



Droxford Community Hub

Community Interest Company (DCH CIC)



CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 1 JUNE 2026

Welcome to our Annual Meeting. Although it is termed our Annual General Meeting on the invitation to you all, as a Community Interest Company, we don't have to hold an AGM as such. However, we do like to keep all our volunteers and supporters up-to-date at least annually.

Well, this has been an interesting year! So much going on and at times a lot of negativity from others to contend with and to be honest, I had a real issue with how to deal with that in this report. But dwelling on the negativity puts everything out of proportion when so many positive things have gone on in the year. I am going to leave it at this. The FODC recently released a statement full of miss-truths and twisted information. It is very far from the truth that they claim it to be. If you feel you would like to know more, please talk to any of us at the end of this meeting. Meanwhile, we're still going and we're still smiling!

Several people have said to me that I should write a book about all that has gone on, but to be honest, I think anyone reading it would believe it to be too far fetched to be true.

We left the church premises in November and we were incredibly sad to do so and to close one chapter in our mini history. I promised some of you at our Christmas volunteer get-togethers that we would be back and - well, here we are. A new chapter in the life of Wilfrid's.

We are delighted to have been welcomed by the village hall and thank the Village Hall committee for allowing us to open here on two days a week and to do everything they could to help us settle in here. Janet, please pass on our thanks to the committee. The support we have received is fantastic.

It is different here of course and has taken some adjustment whilst we get used to a slightly different way of working. But hasn't it been good?

Our volunteers largely came back to help wherever they could, our cake bakers continued to make brilliant cakes. However, I remember opening up again at the end of January with a little anxiety which was shared I know by the rest of the Board. Would our customers come back?

We need not have worried. Our amazing customers - what can I say about them all - some of whom we are glad to welcome here tonight. You came back in numbers

allowing us to build again and provide a place for people to come, enjoy a delicious cake and a coffee or even on a Sunday Reg's amazing bacon baps!

The baristas have had to get used to a new coffee machine, the volunteers had to adjust to a slightly different way of working. The setup of the Cafe was different. Storage was different. Everyone has gone out of their way to adjust quickly to it all, with a warm smile and a welcome for our customers. Big thanks to every single one of you.

Whilst our number of cake bakers is small, their cakes are outstanding and those that have tasted them will definitely agree with that. The cake bakers' commitment to producing their cakes is brilliant and our grateful thanks go to each of them.

Let's continue the positivity with our young people. There is a lot in the press about the difficulty for young people to find temporary work that builds their confidence and gives them experience for the real world of work and we are so glad that we have been able to offer a few young people a chance to do just that. The system that Ali originally set up is still going strong and we have welcomed a number of young people into the café - some as volunteers and some as paid trainees. The youngsters have become an integral part of the café and their quickness to pick things up is amazing - or maybe that's a slight reflection on the rest of us who might have slowed down just a touch now.....We particularly welcome Amelia as our current very enthusiastic, efficient and very willing trainee at the moment

Staying with our young people, we have also welcomed young people through the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, organised by Sarah. We haven't anyone on the Scheme at the moment but do hope to welcome them back soon.

We had another successful Macmillan event with amazing support from the village, raising over £1400 for this worthwhile cause.

We supported community events with the book sales, Maker's markets and Christmas markets. The recent Produce Market was held here in April for the first time for a while and was run in conjunction with the Village Hall. At the same time as the produce, Ailsa organised a litter pick for the village and we were able to support the litter-pickers with a free drink. We also ran a cake stall to raise money for Droxford Junior School, with a lot of help from the village who baked cakes as well as our own cake bakers. We raised £300 for the school from the donations to the cakes. Such a lovely community event with lots of people coming together to support the village and Ailsa, as always, worked hard to make it all happen. Thanks to Ailsa.

We have also supported Meon Valley Garden Club at two separate events. One was after a special commemoration tree planting ceremony for John Martin and the other at their recent Plant Sale. There are a few members of the Garden Club here tonight, but Olive, perhaps you will pass on our thanks to the Garden Club for allowing us to work with them to make another community event.

You may have picked up in my report the references to the community. The community coming together is hugely important and an integral part of everything we try to do. We are a Community Interest Company designed to support our local community, to try to provide a lovely place to come and meet others and to try to generate funding with help from all our volunteers and customers to give back to the community through our grants system.

Thanks to every bit of support we have received and the willingness of so many to help in the café - or of course, to come along and eat cake....we have raised some funding this year. Whilst not as high as last year, it is still a remarkable achievement given that we didn't trade at all for two months and now only run two shifts a week. We are delighted to announce we have over £5700 to give to the community.

Our grants system will be very similar this year, with application forms available shortly on our website or from the Cafe here when we're open. This year however, we are delighted to welcome two independent people who will help us to discuss the grant applications and allocate the funding. This preserves the integrity of the grants process and ensures a fair deal for all applicants. Stephen and I look forward to working with them.

I feel privileged to work with the Board and I will talk more about them later. Along with the rest of the Board, I am glad we have been able to come back and we all look forward to a brighter future with all parts of the community coming together.

Margaret Wallace
Chair
Droxford Community Hub CIC

1 June 2026