



Droxford Community Hub

Community Interest Company (DCH CIC)



CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS 1 JUNE 2026

At various times in the last year, people have said to me that they do not understand how we at DCH (or Wilfrid's as we are better known) have kept going. My answer to those questions is always the same.

Wilfrid's is hugely important to us all. There is the legal framework - we are a Community Interest Company designed by law to help our community. And that is to help all sections of the community - including the church, contrary to the opinion voiced by some that we do not want to support the church. We have done so over the last six years and will continue to do so. But the reason we keep going is much more than that.

We strongly believe that Wilfrid's has a place in this community, a place for people to come, enjoy a coffee and cake and hopefully, as we continue to re-build, to endeavour to increase the possibilities to give back to our lovely village by way of the grants to the community. We don't do this alone and there are many people who contribute so much to helping us achieve that - in fact, without that support there wouldn't be a Wilfrid's. Please bear with me whilst I thank those very important people.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the volunteers who help Wilfrid's to be the place that it is. It doesn't matter whether they work occasionally or regularly, they willingly give of their time and energy. They turn up prepared to help, to give customers a warm welcome and make them feel comfortable. They continue to turn up for training days or individual training to keep up to date with how we are running. That is a truly amazing commitment on their part. And yes, I am going to say - to me you are truly all stars!

To all our lovely customers, for all their brilliant support - and for just turning up to have a coffee or cake. You help us to generate funding to support the community and to build towards the future. Thank you all.

I want to particularly mention Ali. She recently resigned from the Board to spend more time with her family and for her other many commitments. Ali worked with us on the Board from 2021 and contributed much to Wilfrid's and the Board. She was an integral part of the Ops team for much of that time. She developed the young people's training programme. We were intending to branch out in other directions as a company with other fundraising ideas and Ali was an integral part of that and was to become our Events Manager - although the title was undecided. Sadly, other things got in the way of that development, but we haven't forgotten it. An integral part of the Board, full of ideas and sometimes a very necessary note of caution. She became Vice Chair from 2022 at

the same time that I took over as Chair and was a huge source of support and a great sounding board. Huge thanks go to her for her time, effort and energy given to DCH and Wilfrid's and to me personally.

Sarah has expressed our thanks already to those outside Wilfrid's who support us. I repeat those thanks to Pardeep and to Mike.

I have already mentioned the village hall and our gratitude to them for giving us a new place for Wilfrid's.

To Ruth - for independently assessing our accounts.

To Parul - she was a member of the marketing team for a while, but left earlier this year for a number of reasons.

To Nicky - weaver of words and succinct phraseology, the beautiful posters and photos you see round the village, on our website or posted to WhatsApp groups and Instagram or a fine turn of phrase for a Bridge article - these are all her work. She is an integral part of our Marketing team and much more besides. Her willingness to give her time and talents to help us is incredible - thank you Nicky.

And then to the Board. Now just six of us, each one uses their knowledge and expertise to help. Each have their own particular talents but the combination of those talents makes for a brilliant team.

Sarah and I have known each other for quite a while. We started out 7 years ago with some ideas of how to run a café and a willingness to spend time doing so. I would not like to estimate the number of hours Sarah has spent preparing working practices, running shifts, training volunteers, keeping the café stocked with produce or making sure we all conform to the precise standards she sets. Maybe a better person to ask would be John, her husband who would have a pretty accurate picture of her time commitment? To me it's too many hours to even try to count and that plus her immeasurable support, her sense of humour and the friendly ear for a chat is fantastic.

Stewart - chair of the Marketing team, with eagle eyes that make him a super checker of spellings, punctuation or grammar. His precise attention to detail has proved such a huge asset in so many ways over the last six and a half years he's been working for DCH. Many hours spent writing complicated documents that we need - amazing.

Jacky - running our finances with efficiency, definitely a super-baker with the number of cakes she makes which are always delicious. A volunteer in the café on regular shifts with a ready sense of humour. Always ready to support people and listen to what they have to say, injecting her own brand of common sense to a situation.

Stephen - organiser of the volunteer rotas, Stephen does many shifts in the café too and is highly committed. Another who is always ready to lend a helping hand or to mend this or that. Invaluable support.

Louise - last, but by no means least. Louise is our Company Secretary who, with patience and humour, keeps us all up-to-date with dates, times, minutes, filings at Companies House and many other countless jobs she does to keep things running smoothly. Her help is tremendous and she has reminded me on more than one occasion of a particular date. Such a huge support to me and the Board.

The Board works together and as I have commented to some of you before, we don't always agree, but we talk it out and compromise where we need to. It is truly a privilege to work with them all, a group of friends who have developed over time to become a cohesive unit. It is truly special to work with them and I thank them all - not only for their contribution to DCH and Wilfrid's, but to me personally.

Behind the Board members are all their partners - John, Ali, Nicky, Kate and Ian, supporting behind the scenes and I think for many of the Board, the support has been just like my own experience. Reg has been a tremendous support over the time I have been Chair. I don't think either of us could have known when I took it on exactly what it would entail in terms of hours spent or the stresses and strains that there have been and Reg has always been there for me. Thank you to every one of you.

We look forward to that brighter future, with all parts of the community coming together. Thank you all for coming along and you would be very welcome to stay to enjoy another drink and chat with us.

Margaret

1 June 2026