



This issue spotlights three FOLDs-led activities where *now* is the time for action.

1 The funding for **Capturing Old Shoreham** has ended and the artists, crafters, researchers and naturalists are now completing their work and preparing to share it with the wider community. There are still many ways to be involved in what is happening now and get in at the start of whatever happens next! See page 2.

2 We are proud to announce that the Greening Old Shoreham project on Mill Hill has been chosen as one of [21 projects across Southern England](#) boosting nature recovery in the chalk landscape of the region. FOLDs is now a **Big Chalk Partner**, part of *“a powerful, collaborative movement to protect and restore our chalk and limestone landscapes and the nature that depends on them”*. But there are just weeks left before we must down tools for the nesting season. See Page 3

3 Adur Council is developing a Local Plan that will shape the future of the places where we live and work. The Local Plan has the potential to make this area a better place but could also destroy the landscapes we want to protect and improve. We need to engage with this planning now and contribute our unique perspectives on a better future for Shoreham. See page 4

THIS MONTH IN OLD SHOREHAM

Sat 7 FEB 10:00	Greening Old Shoreham Chalk grasslands restoration on Mill Hill .
17:00	Light Gathering Lanterns and Choirs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreham Harmony Group • Gathering Light Choir • Harmonessence • Salty Mares • Amy Hill's Women's Singing Circle
Sun 8 FEB	Walking Safari round the Adur SSSI Organised by FOASSI
Wed 11 FEB 19:00	Old Shoreham Heritage Group Meeting at The Amsterdam to build our new Virtual Heritage Trail
Fri 13 FEB	Shoreham Harmony Singers at The Amsterdam 19:00-21:00
Wed 18 FEB	FOLDs Committee Planning and progress 19:30 at The Amsterdam.
Thu 19 FEB 10:00	Greening Old Shoreham Chalk grasslands restoration on Mill Hill . Meet at the Upper Car Park. Details from joan@oldshoreham.org
Sat 21 FEB 10:00	Greening Old Shoreham Working at St Nicolas and the Conservation Area . Meet at the churchyard . Contact joan@oldshoreham.org
10.00	Friends of St Nicolas Coffee & cake:
Thu 26 FEB 10:00-13:00	Greening Old Shoreham on Mill Hill Extra session for our chalk grassland renovation project.
Fri 27 FEB 20:00	FOLDs Music at The Amsterdam with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singer songwriter Andy Mbelrose • John Finch Acoustic rock • Valentinos Americana and R&B
Sat 28 FEB 10.00	Riverside Litter Pick Starting from the Air Show Memorial. Organised by Adur Green Party

Every month there are too many stories to tell and too little time for us to write them. If you have Old Shoreham stories or events to share in this newsletter, send them to info@oldshoreham.org

Capturing Old Shoreham

After twelve months of activity, *the Capturing Old Shoreham* projects are bringing together the work produced so far, in preparation for our installation at the Marlipins Museum later this year. Funding from the National Trust's *Changing Chalk* programme has now ended, but the work is here to stay. These projects combine community arts with 'citizen researcher' investigations into the natural environment and human history of our area—our 21st-century contribution to Shoreham's story. Changing Chalk has helped us to offer a fresh perspective, shifting attention from Shoreham's beach and town centre towards the open spaces and historic sites that are often overlooked and undervalued.

'Echoes of Old Shoreham'

'Echoes' is the result of five workshops and a series of individual walks in early 2025. Participants recorded the sounds of Old Shoreham—from Thundersbarrow down to the river—alongside their own sound patterns inspired by what they found, plus photos, writings and poetry. Editing is complete, and the recordings shaped into a soundscape: a piece of audio art. We are planning a première on 18 April in St Nicolas, which acted as the project hub, with beautiful acoustics and an evocative backdrop. The piece will be followed with a community-friendly performance by the Gathering Light choir.

The Village Map and the Old Shoreham Banner

The Village Map and Banner projects continue to bring together people of all ages to reflect Old Shoreham's landscape, history, wildlife and everyday life.

The *Old Shoreham Banner* is a patchwork of mostly hand-stitched images depicting features of Old Shoreham, created by FOLDs members, local artists, school children and care-home residents during more than a dozen workshops and many hours of individual work. The banner is now in assembly as a centrepiece for the Marlipins exhibition before going on tour.

The *Village Map* is the product of several months of community involvement through workshops, presentations, drop-ins and school projects, generating contributions in many media. The main

layout is underway, combining community feedback with historic and environmental features. Artwork is being scanned, selected and arranged, with supporting elements of calligraphy and decorative borders being prepared for the final printed map.

Virtual Heritage Trail

The Trail is the result of over a year of research by members of the History and Heritage Group. It will put "flesh on the bones" of the Heritage Trail created in 2024 by adding detailed online descriptions of sites, along with stories of people who lived and worked there. Many places and individuals have never been studied in this way, and each discovery raises new questions. The team is bringing together its findings, and work is underway on a digital repository for an expanding online tour of Old Shoreham.

The Nature Map

Since early summer, members of Greening Old Shoreham have surveyed local nature across the Downs, the river and the town's urban areas to create an up-to-date picture of biodiversity. Existing surveys are plentiful, but it is unclear how well they reflect current conditions—Mill Hill being a good example of change. The team is preparing an overview of the habitats that shape our green landscape for the *Capturing Old Shoreham* exhibition, which will be a springboard for nature walks, talks and further in-depth studies as the seasons change

A community in action

All this work has a clear purpose. FOLDs exists to protect and improve the natural and built environment around us. We have made it a priority to develop a better understanding of what is here so that we can make well-informed plans. FOLDs is also about building community, and every part of *Capturing Old Shoreham* has been driven by community action. Together, these projects provide a strong foundation for new activities and wider involvement. And they have helped to draw the eyes and ears of artists, music-makers, writers and otherpethepp creatives towards the opportunities and resources here. It's all a bottom-up approach paralleling Adur Council's commitment to a community that is "fair, green and local".





Funded through the Big Chalk Nature Recovery Fund, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Protected Landscape Partnership.

big-chalk.org

● As a Big Chalk partner the Mill Hill project is part of a much wider vision to forge *“vital connections between nature recovery projects across the chalk and limestone landscapes of southern England.”*. It links us into other resources and expertise, covering a fifth of England. Their goal is to link-up a dynamic nature recovery network central to the UK’s pledge to protect 30% of land and halt the decline of nature by 2030. This should help us identify and strengthen other initiatives in our part of the Downs and river valley.

Join our Tools and Tow Team

Do you have a tow ball on your car? Are you confident about towing? Our new toolkit and trailer open new ways to help - even if scrub-bashing isn't your thing.

We need drivers and vehicles, equipped to tow a small trailer, to get the Greening Old Shoreham trailer to and from work sites, all short distances in Old Shoreham. You don't need to stay all day, simply deliver and collect.

We also need someone to help fit out the trailer and maintain the tools, work that can be done flexibly.

And we need a home or homes for the trailer. Can you offer driveway space, a garage, or a lock-up? It's a good-looking trailer, self-contained and secure! Contact gosh@oldshoreham.org

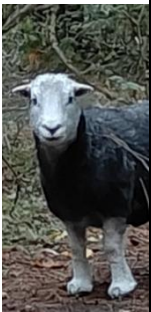
Our Mill Hill project has made great strides and is a catalyst for other action. The central section is cleared to the foot of the slope. Work continues north and south.

● It never is 'now or never', but time is running short for this first phase. We have just six sessions before we must pause for the nesting season and let wildlife recolonise their spring-cleaned habitat. Weather and the advance of spring may shorten that window. If you'd like to join us, now is the time.

● This is slow, thorough work but on a landscape scale, very different from GOSh sessions elsewhere. The results can already be seen from afar and will become part of the record on Google Earth. Meanwhile the occasional bonfires have turned heads on the bypass.

● You'll still see some large sections of well-established scrub. These are refuges for birds and the important local adder population and may be left until next winter while the Rangers work out the management plan for these parts.

● These four-legged conservation professionals moved on to other work this week. Great workers and good company. We'll do all we can to get them back to work in the autumn.



● The project is a conservation alliance, with regular volunteers from Butterfly Conservation Group, SDOS (the ornithological society) and FOldS, working alongside National Park, Adur Council and County Council Rangers. This week members of [Shoreham Green Party joined us](#) and a staff group from HSBC are expected in March. We'd welcome more corporate volunteering.

This may offer a fresh way to tackle other improvements and intransigent problems, banding together volunteers, employers and professionals for flash-projects and longer campaigns.

● Beyond the slope, other parts of the Hill are getting a refresh. In November, FOldS volunteers helped Adur's Ranger to reopen paths that were almost lost under scrub. Since then, Park and Council Rangers have followed us through with powered tools, widening these paths to bring them back to standard for companionable outdoor strolls. This month we will return to complete the work with hand tools, removing hard-to-reach and rooted growth.

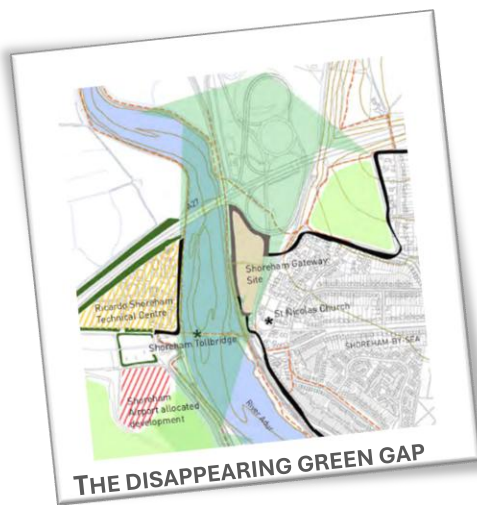
● The work is now part of the Big Chalk programme, who have stepped in with funding for conservation-grade tools and a storage trailer. Up to now, even the tools we've been using came as volunteers!

Making plans

A year ago, our annual Forum focused on 'Planning Ahead' – spurred by worries about recent developments and new threats.

We agreed that FOldS should.

- engage in planning decisions from the start, not simply react to other people's plans.
- act to protect the remaining green spaces and the natural environment around us.
- urge planners to prioritise the infrastructure needed to support more people in the area.
- make sure that heritage and conservation policies lead to action - by us if not by others.



What has changed in a year?

- Adur's Council has started work on a Local Plan
- The government is working to reform planning.
- Local green areas are in the spotlight for review.
- FOldS and others are actively improving the built and natural environment of Old Shoreham
- Government reform is set to abolish the District Council.

At our next Forum in early July, we want to explore ideas for how the area should develop - so we can contribute effectively to the new Local Plan and identify what we can get on with while formal planning processes continue.

There's nothing much new in this challenge. Old Shoreham has long stood at a crossroads - sometimes an inconvenience to planners, sometimes an afterthought in larger schemes. Local plans at different times have threatened to sweep away any remaining character and leave behind little more than widened roads, fragmented green space, empty commercial plots and diminished public realm.

Yet Old Shoreham survives. It remains an enchanting place with a historic core, striking landscape and diverse wildlife. This resilience is largely due to local activists, and this seems good time to recall the work of Reginald Leggett, whose half-century of conservation action shows what determined community effort can achieve. See the next page. The need for Friends like Reg never disappears — and with the changes ahead, Old Shoreham needs them more than ever.

A new planning complication

One issue Reg Leggett never faced is today's split planning responsibility. Old Shoreham and areas to the east are affected by **two different local plans**.

- **Adur District Council** — responsible only up to the flyover
- **South Downs National Park Authority** — responsible for the larger land area beyond

This leaves Adur with even less space to meet development targets, increasing the temptation to push undesirable schemes to the edges, arguing there is "plenty of green space over the road". In reality, this pushes green areas further from residents and deeper into working countryside.

What's Next

We plan to hold an open Forum on **Wednesday 1 July** — please save the date — to explore ideas and proposals for FOldS' next projects.

Before that, in May and June, our **Capturing Old Shoreham** exhibition at the Marlipins will offer opportunities to explore the area's heritage and environment, with walks, talks and resources like the Reg Leggett archives for your own research.

Planning shapes places. If we want Old Shoreham's future to reflect its character, we need to be involved. We'd like to hear from anyone who lives, works or does business in Old Shoreham and can offer a strong interest or expertise in planning issues, to help lay the groundwork for the forum.

Contact info@oldshoreham.org



Reg Leggett

The campaigner who saved a village — and lost a barn.

Old Shoreham did not survive the twentieth century by accident. Its toll bridge, Saxon church and surviving cottages remain because, at critical moments, people chose to defend them. At the centre of those moments was Reg Leggett.

Reg first emerged as a conservation voice in 1946, when post-war Clearance Orders threatened the last thatched cottages of Old Shoreham. He did not simply argue the case in letters to the press.

Working with others, and at personal financial risk, he helped purchase and restore several of the threatened cottages — investing in buildings officially marked for demolition and facing determined authorities. He believed restoration, not clearance, should shape the village's future.

A decade later came the defining struggles.

In 1957 land at Lamb Field was placed under option to developers. The proposal included demolition of the medieval Great Barn and housing around St Nicolas Church. In February 1958 Leggett helped found the Shoreham Preservation Society, serving as its first chairperson. Within days, 230 letters of support were received. The Society proposed adapting the barn as a village hall and art centre and fought the scheme through public inquiry. But in 1962, before the appeal process had concluded, the developers illegally demolished the Great Barn, almost overnight. It was, in Leggett's own words, "a ruthless demolition." Lamb Field was the campaign he lost — a painful reminder that heritage protection still had few safeguards.

Running alongside this, however, was an even larger threat: a proposed elevated concrete flyover to replace the 1782 toll bridge. The scheme would have cut through the village and destroyed the setting of the church. Here Leggett's strategy proved decisive. Rather than simple protest, the Society advanced an alternative — a northern crossing combined with a Downland bypass. He pursued the case persistently, locally and nationally, until the flyover proposal collapsed. The toll bridge survived. The bypass principle was

secured. Leggett later described this as his "greatest personal achievement" — and today the absence of a flyover stands as the clearest measure of his success.

His work did not stop there. In 1967 he established the Historic Shoreham Trust, enabling buildings to be purchased and restored rather than simply defended. He fought major redevelopment plans in the town centre, opposed the Salting's Bridge flyover scheme in 1969–71, and resisted further bypass proposals in the mid-1970s.

Beyond Shoreham, he helped secure land at Bramber Castle for the National Trust, ensuring its long-term protection. The organisation he founded in 1958 evolved, four decades ago, into today's Shoreham Society, still active in championing the town's character.

Reg Leggett died in 1996. He left no monument in his name. Instead, his legacy is woven into the everyday landscape: cottages still standing, river views still open, and a village that remains recognisably itself — not by chance, but because he persuaded others that it was worth defending.

Reg Leggett's archives passed on to the Shoreham Society who have kindly given us access for our Capturing Old Shoreham project which will go on show in the Marlipins Museum this summer. We plan to have more information about Reg and some of the other local heroes who have made sure that the historic and natural highlights of the area have not all been swept aside or paved over.

Song sessions

FOLDs supported the Apron Community Garden Light Gathering event by arranging for choirs to take part. Despite a last minute move to the Shoreham Centre they performed to a packed hall.



Fundraising concerts at St Nicolas church are being planned with local musician Mervyn Wallis (from *Alfonso the Magnificent*) and the Gathering Light choir in April and May respectively.

Music at The Amsterdam

FOLDs sessions on Friday 27 February will feature [Andy Melrose](#) - a singer/songwriter in the classic folk tradition and one half of the highly regarded folk duo Heartland.

Also performing is '[local music legend](#)' [John Finch](#). Originally from Old Shoreham, John gives Hendrix songs an acoustic makeover with other sixties and seventies classics. Click the link to learn more of John's 60+ years in bands and performing solo.

Last on the bill are the Valentinos – well known on the Shoreham scene for their take on Americana and Blues music.



ANDY MELROSE



THE VALENTINOS

Our natural highway

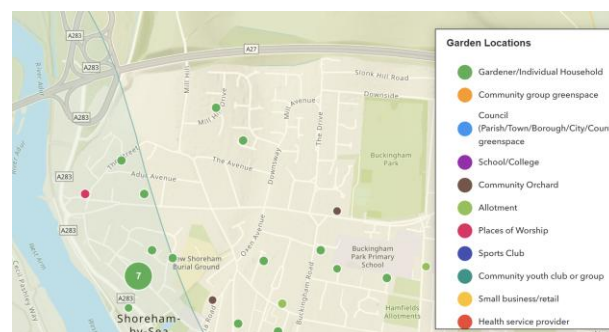
Julia Widdows, Pat Ditton and Joan Staley met recently with **Abby Hurn**, Gardens and Green Spaces coordinator with Weald to Waves.



Weald to Waves began as a project in 2022 with a group of seven Sussex landowners pledging to work together for nature recovery. Weald to Waves aims to create a hundred

miles of nature corridors 'from along the rivers Adur, Ouse, and Arun to the sea at Shoreham, Climping, and Newhaven. The corridors are being built by involving more landowners, organisations like the Sussex Wildlife Trust, businesses, community groups and individuals. All aim to improve the quality and connectivity of their land to sustain wildlife and improve resilience of habitats in the face of 21st-century challenges. Abby was keen to tell us that Weald to Waves is here for the long term, not a short-life project. It is administered by the [Knepp Wildland Foundation](#).

Anyone with any size of outside space and a Sussex postcode can join the [Gardens and Green Spaces network](#), which gives you access to their 'Actions for Nature' tool, which offers resources and information for gardeners who want to help wildlife, whether a complete beginner or experienced.



2000 gardens in our area could make a huge difference for nature.

More than twenty Old Shoreham gardens are already registered on the local corridor. To join them you just need your postcode and email address. Click on the map to learn more.

Your garden will show as a dot on the corridor map which won't identify your individual address. Volunteer groups managing green spaces like community gardens, orchards, and allotments, can also join. And you can borrow resources like moth monitoring equipment for community ev