

The JOURNAL

of The Shoreham Society

MAY 2026

BACK TO THE FUTURE?

**Forty years of the
Shoreham Society -
What's Changed?**



SUSTAINING VIBRANCY

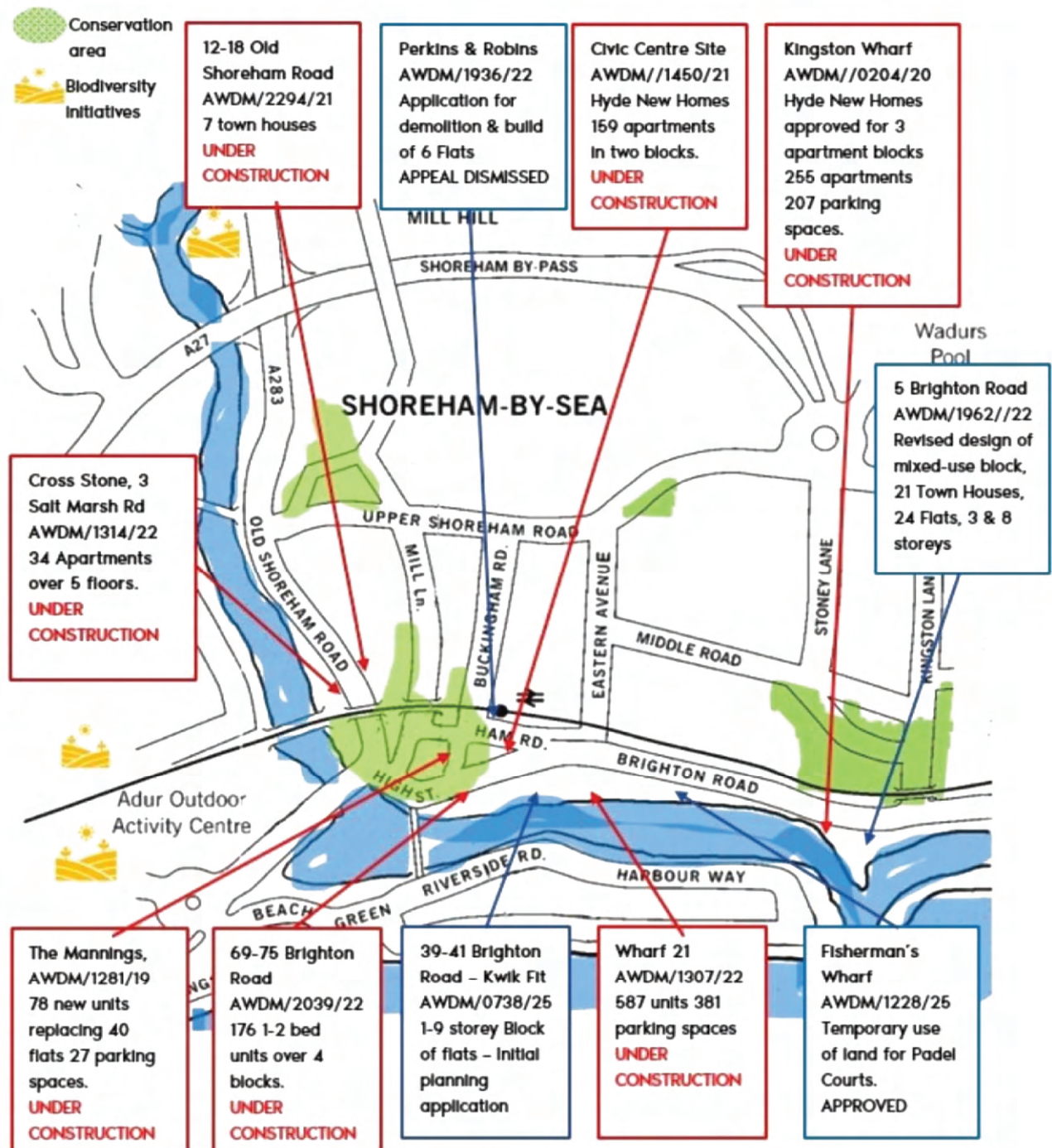
Town Centre adapting
to change

SHOREHAM PEOPLE
Some well-known faces

FUN & FESTIVITIES
40 years of bringing
people together



CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SHOREHAM-BY-SEA



Please contact the Editor if you know of anything that should be included. If you wish to look at a planning application, go to: <https://planning.adur-worthing.gov.uk/online-applications>



Dear Members

I have the pleasure of guest editing this edition of the Journal, which I hope you find informative and thought provoking.

The film 'Back to the Future' was a big hit in 1985, the Society's first full year. The moral of the film is that your future is not set, but rather shaped by your actions and choices in the present, encouraging personal responsibility to create a better life. This is rather apt given the Society's principles and ethos. The things Shoreham's residents and decision makers did or didn't do 40 years ago shaped the town we live and work in now, and the things we do or don't do now will shape its future.

In this edition we go back in time via the Society's archive of 40 years of Journals, reflecting on what was, what happened and what could be. For our next edition I will hand the baton to Dr Bob Howlett, who will focus on the future.

Reading 40 years of Journals filled me with admiration for some remarkable people who held a mirror up to those in power and helped shape our town for the better.

As a member of the Shoreham Society, you make a difference, but maybe you might want to be more involved and help shape the next 40 years.

Jason Sutherland-Rowe

Join us

Shoreham is changing – and fast. Local people need to have a say in how the town develops. That's why The Shoreham Society exists.

- The Society is an independent voice for all who care about the town of Shoreham-by-Sea. Its remit covers planning, conservation, development, the local economy, environmental issues and general local interest. It's strictly non-political and free from commercial interests.
- Members receive free copies of *The Journal* biannually as well as the *Monthly Email Newsletter*, which together keep members in touch with what's going on in the town. They are also first to know about our popular series of talks on local issues.
- Attending an AGM, volunteering at events, or even becoming a member of the Committee – there are many ways you can get involved.

To find out more, and to sign up, visit www.shorehamsociety.org.uk

THE SHOREHAM SOCIETY ON-LINE

Our website and social media are the best way to get a flavour of the range of things The Shoreham Society does. Here are some highlights available via the QR code:



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40 Years of Change and Community

The Shoreham Society was formed in response to concerns over the lack of meaningful planning control in the town. Since then, and in response to members' concerns about the climate, environment, transport and social cohesion, the Society has evolved to focus on the themes we have today.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Shoreham is a reflection of wider society. In the past its numerous pubs were packed with people spreading information and debating. Times have changed, with half those pubs gone and individuals posting diametrically opposed views on social media – at least the fights are now verbal and not physical. Services for young people have changed too. Who remembers the Adur Leisure Mobile, the Monday Night Disco at the Shoreham Centre, and the BMX track on the Adur Rec?

But the people of Shoreham have found new ways to come together, to

share common interests for their enjoyment or to effect change. There are dozens of groups and societies that now exist for Shoreham's residents who enjoy volunteering, cycling, making, the spoken word, art, the environment, heritage, nature ... the list goes on. The people of Shoreham also come together routinely at the East Street markets and various festivals, and for campaigns - like the successful one to save the Poplar tree on Brighton Road.

It is these events, probably more than Facebook et al, that are helping to preserve and grow a sense of belonging and community spirit. This

is why the Shoreham Society actively promotes awareness of groups and their activities.

In 40 years will we see a shift away from social media, as people reembrace the value of face-to-face engagement?

GETTING AROUND IN SHOREHAM

In the 1980s the term 'electric vehicle' was the sole reserve of the Sinclair C5, cycling around town was the preserve of a handful of commuting school children, buses had conductors and many open tops in the summer (buses, not the conductors), and walking wasn't generally considered a leisure pursuit.

Improvements in the first two – electric cars and cycling take-up – cannot be totally attributed to local conditions. Shoreham does not have an abundance of public charging points or miles of cycle lanes. People are turning to electric cars for reasons like lower running costs and environmental concerns; and cycling for improved health, cost-of-living pressures, and the rising popularity of electric bikes. In the future it is very likely that most cars will be electric, but will it be any easier to cycle around Shoreham?



Nowadays many people walk for pleasure, and this has been made easier along the river, the shoreline, and to / from the town centre and beach. In 40 years' time will the boardwalk have been widened and extended to Widewater, or all town centre pavements made even?

A VIBRANT TOWN CENTRE

40 years ago, the town centre was vibrant with a good range of practical shops, more pubs and its principal supermarket (Key Markets, then Gateway). With the advent of East Street pedestrianisation many assumed it would negatively impact trade – people no longer being able to park outside their favourite shops. But to the contrary, pedestrianisation has reinvigorated the area and drawn people to visit and settle in Shoreham. Councils have done much to make the town centre more appealing with plants, benches, cycle racks, markets, special events and the occasional busker on sunny days.

Independent retailers should also take credit for creating an environment people want to spend time in. These are tough economic times, both in terms of people's disposable income and retail margins, and the town's vibrancy is once again challenged. The ebb and flow of the town centre will, as in previous times, largely mirror the broader economy. But its survival will also depend on residents doing their part, by making the choice, whenever possible, to spend locally.

HAVING A LOCAL SAY

Since its beginning, the Shoreham Society has engaged authorities to influence them or campaign head-on when needed. It has been a constant voice against a backdrop of revolving councillors, emerging and disappearing political parties, and pending local council restructuring. Its various publications, website, social media, and talks have helped educate and promote awareness. But

having a local say is more than this, it is about the people being listened to – raising written objections to development plans, speaking with councillors at the East Street market, joining one of the many local groups to add voice and weight. However much technologies evolve in the next 40 years, nothing is likely to replace the impact of direct dialogue.

LOVING WHERE WE LIVE

Our environment has always been important to the Shoreham Society, but now the environment is a significant concern for everyone. Locally we have seen the storm of 1987 decimate trees, beach shingle being continually replenished, a flood wall built, diminished wildlife diversity, increased air pollution, decreased water quality, overdevelopment ... Many aspects of our environment were unquestionable constants, reassuring us as other aspects of our lives changed. This is no longer true, and our inability to address this internationally or nationally is worrying, so it is now imperative that we all take responsibility for the things we can in our local environment Shoreham will continue to change over the next 40 years – that is certain – but what is uncertain is form that will take and the ramifications for its residents.



40 YEARS OF FUN & FESTIVITIES

Looking back over 40 years of Shoreham Society Journals, their focus was mainly concerned with serious matters – protecting historic buildings, restoring the Old Toll Bridge, fighting off Ikea, election hustings, the footbridge design, architectural sense and sensibilities etc.

Interspersed throughout its pages are numerous reports of the people of Shoreham having fun at barbecues, art exhibitions, soirees, dances and the like. For example, the Winter Journal of 1994 includes the programme for the Marlipins Museum Christmas Fayre with such activities as “Kings Manor Handbell Ringers, Mummers play by the Sompting Morris Men, and hot chestnuts on sale”.

DEPENDENCE ON VOLUNTEERS

Over the years an army of volunteers have put on events that bring the town and its people together to entertain and inform, enrich lives and leave lasting memories. The examples are numerous – Beach bonfire nights, the Adur Bathtub Race, mud football, Dragon Boat Race, BMX racing on the Adur Rec, sports days on Beach Green, Wordfest, Beach Dreams, Heritage Open Days and many events on Coronation Green. Shoreham has a rich calendar, with events taking place throughout the year; whether you wrap yourself up to take part in Light Up Shoreham, or saunter from venue-to-venue in the summer soaking up the sun and everything the Adur Art Trail has to offer.

BRINGING THE TOWN TOGETHER

In addition to these annual events there are other activities that regularly punctuate the calendar to bring



us together – examples include the East Street market, car boot sales and a host of active organisations and groups in and around Shoreham.

CULTURAL AND ARTS CENTRE!

Whether it's the spoken word, visual arts or music, other towns take a sideways glance and marvel at the diversity, quality and volume of events created by some very talented residents. Once you get involved in organising or participating in these events you become aware that many rely on the same small set of volunteers. This helps the groups foster strong bonds, align and support each other when needed, but it also puts pressure on few individuals. However, there is help on the way, with the migration of enthusiastic and energetic DFLs (Down from London) and ex-Brightonians eager to embrace many of the things that drew them to Shoreham.

THE FUTURE FOR OUR EVENTS?

How will these events evolve in the future and what new events will emerge to complement them? Perhaps more could be done for children and young families, or to showcase our natural environment – river, beach, downs. Existing established events might expand in scope and duration, perhaps attracting more household names and drawing in more people. Is there an opportunity and space for something altogether new – maybe our very own town-wide jazz or comedy festival? Thankfully, in an age of increasing isolation and polarisation, there continue to be people who selflessly devote time and energy to organising events that bring the people of Shoreham together.

Local events and opportunities to Volunteer can be found on our Website.



BROWNE OFF BY DEVELOPMENT



The Society's Autumn 2006 Journal contained an enthusiastic article about the recent purchase of the Parcel Force site for redevelopment.

"The area adjacent to the Shoreham Yacht Club's quarters has been bought for development by the Urban Life company. The large site contained the Parcel Force operational buildings and vehicle parking, and its position has great potential, separated from the river only by the narrow waterfront of the Surry Boatyard. Urban Life are working on a development plan that will probably propose a mix of buildings such as residential, restaurants, hotel and other service buildings, as well as a riverside walk."

BROWN FROM THE BEGINNING

With hindsight, was this the starting pistol that signalled the beginning of massive redevelopment along the Brighton Road? In 2009 the South East Plan saw potential for 'up to 10,000 dwellings' and the Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP), drafted in 2016, included this site within the Western Harbour Arm (WHA) section of its regeneration strategy.

So, what became of the site that promised restaurants, a hotel and riverside walk? For several years the Parcel Force warehouse was a roller

rink, much used and loved by young families and teenagers – especially on drab days. Today Mariner Point occupies the site, and as with other developments along the WHA, what was built fell short of the initial vision which was enthusiastically socialised and approved.

Many of the negative aspects of the WHA developments are well known and often discussed – lack of unified vision, poor infrastructure planning, limited parking etc. – but we should be thankful that these are brownfield sites. Prior to this, many of the town's major developments decimated open fields, such as Greenacres, the Buckingham Estate, the Herb Estate, and imagine the horror as the shingle spit south of the town was built over in the first half of the 20th century!

Taking the use of brownfield sites a step further, converting and

repurposing offices or industrial buildings for residential use should be a major consideration. A good example of this, in the heart of the town, is Oyster Quay with its nine houses – previously Department for Work and Pensions offices.

*What would you repurpose?
Let us know!*

NO GREEN, MORE BROWN

Let's hope over the next 40 years that any new homes continue to be built on brownfield sites, after all, who would want to see the airport become a housing estate, half the Adur Recreation Ground given over to flats, houses built on the Mill Hill slopes south of the A27, or a sizeable portion of Buckingham Park lost.



SUSTAINING A VIBRANT TOWN CENTRE



Jason Sutherland-Rowe takes a walk around our High Street and reflects back 40 years to the dreams and ideas for its future.

The continued vibrancy of the town centre has long been a hot topic. Back in 1991 Bob Hill put the Society's thoughts down on paper in his article 'Plan for the Future or the Status Quo?'. The extract below includes radical ideas for rerouting traffic away from the High Street.

HIGH STREET IN DECLINE

"Survival of the historic town of Shoreham is dependent on its vitality as a shopping centre. Shops which become vacant for long periods are likely to deteriorate through lack of maintenance and eventually become targets for re-development. The economic situation is only one factor causing a growing number of empty shops.

Traffic in the High Street, lack of town centre parking, and proposed new superstores at Holmbush are persuading potential entrepreneurs to look elsewhere or abandon the traditional shop with its high rent, rates and maintenance in favour of markets and boot sales!

Traffic calming measures proposed in the new draft Local Plan 1991 will give welcome reduction of traffic



nuisance in the High Street for the short term but cannot provide a long term solution. The High Street's gain will be someone else's loss.

There are no proposals in the draft plan for improving town centre parking. Pedestrianisation is a welcome initiative to make the part of the town centre more attractive to traders and shoppers, but its effect on the vitality of the High Street needs to be considered.

Removal of through-traffic from the High Street via appropriate alternative routes is the only sensible long term solution. We have a major parallel route (A27) within a mile, so why not push through onto this via suitable link roads?

A joint committee of local, port and

highway authorities, including Adur, proposed a link from the port to the A27 at Fishersgate, where there is a reasonable gap in the development. Adur Council rejects this solution. It wants Hove to provide a link road within the Hove boundary, even though much of the traffic passes through Adur!

Worthing Borough Council has proposed a link road in the Sompting Gap: so Adur has counter-proposed a link road in the Lancing-Sompting gap because this would provide traffic benefits to Adur. We feel that these proposed policies are inconsistent. We feel that if link roads were built at Fishersgate and Lancing, then Shoreham High Street could possibly be closed to through traffic."

So, what happened? The Holmbush development, along with the Brighton Road superstores and the unforeseen rise of online retail, obliterated the likes of Luckings, Paradise Pets, Just Bananas, Fine Lines, Curds, A & S Records, Rediffusion, Franklins, Gamman's, Adur Vision, and Dennis Lee.

STEMMING THE DECLINE

But was the Society right in 1991 to think a reduction in traffic on the High Street was the answer? Fast forward 20 years to the pedestrianisation of East Street, which has contributed more to reinvigorating the town centre than any other initiative, and at a fraction of the cost of the road schemes discussed in 1991. Yes, the town centre is vibrant again, but with different activities.

Groups of teenagers wandered from shop-to-shop on Saturday afternoons, parents sourcing essentials before a new school term,

and people regularly visiting off-licences, greengrocers, and fishmongers have been replaced with Gen-X and Boomers enjoying coffees, charity shops and personal grooming services. However, there has been a resurgence of eclectic independent retailers – Brunswick Road being the best example – and without the need for additional town centre parking.

So, what of the future? Is the High Street a lost cause? When the Ropetackle Arts Centre opened, 16 years after Bob's article, many thought it would rejuvenate that end of the High Street, in practice it has simply kept it on life support.

The East Street environment was established without burdening the council with generations of infrastructure debt, so should this model be extended? Will the next 35 years finally see Pond Road become a town square and pedestrianisation extended up to the approach of the



station, creating a town centre with ambitions beyond market days, capable of hosting large events and festivals?

NEW RESIDENTS GIVE HOPE

The town centre environment attracts new residents to Shoreham, and with them a diversity of experiences and ideas, which further drives demand for independent retailers, reaffirming their reason for choosing to make our town their home and future.

And as for completing a major infrastructure project to bypass the High Street ... a first step might be a unitary authority, something the Shoreham Society didn't envisage five years ago, let alone in 1991.



What are your views on the development in our Town? We would love to hear from you.

*Please contact:
editorial@shorehamsociety.org.uk
shorehamsociety.org.uk*

SHOREHAM PEOPLE

You might well have been wondering who has provided the photographs for this edition of The Journal. As guest editor, I would be remiss if I didn't call upon talented local photographer **Sarah Sutherland-Rowe**, aka my wife, to provide the fabulous images that complement and enhance these pages.



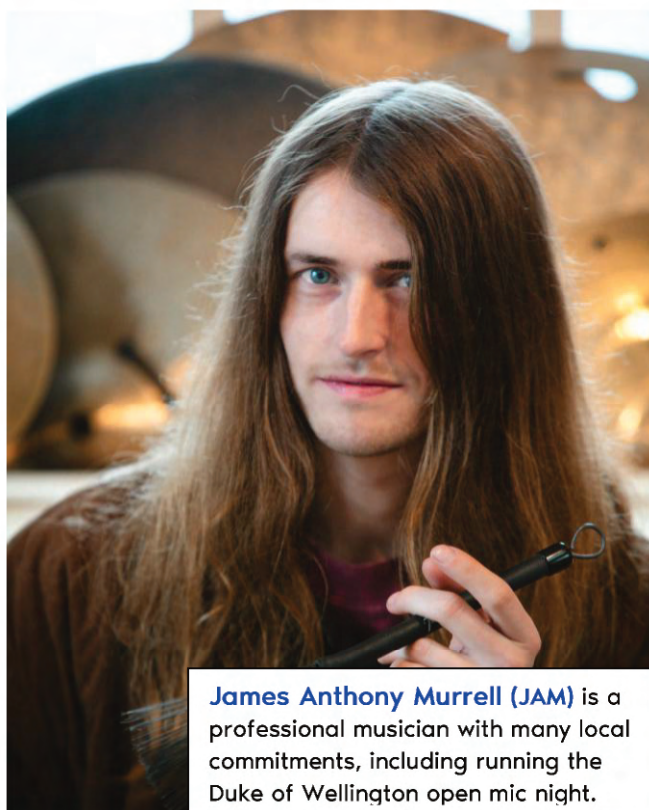
Ant Gillings celebrates his 100th birthday this year. He keeps young by tending the flower beds of St Mary de Haura churchyard.



Hattie Lockhart-Smith is a Shoreham based abstract painter and educator, and Chair of the Adur Art Collective.



Kelly Wickson is an independent retailer, owner of Chapter 34 – providing events space, great coffee, and lots of books.



James Anthony Murrell (JAM) is a professional musician with many local commitments, including running the Duke of Wellington open mic night.

The Back Page

In each edition of *The Journal* we will be introducing you to a member of the Committee. We will also be featuring some of the fantastic creativity that makes Shoreham-by-Sea such a great place to live.

Meet the Team



NAME

Bob Howlett

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR THE SHOREHAM SOCIETY?

I am a member of the Executive Committee, member of the Planning Group, incoming temporary Editor of the Journal.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN SHOREHAM?

I am just an incomer, not a real Shorehamite, having moved here just 46 years ago!

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT LIVING IN SHOREHAM?

Facilities of a small town, near the city, in close proximity to the countryside, sea and river. Selection of pubs and restaurants nearby, Good arts community.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT SHOREHAM, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Currently, planning for new housing, roads and transport, health provision, education, employment opportunities, are all shared across the District and County Councils and government departments, leaving local residents feeling powerless. We need a more 'joined-up' and effective planning system.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST RECORD YOU PURCHASED?

'Liege and Lief' by Fairport Convention in 1968.

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF

I moved to Shoreham to take up a teaching job at Brighton Technical College in 1980. Then, I was at Brighton Polytechnic, later University, for over 20 years, teaching a range of engineering subjects, heading a research team and working with small companies. I left to start a company running international academic conferences on hi-tech topics. We have three children who attended local schools but have now moved away. Over the years I have supported a range of cultural activities in the town and still organise folk music events. I maintain some residual academic activity in smart renewable energy and sustainable food production. Having lived here for over 40 years we have no immediate plans to move away.

Creatives' Corner

Creative Corner Editor Dick Dixon, and his partner French artist Reine Mazoyer, have worked together since 2013.

THE PASSING YEARS

Time is so silent – never rings a bell;
The years slide past – we watch in unbelief,
And cast cold eyes on all that then befell:
Recast the bittersweet in tears and joy,
While gaining hard-won wisdom from this thief.

The thief that also gives is what time is,
Consumed in living: love and strife and all,
And everything that gives us fire and fizz.
But life's less marked by time and ticking clocks,
And more a walk down roads that seem to call:

Roads down which we sang in unison
At first – a common purpose in clear view,
But in a while, when clouds obscure the sun,
We turn and twist – our faces rearranged –
Our voices more discordant, and now few.

Yet after all, the years bear forth their fruit,
Matured and sweet, and deeper than we know,
When softened lines and shadows follow suit.
We better understand the road we trod,
And treading on, still stronger as we go.

www.dick-dixon.com



Join us

Shoreham is changing – and fast. Local people need to have a say in how the town develops. That's why The Shoreham Society exists.

To find out more and sign up, visit:

www.shorehamsociety.org.uk

The Shoreham Society Executive Committee:

Gerard Rosenberg, *Chair*

Vacant, *Vice-Chair*

Christina Robinson, *Secretary*

Jenny Towler, *Treasurer*

Phil Hamerton, *Membership*

Tim Higgins, *Planning & Development*

Tony Hodgson, *Communications*

Bob Howlett, *Sustainability*

Jason Sutherland-Rowe, *Engagement*

Contact : info@shorehamsociety.org.uk

THE SHOREHAM SOCIETY ON-LINE

Our website is the focal point of the Society's communications. With topical news stories, an archive of our Journals and email newsletters, useful planning resources and reports, connections to many local community and voluntary groups, all our event information and ways to join the Society and contact us, it has everything. No wonder over 1000 people a month look at it!

