

EARDISLAND PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Eardisland held on
Thursday 12 May 2022 at 6.30 pm
in Eardisland Village Hall

Present: Cllr Richard Kirby (Chair).

In Attendance: Parish Clerks Alison Sutton and Debbie Cottam. Ward Cllr Roger Phillips. 8 members of public.

1. **Apologies of absence** – Cllr Hanson.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting** – 6 May 2021- ADOPTED and SIGNED.
3. **Report from the Chair of the Parish Council** –

Notwithstanding that 2021/2022 has been a second year significantly disrupted by the effects of COVID, the majority of the activities and actions required of the Eardisland Parish Council during this period have been successfully completed.

Council finances remain in good shape, but it would be true to say that work to refurbish the Village Hall has put us under some strain. Now that the major works on the new kitchen are virtually complete, balance should be restored. We should not forget that we will be paying off the loan taken to fund the works, for many years to come.

During the whole of this period the Council continued to meet in person.

The team of Volunteers who manage and operate our Community shop deserve a massive vote of thanks. The shop continues to provide an outstanding service to the community, supporting local businesses, ensuring that the essentials of life are available locally when we need them. The Parish benefits enormously from having this facility.

Most parishioners will be aware of the renovation work that has been happening this last year at the Village Hall. We now have a fantastic new kitchen space, fully fitted out, which will be a game changer in the sense of how the Hall can be used. Completing the work has not been without its challenges, and the Community has been well served by a team of volunteers who have stuck with the task, through difficult times, to ensure that the project is delivered. A special mention must be made of the Village Hall Committee, thanking them for all of their hard work, raising money, giving advice and all the practical tasks undertaken, not least the internal kitchen design and themselves, doing a complete repaint job. Dave Carr, as our technical project coordinator, has been constantly at the sharp end in often difficult dealings with the contractors, and has been invaluable. And finally a mention must be made of the massive amount of hard work and time put in by our Parish Clerk, Alison Sutton, without whom this project could not have been achieved!

The Community of Eardisland has emerged from the difficult times surrounding the pandemic in reasonable shape. We continue to benefit from the activities of a number of volunteer led groups, significantly, In Bloom, the E Team, the Environmental and Sustainability group, the WI, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall Management team, and the Church of St Mary the Virgin. All of these organisations deserve our thanks for all that they do, because it is these organisations, and there will be others, who together make our unique small Community what it is.

In Eardisland we have a Parish Magazine which is among the best around. Edited by Chris Bivand, he and his team do an outstanding job, keeping us informed and producing an excellent Magazine, for which we thank them .

Flooding remains an issue for us all in Eardisland. The PC continue their efforts to protect the residents and properties at risk. Work and discussions have continued with the Environment Agency, the aim of which is to improve the flow of water through our area and minimise flooding. The Council have limited funds for self- funded works, which have mostly been spent on the millstream and the Arrow in the middle of the village. The Eardisland Flood Response Group has remained active during this last year with one potentially difficult event. We want to thank all the volunteers in this team who make such a big difference when the flood occurs. The PC want to encourage all Residents to take their own Flood protection seriously and to get involved. The Hereford and Worcester Fire Brigade has been active

locally, offering home safety advice to residents, and through a recent water borne exercise to show that, in a flood situation, they can provide appropriate support to us.

The condition of our roads, footpaths and rights of way, continue to be a concern. The PC using very limited parish funds, does what it can to keep things tidy, but the major responsibility remains with Hereford CC.

Our Neighbourhood Development Plan, launched in 2016 and with active life and legal standing until 2031, remains an important tool in supporting the wishes of our Community, in our dealings with the County Council and others. The plan will be due revision but until that happens it is our obligation to support the NDP as it is an expression of the Residents will.

We are still seeking a volunteer Parish Tree Warden. In a period of rapid climate change, this is such an important role; does anyone want to volunteer?

My last point concerns the imminent retirement and departure from Herefordshire of our Clerk Alison Sutton. Alison has been the Clerk here for almost 9 years, is well known to you all and has served this Community in an outstanding manner, but will finish at the end of June. Through some quite difficult periods Alison has advised, led, and sometimes harassed the PC, but mostly for the right reason. Alison has been excellent in all facets of her role in Eardisland, we will miss her and we wish her and her family well in the next phase of their lives. Our new Clerk will be Debbie Cottam, who lives locally and will assume the role in July.

4. Report from the Ward Councillor Roger Phillips, Arrow Ward

Communities and business are moving forward after the worst of the Covid pandemic and we all have to adjust to living as normal a life as we can. Herefordshire Council has received significant funding in various forms from the Government to help with post-Covid recovery and I urge vigilance to spot the various grants the Council publishes so that we can continue to secure funding for our local projects and support local employment.

The Council's Children's Care Department has been identified by the Government as a cause for concern and a top priority of the Council remains to better function its responsibility to vulnerable children in the county. A Panorama TV programme on 16 May will make uncomfortable viewing. The Council is concerned about climate change and has a new Plan which sets an interim target of a 75% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025/26, as part of a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030/31. The Council is developing a Big economic plan for the county but it is a struggle to get them to understand the needs of smaller rural economies. I remain of the belief that until proper investment is made in highway infrastructure in the county and especially Hereford City we will always hit a glass ceiling as we try to develop the local economy and provide better paid jobs.

I am pleased to be working with the community and partner public agencies on the village flood plan. I held a meeting with Hereford and Worcester Fire service, Herefordshire Council (HC) and the local flood group to improve understanding and communication. Recently I was pleased to see the Fire Service carry out water rescue training on the Arrow.

This summer will see the third anniversary of the ban on planning consents due to the phosphate problem in the Wye catchment area. Although pre-consents have allowed some developments to take place, we are now at an almost complete standstill and this has huge implications on the local construction sector. The Council seems to have progressed a solution to the problem with a reedbed solution at public sewerage plants at Luston, Titley and Tarrington, which will allow development to begin again. Final details have yet to be confirmed but it will require applicants to purchase phosphate credits from the Council. Hopefully, HC and Natural England will also allow similar and other schemes to be privately developed also.

The Core Strategy is being reviewed by HC and a number of consultations are coming out within a tight timetable. I have some concerns about emerging options to significantly limit housing growth in rural areas – rural sustainability requires housing in the future particularly for economically active and maturing population. I urge residents to take part in these consultations.

I am pleased to report the commencement of the Fastershire Eardisland build to bring superfast broadband to virtually all residences and businesses in the parish following the Hardwick section being done last year. Particularly important given the understanding that broadband connection is scheduled to be withdrawn from copper wiring in 2025.

Herefordshire's 2,000 miles of highways remain a challenge to maintain. This year we benefited with a mild winter which resulted in a low impact on our highways, however issues of potholes and drainage

remain concerns. It is over 12 months since the opening of the roundabout at Lawton's Cross and my understanding is no accidents have been recorded since this safety measure was installed. Golden Cross remains a sensitive accident spot and I was pleased to ensure maintenance on the infrastructure was carried out during the year. Monitoring is being undertaken at Heybridge where some earth slippage has taken place and is to be repaired.

In September our Balfour steward Lara Edwards resigned which was great loss to the clerk and myself, however we have Paul Hunter as our new Steward. Last month Public Rights Of Way maintenance were transferred back to the Council from Balfour Beatty. Throughout the year I have regularly attended meetings of the Parish Council, numerous local events and activities, and dealt with many resident individual concerns. I produce a monthly email update to all email contacts in my ward and contribute to the parish newsletter.

I would place on record my thanks to the Parish Councillors and Chairman for their support to me and the work and care they undertake for their community. A particular thank you also to Alison who is retiring as your clerk – her knowledge, expertise and wise counsel will be a loss to us all.

These are challenging times for our world, nation, county and parish but working together we can have a positive impact on our local community .

5. Public Forum – To receive comments/views from local residents

What does a tree warden do? Previously explained in magazine and will be put in again.

6. Parish Organisations – Reports as follows:

6.1. Church of the Virgin Mary Parochial Church Council

The past 12 months have been a difficult time for Churches generally. Continuing COVID related restrictions have impacted on the normal life of the Church in Eardisland such that congregations have been down and church income significantly reduced. Notwithstanding the national situation, locally we have managed to continue with most of our traditional services, ceremonies and the larger fund raising events (Open Gardens and the Craft Fair), all very positive.

We are constantly trying to improve the condition of our 1,000 year old building and a project is being developed at the moment to provide a mini kitchenette inside the Church and a toilet facility in a north wall extension; it will take some time to deliver! We do have a major problem with a collapsing church yard wall which is going to be a very expensive job for the near future. At last we do have a mains water supply to the Church.

We are blessed with a very active bell ringing team, you will have enjoyed hearing their efforts, and a dedicated Parochial Council who work hard to deliver the Church programme and to meet the needs and aspirations of the community of Eardisland.

Richard Kirby, Churchwarden

Bell Ringers

Mechanically the bells remain in very good condition and have been regular maintained. This continues their UK wide reputation of an excellent set of bells to ring. The bell ropes, however, where our weakest point with one very recently breaking whilst the bells were being rung by visitors. Very quickly fitting a replacement saved the day and the upper sections (top ¾ of each rope) have now all been replaced on all in-use ropes.

A set of new muffles has been recently donated and are ready to fit when required. These are used for ringing at funerals or to mark any sad state occasions etc.

Bell simulator equipment that has been removed from Eardisley Tower is currently being refurbished and upgraded and is likely to be ready for installation here at Eardisland in 3 months time. This equipment can be extremely useful when teaching learners as it allows bells to be rung normally but silently outside with computer generated sound inside.

Despite having no local bell ringers we have managed to ring for every Sunday Service since last June when Covid restrictions first allowed ringing to resume. Despite best efforts, the complete dearth of local ringers remains our biggest problem. Efforts to firstly recruit and then train local personnel will continue.

One notable set of visitors, Derby Cathedral, rang a peal (5000 changes, 3 hours long) last October. Whilst ringing I published a note on the Eardisland Village website and immediately received 27 "likes" and 7 comments such as "a lovely sound that shows the church is at the

centre of our community”, “I opened my windows wider so I could hear the bells better”, and “I stopped and listened in awe as I was walking past the church”. Sadly, Covid cancelled similar activity immediately before Christmas.

I will continue to encourage visitors throughout this coming year. Meanwhile, ringing practice nights for ringers from other parishes will continue on Monday evenings and church services will be supported whenever possible (bearing in mind that one band of ringers is required to share its services amongst 6 other churches).

Geoff Cowling, Tower Captain

6.2. Community Garden

The 2021 season was still affected by the COVID pandemic and concerns about meeting up in groups. Packs of seeds were made available to collect from the Community Shop in April (thanks to the E-Team for funding) with pots and compost available from the garden.

Seedlings were planted out towards the end of May and produce available to pick all summer. In the autumn the beds were cleared, and green manure sown for overwintering. It's hoped that 2022 will enable more group activities, starting with planting seeds on the 8th of May. This year we are going to concentrate on the most popular vegetables and devote some of the beds to bee and butterfly friendly flowers.

Wildflower Area

The area (around 10 to 15% of the recreation ground) is settling in having now had two full growing seasons. The Golden Rattle (which weakens the grass growth) seems to have established well over large areas of the patch, particularly in the northern end. Distinct differences are showing between different areas, perhaps due to underlying soil conditions or drainage, for example Hogweed is dominant in the southern end. Paths were kept mown throughout the area during the summer, and the whole area cut back with a topper in September.

Ben Woodcock

6.3. Dovecote Trust

Plans to redirect visitor interest are in hand. Currently, we are displaying much of the History group's items, pictures and photographs, while the information boards dedicated to each of our fallen WW1 soldiers remain in place in the large glass cabinet.

We shall be developing the Eardisland history aspect in the near future, while making wider use of the glass cabinet: with luck running through a variety of displays.

Our main challenge relates to timings, which at present are fixed to Community Shop open hours. Thus, trustees' finger remain firmly crossed in hoping that summer brings in volunteers to keep going our fortunate Dovecote asset both upstairs and down!

Hugh Vernon

6.4. Eardisland Bowling Club

Saturday April 16th saw the Opening Day for the club with over 30 players attending including present members and some prospective new members who were able to "Have a Go". The weather was perfect and everyone was more than happy to enjoy outdoor bowling once again especially after the Covid epidemic which affected the last two previous seasons.

A lot of work has been done by the members during the winter months so the clubhouse and ladies changing room are now newly painted and looking fresh and clean. Maintaining the bowling green and surrounding areas takes a lot of work in the Spring but it is now ready to take on the matches and competitions of the season.

Bowling is a great game for everyone and both Juniors (11-16 years) and adults, whether beginners or experienced, are welcome to come along and see us on Tuesday evenings, which are club nights opening at 6pm.

Barbara Kay (Secretary) email: fitcats@btinternet.com

6.5. Eardisland Community Shop

Eardisland Community Shop has emerged from the pandemic still holding its own but there continue to be challenges. Quite a few volunteers have left and not returned so we are very grateful that new ones have stepped forward. The committee wishes to thank all the volunteers, old and new, who have kept the shop going for so many years. We are very grateful for the grants we have received from Herefordshire Council which have continued to enable us to serve the village. Takings are inevitably lower because of reduced opening hours and the shop needs

the help of the village community to remain viable. The shop supported the Dovecote Trust in the maintenance of its premises in 2021.

We are continuing to stock from local suppliers as much as possible, thus supporting local businesses and limiting the travel miles of the goods we sell. This has become particularly important as we wish to assist the Eardisland Environment and Sustainability Group in its efforts to reduce the effects of climate change. To this end we are selling a variety of eco friendly products and reducing the plastic used and sold in the shop. We are in the process of installing a drinking water tap outside the Dovecote to discourage the use of plastic water bottles.

Sue Wallis

6.6. Eardisland in Bloom

This last year just about saw the Team keep up with the annual workload. We lost a couple of members but managed to recruit three ladies, our first females in the group's history. Due to covid restrictions we were unable to host the annual plant fair but the Craft & Produce Fair did go ahead and due in part to glorious weather we had a record public attendance of 481 persons. The format was changed slightly as it is no longer possible to erect three marquees due to limited manpower and none of us are getting any younger! Instead, stall holders were invited to erect their own gazebo, with ten taking up this option. The overall effect received very favourable comments and will be repeated this year.

The E Team was pleased to share its half of the profits with the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) an arrangement which is likely to continue. Bookings for the 2022 show on 1st October, opened towards the end of March and all space, apart from a limited number of gazebos, is now fully booked.

Sadly 2021 was the year the Eardisland in Bloom boat finally gave up the ghost and could no longer be repaired. It lasted 8 long years and put on a wonderful display, but has now been replaced by a rockery, thanks to the generosity of both the parish council and the VHMC in donating the stone from the knocked down kitchen.

We are still looking for volunteers to come and help on a Thursday morning to help lighten the load.

Phil Milchard

6.7. Eardisland Heritage and History Group

The Group has been meeting regularly since restrictions were lifted in 2021. Our research into the historic field names of the parish, areas in which archaeological finds had been made and detailed examination of parish maps had been placed on hold. It became apparent following the unexpected death of George Alderson, our dedicated research member that it was necessary to reconsider the indexing of our extensive archive. It was recognised that this ought to be made available to parishioners and others interested in the history of the parish.

On resuming our meetings, two developments occurred. We agreed that we should develop an indexing system which George had devised, with a view to making it available on the parish website. The other was a request by the Dovecote Trustees for us to provide an exhibition of photos and other historical features (artefacts, maps, documents) to illustrate the ancient history of the parish to modern times. We duly organised a photographic display which is currently on show. This remains an interim exhibition since there may be changes to the structure of the display area, allowing visitors to have more space to view items. There is naturally a potential difficulty in displaying important and historically valuable artefacts since the matter of security is problematic. We hope this will be developed in the future. We were grateful to the Parish Council for providing us with a grant of £200 which has enabled us to provide the materials for our displays and cover the costs of work involving local printers.

Naturally, we would like to digitise more of our archive. We are seeking guidance on this by various experts in the field. We have digitised approximately 60 audio tapes made by the Oral History Group in 1990s. These were interviews with members of the community at that time. We are presently seeking ways of making these (and our films, books and reports about the village) more widely available. A talk about these could be provided. A long-term aim may be to have a formal Heritage Centre available in the village where all material could be stored, examined and research developed.

The indexing of the archive is a major undertaking and is presently taking up most of our time. We hold a large collection of photographs each of which is categorised and filed accordingly.

This should enable researchers of the future to locate photographs and documents of relevance to their interest.

Occasional requests for those doing family history are received and we respond to all enquiries with relevant information where we can. Sometimes such enquires lead us to a deeper understanding of the rich history of the parish and some of its most remarkable members and events. Often, details uncovered are written up as articles for the parish magazine.

We have been fortunate to have had the assistance of Peter Reavill, (Portable Antiquities Scheme) in examining rare or ancient artefacts which we were able to present to him. He has subsequently put a wide range of this material, duly identified, on a website. This is an example of how important it is to have our archive digitised and made available for future historians and interested parishioners to examine. The collection we have made of Norman period pottery from Burton Court excavations is regarded as the most important in Herefordshire and is now used by historians of the period for identification and comparative purposes.

The links Rhydmoor: <https://finds.org.uk/database/search/results/lat/52.21904676/lon/-2.83577209/d/0.1>

Paul Selfe

6.8. Eardisland Village Band

Eardisland Village Band was formed back in 2003 which means that we are currently in our twentieth year - and at the last count, we now have some 260 tunes in our repertoire. Plenty for us to get our teeth into at our regular practices now that we can meet again after a long break as a result of the Covid restrictions.

We remain six players covering a range of instruments including fiddle, English concertina, banjo, whistle, flute, guitar and 'cello.

Alongside supporting community events, a key aim of the Band is to remain self-funding. As the Band's main expense is the hire of the Village Hall for practices, monies are in effect returned to the community via Village Hall funds. The Band's accounts are available for inspection on request – as of today, 30th April 2022, the balance stands at £14.92.

On June 5th, we have been invited to play for the village Jubilee picnic on the Recreation Ground and later this summer we hope to play at the monthly Folk Club in Brimfield Village Hall. As always, the Band expresses grateful thanks for the boundless energy and support of our leader, Andy Davies.

Ruth Brinton-Bivand, Administrator, Eardisland Village Band, 07773 706147,
ruthbrintonbivand@gmail.com

6.9. Parish Magazine

The Eardisland Parish Magazine has been published on schedule over the past calendar year. The printers have been changed to PIP, Hereford. They have done a quick, efficient job and deliver to the village for distribution.

The team remains the same as the 2021 report: Chris Bivand (Editor), Patricia Gill (Advertising Manager) and Barry Freeman (Distribution Manager).

The Magazine continues to be circulated free to all residences in the parish, the village shop, and Arrow Bank Holiday Park. The magazine is also published on the Eardisland Community Website and has international readers.

The delivery team has done stoic work in getting the magazines out quickly, sometimes in adverse weather conditions.

We should be grateful to all those who give their time voluntarily in writing, compiling, delivering and all aspects of the magazine's publication.

Chris Bivand, Editor

6.10. Speedwatch

This group has been going since 2019 . At present we have 12 Volunteers. We try to run fortnightly sessions between the months of March to October with 3 volunteers each session. Sessions are run early morning, midday and afternoons on different days of the week. One Saturday session was run but not very successful for some reason.

There are 4 sites in the village which have been risked assessed by West Mercia Police as safe places to run sessions.

Lyme Lane lay-by tends to be the best site with traffic coming from Leominster and over the bridge from Pembridge. On an average 45-60 minute session 90-100 + vehicles past through

the village. Usually between 5-12 vehicles are caught driving over the 35 mph allowed by West Mercia Police before their details can be noted. Although not a huge number just being visible in our yellow jackets acts as a reminder and people do slow down.

Last year we were given new Bushnell Speed Radar equipment which is a light weight hand held battery operated "speed gun" this has been a great help as the old equipment was heavy and awkward to use.

We have recently had support from Dean Wall and Felix Rawlinson from the local Community Neighbourhood Police Team who have attended 2 sessions with us.

Without the volunteers this group could not continue and they are thanked for their ongoing help.

Diane Lee

6.11. Twinning Association

7 parishioners attended the Special General Meeting of 31st March 2022. 30 other people requested their apologies to be noted. It was agreed that Ruth Brinton-Bivand, in her role as founding Chair of the Association, should chair the meeting.

Chris Bivand, as the latest Treasurer of the Association, gave a financial update. After the cost of hiring the Hall for the meeting, the balance would be £583.37. The meeting gave Chris the authority to open an interest-bearing account solely for the ETA. The new account will be in his name, with a guarantee that all money will be available, including interest, if required by a properly constituted committee.

Only one person at the meeting was prepared to stand for election and as no-one tendering their apologies had offered to do so, it was therefore not possible to form a properly constituted committee. Along with her apologies, Caroline Marsden had sent a suggestion to maintain and strengthen the links between Eardisland and La Vieille Lyre. Caroline suggested that while both travel and funding are problematic under current circumstances, the setting-up of an Eardisland/La Vieille Lyre Facebook page, linked to our community website and the Eardisland Facebook page, would allow the two communities to post what is going on day-to-day. Caroline felt that this would give us the opportunity to get to know each other as communities, without necessarily meeting face-to-face, and to strengthen the existing relationship which at the moment is perhaps dependant on, and focused on, those who have participated in person-to-person exchanges in the past. To those not in a position to host or travel, it would offer an opportunity to participate in the Twinning in a meaningful way – for instance, it would give a platform to local historians, craftspeople, equestrians, sportspeople, artists, businesses and students of all ages to exchange views and ideas. The meeting received this proposal with enthusiasm, believing it to be a practical and exciting way forward. Ben Woodcock, who maintains the Eardisland community website and is an administrator of the Eardisland Facebook page, offered to investigate the practicality of the proposal, believing it to be a highly possible project. For those who don't use Facebook, Ben suggested investigating a live feed to the Community website. The Chair explained that she is a "friend" on Facebook of Marc Morière, the current mayor of La Vieille Lyre. He posts frequently about events in La Vieille Lyre, complete with photos. For those in the village without computers, tablets or smartphones, Ruth Brinton-Bivand offered to write a summary for each edition of the Parish Magazine.

The meeting could see many advantages to the proposal, including: the fact that Facebook posts would appear automatically translated into English with a button to click to read the original in French; the possibility of ex-villagers who have moved away from Eardisland maintaining on-going links with La Vieille-Lyre (and Eardisland); the possibility of establishing easy links with other Herefordshire twinning associations (there are two which are twinned with other communities in Normandy); the possibility of developing informal individual or group visits to La Vieille Lyre – perhaps using the campsite or the gîte in La Vieille Lyre as an alternative to staying with hosts; the possibility of involving local school pupils; the possibility of Zoom meetings in parallel involving both communities.

Ben offered to feedback to those at the meeting once he had investigated more. The meeting offered warm thanks to Ben and gave Chris Bivand permission to pay monies required solely for the benefit of the ETA up to the value of £50.

This arrangement will be reviewed at a Special General Meeting in March 2023, along with the on-going organisation of the ETA .

Ruth Brinton-Bivand, Founding Chair of Eardisland Twinning Association

6.12. Village Hall Management Committee

It has been a roller coaster year for Eardisland Village Hall Management Committee (EVHMC). In common with all community groups, we are still reeling from the effects of the pandemic but, in addition to this, we have had the sometimes challenging task of keeping the village hall afloat whilst a new kitchen was being built.

The results are spectacular and we look forward to building up use of the hall to, once again, create income. Lack of earnings for the past nearly three years plus the ever-increasing gas and electricity costs present us with ongoing management challenges.

The official re-opening of the village hall on April 23rd was a well-attended and successful event. Working with Ignite: Our Community Can a number of taster events took place and Eardisland residents sang, danced and exercised their way through the day refreshed, as always, by tea, coffee and cake. The responses from participants mean that we anticipate that a number of new activity groups, in addition to our other events, will now go forward.

We look forward to the next year, ready for the next stage in taking our village hall to the next level.

Carole Millin

6.13. Village Show

The Eardisland Village Show returned on the first Saturday of September. There were over 50 entrants and the sun shone down on us. A wide range of classes were available to enter- food, drink, craft, art, photography, horticulture (flowers and fruit/veg) and a popular children's section. This year the show also incorporated a well-attended fete.

Jo South

6.14. Whittington Exhibition Foundation

We have met safely throughout Covid & kindly used our Church as a new Venue. Our Committee are always keen to hear from New Applicants & to this end we have seen Ben Woodcock who has kindly added us to our Village Organisation Website. "Village.Org". We have a specific Protocol & need to be extremely Professional & Confidential as always. The Village Facebook Page was deemed not to be acceptable.

Committee Members are very Happy to be approached on a Personal Level & obviously my email is always an option djgittoes@btinternet.com or Homeline 01544 388681 in Evenings. Again we are able to accept any Applications within our Parish for future Career Paths & word of mouth is always a great way to spread the word.

Any further updates required please never hesitate in contact myself or Wendy Priday on 01544 388570.

Mel Gittoes, 07952 283 447

6.15. Women's Institute

Once again the Eardisland WI was significantly affected by the Pandemic in 2021. The committee remained on board for a second year and we had a much reduced programme in the early part of 2021. The National WI moved the membership year from January to March and Herefordshire WI took the decision to replace the monthly WI newsletter with an online version. It was no surprise when we lost a number of members in the year. Some took the decision due to Covid that they would not continue with their membership and Eardisland WI was reduced in size during April 2021, despite making the decision to reduce the membership fee and covering only the National expenses which still had to be paid.

The remaining members received regular updates and details of competitions on line via email, but this left at least four members who could only be reached in person or on the phone. Rita and Wendy manned the phones and kept in touch with everyone during the second lockdown, we held a few zoom meetings and when we were able, we met for coffee in the garden, having our first formal meeting in June at The Old Barn for a socially distanced exercise class with Mandy Ware, then in July we met in Mandy Vernon's garden to play games and socialise. In September we resumed our meetings with a wonderful trip to Hereford Cathedral Gardens, then from October meetings were held in the Church, firstly with a talk on Forensics from Simon Fanthorpe and a demonstration of seasonal flower arranging with Sue Hamer in November. The WI were able to welcome a number of guests to the meetings, including those who have recently moved to the village and surrounding area and those who decided to give WI another go. We had an excellent Christmas lunch in the New Inn at Pembridge and returned to the village hall

for our January and February meetings. Those two meetings were as diverse as they could be with a chance to pamper our hands and make a hand cream using essential oils and a talk from two Herefordshire ladies who travel to Uganda with their charity Ugandan Dream to provide essential voluntary support to a rural maternity unit and centre for children with disabilities. We start the new membership year with great optimism and a full programme of talks and visits and welcoming our former guests as new members. The new programme will be published on the Eardisland village website and on the Eardisland Village group page of Facebook. Guests in 2022 will be welcome to come for a fee of £5 per meeting. So we look forward to the new membership year with a variety of events, visits and talks as well as engaging in the programme from the National Federation of WI.

Helen Kirkham

This meeting was declared closed at 6.50 pm.

SIGNED.....

DATE.....

Chair