

Folds

Friends of Old Shoreham

REPORT 2024-25

It's just over a year since the first meeting of FOLDs. This report summarises what we have achieved in that time and how we work.

SETTING A DIRECTION AND RAISING AWARENESS

The mission of the Friends of Old Shoreham is to protect and improve the heritage and environment of our neighbourhood, by working as a community, rather than lobbying other agencies like the Council to do it for us. FOLDs take its direction and priorities from the membership.

FOLDs emerged from discussions amongst half-a-dozen people who were concerned that the area had been neglected and ignored for a long time. We made some flyers with the slogan 'Old Shoreham needs friends' inviting people to a public meeting. Seventy people turned out on a cold January night, and a year later there are over 170 registered Friends.

That first meeting was a round-table forum, and FOLDs mission, summarised above, came out of those discussions and is now the basis of our constitution.



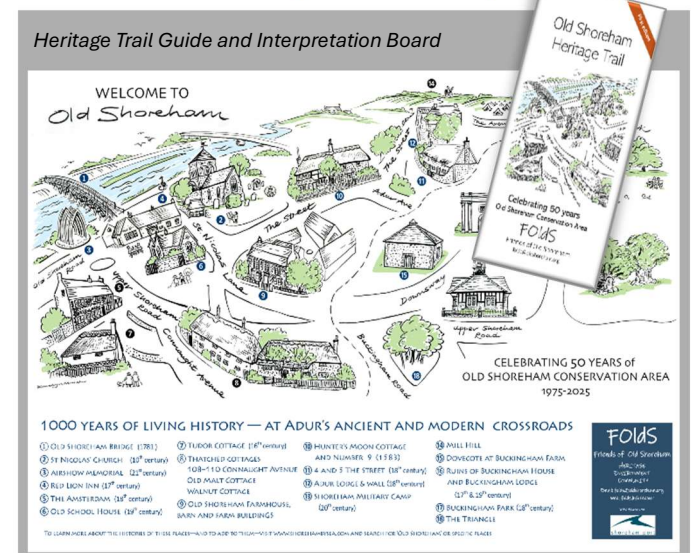
Our main focus in the first year has been to widen awareness of Old Shoreham and encourage other organisations to take an interest in this area of Adur.

An early initiative with Adur Arts Collective was to launch an exhibition on the theme of New Art for Old Shoreham which successfully bid for funds from the Adur and Worthing Trust.



The art exhibition became a central feature of the Old Shoreham Heritage Festival last September, with a mixture of community arts, local music, walks and talks which attracted 1000 participants. Committee member Karolyn Mnich created an 'inspiration map' to stimulate artists' ideas and this image became a strong component of FOLDs' increasing public profile. The inspiration map evolved into a Heritage Trail and interpretation boards published for the festival.

The festival was held as part of the National Heritage Open Days with the theme of Routes, Networks and Connections. We worked with the Shoreham Society who took this theme across other parts of Shoreham and who successfully bid for funding from Shoreham Port and the Community Rail Partnership.



INITIAL IMPACT

This 'infographic' appeared in our October newsletter, summarising involvement in the Old Shoreham Heritage Festival.



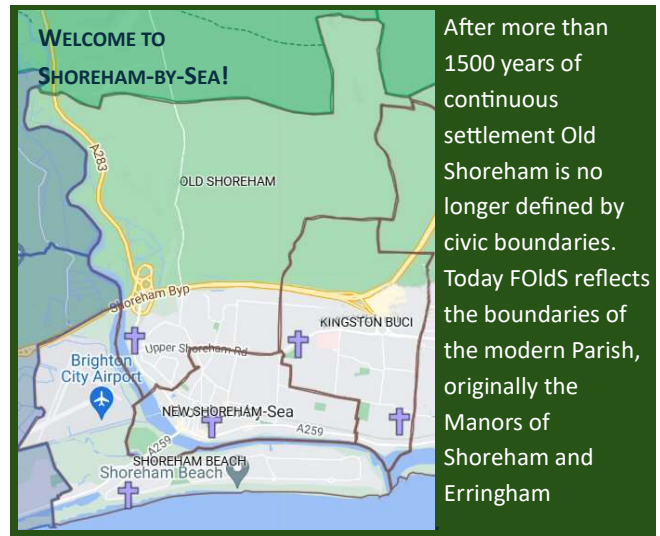
So, we are confident that FOldS meets a need, which is primarily about rebuilding some community identity, which had gradually been lost over recent decades. Moreover, this was all organised in less than four months - an outstanding example of the power of community, giving us confidence in the way FOldS works.

However we recognise that around 5000 people live in the area, and we have a long way to go to be able to claim that FOldS represents the people who live, work and do business here – which is how our Constitution defines the core membership. (People who share FOldS aims but do not fall into these categories are Associates)

WHAT NEXT? GETTING BETTER INFORMED

Our first year was mostly about building awareness of the area as a distinct part of Shoreham, with its own history, character and local issues. It is the largest and oldest part of modern Shoreham and the place where the town began. It spans hundreds of acres of farmland, downland and river valley, up to the boundary with Beeding. It is also the place that around a fifth of Shoreham's population call

home. But they are poorly served with a lack of public amenities, public transport or meeting places. There is not a single shop in the area, and the 'public realm' of footpaths, cycleways, verges, play spaces and parking is crumbling or absent once you leave the riverbank or head north from the town centre.



Following the Heritage Festival, we held our second FOldS Public Forum with the title 'What next for Old Shoreham?'. Groups shared ideas and hopes for the local environment, heritage and community arts, creating a menu of activities from which the FOldS committee could forge plans for the year ahead.

The main emphasis in 2025 is on making sure that we properly understand the area, so that we can make well-informed contributions to discussions about local planning, heritage protection and nature recovery.

We successfully bid for funding for *Capturing Old Shoreham*, which is a cluster of five projects - with room for more - that aim to build a thorough understanding of the area and then present what we find as a multimedia portrait of Old Shoreham today which we will showcase at Marlipins in May next year.

The projects include a biodiversity audit of natural habitats to create a 'Biomap' of the area; local history studies to develop a virtual heritage trail; and three community art projects to create a community banner, village map and a 'soundscape', *Echoes of Old Shoreham*. The banner and village map are further evolutions of Karolyn Mnych's inspiration map, involving community members of all ages and abilities.

The whole initiative is supported by the National Trust with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the Trust's Changing Chalk initiative.

WORKING FOR NATURE AND HERITAGE



Alongside the 'urban exploration' work of *Capturing Old Shoreham* we have launched *Greening Old Shoreham*, a group of conservation volunteers engaged in practical outdoor tasks.

At first this group was doing one-off projects to help recover footpaths, investigate habitats for wildlife, clear overgrown pavements and help to renovate the churchyard. This has now become regular work sessions, currently twice a month, to support established groups working for the environment and nature recovery. The current work programme supports Adur's Rangers, St Nicolas Church, Swiss Gardens Primary School, Apron Community Garden, the Friends of Buckingham Park and the National Park Rangers.

Greening Old Shoreham is registered with the Trust for Conservation Volunteers' Community Network. Members of the group will undertake the fieldwork for the FOldS Biomap project.

A thriving Heritage Group has started to research the histories of local buildings and families. The Group will create the virtual heritage trail which is part of the *Capturing Old Shoreham* initiative. They are currently researching the histories of the most significant buildings in the area – including St



Nicolas, Old Shoreham Farmhouse, Adur Lodge, Buckingham House and the Red Lion. This will widen out to encompass other listed and historic houses in the area and historic sites like the wartime military camps, St Nicolas churchyard, and the neolithic, iron-age and Romano-British sites across Shoreham Downs.

MUSIC AND ARTS

Performance and visual arts are central to Shoreham's cultural life and have greatly influenced FOldS' work. The Heritage Festival featured skills concerts and sessions with instrumental music and natural voices. Starting March 2025, regular sessions will take place at The Amsterdam Inn, with occasional concerts at St Nicolas, the Red Lion, and other locations, including care homes.

The New Art for Old Shoreham exhibition, a highlight of the Heritage Festival, displayed over sixty original artworks from diverse artists, offering new perspectives on Adur.

Music and art remain integral to FOldS activities. Community art projects are key to *Capturing Old Shoreham*. The June Adur Art Trail will feature Old Shoreham studios in conjunction with the Sussex Tree Festival and FOldS' Old Shoreham Midsummer Fair, drawing visitors from the town centre.

WORKING WITH OTHER GROUPS

The Shoreham Society and the Friends of St Nicolas were involved from the beginning of FOldS. The Society hosts FOldS' web pages, and St Nicolas provides a venue for events as the only public community space in Old Shoreham. Adur Voluntary Action (AVA) provides a business address and helped with organisational matters, including our constitution, banking, and insurance.

AVA, Shoreham Society and St Nicolas Parochial Church Council and Friends have supported FOldS activities along with groups like Community Works, Changing Chalk, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Shoreham and District Ornithological Society, Greening Steyning, Transition Towns, The Living Coast, AREA, SOLD, Circular Space, Sussex Past, Sussex Family History Group, Wordfest, and others. Some of these groups help us with outreach and engaging other community organisations to address specific issues.

We are very grateful to these and other supporters for giving time to support a new and unproven initiative. Adur Council, local councillors of all parties, and our new MP, Tom Rutland, have also been supportive.

Our aim is to change perceptions of Shoreham by recognising and supporting local areas and ensuring they are appreciated throughout Adur. We listen to what people want to achieve and help them reach their goals. This strategy has proven effective, but we must improve our diversity and fully represent the local community.

COMMUNICATIONS

We aim to support the people and environment of Old Shoreham. We have been trying to reach beyond the group of Friends with door-to-door leafleting; articles on Adur websites and publications; supporting St Nicolas; and visiting local care homes and schools.

We also aim to connect Old Shoreham people with local organisations and are pleased to use the Shoreham Society website for our web pages and plan to work with 'SBS' shorehambysea.com, the local history portal, as the place to publish our local history studies. SBS have already reorganised their website with a new Old Shoreham 'landing page'. Greening Steyning will host the findings of our biodiversity audit, extending their growing Nature Map of areas immediately to the north of Adur.

We're also holding a [Community Midsummer Fair](#) with music, activities and community stalls to connect local people with local organisations and opportunities. We're organising this in partnership with AVA as part of the Sussex Festival of Trees.



PLANNING AHEAD

Our annual meeting on 24 March was also our third FOldS Forum, designed to start a discussion that will shape FOldS' activities for 2026 and beyond. We are aware that the whole of north Shoreham is vulnerable to pressure for development and growth, with the ever-present competing interests in the Adur Valley. We want to ensure that this community is not taken by surprise with other people's plans for the area but instead are involved with creating positive solutions from the earliest opportunity.

MONEY

The collaborative approach has enabled significant achievements despite limited income, thanks to in-kind contributions and Friends' generosity with their time. Shoreham Society's fundraising supported printing costs for the Heritage Festival. Donations have included a digital projector and display stands.

We generated income through art sales, donations, and a small grant from Adur and Worthing Trust. We kept expenses low, leaving a surplus to meet known costs in 2025. However, the *Capturing Old Shoreham* grant is project-specific and does not cover operating costs. Half of the grant is paid in arrears, so we have to bridge a gap between expenses and income.

With membership increasing over twentyfold, higher costs are incurred for insurance, communications, web services, and other administrative needs. We don't charge membership and event fees to avoid deterring participation and adding administrative burdens. Following the annual meeting, we should launch a new appeal for donations to cover core costs, with crowdfunding considered for future projects.

Income and expenditure at 1 March 2025

INCOME

Artist's fees	£260
Donations	£749
Sale of Artist's Work	£1,062
Adur and Worthing Trust	£600
Refreshments	£191
Shoreham Port	£45
Total income	£2906

EXPENDITURE

Exhibition and publicity costs	£465
Stationery supplies	£29
Refreshments	£154
Insurance	£208
Payments to artists	£849
Volunteer refreshments	£45
Miscellaneous expenditure	£103
Web hosting	£110
Donations(St Nicolas, St Luke, FOSB)	£199
Total expenditure	£2162
Balance at bank	£744



Friends of Old Shoreham
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