make it more of a community affair, with events both on the recreation ground and in the village hall – the first part of the evening is dedicated to celebrating some of the groups and people that make Keevil such an amazing place to live, work, and raise a family. Villagers can make the most of the opportunity to meet neighbours and get a feel for how our community clicks over a free glass of wine and some lovely cheese...

More here https://keevilvillage.com/parish-matters/annual-parish-community-meeting/



THE BIG THANK YOU

So many people in our Parish contribute to the wellbeing of our community, often in a thousand ways that are not obvious, as well as many more that are in plain sight! ... including (but by no means limited to) ...

The villagers who Adopt-a-Drain and help keep them clear throughout the year; our team of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators; our Parish News editor and the team who see that it gets to you; the Keevil Village & Buzz website team, Facebook group admins and contributors; those who come to Council meetings and help us understand different views; our many village groups, clubs and committees who give up so much time to organise a thriving calendar of activity throughout the year; our Cricket team, our Community Shedders, our Flood Wardens and Emergency Volunteers; the team who erect the marquees; the farmers who help with salt bins and tractors, flails and other equipment when we need them; our bell ringers and everyone who helps keep our Church flourishing; who tend the plants at the War Memorial, the garden outside the village hall, or the flower border on the recreation ground; those who keep verges and hedges outside their home tidy, who park mindfully, who deal with their dog poo; walkers who follow our Country Code and designated footpaths across our farmer's land; those who turn up to the annual Litter Pick or just take a bag when off for a stroll; who clean the railings and village signs; those who've helped keep the defibrillator point ready for action; all who help clear the village pond; and everyone who helps a neighbour or simply stops to pass the time...

All these things and many more are the ties that bind us as a community...

Thank you to everybody.

Alex Goodwin Chair, Keevil Parish Council 2023-24, May 24th, 2024



Copies of this report and other Parish Council documents are available from https://keevilpc.com/meetings/ (scroll down to 'Annual Parish Meetings') or on application to the Clerk: