FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Naming new roads off Love Lane

INTRODUCTION

Swale Borough Council (SBC) have contacted Faversham Town Council (FTC) regarding street naming for a housing development, comprising four new roads, now nearing completion off Love Lane. The developer has suggested to SBC that Faversham mayors could be taken as the theme for naming.

The developer has suggested Francis Waterman, mayor 1665 and 1681; Matthew Austen 1678; Alexander Willmott 1699; Knowler, after members of that family who were mayors - John (1634, 1643, 1667), Thomas (1649, 1658), Robert (1654) and Henry (1705, 1711, 1730). The developer's rationale for selecting those names in preference to others is unknown. The developer has also said they welcome other naming suggestions.

BACKGROUND

In February 2023 councillors ratified the town tradition of naming streets and roads as a way to commemorate noteworthy local events, features and social topics, as well as notable people from the town's past. Individuals are usually those who have made a contribution to the town's wellbeing, including through involvement with social welfare or economic prosperity.

Councillors have also been concerned in recent years to ensure the contribution of notable local women is not overlooked; it being considered that has been the case in the past. Alongside this, it was recognised significant contributions have been, and continue to be, made by townspeople not necessarily active in local politics.

It was noted not all recent street naming had conformed to the FTC criteria, some seemingly having no connection at all to the town or local area. To avoid repetition of that a list of 51 suggestions for naming was considered and agreed. This list is to act as a bank from which suitable names can be selected, rather than names being selected at random and in haste because of the exigencies of developers' timetables. The list included suggestions from councillors and from the Faversham Society.

REVIEW

The four past mayors selected for naming by the developer (Waterman, Austen, Willmott and Knowler) appear on the list of town mayors, but none appear on the councillor agreed list of suggestions for naming. Research has not indicated any of the named gentlemen were notably influential or active in the life of the town.

Names of mayors agreed by councillors in 2023 for inclusion, and reasons for doing that, are (in alphabetical order):

Bennett
The Bennett family were leading local business people and ship owners; they were associated with Davington Priory, where some family members lived. Thomas Bennett was mayor in 1780, 1795 and 1806, Bartholomew in 1781, William in 1782 and 1792 and Thomas Jnr in 1790

Crow
Edward Crow was a 19th century mayor of Faversham and a local historian. Like Thomas Southouse (qv), but unlike Edward Jacob, Crow has somewhat slipped under the radar in terms of historic recognition

Gillett
Thomas and Thomas George Gillett were mayor three times; Thomas in 1895 and 1896 and Thomas George in 1909. A local family surname, it is pronounced as in a fish's gill (not as in the Gillette razor)

Greenstreete
The Greenstreete family appear to have been extensively involved in town affairs in the 17th century. John was mayor in 1623, Robert in 1635 and 1644 and Michael in 1666, 1673 and 1684

Pryer
Councillor Frederick Pryer was a local brick manufacturer of the late 19th century; he lived in Tanners Street

Pysing
Pysing is an historic family name in Faversham (archaically Pizing). Pysings were local ship-owners, one was a mayor of Faversham. The current place name Bysing Wood is a corruption of Pysing's Wood. The name seems worth consideration, but may be thought too close to Bysing to be usable

Shrubsole
Lewis Shrubsole was mayor Faversham six times – in 1873, 1877, 1878, 1880, 1884 and 1885

Southouse
Thomas Southouse was mayor in 1663, 1671, 1679 and 1688. He published a well-regarded history of Faversham abbey, but appears – by comparison, for example, with Edward Jacob - to be a local historian whose work has been largely unrecognized
Coincidentally, a summary of Southouse's life and work has featured in a recent edition of the Faversham Society newsletter

Trowts
John Trowts, Mayor in 1660 and 1669. Greeted Charles II in Faversham at the Restoration (1660) at which meeting the king was reported to have given priority to

the mayor's wife, giving her a hearty kiss (in what might thought be a precursor for his reign). John Trowts was a leading figure in Royalist circles of the time, having been a supporter of the future king when he was an exile in the Netherlands. Either spelled Trowts or Trouts; Trowts may be thought more individualistic and to have more 'character.'

In addition, further recent research has identified **Florence Graham** as a suitable candidate for inclusion in the list. Miss Graham was elected to Faversham Borough Council in 1951 and became mayor in 1956, the first woman to hold the office in what is now nearly 800 years of its recorded history.

CONCUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

While naming after past mayors as a theme for the new Love Lane development has merit, the four names suggested by the developer do not appear to fit with FTC's agreed street naming criteria.

Those names are not on the councillor agreed list and previous research did not identify the gentlemen as having made significant contributions to the wellbeing of Faversham. On those grounds it is suggested the developer's names are not used.

Rather, a set of four names from the councillor agreed list could be used.

If the mayoralty theme is adopted, it is suggested:

Southouse
Pryer
Shrubsole
Florence Graham

appear to be suitable candidates.

November 2026