

Folds

Friends of
Old Shoreham

Newsletter
November 2025



Above: Conservation volunteers from FOldS and other groups in action on Mill Hill in late October (see page 4)

October has sped by with a packed programme, summarised in the two 'supplements' that follow this month's calendar.

The first is an interim report on the achievements of our *Capturing Old Shoreham* project teams as they start planning for our exhibition at the Marlipins next year with a linked programme of events. See pages 2-3.

The second supplement summarise the plans of Greening Old Shoreham, following five trial sessions clearing the scrub and re-opening footpaths on Mill Hill. See pages 4 and 5

This month's calendar is more manageable but still offers something for every taste – and hopefully some spare time to come together to enjoy the last 'Fourth Friday' music session for 2025, which has brought new music to Old Shoreham every month since March and already has acts booked to next summer.

THIS MONTH IN OLD SHOREHAM

Friday 7 NOV 19:00-21:00	Shoreham Harmony Group – Old Shoreham's new singing circle. Just bring your voice to The Amsterdam Inn, Upper Shoreham Road
Weds 12 NOV 19:00-21:00	Heritage and History group meeting at The Amsterdam looking at Old Shoreham's historic timelines
Sat 15 NOV 10:00-13:00	Greening Old Shoreham in the Conservation Area. Meet at St Nicolas for a churchyard tidy-up Or come and join us and others for St Nicolas Coffee & Cakes 10:00-noon
Tues 18 NOV 12:30-14:30	Old Shoreham Banner working session at Circular Space. First assembly and previewing a project documentary
Thurs 20 NOV 10:00-13:00 (optional to 15:30)	Greening Old Shoreham on Mill Hill Chalk grasslands renovation and clearing the southern approach path to the nature reserve with Rangers from South Downs National Park and County Council
Fri 28 NOV 20:00 - late	FOldS Fourth Friday Music Sessions at The Amsterdam with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Rude Mechanicals</i> folk band • <i>Joy</i> a three-piece featuring vocalist Emma Knight • plus folk-rock from <i>Liege and Lief</i>
Sat 29 NOV 15:00	History Talks at St Nicolas New stories of Old Shoreham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Citizens History in Action</i> Clare Ablett and Leia Sands • <i>Local History Research in the Old Shoreham Area</i> Brian Drury • <i>Shoreham Airport - Milestones, Monuments and Muck ups</i> Ray Staley

BOOK NOW

COMING UP IN DECEMBER

Sat 6 Dec 10:00-13:00	Greening Old Shoreham at Swiss Gardens School creating a new micro-orchard
Sat 13 DEC 20:00	Celebrating friends and welcoming the festive season with music, words and good company – in a relaxed cabaret-style evening at St Nicolas

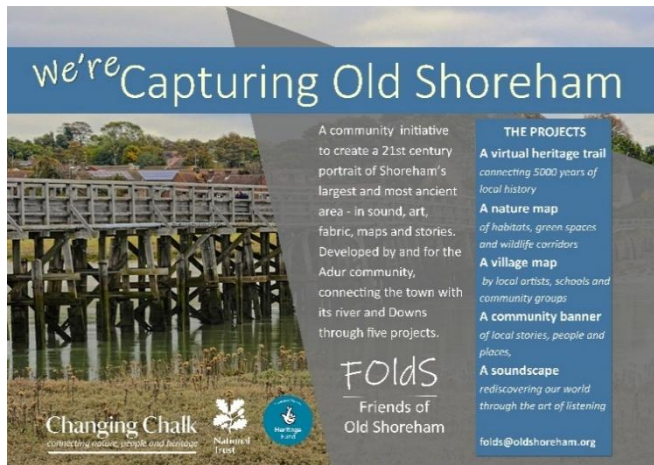
Our full programme for December will be in the next newsletter. If you have Old Shoreham activities to add, please email info@oldshoreham.org

History Talks (see 29 Nov) is the curtain-raiser for our first-ever community fundraiser to match support from the National Trust for 'Capturing Old Shoreham', our exhibition at The Marlipins next May. Every penny raised will go towards creating the exhibition and unlocking a future of community-led heritage and nature projects. **Watch your inbox for more details.**

Capturing Old Shoreham

Looking back, looking ahead

We have passed the halfway point of the *Capturing Old Shoreham* initiative, a lively, multi-stranded project that's brought us together as community artists, historians, ecologists, and neighbours to explore what makes our corner of the world special.



Supported by the National Trust's Changing Chalk programme with National Lottery Heritage Funding, *Capturing Old Shoreham* has been running since February and will continue into early 2026, leading to a major exhibition at the Marlipins Museum in May. This will showcase all that we've achieved — and even more importantly, will open the door to what comes next.

Building the picture together

The project has five linked strands — a **community banner**, ***Echoes of Old Shoreham* Soundscape**, a **virtual heritage trail**, **nature map**, and **village map**. Each has grown in its own way, but they share a common goal: to capture Old Shoreham's stories, sounds, and landscapes through the eyes and ears of local people.

Participation has far exceeded our expectations. Dozens of residents have become regular contributors. Many are involved in more than one strand. It's a real world example of creative, voluntary energy bringing a community together — even with inevitable hurdles of limited funds and tight deadlines.

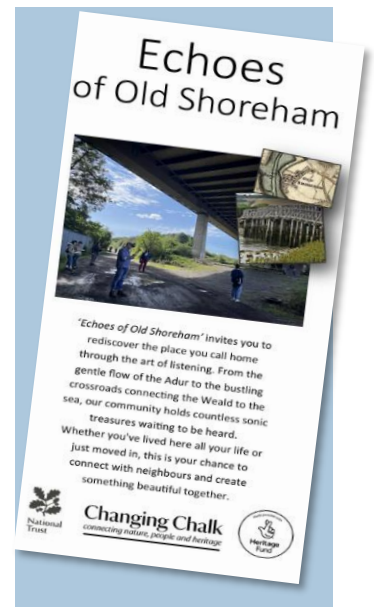


Progress so far

The Banner Project, led by community artist Wendy Jones, is currently the most visible success. What started as an idea during lockdown has grown into a joyful, collaborative artwork involving more than twenty creatives and soon local schools and care home residents. Work has started to assemble the banner's many component parts, ready for the Marlipins.



Echoes of Old Shoreham, our soundscape project, has completed its main phase of field recording under the guidance of sound artist Simon James. From river walks to church concerts, the group has captured the area's rich acoustic life — including natural sounds, human voices, even the underwater rhythms of the River Adur. Editing has begun, for preview at St Nicolas this winter.



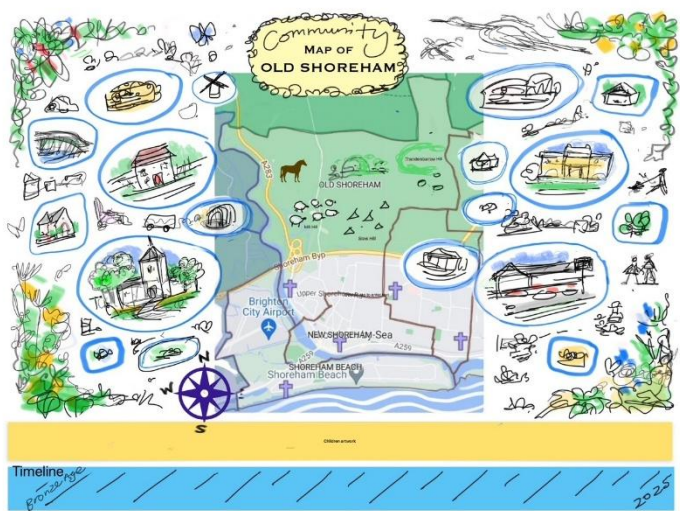
The **Virtual Heritage Trail** is evolving into a strong research community. Members of the Heritage and History Group have been delving into archives, deeds, and oral histories to expand our knowledge of the 18 trail sites first mapped for last year's Heritage Festival. Work is ongoing to produce short histories, linked to waymarks and web pages. The trail will be central to the exhibition and an enduring online resource.



On the environmental front, the **Nature Map** team, led by Julia Widdows, has carried out six successful field walks covering everything from chalk grassland to riverside habitats. A parallel garden survey is gathering information about how locals support wildlife at home. The data will come together for the exhibition, but the work won't stop there — it's establishing a framework for ongoing monitoring and local nature recovery.



Finally, **The Village Map** has launched with strong interest from schools and local artists. Workshops during Heritage Open Days drew new contributors, and initial concept drawings are ready. The finished artwork will bring together elements from all the projects — a visual celebration of shared effort and imagination.



Challenges and next steps

Like any grassroots project, *Capturing Old Shoreham* has its share of challenges. The main ones are about funding conditions and timing, creating cashflow pressures. Our solution is to launch a **crowdfunding campaign** to help meet immediate printing and exhibition costs and provide kickstarter funds for new projects when the final grant payment comes in.

Inclusion and outreach remain ongoing priorities. While the project has engaged a wide range residents, we know there's more to do to reach under-

represented voices. New links are being made and there's continued collaboration with schools, care homes, and community groups.

The coming months will focus on **bringing everything together** — editing recordings, finalising banner panels, completing mapping work, and preparing the Marlipins installation. Each strand will contribute its own materials and stories, but the real challenge (and excitement) lies in how they interconnect.

Beyond the grant

One of the most encouraging outcomes has been the sense of belonging this initiative has created — with a network of mutual support, creativity, and learning. Participants have developed confidence, shared skills, and formed lasting friendships. *Capturing Old Shoreham* is building something lasting- not just a record of place, but a living expression of the community that calls it home.

If you would like a copy of the full **Capturing Old Shoreham** report (6 pages) email info@oldshoreham.org



Project support

The Friends of Old Shoreham (Folds) 'Capturing Old Shoreham' project is supported by a National Trust Changing Chalk Community Grant and the National Lottery Heritage Fund



Focus on Mill Hill

October was a busy month for FOLDs and for Greening Old Shoreham. Our conservation volunteers had three special all-day sessions on Mill Hill local nature reserve working with other local volunteers for exploratory work on how to recover the nationally important butterfly habitat on the reserve. They also had two regular sessions helping to get some of the access paths on the hill back into shape, plus the regular churchyard clean-up in readiness for autumn. Huge congratulations to everyone involved.

The newly arrived Herdwick sheep have also been hard at work, alongside the Rangers with brush cutters and a robot flail- in just four weeks the Reserve is coming back to life. The main public footpath has been cleared, and GOSh volunteers have been working to recover the ‘desire paths’ that offer different trails through the reserve, leading to the best views and quietest corners. There’s lots more work to be done, but it’s a great start and has filled everyone with optimism.

See this month’s [Inside Shoreham](#) for our latest article about the Project (page 11), or click here for [our web page](#)



The November programme

Saturday 1 NOV 10:00-13:00 (optional to 15:30)	Mill Hill Nature Reserve ‘Scrub-bashing’ (removing invasive species) and bio-mapping the Copse area with the Butterfly Conservation Group and others
Saturday 15 NOV 10:00-13:00	St Nicolas churchyard and the Conservation Area (with coffee and cakes in the church)
Thursday 20 NOV 10:00-13:00 (optional to 15:30)	Mill Hill Nature Reserve ‘Scrub-bashing’ and clearing the southern approach path to the reserve with South Downs National Park and County Council Rangers

At the end of October, the GOSh coordinators paused to review progress, consult, and plan with key stakeholders and partners. We now have a plan in place up to Easter, giving priority to this vital nature recovery project while consolidating what Greening Old Shoreham has achieved since launching this year.

The Plan

Through the winter months, our focus will be on Mill Hill, with regular sessions on the usual dates. Priority will go to continued scrub removal on the Mill Hill slope, while ensuring there’s something for everyone to do through other work across the reserve and surrounding areas, including:

- Improving footpaths within the reserve and on approach routes from the river and town
- Winter woodland management in the copse at the highest point of the reserve
- Continuing to create a nature map of the reserve and its surroundings
- ‘Monument monitoring’ and restoration with archaeologists from the National Trust

There’s plenty to do to restore the reserve’s health and understand how it has evolved over the past two decades — and how it must adapt to climate change.

As we do this, we’ll also plan and negotiate a work programme from Easter onwards, while recording what’s been achieved so far. We won’t be ignoring our other partners, with occasional task groups continuing work at Swiss Gardens Primary, Buckingham Park, and elsewhere. There truly is something for everyone, whatever your ability or preferences. Even if you can’t join the task group, come along to see what’s been done or chat over coffee at St Nicolas.

Tooling Up

- The Chestnut Fund of the Trust for Conservation Volunteers has awarded FOLDs a £200 start-up grant and a £500 support grant. This is paying for first-aid training and essential tools.
- Six of our volunteers are joining the South Downs National Park’s Conservation Task Leader training in early November, covering topics like project planning, tool safety, risk assessment, and conservation skills.
- In late November, two volunteers are also training as Outdoor First Aiders at the Adur Outdoor Centre.
- By Easter, our aim is to be fully equipped to work independently as partners to local authorities, landowners, and community groups.

Working together

This isn't just about Greening Old Shoreham. Much of the impetus for the Mill Hill recovery project came from the [Butterfly Conservation Group](#) (BCG) who have been recording the declining habitat for many years. As well as GOSh volunteers, the sessions on Mill Hill involve other teams from the BCG, the [Shoreham and District Ornithological Society](#), conservation volunteers from Steyning and the Rangers for Adur District Council and the South Downs National Park. It's quite a party with some real expertise on hand to explain the highlights of bird and animal life and the specialist plants growing on the reserve.

If you are part of another group that would like to get involved contact gosh@oldshoreham.org or simply come along. This is a project for all in Adur. If it succeeds it might provide a model for further nature recovery and environmental improvement projects.

And it is important to recognise that there's 'nothing new to see here'. For years the reserve has been kept in some shape by other generations of volunteers. [Andy Horton's fantastic website](#) tells some of the story and is a trove of diligent real-world recording of the changing ecology of the site. Hats off to all who have worked there over the years. We hope that GOSH can find a sustainable way to ensure that the benefits of your work flourish in the future. Conservation work is never a one-off investment. It needs continued effort and energy, year after year. The reward is exercise, fresh air, and a thrilling place to work!

Session dates until Easter

Normally 10:00-13:00

The Mill Hill Sessions (meet at Upper Car Park)

November	Saturday	1st	Thursday	20th
December	Saturday	6th	Thursday	18th
January	Saturday	3rd	Thursday	15th
February	Saturday	7th	Thursday	19th
March	Saturday	7th	Thursday	19th

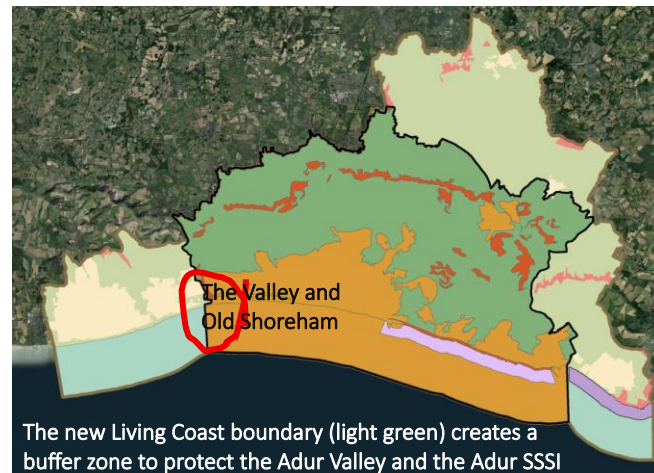
GOSH will be at Swiss Gardens Primary on 6th December, but others will continue work on Mill Hill

St Nicolas churchyard & the Conservation Area

November	Saturday	15th
December	Saturday	20th
January	Saturday	17th
February	Saturday	21st
March	Saturday	21st

The Living Coast

Until this month, Old Shoreham has been at the western boundary of [The Living Coast](#), the only UNESCO urban biosphere reserve in the UK. Now UNESCO has announced worldwide approval for an expanded Biosphere, reaching across the River Adur to Worthing and to the north



This could be a fantastic opportunity for some joined up thinking with our neighbours in Lancing, Steyning and along the Adur to work together on the ecology and amenity value of the whole 'Green Gap' of the Adur Valley as it passes through the Downs.

At the same time the local and county councils have recommended that Adur should be merged into a new West Sussex unitary authority, combined with coastal districts to the west and probably managed from far-away Chichester. And East and West Sussex are preparing separate Local Nature Recovery strategies for their authorities with a boundary between the two just a mile or so to our East. So, the integrated vision that the Biosphere reflects could once again be thwarted by administrative boundaries drawn in straight lines to our north and east.

Same as it ever was? Well, perhaps not if we can get together and make sure that these new authorities recognise and support the kind of community-led approach to looking out for our environment and community that is developing here in Old Shoreham with FOldS and our friends.



To contact Greening Old Shoreham email gosh@oldshoreham.org. The coordinators are Pat Ditton, Julie Hurst, Brian Sayer, Joan Staley and Julia Widdows.