



Friends Of Droxford Church

November 2023 - Review and Evaluation of 5 Year Strategy Plan (2022-2027)

OUR AIMS

1. Events and Activities

We aim to satisfy our Objects by engaging with the village community so that more people and a wider range of people use the church building. We will do this by facilitating, encouraging, promoting, supporting and organising events and activities which are appropriate to the spaces available in the church and churchyard, which complement other spaces in the village, and which are consistent with our Objects.

- Grow the number of attendees at existing church services, and foster new events and activities
- Cater for wider range of demographics
- Build relationships with community groups
- Junior School/Montessori/Scouts more involved
- Enhance Heritage section and church interpretation
- Promote and encourage events, activities and availability of space for community groups

FODC have delivered a number of events in the past 18 months including:

- *a 'soiree' for all volunteers of the church which saw attendance from PCC / DCH and Wilfrid's / The Village Hall and other volunteers*
- *A book author event (Tracy Chevalier talking about her novel, A Single Thread) which attracted attendance of more than 100 people ; mostly from the local area.*
- *Two art exhibitions where local artists exhibited work as well as artists from further afield. This is now an annual event which will develop and grow in its scope.*
- *A production of the West End play, Jesus My Boy which attracted an audience of around 70 people.*
- *Watercolour classes for beginners.*
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As a result of these events, and events organised by other stakeholders, there has been increased support between groups, so that each can rely on support and assistance from other group members when they

are leading an event. Furthermore, because volunteers are affiliated to more than one group, collaboration is becoming increasingly stronger.

FODC strongly supports and encourages the vision of Wilfrid's Cafe/DCH board. Clearly, the Friends' foresight, to extend the church and establish the cafe, was aimed at opening the building to a wider demography. Since Wilfrid's opened in 2021 a range of activities, facilities and events has targeted different community groups.

The following examples are:

- Little Beans for mothers, carers and toddlers
- Wilfrid's Wednesdays, a social event that includes price promotions to make it affordable
- Surgeries for local police and Neighbourhood Watch and Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Book club
- Computer Club
- Hire of community room by a range of users

Additionally, the use of the church building by other groups has also increased significantly; Droxford Junior School visits the building throughout the year both for religious services and as a resource for curricular links.

FODC's work on promoting the heritage of the church and village is progressing well.

- A dedicated place has been created in the office of the annexe where a range of resources can be accessed and viewed in a quiet space.
- External funding from the Jomati Charity will be invested in the creation of a Wiki platform where people can tell their stories, through a range of media, about their experiences of Droxford, as well as share information about the houses they live in or have had a connection with.
- A collaboration is underway, with Hampshire English Heritage, to plan and deliver a celebration of the Hampshire Swing Riots 200 Year Anniversary in 2030.

Although the increase in numbers attending formal church services are not significant, there has been a positive response to the informal family services, with attendance in excess of 50 people.

What do we need to do better?

- Find ways of engaging with those stakeholders where collaboration could be improved.
- Collect and use data for more robust analysis. Example: Measure different demographic groups who use the building, identify gaps and plan a joint promotion campaign, (working with other main groups).
- Plan FODC Events using above data analysis.
- Find correlation between people attending informal family services, and attending other events /facilities in the building.

2. Communications

We will communicate between ourselves and with our village stakeholders in an open and respectful manner consistent with our values. We will consult and publish our plans for change and encourage open access and participation. We will build relationships based on shared objectives and common interests.

- Welcome and hospitality and 'who to contact'
- Respectful of religious and minority sensitivities – always true to our values
- Effective communication systems including noticeboards, websites, social media and meetings
- Collaborative planning and consultation
- Regular opportunities for voluntary stakeholder groups to collaborate in delivering specific events.

News items on the website have been updated and regular posts are in operation. Obsolete and outdated posts have been removed.

The home page focuses on what FODC is, what its function is, and explicitly how the audience can help FODC achieve their objectives. This includes supporting events, volunteering help and donating monies.

A QR code for donations is prominent on the Home page.

Work is currently in progress reviewing the design of the website so that it is more engaging for its audience ; this includes:

- the layout of text, illustrations and photos
- reviewing headers and footers to improve links and navigation
- reviewing texts in line with overall design.
- Adam Sinnot , a computer consultant, and Mark Bishop(from Wizz Bit) are providing support to FODC.

A summary of website news and events is shared regularly with the FODC Facebook page, and occasionally with Droxford WhatsApp Group.

There is a temporary FODC Noticeboard in the church which is updated regularly by a trustee. FODC are awaiting confirmation from The PCC subgroup allowing a permanent notice board to be installed.

A published annual timetable of scheduled FODC meetings is available on the website and Noticeboard.

What do we need to do better?

- Ensure that FODC is promoted regularly through The Bridge Magazine by celebrating successes and keeping readers informed regularly about what trustees are doing and how much money needs to be raised .
- Continue to look for opportunities to work jointly with other stakeholder groups (eg. identifying gaps in demographic groups using the church building, with a solution plan)
- Look to recruit volunteers for specific projects.
- Recruit trustees by 'volunteers conversion'.
- Engage with Andy Davies , the new Priest In Charge, and maintain ongoing dialogue concerning all mutually relevant items

3.Small Building Enhancements

We will seek to enhance the building and its fixtures to facilitate its uses and the community activities which will take place in and around it. We will prioritise outstanding work identified in the quinquennial report.

- Regular maintenance and practical refurbishments
- Audio-visual systems, streaming, and music facilitation
- Enhance outside areas and accessibility
- Storage
- Lighting
- Heating

FODC and its volunteers have completed the following repairs and enhancements:

- 85% of the Tower repairs and refurbishments have been completed
- The Nicholson Screen has been installed
- Leaking pipe work from radiators in the church has been repaired
- Boiler control faults have been resolved
- Drainage issues causing flooding in the annexe have been resolved
- temporary fencing has been installed to Wayfarers' Walk.
- regular maintenance and refurbishment is carried out through the year.
- Audio part of AV project progressing well and awaiting the go ahead from the Archdeacon

This work is mainly undertaken by two Trustees with some help from volunteers.

What do we need to do better?

- find a resolution for re-starting the plan to enhance the outside areas including accessibility.....

4. Structural Building Changes

We will seek long-term improvements in the building to continue to make it fit for purpose in the 21st Century, whilst respecting its 800 year old heritage.

- Flexible Spaces and moveable seating
- Flexible screening for Lady Chapel
- Increase footprint and usability of kitchen
- Improve sustainability and aim for Net-Zero Carbon output.

Although there was a general consensus at the consultation meeting, that the above projects were priorities for improving the church to make it fit for purpose, there has since been a reluctance to commit to these improvements, due largely due to diversion of funds to alternative priorities.

Perhaps attitudes will change in the future; in the meantime, because of continuing problems with the radiator system in the church, FODC will make:

- heating, and improved sustainability, the priority going forward
- significant quinquennial works a principal priority