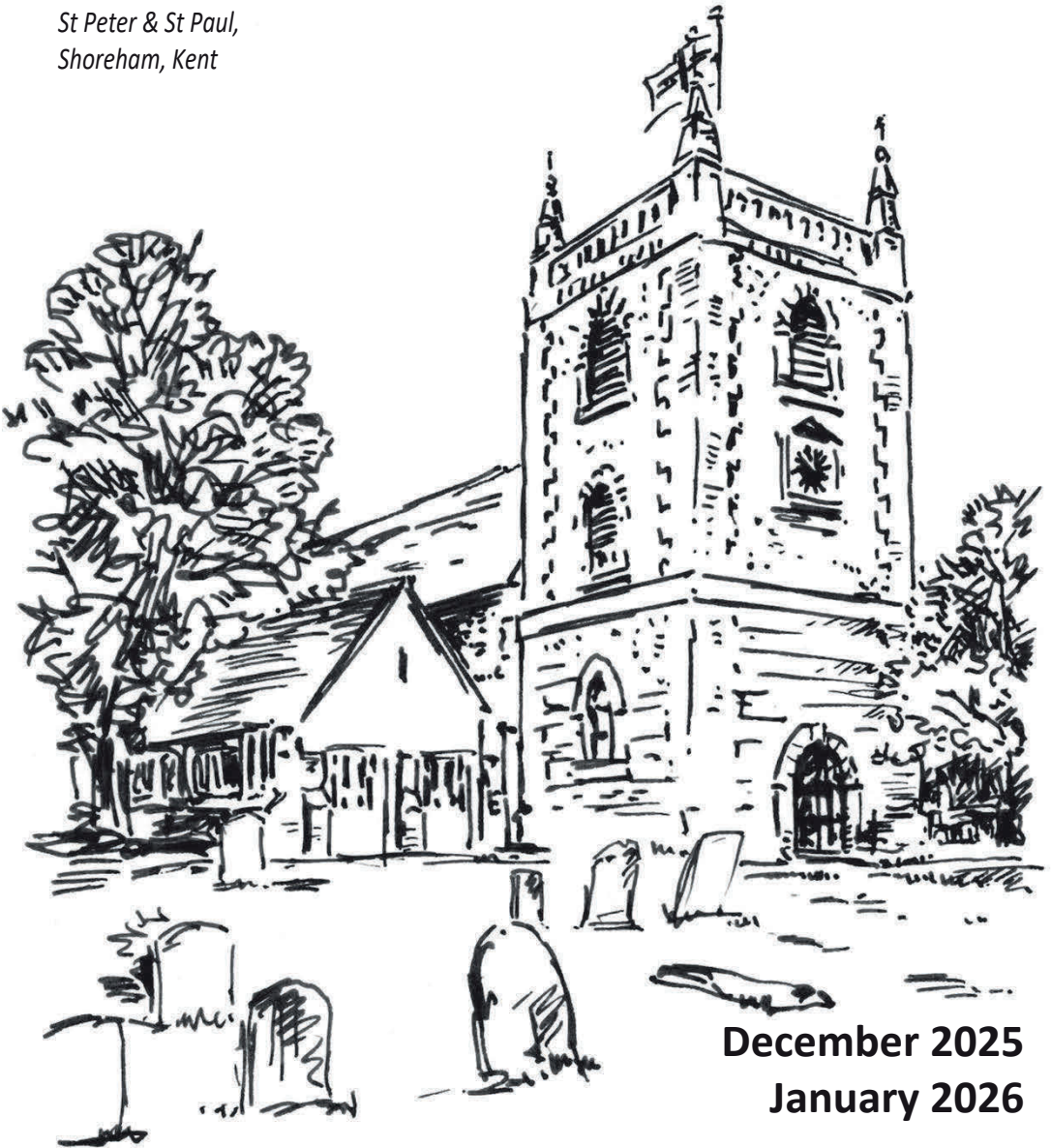


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If you'd like to be on the list either permanently or temporarily, or you know someone who would, then please contact Amanda Barlow, the Parish Clerk on 0791 2611048 or via email at clerk@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk. If you are giving the details of another person please ensure you have their permission and agreement.



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VOLUME 57 SHOREHAM GAZETTE NUMBER 10
DECEMBER 2025/JANUARY 2026

Happy Christmas, Happy New Vicar, Happy New Year!

Advent, meaning arrival, was traditionally a period of fasting and spiritual preparation for the great celebration of Jesus's birth and the 12 days of feasting that followed. Nowadays we tend to do it the other way around, with all the parties in the run up to Christmas followed by exhaustion (often on the day itself), New Year's resolutions to lose weight and "dry January". And sadly, far too many find little to celebrate.

But Advent this year offers an opportunity to *all of us* for some extra preparation, spiritual renewal and much hoped for celebration as we welcome Revd Caz Mills to be the new Vicar of Shoreham. Elaine and I, as your churchwardens and parish representatives in the recruitment process with the Archdeacon, were absolutely delighted that Caz seemed like an excellent fit for our village community and very much hope that as many as possible will join us and the Bishop of Rochester for her:

Service of Licensing and Installation

Monday 15th December, 7.30pm

St Peter and St Paul, Shoreham

(followed by refreshments)

For Shoreham still to have its own vicar, when so many parishes are being combined, feels like a wonderful and unexpected gift; but with it comes the responsibility - a new year's resolution even - to use that gift wisely and not take it for granted. The greatest gift of all, God's love in human form, is meant for sharing. Who knows what this new life might bring? Advent is the start of Adventure!

Ring In The New Year

That wonderful feeling of trying something completely new and being surprised how much you liked it - ring a bell?! Then why not have a go at doing just that on **Saturday 17th January** from 11-12.30. Bellringing is for people of all shapes, sizes and ages (10+). The main requirement is to be able to count to 8 and want to have fun! If you don't try it, you'll never know - or just come and watch. And we promise not to rope you in unless you're keen!

Johnny Aisher, Churchwarden, shorehamparish@gmail.com

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25 October

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Hi, I'm Caz

Before joining you at Shoreham (in what almost feels like a previous life!) long ago in 2011, I gained an art degree with printing in London, worked in retail, belonged to a theatre group doing their backdrops and I volunteered at my local church; during which time I discovered a deep love for exploring all sorts of chaplaincy. Then after God's persistent nudging to explore ordained ministry — believe me it wasn't my idea, but God is God and he won my heart over!

In 2017, I began my academic theology studies at Trinity College. This ordinand training was in Bristol for 3 years and then I moved back to Kent to proceed into curacy (practical training) in Tonbridge in 2020. After a year there, I served at Langton Green for two years and completed my curacy training at St James Church in Tunbridge Wells. It has been my pleasure to experience a wide range of worship styles and meet some great people along the way.

Q: What's your family background?

A: Growing up, I lived with my parents and our cats/rabbits/hamsters in a village not far from Gravesend (before going to Art College in Rochester). The local church is still like extended family to me and were a big support when my Dad went to live his best life in heaven in 2023. My Mum is still an active figure in my sending church and the wider community. Now, I have two rescue dogs, Suri and Pax (who are very friendly to humans but can be reactive to other dogs; overcoming this is a work in progress) who will settle with me in the vicarage. My significant other is Alex who as my long-term partner will hopefully join us in the vicarage in due course.

Q: What does Caz like?

A: Tarantino or Tim Burton films and crime documentaries whilst munching through chocolate covered cranberries! I enjoy eating out and socializing or curled up with a book. I also enjoy abstract painting and have various little creative projects on the go, which I intend to expand whilst living in Shoreham when I'm not working. You should know, I love exploring a good old flea market or junk shop. Music wise, I can't play

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anything but appreciate a wide variety of musical genres including the 1920s up to current dance and punk. I've also developed a tradition of watching the *Live from Vienna* concert every New Year's Day. I'm no stranger to a music festival and live gigs and am keen to support local bands and the arts.

Fave Bible verse: Matthew 13:31-32

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Q: What can you tell us about your passion in faith?

As a priest I am excited about prayer, the Bible and sincere in my worship to God, as you would hope. So as I walk alongside people at various stages of life, it is my privilege to hear people's stories, and help them realise their potential giftings, enabling them to blossom and explore God's presence in their life. As such my passion is helping others see themselves as God sees them, as loved and incredibly precious to Him. My aim then is to help people connect with God in very real, personal and practical ways as they develop their faith.

Say Hi: I love a good ale shandy, a flavoured stout or a cuppa tea, so if you see me around, probably in my snazzy footwear, feel free to say 'hello' and I look forward to meeting and getting to know you.

Revd Caz, Vicar

SHOREHAM VILLAGE STORES

Whether you're planning ahead or looking for last-minute essentials for last-minute guests, Shoreham Village Stores is ready, as ever, for the festive season. Our Christmas trees proved popular last year – look out for them outside by the entrance. Inside, discover decorations, wrapping paper, crackers, party treats, chocolates, mince pies, fine cheeses and wines, plus our excellent selection of real ales. The Susan Horsfield Christmas cards show a range of beautiful Shoreham scenes. And don't forget champagne for the New Year celebrations.

Always ask for anything we can order for you. We'll be open part of the time over Christmas Day and Boxing Day – we'll post the hours in due course. Thank you for your custom this past year, and we wish all our customers a peaceful and happy holiday season.

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Kate Britten

SERVICES AT ST PETER AND ST PAUL DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

Sunday 7th December - Advent 2

9.00am Breakfast Church

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 14th December - Advent 3

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.00am *No Service*

6.00pm Carol Service - followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Monday 15th December

7.30pm Licensing and Installation of Revd Caz Mills

Friday 19th December

5.00pm Carol Singing in the village (meet in church), then mulled wine & mince pies

Sunday 21st December - Advent 4

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

Monday 22nd December

5.00pm Carol Singing in the village (meet in church), then mulled wine & mince pies

Wednesday 24th December

4.00pm Christingle Service - followed by mulled wine, juice and mince pies

11.15pm Midnight Mass with carols and Holy Communion

Thursday 25th December

10.00am Christmas Day Celebration

Sunday 28th December - Christmas 1

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

Sunday 4th January - Christmas 2

9.00am Breakfast Church

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 11th January - Epiphany 1 - Baptism of Christ

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 18th January - Epiphany 2 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

Sunday 25th January - Epiphany 3

10.00am Holy Communion with Choir

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SHOREHAM WI

Our December WI meeting, on Tuesday 2 December, will be our Christmas Lunch at The Crown, 12 noon for 12.30pm. We look forward to getting into the Christmas spirit with all our lovely members.

The last Community Coffee Morning of 2025 will be on Thursday 11 December, in the Village Hall, from 10am to 12pm. The cost of tea/coffee and cake is only £2 and we would love to welcome everyone to this lovely community event.

Our first meeting of 2026 will be held on Tuesday 6 January and will take place, with lunch, in the Village Hall, 12.45pm for 1pm. We are always pleased to welcome guests and new potential members - please send enquiries to Shoreham@wkfw.org.uk

Finally, our January Community Coffee morning will be held on Thursday 8 January, from 10am to 12pm, in the Village Hall. Start the year as you mean to go on – keeping in touch with old friends, as well as making new ones, in this sociable and warm-hearted environment. All welcome. WISHING ALL OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Shoreham WI

OVER 60s

It is with great sadness that Kath and I are stepping from running the Over 60s. Our last working day, so to speak, will be on 10th December at the Christmas lunch, 12 noon for 12.30pm at the Village Hall.

No one is taking over but a small group of members will be running the Over 60s, with Terry Clark leading! The next event is the AGM on 28 January.

Many thanks to Suna and Kath for their sterling work arranging the Over 60s programme over the years.

THE VILLAGE HALL TRUST AGM 10 DECEMBER 7PM Public Invited

Please come to our upcoming Annual General Meeting to elect the management committee and contribute to the discussion on running the hall and balancing our budget.

Most of us in the village have memories built in our Village Hall, whether it be celebrations of all sorts both national and personal; community coffee mornings; art exhibitions, plays or yoga. It is at the heart of our community in so many ways.

You may not know that it is run by a group of unpaid trustees representing various village groups and elected from the public, and assisted by volunteer advisors. We work hard to maintain the hall so it's available to the village at the best price we can offer, while keeping it in good order and covering our running costs.

However, we are currently facing a financial squeeze. So far this financial year we are facing an operating loss of £2,000. Many of you have already helped by coming and enjoying the quiz night in March. The £972 from that is being put to good use as part of £3,500 we need to spend on urgent repairs and maintenance to our roof and exterior woodwork.



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But we need to raise more funds for our normal operating costs. We are already planning some more fun (aka “purposes of social or recreative character” to quote our 1924 deed), village events as fundraisers, but we could do with your help, ideas and input on how we keep the hall running for our community. So we'd love to see you at our AGM on 10th December at 7pm in the hall. There will be an opportunity to hear more about the hall, vote at the election of the committee, bring ideas for fundraising and get involved.

More information:

Shoreham Village Hall is owned by The Shoreham Village Hall Trust, established in 1924, registered as a charity in 1963 and is run by its managing trustees. The Shoreham Parish Council is the custodian trustee of the Trust – holding the title to the property “in trust for the Charity” – but is neither the owner itself nor part of its management. The Trust must pay its operating costs and periodic repairs from fees and donations. **It receives no regular funding from any government body**, though the Parish Council has been generous in the past in a crisis.

Our governance document, a Charity Commission Scheme dated 1991, requires a committee of managing trustees to be selected annually of up to 14 people:

- 2 members appointed by the Shoreham Parish Council
- 4 members elected by the general public at the Annual General Meeting
- 8 members appointed by village organisations who regularly use the hall

(The Shoreham Society, the Royal British Legion, The Women's Institute, Shoreham Village Players, the Over 60's Club, Stay and Play, the Horticultural Society)

The Committee of Management Trustees

(Geraldine Field, Ralph Abbott, Elie Williams, Tim French, Peter Kasch)

CHRISTMAS GAMES NIGHT @ THE SAMUEL PALMER

Monday 15th December, any time from 4pm to 9pm, The Samuel Palmer Pub

After a summer break, games night is back for the cosy season! Come along to The Samuel Palmer for an evening of festive fun with games and laughter.

Everyone is welcome - kids, adults and families, whether you're coming in a group or on your own. Drop in any time between 4pm and 9pm; we'll help you find a game, a table and some new people to play with.

We'll bring a sleigh-full of easy-to-learn, family-friendly games, or you can bring your own favourites. Christmas jumpers very much encouraged, and the bar will be open for festive drinks.

Hosted by Ceri & Natalie Price, village residents and board game lovers and inventors!

NEWS FROM SHOREHAM VILLAGE SCHOOL, NOVEMBER 2025

It has been another busy and exciting few weeks at our school, filled with learning, visitors, and special events that make our community so vibrant and inspiring. Last week, we were delighted to welcome The Pioneer Academy CEO who thoroughly

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enjoyed his visit to the school. He was full of praise for the positive atmosphere in every classroom and was particularly struck by the enthusiasm and confidence of our pupils as they eagerly shared their learning. Our Regional Director, **Mrs Marsh**, continues her regular visits every fortnight and has been especially impressed with the outstanding Early Years provision in **Barton Class**. She also took great pleasure in chatting with our articulate pupils, who spoke so warmly about how happy they are at school and how much they enjoy learning.

Music has also been in the air this term! Pupils from **Sevenoaks School** treated our Years 3 to 6 classes to an uplifting musical workshop. Their enthusiasm and talent were infectious, and our children loved joining in with the live singing and music-making. We are also thrilled to welcome our new **peripatetic strings teacher**, who is already inspiring three budding violinists and hopes to open up more opportunities for string lessons very soon.

A special thank you goes to one of our **Year 4 parents**, who visited the class to talk about **Judaism**. The children were fascinated by his insights and asked some wonderfully thoughtful questions. We always welcome parents and community members who wish to share their culture, religion, or hobbies—it enriches the children's understanding of the world and strengthens our sense of togetherness.

Our first **Open Mornings for prospective parents** were another great success, with over 14 families attending the first event and many more at the second. Our **House Captains and Ambassadors** were superb hosts and tour guides, representing our school with such confidence, warmth, and pride.

Most recently, we were deeply proud of the children who represented the school at the **Remembrance Service**. They read poems with great sensitivity and laid the school wreath at the war memorial with dignity and respect. Their participation was a poignant reminder of the importance of remembrance, and they did both their families and the school proud.

Last week, I announced the news of my forthcoming retirement at the end of April. I look forward to seeing some of you at various events over the next few months before I leave my post and move to Scotland with my family.

We are hosting Open Days for prospective families over the next few weeks, and we still have some limited spaces for pupils available in some year groups, so if you know anyone who is looking for a small friendly school with high standards and lots of lovely outdoor space, please ask them to call us to arrange a tour. Phone: 01959 522228 or email: office@shoreham.kent.sch.uk

Gillian Lovatt-Young, Head Teacher

CENTENARY WOOD GUARDIANS

Those of you who regularly walk in this lovely space will have noticed that a lot of work has been undertaken over the past few weeks: some by you and other volunteers and a huge amount by **Jeremy Tooley**. This effort is much appreciated and it seemed a good idea to ask for volunteers to agree to being on a list of those who would be willing to

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monitor the state of the developing woodland and report any problems that should be dealt with by the Parish Council or ourselves (including cutting back any growth of brambles before they become a big problem). The paths are mown regularly by the contracted grass cutter who also did a splendid job in mowing the areas between the trees which then had to be raked off by volunteers. This annual task is to try to impoverish this soil and allow the orchids to come back. I would like to make an email list of those willing to participate and look forward to hearing from you.

lesleyspence@aol.com Lesley Spence



YOU BETTER WATCH OUT, YOU BETTER NOT CRY....

He's making a list and checking it twice – and he's coming to **The Teepee at The Mount Vineyard on Christmas Eve at 3pm**. The Shoreham Society has arranged with The Mount to host this wonderful annual visit.

This is a free event for all Shoreham children and those that are here for Christmas. Mulled wine, courtesy of The Shoreham Society, will be provided for parents and carers. Just come along: the elves will be there to meet you, sing some songs and wait for Father Christmas's big arrival. Same procedure for parents and carers as usual - if you are unsure of the arrangements or you are new to the village, **please get in touch at: shorehamsociety@gmail.com.**

You are asked to walk to The Mount, as their car park will be full of regular customers. There will be elves to direct you and to ensure safety as you walk up the driveway from Church Street. You can also approach from Church Field: the small gate at the far end of the field will be open to give direct access to the Teepee. If you are going to the Christingle service, which is at 4pm, you can also take the route via Church Field, but you may need wellies! William Alexander has kindly agreed to provide some silage as a snack for the reindeer in a nearby field.

...FATHER CHRISTMAS IS COMING TO SHOREHAM!

John Saynor, Chair, The Shoreham Society

CITIZENS ADVICE

At this time of year it's easy to let the stress get to you, and mistakes can happen in the rush to buy presents. The Citizens Advice website <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> has useful tips on consumer rights and how to deal with any issues, including reporting to Trading Standards. Or you can call the freephone number 0808 278 7810 (10am-3pm, Monday-Friday – be prepared to wait) or email advice@nwkent.cab.org.uk, for free, confidential advice on many other areas - housing, employment, benefits, debt and more.

Kate Britten

SHOREHAM & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hop fields once spread across the Darent Valley, and each year dozens of families arrived from Dartford and the East End of London to pick the grape-like branches of hops, some of them bringing their own furniture as they set up camp for their annual working holiday. On Friday 16 January, the ever-popular historian Rod Shelton will be giving us a talk on “From Poke to Pocket: the Story of Hops”. The meeting is at 8pm in the Village Hall, with refreshments from 7.30. Non-members of the Society are always welcome for just £3.

In November, our guest speaker was Delia Taylor whose subject was the women of the First World War. In Shoreham, Gwendoline Madge ran the Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital during the 1914-18 conflict and you can read about her in the People section of our website.

<https://shorehamkenthistory.weebly.com>

James Saynor

SHOREHAM PARISH COUNCIL – NOVEMBER UPDATE

Shoreham Parish Council met on 5 November, and Members were pleased to welcome a number of residents, along with our County and District Councillors. The meeting was preceded by a very well-attended “*Coffee with a Cop*” session, which offered residents the chance to speak directly with PC Wilson, our local beat officer. It was an invaluable opportunity for people to raise concerns and discuss local issues informally. The Parish Council would like to thank PC Wilson and all those who came along to make the event such a success.

Remembrance Sunday The Parish Council extends its sincere thanks to everyone who helped make this year’s Remembrance Sunday both dignified and memorable. Special appreciation goes to Cllr Blamey and his team of volunteers, who organised the road closures to ensure a safe procession from the Church and the proper observance of the two-minute silence.

Items Discussed at the Meeting

Christmas Tree at the Village Hall Members agreed that a Christmas tree, decorated with lights, will be placed in front of Shoreham Village Hall. We are grateful to the Shoreham Allotment Association for kindly donating the tree.

Flagpole Arrangements It was agreed that the flag of St George’s Cross will be flown outside the Village Hall. On special dates, the Royal British Legion will raise the Union flag to mark national and commemorative occasions.

Improved Bin Provision To support the cleanliness of our village, the dog bin at the bottom of Mill Lane will be replaced with a larger dual-purpose bin suitable for both dog waste and general litter.

Christmas Newsletter The Parish Council will be producing a Christmas Newsletter, which will be available on social media and on the Council’s website. A limited number

of printed copies will be placed in public locations. If you would like a personal copy, please email the Clerk at clerk@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Staying Informed A full information pack for each Council meeting is available to download from the website. Prior to planning meetings, the updated planning log—containing details of past and current applications—is also published for residents to view. Visit: www.shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Finally, the Members and Clerk of Shoreham Parish Council would like to wish all our residents a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Amanda Barlow, Clerk, 07912 611048, clerk@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk

WALNUT TREE TRUST NEWS

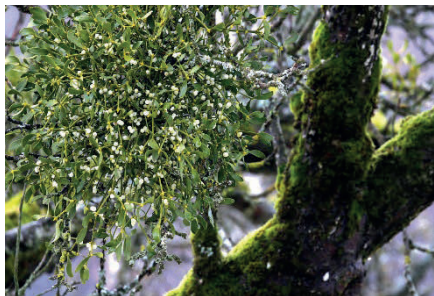
The Walnut Tree Trust is pleased to report its activities over the last year. To recap, the Trust was established in 1932 and owns the cottages plus outbuildings at 29-33 High Street. Its objects are to preserve the picturesque historically listed buildings and to use any surplus income for charitable purposes.

The Trust completed the restoration of two of its three outbuildings in August 2024 using borrowed funds while continuing its planned programme of improving the cottages. The outbuildings remain let at fair market levels returning a good income that justifies their restoration expense. One of the cottages was refurbished to be relet this year. The income from the cottages is approaching fair market levels, as required by law and our constitution, which has enabled the trust to continue to invest in the property, to start to pay back its loans and to continue to gift money for charitable causes; this year the Trust granted the Shoreham Pre-School £2,500. For greater detail on our year's activities, please consult our accounts and annual report, available on our own website and on the Charity Commission website too.

There have been some changes to the Board of Trustees. Peter Triggs is thanked for his excellent service. We have welcomed Louise Taylor, a qualified chartered surveyor and relatively new resident to Shoreham.

We continue to search for yet another interested person to commit to contributing to the management of the Trust for the benefit of the Shoreham community.

Jill Aisher (chair), John Dinnis (vice chair), Lesley Spence, Jonathan Histed, Graham Peck, Peter Kasch, Louise Taylor



MISTLETOE

In Britain most mistletoe is found in the south and west Midlands, with particularly good populations in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Gwent and Somerset. There is mistletoe elsewhere, but it is only regionally abundant in that core area of the south-west midlands.

Change may be happening though – new evidence from the last 20 years suggests that mistletoe is spreading faster than it used to. This is particularly noticeable in eastern areas, where established but seemingly static mistletoe populations are now spreading. Is this change due to climate or to birds? Computer modelling does suggest that mistletoe will head east with climate change. Or it could be something else. One possibility is better seed spread by Blackcaps, a bird that is highly efficient at spreading mistletoe. British Blackcaps migrate for the winter so they do not usually affect mistletoe here, but recently continental Blackcaps have started overwintering in Britain, with many thousands now feeding on mistletoe here and spreading it.

Kissing beneath the mistletoe is an old tradition. Although part of Christmas revels, mistletoe is rarely allowed inside a church because of its pagan associations. It is well known as the most sacred plant of the Druids, the priestly clan of the Celts.



If you have a young fruit tree in your churchyard, garden or elsewhere, how about encouraging mistletoe by smearing some berries onto the bark after Christmas is over? The thin bark of a young trees is easier for the mistletoe to penetrate and establish. *Prue Dakin* www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

SHOREHAM VILLAGE DIARY FOR MIDWINTER 2025-2026

Tuesday 2 Dec	WI Christmas Lunch	The Crown	12 noon
Friday 5	Coffee and Chat	Church Room	10.30am
Wednesday 10	Over 60s Christmas Lunch	Village Hall	12 noon
Wednesday 10	Village Hall Trust AGM	Village Hall	7pm
Thursday 11	WI Community Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10am
Monday 15	Christmas Board Games	Samuel Palmer	from 4pm
Friday 19/Monday 22 December - Carol Singing around the village (followed by mulled wine and mince pies)		Church	5pm
Christmas Eve	Father Christmas arrives	Teepee, The Mount	3pm
Tuesday 6 Jan	WI meeting	Village Hall	12.45pm
Thursday 8	WI Community Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10am
Friday 16	Historical Society talk on Hops	Village Hall	8pm
Wednesday 28	Over 60s AGM		

SHOREHAM GAZETTE

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