

NAMING OF PATH FROM ABBY PLACE TO GORDON SQUARE

The Following motion was brought to the Town Council Planning Committee on Monday 24th March 2025.

1. To consider the motion submitted by Cllr C Gibson:

Faversham Town Council recognises the historic name of shooting meadows, the shoots (pronounced the shuts) referring to the path from Abbey place to Gordon Square and a former path across the site of the current Grammar School. Recognising Swale's guidance on naming paths and roads using words that can be misinterpreted Faversham Town Council requests that Swale Borough council begin the process to formally name the path from Abbeyfields to Gordon square (part of ZF 08) "The Shuts"

The minute from the meeting:

239. NAMING OF PATH FROM ABBEY PLACE to GORDON SQUARE

Cllr C Gibson proposed the motion:

Faversham Town Council recognises the historic name of Shooting Meadows, the Shoots (pronounced the Shuts) referring to the path from Abbey Place to Gordon Square and a former path across the site of the current Grammar School. Recognising Swale's guidance on naming paths and roads using words that can be misinterpreted Faversham Town Council requests that Swale Borough Council begin the process to formally name the path from Abbey Place to Gordon Square (part of ZF08) "The Shutes".

Cllr T Martin proposed an amendment to the motion:

That Faversham Town Council should undertake a 10-day period of public consultation (directly consulting the Faversham Society, Faversham Footpath Group and Abbey Residents Group) ending on 11th April and for the motion and comments received to be brought back to the next meeting of the Planning Committee (14th April 2024).

The Motion as amended was proposed by Cllr C Gibson seconded by Cllr T Martin and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED**.

Cllr R Newman requested a recorded vote:

Cllr A Eyre	For	Cllr C Gibson	For
Cllr T Matin	For	Cllr R Newman	For
Cllr J Rowlands (Chair)	For	Cllr J Saunders	Against

[Office Note: Town Clerk stipulates that the public consultation cannot commence during the pre-election period for KCC election being held on 1st May 2025]

Public Consultation Report: Proposal to Name Footpath The Shoots (pronounced “The Shuts”)

Background

The Town Council sought views on the proposal to name the public footpath running from Abbey Place to Gordon Square The Shoots (pronounced “The Shuts”). There are historical records of the footpath being known as *Shooting Meadows*. However, Swale Borough Council has confirmed that this name cannot be formally registered under their current policy. The consultation invited comments from three local civic groups, Abbey Residents Association, Faversham Footpath Group and the Faversham Society.

Consultation Process

The civic society members were invited to submit written representations by 5 September. Faversham Footpaths Group did not participate, as the issue of naming paths does not fall under the aims and objectives of the group. A total of 26 responses were received, encompassing a range of views. (Appendix 1).

Summary of Responses

The overwhelming majority of respondents opposed the proposal to name the path *The Shoots*. Most comments emphasised that the historic name *Shooting Meadows* should be preserved, even if not formally registered, or that the path should remain officially unnamed. Many felt that the proposal represented an unnecessary expense and risked erasing a significant aspect of the town’s history.

A number of respondents also expressed concern that the name *The Shoots* would be confusing, open to ridicule, or subject to graffiti. Several noted that it bears little or no historical connection to the path. Alternative suggestions, such as *Archery Lane* or *Longbow Lane*, were made by a minority, though these were not widely supported.

Only a very small number of contributors were in favour of the proposed name *The Shoots*, some noting that this shortened form had occasionally been used colloquially. Even among these respondents, support was cautious and often framed as acceptance of a compromise rather than strong endorsement.

Conclusion

The consultation revealed little appetite for the proposed name *The Shoots*. The great majority of respondents opposed the change, favouring either the continued informal use of *Shooting Meadows* or no formal designation at all. The proposal to adopt *The Shoots* did not receive broad community support, and concerns were raised regarding both historical accuracy and public perception.

Recommendation

In light of the consultation responses, it is recommended that the Town Council **does not proceed with naming the path “The Shoots.”** The Council may wish instead to:

- Leave the footpath officially unnamed, allowing residents to continue using *Shooting Meadows* informally; or
- Provide an interpretation board at the site, explaining the historical significance of the name *Shooting Meadows*, thereby preserving local heritage without imposing a contested designation.

[Data analysed by AI]