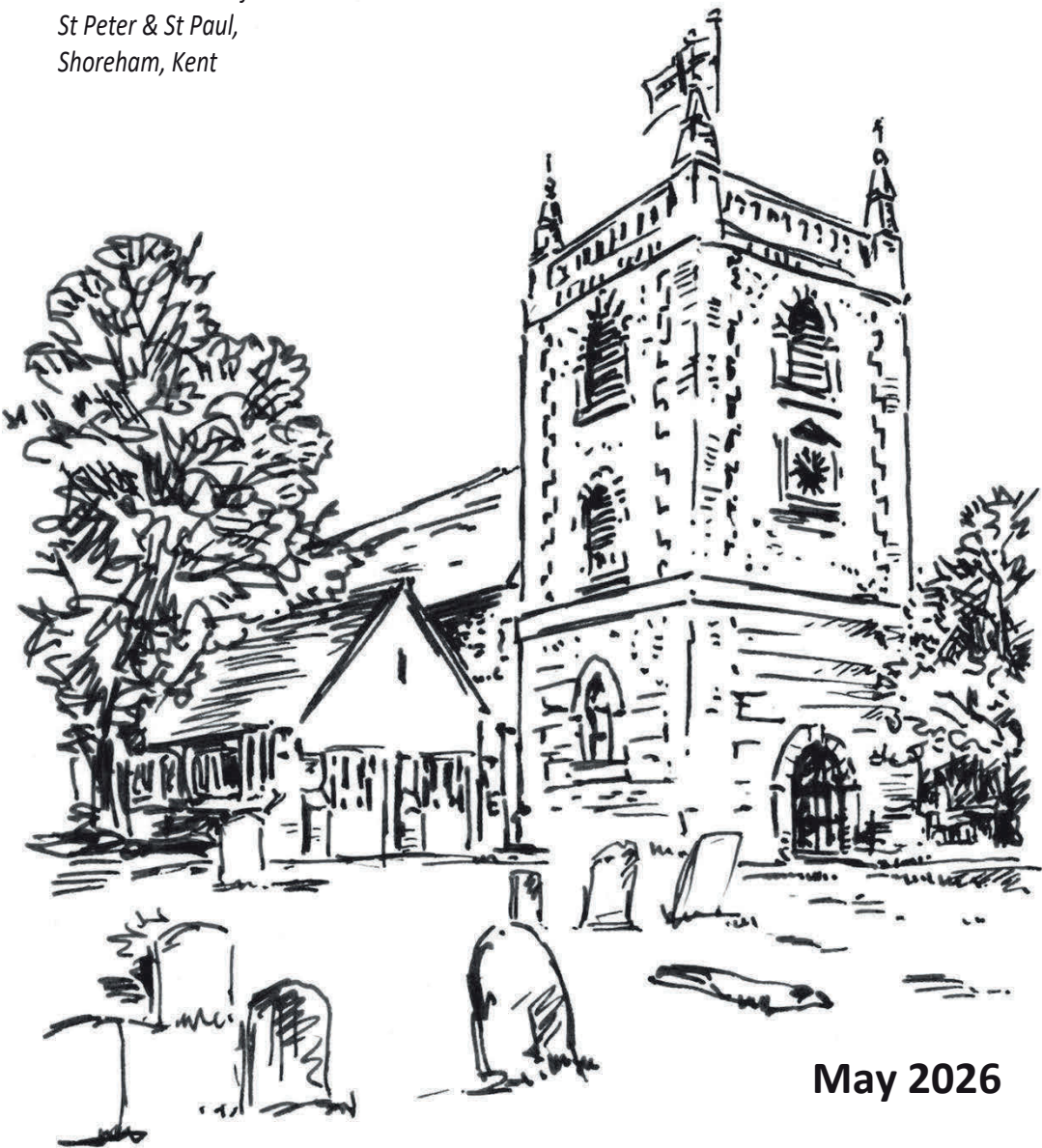


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May 2026

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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 58 SHOREHAM GAZETTE NUMBER 4 MAY 2026

I was at a friend's quiz recently and admittedly I was there for the peanuts, crisps & comradesy, not for general knowledge, anyhow, there was a picture round on garden birds; could you name the different varieties from their photos? I wonder, is this one of your skills or are you better at identifying them from their song? In our local wildlife around us, there are so many animals, critters and flying insects and of course cute little flying feathery balls of fluff. Our garden birds, all with their own lives and families to hatch and feed, at times looking bright eyed and colourful and at others looking slightly unkempt as they fly around in search of a mate or some food for their little ones. Each baby bird can require 1000 grubs a day — that's a lot of food to find as a feathery parent of 5 or more!

When I was in the churchyard, the temperature warmer, and taking in the joy of spring with the sun shining all around me, the air filled with sounds of all those little birds. Each one slightly different, and even though there are ugly things happening all over the world, difficult things happening perhaps in our own lives and life can feel generally tiring at times, yet in that moment of goodness, those little birds were *still* singing their hearts out —how amazing is our God, I thought, what a gift to receive in that moment, a slice of heaven! Each bird has a different song to communicate various altered messages to their feathery friends. I wonder if different varieties of bird understand each other's songs, or are they built to only understand one voice? Hmmm.

Singing is very healthy for us and I know a few of you are part of bands/musical groups or singing societies and choirs that do all sorts of songs and show-tunes. Singing when expressed whole heartedly is a form of worship. I would suggest we all have an in-built need to worship musically, whether we are the birds singing out their tunes to each other, or just casually humming a tune to ourselves. Not only is singing good for us, but we can sing almost *anywhere*, with others or alone, with accompaniment or a cappella. A good song though, sung from the heart doesn't have to be in tune either, just performed passionately and with sincerity. It is not where it happens that matters, but to what or rather, *whom* it goes. *Who* do you sing to? Or sing for?



Different songs capture our hearts and sum up a moment with their exquisite lyrics or their catchy tunes at various times of our lives. Sometimes we even join in, be it people singing in their showers, whistling on the way to school/work, chanting on sports terraces, warbling in church, sharing ditties at parties and receptions, ballads at key life events and with the radio jingles at the beach. And we choose what songs to listen to celebrate and remember a loved one. It doesn't matter where we are, music and song are often in the air, but how often do we stop and listen to it, as we do the birdsong all around? And in doing so, can we recognise someone greater than ourselves is with us? I recall a gentle worship song, sung by Matt Redman, called 'The Father's Song', here are some of its lyrics:

*You sung it over me and for eternity, It's written on my heart
Heaven's perfect melody, The Creator's symphony
You are singing over me, The Father's song
Heaven's perfect mystery, The king of love has sent for me
And now you're singing over me, The Father's song*

Redman takes his inspiration from Scripture, the book of Zephaniah chapter 3 verses 9-17 where God rejoices in his people and sings over them. A full version can be heard on his album *Sing like never before: The Essential collection*.

Whatever you require at this time, be it a foot-tapper or a soothing lullaby, the birdsong and other inspired melodies remind us that God is always singing over us a love song of great pride and joy in us, His Creation.

On the 21st June this year, it is the longest day, but also Father's Day. For some of us our Dads are in heaven, or we've not seen them/our kids for a while, or we see them all the time and they show us

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On the 21st June this year, it is the longest day, but also Father's Day. For some of us our Dads are in heaven, or we've not seen them/our kids for a while, or we see them all the time and they show us their love in wonderful ways, you may even be a dad or father-figure to someone yourself; whoever you are, dear reader, remember the Father's love for YOU and God is singing over YOU now and always, so take time to stop and listen a while until his song resonates in your soul, lifts your spirits and puts a spring in your step, Amen.

God bless you always, Revd Caz.

Revd Caz, vicar.shoreham@gmail.com

MAY SERVICES AT ST PETER AND ST PAUL

Sunday 3rd May - Easter 5

9.00am Breakfast Church

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 10th May - Easter 6

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.00am Morning Worship

Thursday 14th May - Ascension Day

8.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 17th May - Easter 7

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

Sunday 24th May - Pentecost

10.00am Holy Communion with Choir

Sunday 31st May - Trinity Sunday

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

Every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday - Morning Prayer at 9.00am

FROM THE CHURCH REGISTER

18 April

Interment of ashes

Peter Knight

<https://www.shorehamchurchkent.org> <https://www.facebook.com/stpeterpaulshorehamshorehamparish@gmail.com>

SHOREHAM & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This isn't a comment on Shoreham's excellent new vicar, but the next Historical Society meeting – on **Friday 15 May** in the Village Hall – will be on bangles by the clergy. Ed Adams talks on **Kentish Clerical Errors: Shocking and Amusing Tales of Victorian Vicars**, covering all manner of "ministerial misbehaviour and priestly peccadilloes" in times gone by. The meeting starts at 8pm, with the usual refreshments from 7.30. Guests are always welcome for just £3. This talk has proved very popular across Kent and it will be our last one before our summer break.

Our April speaker was Jo Livingston, who told us about the local people who gamely ran Volunteer Fire Brigade services. Don't forget all the news and information about Shoreham's history on our website to keep you going through the summer.

<https://shorehamkenthistory.weebly.com>

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May 9th 2026

“Spring into Song”



Do join us to celebrate May's arrival at our concert in St Peter and St Paul's, Shoreham on May 9th. Programme attractions include the haunting 'Panis Angelicus' and much-loved standards such as 'Summertime' and 'Puttin' on the Ritz'. Also, our star surprise musician will delight you. We are so lucky to live in such a musical valley.

Admission is £12 and *under 18s are free*. Bar available (donations). Tickets will be on sale on the door and from our singers. You can also email: darentvc@gmail.com

Do tell your family and friends about the Darent Valley Choir – singers are very welcome to join us.

“The only truth is music.” — Jack Kerouac

SHOREHAM WI

Our next WI meeting, which is our AGM, will take place on Tuesday 5 May at the Village Hall. Members are requested to arrive from 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Although there will be no formal speaker we will have some fun, refreshments and the chance to socialise after the formalities have been completed. If you would like to find out more about Shoreham WI, and what we do, please contact Shoreham@wkwfi.org.uk

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING

Do come along and join us for our next Community Coffee morning, which is being held on Thursday 14 May in the Village Hall, from 10am to 12pm. Everyone is welcome at this enjoyable monthly event when the cost is only £2 for tea/coffee with a delicious home-made cake. We look forward to seeing you there for a good chat with friends and neighbours, as well as meeting new people from Shoreham and surrounding areas.

Shoreham WI

SHOREHAM VILLAGE STORES

As excitement builds for the Duck Race on 10 May, we'll be stocking our usual supply of ducks, with their unrivalled powers of speed and endurance. How you primp and deck them out is, of course, up to you – but some of our craft supplies might help you out. You might also pick up a fishing net in case your entry needs some extra assistance.

To keep yourself up to speed along the riverbank, check out our many varieties of Buzz sweets – two mini-packs for just £1. Or some Cadbury Dairy Milk with Biscoff pieces. If the weather's good, it might be time for a pistachio Magnum or the new multi-layered Cornetto Max in the ice-cream freezer.

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KALEIDOSCOPE- CHARITY CONCERT - SATURDAY 13TH JUNE 2026

Kaleidoscope, a vibrant evening of music bringing together a rich mix of styles and eras in a colourful, uplifting programme for all ages. Henry promises an evening of music from much-loved musical theatre favourites to stirring concert band classics, there's something to delight everyone. We're delighted to welcome West End star Nikki Bentley as special guest, whose powerful vocals and captivating stage presence promise to make the night truly memorable.

More than just a concert, *Kaleidoscope* supports Team GB on their journey to the 2027 Invictus Games — a wonderful evening of music with heart and purpose.

Saturday 13th June St Peter & St Paul Church, Shoreham 7:30pm (Doors open 7pm)

Tickets: £17 | Children (under 16) £10

Book online: www.ticketsource.co.uk/hd-productions

Email: henrydesmondmusic@outlook.com Tel: 07713 117288



THE SHOREHAM DUCK RACE SUNDAY 10TH MAY!

Kids young and old can't wait for Shoreham's biggest event!

Arrangements are as usual: **Registration starts at 1.30pm, in Darenth Way near the Bridge. Race starts**

at the Bridge at 2.30pm, after judging of home-made ducks is complete.

Volunteers will give you a form to fill in your details. If you bring your own duck, it costs £2 to register. If you don't, you can buy an Orphan Duck for an extra £2. Each duck is given a number which you need to note to see if your duck wins.

Please use your imagination and skill to make your own duck (or ducks). Be as creative as you can! **The best ducks will be displayed by the War Memorial at the start. There are medals to be won for different categories of award,** including one for a sustainable (non plastic) duck.

While you are waiting, special Duck Biscuits, cakes and drinks will be on sale. New for this year are Duck Hats. Friends of Shoreham School (FOSS) will also be selling ice creams and cakes.

At the end of the race, **you collect your duck at the bottom of Mill Lane – please don't forget to collect your duck if you have made one.**

We need helpers on the day for many different jobs. We are particularly looking for traffic marshals to ensure the safety of our visitors. – please get in touch at shorehamsociety@gmail.com.

SPECIAL SAFETY WARNING: Please don't allow your children in the water before and during the race. Only duck race helpers are allowed in the water to marshal the ducks. Every year, the net proceeds of the event go to support a village activity or good cause. This year, it's the Village Hall fund, because the Hall is facing some huge repair and maintenance bills to keep the place running.

If you can, please persuade your friends and family **to leave their cars behind,** to reduce congestion. Car parking will be available in the Heavy Horse field, off Station Road, for which we are grateful to The Mount. **Please avoid driving over the Bridge between 1pm and 3pm. There will be a normal half hourly train service at Shoreham Station on the day.**

TRAIN NEWS

Train improvements for commuters and visitors have been announced, starting on 18th May.

There will be more direct fast trains between Otford and Swanley and London Bridge and Charing Cross. From Shoreham, by means of a same-platform connection at Swanley, you can reach London Bridge in 35 minutes. The fast trains will also run on Sundays from later in the year.

And don't forget that you can travel in the 'first class' carriages on all trains to and from Shoreham at no extra charge. The carriages are at each end of the trains.

Use of our trains is on the up and up – mainly thanks to visitors taking the train – with a 20% increase in passengers year-on-year.

Finally, if you'd like to help look after the flower planters at Shoreham Station, please get in touch.

John Saynor, Chair, The Shoreham Society, shorehamsociety@gmail.com

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At the time of writing, we have been enjoying unseasonably good weather over Easter. However, as we head towards the Hall's quiz night to raise funds for planned maintenance, the Village Hall Trust finds that it never rains but pours. Unfortunately, the Hall has discovered an external water leak, which has led to a

large and unexpected water bill following meter readings.

Our committee has sprung (excuse the pun) into action to resolve the issue. Fortunately, the Hall has two water points of entry, so it remains fully functional thanks to the Parish Council allowing us to temporarily connect to their supply. We are currently exploring ways to mitigate the costs with the water supplier.

Our fundraising goal over the next three years is £12,000 to support the upkeep and running of this valuable community asset. Please continue to support the Hall. Our next planned events are:

23rd May: Table Top Sale 10 am – 3pm – tea, coffee and delicious cake will be available while you browse the delights of the sale.

To **reserve a table** please contact bookings@shorehamvillagehall.co.uk with your name and contact details and we will let you know how to pay and any other relevant information. Tables £10 – stallholders' access from 8:30am.

26th September: Film Night

Hall Bookings - If you are thinking of booking a space for an event, party or wedding, why not consider the Village Hall?

Booking link: <https://shorehamvillagehall.co.uk/hallbooking/>

Email: bookings@shorehamvillagehall.co.uk

Please also continue to support other hirers who run events for residents to enjoy, such as the yoga classes, the WI, Stay and Play for pre-school children, and the local societies that host events in the Hall – details can be found in the Gazette. Our grateful thanks for your continued patronage in supporting the Village Hall Trust.

Mary Gee

OVER 60'S

The Shoreham Over 60's Club meets once a month, usually on the 4th Wednesday.

The dates and subjects for May and June are as follows:-

27th May Talk on "My time being a London Guide" Given by Liz Scott

24th June Trip to Falconhurst Gardens , Edenbridge, with afternoon tea
and talk from Nicola Talbot, the owner. Travel is by car share. Meet in
Shoreham Car Park at 1.15pm.

General Meetings are held in the Village Hall at 2.00pm and include Refreshments of Tea, Coffee, homemade and shop bought cakes, mixed with friendly chat and gossip. New Members, and day visitors, are always warmly welcomed. A day visitor's Fee is £3.00, to cover refreshments.

A Membership Fee for the year is £5.00, if they choose to join.

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SATURDAY
23rd MAY
7.30pm

The Friends of Shoreham Church invite you to a concert by

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conducted by Rupert Bond



doors and bar
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TICKETS £15 from the village
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The Friends of Shoreham Church are delighted to invite you to come and enjoy an evening with the Sonnet Wind Orchestra, conducted by our organist Rupert Bond. They have agreed to come back after a gap of 2 years and will enhance us again.

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NEWS FROM SHOREHAM VILLAGE SCHOOL – APRIL 2026

I am thrilled to be writing my first piece for the Parish Gazette as Head of School. Having joined our school community 12 years ago, it's fair to say I absolutely love working alongside our children, staff and families and I am very excited for the next chapter ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Lovatt-Young for her outstanding commitment to our school over the past 11 years and to extend our heartfelt thanks and warmest wishes on her retirement. Her dedication, vision, and unwavering commitment have shaped the school into the thriving and inspiring place it is today. Through her leadership, countless pupils have flourished and the whole school community has benefited from her passion and care. She will be greatly missed; we are deeply grateful for all she has given over the years and wish her a long, happy, and well-deserved retirement.

The children have made a fantastic start to the new term following the Easter break. They have returned refreshed, positive, and ready to engage with their learning, which has been wonderful to see. There is a real sense of enthusiasm across the school with pupils showing increased focus, curiosity, and motivation as they settle back into their routines.

It has been particularly pleasing to see how quickly the children have reconnected with their learning and with one another. Classrooms are already full of energy and purposeful activity, setting a strong foundation for the term ahead.

We also have a very exciting term ahead, with a wide range of opportunities planned for the children. From enriching trips and visits to performances, assemblies, and special events, there is much to look forward to. These experiences will not only enhance learning but also help create lasting memories and further strengthen our school community.

As a school at the heart of our community, we are always grateful for the generosity of our volunteers. If you are local and would be interested in volunteering in school to support our children with reading, we would be delighted to hear from you. Listening to readers makes a tremendous difference to children's confidence and progress. Please note that all volunteers are required to undergo the appropriate DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and safeguarding procedures.

We would also like to share that there are currently a few limited places available in some year groups. If you know of any families who may be interested in joining our welcoming and nurturing school community, please encourage them to contact the school office for further information. We would be very pleased to arrange a visit and share all that makes our school such a special place to learn and grow.

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Nikki Sheraton, Head Teacher

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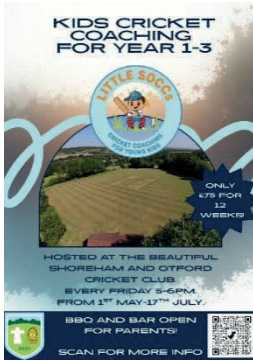
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SHOREHAM AND OTFORD CRICKET CLUB

Hi everyone,
It is literally only weeks away now before we get out onto the green green grass of our summer homeland. Men's training has begun outside and the newly introduced kids years 1-3 starts on 1 May!



We welcome anyone who is interested in playing for any of the teams. Please contact the club, me or Nick Stroudley, the director of cricket. You can follow us on Facebook and Instagram as well.

PLAYER SPONSORSHIP: Did you know you can also sponsor a player? You can, even more than one if you like. Please contact the club for information on how to arrange this.

We are anticipating the arrival of the women's coach, and men's 1st team player Jack Whitelaw any moment and hope to have an entry from him regarding how he ended up in a small village in Kent having come from his native Australia in the next article.

We also welcome Jackie HOCH as the Prosocco's captain and vice captains Rachel and Karien. We will be hearing from them next issue as well. Why next issue you may ask? Well, the team are going on tour early May and I thought you might like to hear some of the results of that 😊

The Prosocco's had a great winter indoor season and it was good to get back into the swing of things. As well as getting the muscle memory back, there were the additional layers for winter play to be adjusted to! It didn't deter anyone and we competed in two different leagues having our fair share of successes.

This season we will be competing in two leagues. One is played in groups and each batting pair play their nominated number of overs, and the other is a T20 style, where each batter plays until they are out. If you come and watch us all will become clear(er). Thanks to everyone who came to our Easter Monday event. It was fantastic to see so many people enjoying the club. We look forward to seeing you again during the season.

'Faces of Shoreham and Otford Cricket Club' this month relate to earlier times of the club, one being an article by Martin Wells, who describes how the ground came to be what it is with some historical background. The other talks about Sam YATES. It has been written by someone with the initials of C.B.F. I'm sure many of you will know who this may be. The article was provided to me by Ann Ball and is a wonderful account of Mr Yates.

Social Media

Residents are encouraged to follow Shoreham Parish Council on Facebook. While all official documents are available on the Council's website, the Facebook page is regularly updated with useful news and information for the community.

Tennis Club

As we move into the spring and summer months, residents are reminded of the Parish Tennis Membership Scheme. Membership is just £20 per year. For further details, please contact the Clerk at clerk@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 29 April 2026 at 7.00pm in Shoreham Village Hall. All residents are warmly invited to attend.

A full pack of information supporting each meeting is available to download from the Council's website. Prior to each planning meeting, the planning log is also published, providing details of both past and current applications.

The next Parish Council meetings will be held on Wednesday 6 May and Wednesday 3 June 2026.

www.shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk.

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

BRIMSTONE, THE ORIGINAL BUTTER FLY



May is a lovely month to look for butterflies, several of our native species are on the wing at this time of year including the striking yellow



Brimstone. It is thought that the name butterfly comes from this large, yellow beauty, literally

Butter Fly! When you see one flying it is highly visible but actually it can be well camouflaged too; have a look at the shape of the brimstone's wing and you will see that it closely resembles a leaf. When at rest they can disappear amongst foliage.

Brimstones can be seen early in the year as they overwinter as adults, emerging from hibernation to lay eggs in April or May, ready to hatch as green caterpillars in July. Following pupation in August, adults are back in early autumn, feeding and finding sites to overwinter. The other spring butterflies that you see will have either overwintered as adults, such as the red admiral or small tortoiseshells, or as a chrysalis or pupa – orange tips do this as do holly blues. Some butterflies overwinter as caterpillars, the meadow brown for example.

Brimstone caterpillars feed on buckthorn and alder buckthorn so if you are planting a hedge try and include these, buckthorn favours calcareous soil and alder buckthorn more acidic conditions. Churchyards are great for butterflies as they contain such a rich

array of plants. If you have an area which is managed as a meadow you may have many species of caterpillar chomping away at the plants within it. Look out for orange tips laying eggs on cuckoo flower, garlic and hedge mustard, or the speckled wood, also flying in May, which lays eggs on native grasses such as Yorkshire fog and couch grass. This butterfly prefers long grass so may use a tussocky area at the back of your churchyard, perhaps near to shade trees.

We'd love to know what butterflies you see as well as any other wildlife that you spot. Why not while away a sunny hour or two looking for butterflies in this beautiful place.

Prue Dakin, Caring for God's Acre, www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

SHOREHAM VILLAGE DIARY FOR MAY 2026

Wednesday 29 April	Annual Parish Meeting		
	Village Hall	7pm	
Friday 1	SOCC Kids' Cricket Coaching starts		
	Cricket Ground	5pm	
Tuesday 5	WI AGM		
	Village Hall	7.30pm	
Saturday 9	Darent Valley Choir Concert		
	Church	7.30pm	
Sunday 10	Duck Race		
	War Memorial: Race starts	2.30pm	
Thursday 14	WI Community Coffee		
	Village Hall	10am	
Friday 15	Historical Society talk: Ed Adams on Kentish Clerical Errors: Shocking and Amusing Tales of Victorian Vicars		
	Village Hall	8pm	
Saturday 23	Table Top Sale	Village Hall	10am
Saturday 23	Annual Plant Sale	Allotments	10am
Saturday 23	Friends of Shoreham Church Concert: The Sonnet Wind Orchestra	Church	7.30pm
Wednesday 27	Over 60s Talk on "My time being a London Guide" Liz Scott	Village Hall	2pm

SHOREHAM GAZETTE

Copy deadline for the June Gazette is 18th May to shorehamgazette@gmail.com
 Word attachment in **Calibri 10** and single spacing, please. Images as **jpgs**, please

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