

PRESS RELEASE

Family business invests in Darley Abbey with new deli opening despite bridge closure

Darley Deli & Co opens at 9am on Saturday 26 September at Darley Abbey Mills

At a time when businesses at Darley Abbey Mills continue to feel the impact of the bridge closure and a challenging trading environment, one long-established local family business has chosen to invest, adapt and open something new.

Darley Deli & Co officially opens at 9am on **Saturday 26th September 2026**, following the transformation of the front of Mackney Photography's studio at The Polishing Shed into a stylish new neighbourhood deli.

Behind the venture are husband and wife Simon and Wendy Mackney, together with Simon's sister Joanne Corah.

Joanne joined Mackney Photography in 2015 and has worked her way up through the business to become Studio Manager, playing an integral role in its day-to-day running. After more than a decade working alongside Simon and Wendy, joining them in their latest venture felt like a natural progression.

"Joanne has grown with Mackney and knows the business inside out," says Wendy. "She's family, but she's also worked incredibly hard to get where she is. When we started seriously talking about the deli, it just made sense for the three of us to do it together."

Adapting a family business

Simon and Wendy have been part of Darley Abbey Mills since 2012, when they transformed an empty industrial space into the distinctive home of Mackney Photography.

Fourteen years later, photography isn't going anywhere. Instead, the family has converted the front section of the building, allowing Mackney Photography and Darley Deli & Co to sit side-by-side under the same roof.

For Wendy, the decision reflects something they have learned over many years of running independent businesses: sometimes you must adapt.

"We absolutely love photography and Mackney is still a huge part of what we do, but any independent business owner knows you can't always rely on one type of business," says Wendy.

"With the bridge closure and businesses at the Mills having such a difficult time, we could have pulled back. Instead, we decided to invest, diversify and create another reason for people to come to Darley Abbey."

A modern deli in a World Heritage Site

Set within the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, the location has played an important part in shaping Darley Deli & Co.

The family has carefully sourced a collection of fresh food, bread, flowers, deli produce, pantry goods and gifts, combining brilliant local producers and makers with exceptional products discovered from further afield.

“We’re incredibly lucky to work in a World Heritage Site and we wanted the deli to feel worthy of where it is,” says Wendy. “There are some fantastic producers and makers on our doorstep, so supporting local has been really important to us.

“We’ve also sourced products from further afield that we absolutely love and are excited to share. The idea has always been simple: local where we can, and the best of the best wherever we find it.”

The result is a colourful, relaxed and contemporary deli where customers can sit in for breakfast or lunch, meet friends, or pick up something delicious to take away.

Alongside fresh bread, flowers and a carefully curated retail selection, the food offering includes freshly baked pastries, filled croissants, jacket potatoes, sandwiches, toasties, grazing boards, cakes and bakes.

The deli counter and specials will change regularly, keeping the focus on fresh finds and giving customers something different to discover when they visit.

“We wanted to create the kind of place where you might pop in for lunch and leave with a loaf of bread, some flowers and something delicious you spotted on the shelf,” says Wendy. “It’s very much a deli first – carefully curated, relaxed and full of things we genuinely love.”

Matcha, but no guilt trips

A dedicated matcha bar also sits at the heart of the deli’s drinks offering, bringing a contemporary twist to the traditional neighbourhood deli.

The wider food and drink selection follows a similarly simple ethos: fresh and colourful choices alongside plenty of indulgence.

“We love food that makes you feel good, but we’re certainly not here to preach about it,” says Wendy. “There’ll be matcha and plenty of fresh choices, but there’ll also be fabulous cheese, great bread and lots of cake.

“Our philosophy is pretty simple: no guilt trips – just satisfied smiles.”

Keeping it in the family

Darley Deli & Co also builds on Simon and Wendy’s experience in hospitality as owners of The Lamp House at Darley Abbey Mills alongside their friend Phil Clare.

But the deli has been given an identity entirely of its own, with Simon, Wendy and Joanne hoping it will become another reason for people to visit, explore and support the historic Mills.

Opening another independent business during the continuing bridge closure isn’t something the family has taken lightly.

“Opening a new business right now might seem a little bit mad,” Wendy laughs. “But we’ve been at the Mills for 14 years and we care enormously about what happens here.

“The bridge may be down, but our spirit and fight certainly aren’t.”

“Sometimes you have to take a risk, change things up and keep moving forward. We can’t wait to open the doors and finally show everyone what we’ve created.”

Darley Deli & Co officially opens at 9am on Saturday 26 September 2026 at The Polishing Shed, Darley Abbey Mills, Darley Abbey, Derby.

ENDS

Notes to editors: Darley Deli & Co is a new independent family-run deli founded by Simon and Wendy Mackney together with Simon's sister, Joanne Corah. Joanne joined Mackney Photography in 2015 and is now Studio Manager. The deli shares The Polishing Shed with Mackney Photography, which continues to operate from the building. Simon and Wendy have been based at Darley Abbey Mills since 2012 and are also involved in The Lamp House alongside Phil Clare.

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