

**THE STREETS
OF THE PARISH OF
STAPLEHURST**

NAMES AND HISTORY

A Millennium Celebration of a Village

**By
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THE STREETS OF THE PARISH OF STAPLEHURST. INTRODUCTION

As part of the celebrations for the start of the 3rd Millennium, Staplehurst Fellowship of Churches, now known as 'Churches Together in Staplehurst', were looking to do something which would involve everyone in the Parish and which would, in some way, epitomise the ways of Jesus Christ, whose birth the Millennium commemorated. It was decided that a picnic for the whole village, with games and entertainment, offered the best way of achieving this by bringing villagers together and giving them an opportunity to meet and talk, an aspect of life which is fundamental to the Christian Way and indeed to all the great religions in the world.

One additional idea, promoted to complement the gathering, was that it would be nice to have around the site a number of boards on which were given brief explanations of the origins of the names of all the streets in the Parish. This project was achieved following a rather rushed research but the descriptions are hopefully accurate in their limitation. They were also exhibited at the picnic arranged by the Parish Council for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 where a lot of interest was shown by those attending.

To avoid the results of the exercise being wasted, this small booklet has been produced in the hope that it may perhaps encourage others to delve more deeply into the history of 'their road' and also by so doing correct some of the errors and fill in some of the gaps which may exist in this résumé. Some slight amendments to the text have been made since the initial presentation in recognition of the further development which has taken place in the village and to include additional data received.

The booklet is divided into 3 sections:

- A brief summary of the growth of the village and parish over the last 50 years.
- A summary of general facts about each of the housing estates in the village
- Short notes on each street in the parish which inevitably repeat some of the information in the first two sections, and indeed between streets, as each entry has to stand alone.

The author learned a lot about the village and some of its people as a result of doing the research for this project but would be grateful for any feedback, additional information or correction to ensure that the document can be updated and so be as accurate and comprehensive a record as possible. Any feedback should be sent to Tony Norfolk, at 33, Hanmer Way, Staplehurst, Kent. TN12 0NR. (Tel. 01580 892104)

THE STREETS OF THE PARISH OF STAPLEHURST. THE GROWTH OF THE VILLAGE

The growth of Staplehurst during the last 100 years of the 2nd Millennium was unprecedented with most of the expansion taking place after the Second World War. In 1901 there were 390 dwellings in the parish and a population of 1688. There were none of the estate roads, only the through routes and country roads together with Chapel Lane and Bell Lane, all of which still exist today. This situation prevailed until 1951 when the number of dwellings had risen to 560 and the population to 1984.

New building then began to accelerate starting with the two council estates at the north and south ends of the village and followed by the several larger private estates and other smaller sporadic developments. These have increased the size of the parish to 2,292 dwellings with a population of 6003 recorded at the last census in 2001.

Staplehurst itself derives from the two words, Staple and Hurst, which historically, in a variety of spellings, respectively mean

- a wooden post, probably depicting where the boundary between bordering 'Hundreds' crossed or met the roman road. A Hundred was an ancient unit of administration, below that of a Shire.
- a wooded slope or a small wood.

THE STREETS OF THE PARISH OF STAPLEHURST. THE ESTATES.

The Post War Council Estates.

After the second world war two estates were built in the late 40s early 50s at the behest of the then Maidstone Rural District Council, one at the north of the village and the other at the south.

The streets making up these two estates are:

North:	Market Street	Willow Crescent	Winch's Garth
South:	Bell Lane	Church Green	South Bank

Church Green, built by Bensteads on land originally part of Henhurst Farm, gained an award for its designer.

Since that time a new development of flats, Pankhurst House, and more recently 4 semi-detached houses have been built in Market Street. Also the Airey prefabricated houses, which formed the Bell Lane part of the southern estate and were erected in 1948/49 to house residents from the ex army camp at Loos Barracks on what is now the Jubilee Field, were demolished and replaced with new houses in 1986/87.

Now some of these properties are privately owned under the Government's 'right to buy' policy.

The Tickner and Emmerton Estate

The first of the big post Second World War private estates was the estate in the quadrant bounded by the High Street, Marden Road and Bathurst Road. This was built between 1961 and 1963 by Tickner and Emmerton mostly on land (two fields) owned by the Offens family, a large local family, farmer, butcher and property owner and the main road into the estate was named after them. They lived at The Grange.

Nearer the Marden Road end the estate was built on land owned by Mr Simms, a butcher from Chatham who lived in various properties around the village including that which is now Trinity Court in Station Road. The streets which make up this estate are:

Bathurst Close	Bathurst Road	Bell Lane
Bower Walk	Fletcher Road	Gybbon Rise
Jaggard Way	Marden Road	Offens Drive
Surrenden Road	Thatcher Road	The Parade
Usborne Close		

The Parade of shops was built towards the end of the scheme. Chestnut Avenue and Crowther Close, which are within the same quadrant, were built independently by Croudace and T.B.C.Ltd respectively, the latter much later.

Bell Lane existed long before this estate came along but some of the houses were built along it at the top end of Jaggard Way, to the east as far as the nature reserve and a short length to the west. Those to the west were not allowed to front onto the unadopted section of Bell Lane and so have their own service road which is also unadopted.

Marden Road too was there before this estate. A number of properties front on to it but enjoy their own service road separate from the main road.

In 1933/34 the then Maidstone Rural District Council agreed to buy the land which is now Surrenden Road playing field from Mrs Nicholson, who owned Surrenden at the time, for use as a public open space. It is leased to this day to the Parish Council by Maidstone Borough Council for a nominal annual fee. The access path from the High Street to the field was part of the package and is now named Nicholson Walk.

The new primary school which is accessed from both Surrenden Road and Gybbon Rise was built in 1966 with a further extension completed in 1986.

Although the Builder no longer exists, there must still be a holding company because occasionally they lay claim to pockets of land.

Corner Farm Estate.

This was the second of the big estates. It was built in the mid 1960s on land which was previously part of the farm of the same name. It is the north west quadrant of the village bounded by Station Road, Marden Road and Northdown. The farm was primarily a dairy farm owned for many years by Mr Watkins who sold it a few years before it was sold on to developers. The builder was again Tickner and Emmerton.

The streets making up this estate are:

Brooks Close
Tomlin Close

Corner Farm Road
Watkins Close

Northdown

There is a footpath connecting through to Station Road from the north end of Corner Farm Road presumably in recognition of Staplehurst as primarily a commuter village to give easier access to the station and the bus stop.

‘Fishers Farm’ Estate.

This is not really the correct name for the whole of this area but it helps to locate it in the north east quadrant of the village bounded by Station Road and Headcorn Road. It was built in three sections.

The first was Hurst Close from Marden Road up to nos. 40 and 47, built by F Childs from Chatham. This was followed by the Woodgate Development which comprised of

the extension of Hurst Close, Newlyn Drive, Fishers Close and the terraced houses at the west end of Fishers Road and the chalet bungalows to the east. The final part was the housing on the north east and south west sections of Fishers Road which was built by Tickner and Emmerton.

The whole development went on from 1962 until 1967.

The streets in the estate are, as noted above:

Fishers Close Fishers Road Hurst Close Newlyn Drive

The Henhurst Farm Estate.

This estate is bounded by Cranbrook Road and Pinnock Lane. It was built by Tilbury Benstead Ltd being completed in 1969/70. It is built wholly on land which formed part of Henhurst Farm the remainder of which is still farmed.

The streets which make up this estate are:

Hallwards Hanmer Way Iden Crescent Pinnock Lane

Pinnock Lane was in existence long before this development took place but several of this estate's properties were built fronting on to it.

Hanmer Way is a continuation of South Bank which is part of the estate of council housing built in the early 1950s and which includes Church Green and Bell Lane.

Marden Road Estate.

This was built by Wimpey in the mid 1970s and all the streets are named after people associated with the local school. It abuts the Marden Road and is to the west of the Tickner and Emmerton Estate to which it is connected by Pope Drive.

The streets making up this estate are:

Butcher Close Jeffery Close Oliver Road
Pope Drive Reeves Close Stanley Close

Headcorn Road 'Oaks Farm' Estate.

This estate is built on land from Oaks Farm and Loddenden in the late 70s. Two builders were involved, Abbey Homesteads and Wards. It lies to the south of the Headcorn Road on to which it has two access roads, Slaney Road and Poyntell Road.

The streets making up this estate are:

Alen Square Benden Close Knowles Walk
Marian Square Poyntell Road Slaney Road
Staple Drive Weavers Close Weld Close

Lodge Road Development.

This is Staplehurst's Industrial Estate which was built in 1980s by Honeycrest Properties Ltd on land which was previously part of Horns Lodge Farm owned by Mr Simms, a butcher from Chatham, who owned quite a lot of land in the area.

Lime Trees Estate.

This is the most recent large estate to be built in the village and is on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family, three of whom still live in the village. It accesses onto the Marden Road and is to the west of the Corner Farm estate. It was developed by two firms, Wimpey and Gleeson, to give a better mix of property sizes and types and to this end the estate includes 32 homes managed by a housing trust. They called their developments Sherbourne Grange and Hedgefields respectively and they were completed just after the Millennium..

The streets on this estate are:

Barn Meadow
Lime Trees

Greenhill
Little Field

Further Field
Marlfield

Other sporadic developments were:

Fir Tree Close off the High Street just north of the Parish Church

Cornforth Close off the High Street just south of the main cross-roads

Garden Close off Pinnock Lane

Vine Walk off Bell Lane and

Old Rectory Lane off the High Street on the hill to the south of All Saints Church.

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2007 - Development at the Gasworks site off Marden Road.

The name chosen for the single road in this development is Maxted Close.

The Parish Council had originally suggested Percy's Field as the Percy Family used to farm the land and it was known by local children as that, but this was rejected by the Developer, Rydon Homes.

DERIVATION OF INDIVIDUAL STREET NAMES

INTRODUCTION

There now follows the detailed account of the derivation of each individual street name in the village and wider parish. These of necessity and where relevant do repeat information as each and every account must stand alone.

The research done was as thorough as the time available for the original deadline in May 2000 allowed and since then only a little additional information has come to light. However, no doubt there are corrections, clarifications and additions to be made. The author therefore seeks feedback from anyone who has any information at all which will add to the accuracy and completeness of the data presented. A record of those who have received a hard copy of the booklet will be retained so that updates can be issued as they are produced.

Hopefully your street will be in here. If not please let the author know. His details are given in the main introduction at the front of the booklet.

The streets are in alphabetical order.

ALEN SQUARE.

Alen Square is named after the martyrs Edmund and Katherine Al(l)en of Frittenden who are commemorated on the memorial at the A229/Marden Rd/Headcorn Rd. cross-roads. They were burned at the stake at Maidstone on 18 June 1557 during the Marian persecution and the monument was erected in 1904 by the Protestants of Staplehurst and District.

It is part of the Headcorn Road Estate built in the mid to late 1970s by Abbey Homes and Wards on land which was part of Oaks Farm and Loddenden.

BARN MEADOW.

This road is part of the estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family. Three daughters still live in the village. The land was originally bought by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types.

Barn Meadow is so called because it is approximately located where the farm barn used to be. Part of this road may also be on land purchased from Oak Lodge next door.

BATHURST ROAD AND BATHURST CLOSE.

Bathurst Road and Bathurst Close are on the first of the big post Second World War private estates in the parish built at the beginning of the 1960s by Tickner and Emmerton. Bathurst Road was originally to be called Meadow View but was renamed at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 June 1961. The roads are named after Lancelot Bathurst whose charity, founded in 1630, invested £150 in land called 'the School Farm' for payment of a master who should educate 10 boys of the village free of charge. Mr Bathurst died in 1639.

Today, the Bathurst Trust has been combined with the Gibbons Trust (The Gybbons Charitable Trust) and still provides, in that combined form, help for young people in their education and training. The Trustees are appointed under the will of the founders and include the incumbent ministers of All Saints Church and the United Reformed Church. The Board of Trustees meets annually, chaired by the Rector of All Saints, and reports to the Parish Council.

BELL LANE

This is one of the oldest roads in the central village part of the parish and has several generations of houses along it. The latest are located either side of the junction with South Bank. They replaced the Airey houses which were built in 1948/49 for people living post war in the old army camp (Loos Barracks) on what is now the Jubilee Field, and which were demolished in 1986/87.

There is one section off Jaggard Way where Bell Lane has two legs, both unadopted cul-de-sacs, the newer leg being built as part of the Tickner and Emmerton Estate. This acts as a service road to the properties along it because they were not allowed to front onto the older, parallel, unadopted original Bell Lane.

The lane is presumably named after the Inn on the corner which in turn must be named The Bell because of the church and its bell(s). All Saints church currently has a ring of 10 bells, the extra 2 were added in 1997, thanks to private donations, when the original ring of 8 went away to be retuned and rehung. A new bell frame was installed to accommodate the changed ring.

Also located along the lane are the car park, built by the Borough Council on land purchased from Shepherd Neame, owners of the Kings Head PH, and the nature reserve, managed for many years by the Staplehurst Society but now looked after by volunteers on behalf of the Parish Council. This is on land which once formed part of The Limes, now Vine House.

BENDEN CLOSE.

Benden Close is on the Headcorn Road Estate, built in the mid to late 1970s on land that was part of Oaks Farm and Loddenden. It was started by Abbey Homes and continued by Wards.

It is named after Alice Benden, one of the Martyrs of the Marian Persecution commemorated on the memorial, erected in 1904 by Protestants of Staplehurst and District, at the cross-roads in the middle of the village, Cuckolds Corner. She was burned at the stake at Canterbury in the cause of Protestantism on 19 June 1557.

BOWER WALK.

Bower Walk is part of the big 'Tickner and Emmerton' estate built in the early 1960s which was the start of the major escalation in size of the village. It takes its name from The Bower, the big house next to the entrance to the school field on the main road.

As the name suggests, it is a pedestrian way and connects between Gybbon Rise and Surrenden Road which subsequently afforded the two accesses to the 'new' primary

school which opened a few years later in 1966. It is presumably called after The Bower because it is in line with and behind the boundaries of the property.

In 1706 The Bower was a small farm (10 acres) and by 1812 it was a 'superior seminary for young ladies'. In 1879, by which time it is likely to have been extended to its present size, it lost its 10 acres in the Iden Manor Estate sale. It was split into two in the 1950s by the then owner Major Rutherford, the front section retaining the name 'The Bower' and the back section being called 'Crowthers'. Recent owners include Mr and Mrs Furness, Mr Furness was at one time Deputy High Commissioner in India and then HM Ambassador to Senegal. Currently 'The Bower' is a dentist's surgery.

BROOKS CLOSE.

Brooks Close is on the Corner Farm estate which was built in the mid 1960s by Tickner and Emmerton. It is named after Mr Unicum Brooks, a local builder, who lived at and operated from 'Homeleigh', a converted oast house. He was also the longest serving Parish Clerk and was a Chairman of the Parish Council. He built 'The Gables' and 'Brookfield' further down Station Road. He also donated the land on which the martyrs monument at the Headcorn Road/Marden Road cross-roads is built, being the owner of Rowland House at the time.

BUTCHER CLOSE.

Butcher Close is part of the Marden Road Estate built by Wimpey in the mid 1970s in which all the roads are named after people associated with the village school. Mr Butcher was appointed head of the Boys' School in 1938 and became head of the whole combined school in 1939, a post which he held until 1962 when Mr Yates-Smith took over.

Mr Butcher was very interested in gardening and he received permission in 1939 to extend the school garden. Records show that the garden crop rotation was meticulously planned and it was only grassed over in the 1950s after senior boys began to go to secondary school after the age of 11. No doubt it played its part in the 'Dig for Victory' campaign during World War II!

CARPENTERS LANE.

Carpenters Lane, as it is called in some maps, is also known and currently signed as Grave Lane. It derives its name from that of the person who owned(s) most of the land along one side of it. It connects between Clapper Lane and Summerhill Road in Marden Parish. The Grave Lane connotation comes from legend that has it that a lady is buried in the field at the Marden end of the lane.

CHAPEL LANE.

Chapel Lane is so named because it has along it two buildings of worship affiliated to Christian religions. Currently they are the United Reformed Church (URC) and the Providence Strict Baptist Chapel. It was also in the past the lane to Spillsill Court which is where the original (Particular Baptist) chapel was located, founded by Mr Osborne and friend, and so this could be another, possibly the original, reason for the derivation.

The URC building was originally a timber building, part house, part shop and part Presbyterian Chapel. In 1825 it was replaced with a purpose made brick chapel and in 1889 this was further extended to bring it forward to its present frontage which has recently undergone further modification. William Jull, the grocer, had much to do with these advancements and also provided the land on which The Manse was built. He himself retired to Maybank (now Minton House) next door, very handy for his churchgoing.

The Providence Strict Baptist Chapel was originally the barn of Bly Court and was licensed for religious worship in 1751 by John Austen, a Dissenting Minister, whose son Daniel inherited the ministry in 1773. By the 1820s it had become a Baptist Chapel under the leadership of Mr Dobell, another grocer, and was sold to the present Church in 1841. It originally had 3 galleries allowing 350 people to be seated, but extensive damage in the Second World War necessitated the removal of two of these.

Chapel Lane also housed the school before the 'old' school, now the Village Centre, was built in 1873. It was housed in the building which was taken over by Mr John Harris, a wheelwright, as his house and workshop, which he named 'Victoria Works', and it remained in the Harris family until his son Frederick George (Fred) died in 1988.

CHART HILL ROAD.

Chart Hill Road is so named because it leads from the A229 at Cross at Hand to the hill up to Chart Sutton on top of the Greensand Ridge. It crosses the parish boundary at the south end of Hertsfield Bridge(s) over the River Beult.

CHESTNUT AVENUE.

Chestnut Avenue was built in the early 1960s by Croudace. Although built at the same time as the big estate behind, it was not part of it and in fact vehicular access between the two was and remains barred at the end of Bathurst Road to avoid encouraging a lot of traffic exiting onto the Marden Road so near to the cross-roads.

It takes its name from the magnificent row of chestnut trees which it runs alongside and which have given so much pleasure to generations of children and adults. Infill

trees were planted in 1963/4. Some were given by the Horticultural Society but the records are unclear about the rest, the Parish Council originally believing that the developer was going to plant them.

The original name for the road was intended to be Cuckolds Corner, thus retaining the historical name of the site. This was changed at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 November 1961, no reason was recorded. The land was originally owned by Mr Simms, a butcher from Chatham, who owned several farms and land in the area. Seemingly Croudace still own the land on which the trees stand as became apparent during the recent work on installing the traffic lights at the adjacent main road junction.

CHICKENDEN LANE.

Chickenden Lane, a 'no through road' off Cradducks Lane, gets its name from Chickenden Farm which is at the end of the lane. Spills Hill Farm and Cottons Farm are also located along it. The derivation of Chickenden is as yet unknown.

CHURCH GREEN.

This road, built in the mid 1950s, formed, along with South Bank completed earlier, a small estate of housing built by the then Maidstone Rural District Council. Its name derives from the fact that the finished scheme included a nice protected stretch of green opposite All Saints Church. In fact this, together with the expanse of green within the estate and its general architecture and layout, gained an award for the designer.

It was built by Bensteads on land which was originally part of Henhurst Farm.

CLAPPER LANE.

A clapper 'bridge' is a primitive construction such as wooden planks or slabs of stone resting on piles of stone. They were often used to allow people to cross shallow streams or rivers or places subject to periodic flooding. There is a form of clapper on the Hawkenbury road between the rail and river bridges. There must have been one at some stage in that part of Clapper Lane next to the A229 where there is frequently flooding in winter months. The existing sandbag wall currently provides the same facility.

This must be the derivation of the name of the lane which bounds the north west quadrant of the parish and along which are several small businesses which are important for employment in the village.

CORK LANE.

Cork lane is a very narrow lane which connects between Goudhurst Road and the entrance to Lovehurst Manor and Mill. It is named after Mark Cork, a local 18th century farmer.

CORNER FARM ROAD.

Corner Farm Road takes its name from the farm on which most of the estate of which it is part was built. The south end of the road is located just about where Corner Farm house (a 16th century timber framed house previously called Little Aydhurst) stood before it was taken down and rebuilt at Swanley. The farm was primarily a dairy farm and was owned for many years by Mr Watkins who retired and sold it just a few years before it was finally sold on to the developers. The last owner was Mrs Marshall. The estate was built by Tickner and Emmerton in the mid 1960s.

CORNFORTH CLOSE.

Cornforth Close, a cul-de-sac off the main road opposite Chestnut Avenue, was built in the late 1960s on land which was part of Little Green Court. It is suggested that the houses were built one at a time by a builder called Saunders or by Tickner and Emmerton (which is correct?). It is named after Harry Cornforth who died in 1966. He was chairman of the Parish Council for 20 years and chairman of the school managers/governors from 1951 until shortly before his death. He was a director of Kent Egg Packers and a member of the National Farmers Union Committee and was by all accounts very well liked.

He was generous with his time and money in support of local organisations and charitable causes and was the founder president of the Staplehurst Dramatic Society in 1946 and held that post until he moved to Yorkshire. He was also active in the cricket and tennis club. He was commemorated by a seat placed next to the bus stop at Cornforth Close, which unfortunately had to be removed because of damage caused by vandals, and by the trees planted around The Parade. The seat has recently been replaced by one in memory of Sheila 'Teddy' Day.

COUCHMAN GREEN LANE

Also known as Sweetlands Lane. Both names are derivations of properties along the road, Sweetlands Couchman Green half way along and Sweetlands Farm which was on the junction of the lane with the A229. Sweetlands comes from a Mr Sweeting who owned the farm at some stage. Sweetlands Couchman Green, owned until very recently by Mr Tipples, was sold at the end of the 20th century for redevelopment as housing. Currently the street signs show Couchman Green Lane going from the A229 to Pile Lane and Sweetlands Lane carrying on from Pile Lane to Headcorn Road, the exact opposite of what might be expected.

CRADDUCKS LANE.

The derivation of Cradducks Lane is not clear. There is a house called Little Cradduck but it is a modern property and I have not yet discovered if there was an earlier one at the site. Another point of interest from the name is that a Jane Cradduck was the first pupil teacher, that is an older pupil encouraged to (stay on to) teach, in the Girls School. The lane connects between Frittenden Road and Headcorn Road

CRANBROOK ROAD.

The main road through the village has several names but from the entrance to Iden Manor to where it crosses the parish boundary, at the culvert under the road just to the north of Knoxbridge between Elm Cottage and Knoxbridge Cottages, it is called Cranbrook Road, ie the road to and from Cranbrook.

CROWTHER CLOSE.

Crowther Close is named after Joseph Crowther who was Rector of All Saints from 1684 to 1719. It may also be relevant to the naming of the road that his son Robert lived at The Bower which is quite near to Crowther Close. Also when The Bower was split into two dwellings in the 1950s, the rear half was called 'Crowthers'

The Close was built in 1977/78 at the north east end of Bathurst Road, a cul-de-sac at that point, on land which was part of the garden of Surrenden, the big house on the main road opposite the village centre. The builder was T.B.C. Ltd.

DAVIES CLOSE

Davies Close is one of the Streets on the Taylor Wimpey 'Saxon Mead' Estate, built between 2014 and 2016 and which comprises of 53 houses. Of these 21 are owned by Golding Homes, 12 of which are for affordable rent and 9 for shared ownership. A Nature Reserve has also been provided on adjacent land to the south and west which will be managed by the Parish Council.

The street is named after Dr Malcolm Davies who was a much loved General Practitioner in the village from 1978 until his (second) retirement in the early 'noughties'. He had initially retired in 2000 but, a few months later, along with Dr Skinner, came out of retirement to cover a shortfall of GP availability in the village, carrying on for another 2 to 3 years. Even after this second retirement he carried on locum work in the area until 2007.

His surgery was based initially in Hill House before purchasing the then derelict Rose Cottage in 1980 which he converted and where, with his wife Ann as Manager, established a busy village Practice, enjoying the support of other doctors in the area, especially Richard Skinner, with whom he worked closely, all to the benefit of we residents.

He involved himself fully in village life being variously a Governor at the School, a Parish Councillor, a member of the McCabe Centre Committee and a doctor to Blantyre House.

In many respects we were lucky to get him as his early life was centred on the Neath and Penarth areas of Wales, both he and his wife are from there, and it was only at the age of 31, after his father died, that he embarked upon a career in medicine. His early placements after graduation were aimed at pursuing his particular interests in obstetrics and psychiatry but he eventually realised that he favoured the completeness of General Practice and moreover in a single handed environment, choosing Staplehurst over other possibilities. Sadly, Dr Davies died in 2011 but his widow still lives in the village.

FIR TREE CLOSE.

This Close was built after the Second World War by the Maidstone Rural District Council on the site of The Firs, a house just up the hill from Minton House in the High Street, which was demolished by a doodlebug in 1944. The name continues the association with the trees which originally adorned the site and two of which are still standing, alongside the main road, in the garden of No1 and adjacent to the entrance to the Close. They are protected by preservation orders.

FISHERS ROAD AND FISHERS CLOSE.

These Roads both take their name from Fishers Farm. The land on which they are built was part of the farm.

The houses in Fishers Road were built in two stages, the terraces on the north side of the entrance from the main road to Newlyn Drive and the chalet bungalows on the south side formed part of the development built by Woodgate, which also included Newlyn Drive, Fishers Close and the north end of Hurst Close. This was completed in the mid 1960s. The remainder were a Tickner and Emmerton development carried out in 1966/67. The interesting thing about this last development is that all the houses, terraced, semi-detached and detached are all the same size and layout.

As stated Fishers Close was built in the mid 1960s as part of the Woodgate development.

FITZGERALD CLOSE

Fitzgerald Close is a Golding Homes Development of 6 bungalows for rent by local people. It is located off Bell lane, immediately next to Old Bell Place, and between the back gardens of properties on the High Street and South Bank. It is on land which, until a few years ago, housed allotments but which was then identified by the Borough Council for housing and transferred to a Housing Trust with the promise of replacement land being found for allotments. This has so far not materialised.

It is named after Reginald Charles Fitzgerald of the RAF Volunteer Reserve who was killed in the Second World War and who is commemorated on the memorial in St George's Chapel in All Saints Church. In fact his name has just recently been added (in 2015) having been overlooked for 67 years. The newly restored memorial was installed at a service in All Saints, very befitting of the occasion and attended by Mrs Anne Storm, who first alerted of his omission from the war memorial, members from the Fitzgerald family, the British Legion, Fegans Charity, Parish Councillors, and many others. On 12th August 2015, there was a small naming ceremony for Fitzgerald Close which took place at the development attended by those named above and the Rector. His family had donated a bench in his memory which the Rector blessed, along with the bungalows.

As a young boy Mr Fitzgerald and his two younger brothers had been placed in care with the Fegans Charity who housed them in their home at Blantyre Farm. Here they trained boys in Canadian Agriculture methods with the intention, when they were 14, of sending them over to Canada to work on farms there. However, when he was 14 in 1940, war had already broken out and he was then lodged in Slaney Farm living with one of the tenant families. When he was 18 he chose to join up and entered the RAF Volunteer Reserve being posted as a rear gunner on Liberators with the South African Air Force. It was possibly on only his 2nd mission, when flying over Italy dropping provisions to Partisans there, that he was killed. It was a disastrous mission altogether as they lost 12 planes that night but his was the only one that was never found.

FIVE ASH LANE

This is the name as recently signed for the road connecting Five Oak Lane and Pagehurst Road. Until then there was some uncertainty and other earlier suggestions as well as this were Thorn Lane, West End Lane and Harp Farm Lane, the last being as recorded by the Borough Council in 2000. Are there, were there five Ash Trees along there?

FIVE OAK LANE.

Five Oak Lane runs from the west end of Pinnock Lane, past Brattle Farm, the home of the museum of bygones of rural life, to the junction with Wilden Park Road (previously Wildenbridge Road) at Plain Farm. It was called Plain Road after the Staplehurst Plain but was changed by the Borough Council to avoid confusion with Plain Road in Marden. Quite why it is called Five Oak Lane one is not quite sure as there are many more than five oak trees along its length.

FLETCHER ROAD.

Fletcher Road was originally to be called Meadow Way but was renamed at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 June 1961. At this meeting several intended road names were changed to ones which recognised people who had, over the years, been associated in some way with the village

I have been unable to find anything definitive about the person after whom the road is named other than a suggestion that Mr Fletcher owned some of the land on which the estate is built, the remainder being owned by the Offen family.

The road was built in the early 1960s as part of the Tickner and Emmerton Estate.

FRITTENDEN ROAD.

Frittenden Road is obviously the road to and from Frittenden. The Parish boundary is situated just west of September Cottage and the junction with Park Wood Lane at which point the road then becomes Staplehurst Road. Along the road are the entrances to The Tennis and Cricket Club, Staplehurst Manor Nursing Home (previously Staplehurst House or The Old Manor), Iden Croft Herbs, Spilsill Court, Maplehurst and Exhurst Manor. The Rectory was also in Frittenden Road at the turn of the Millennium. However, it was badly damaged by arsonists in 2002 and so the Rector now lives in the New Rectory, formerly known as Blairfield, in the High Street.

FURTHER FIELD.

This road is part of the newest estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family. Three daughters still live in the village. The land was originally bought by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types.

The name derives from the name of one of the fields as noted on the tithe map of 1842.

GARDEN CLOSE.

Garden Close is a terrace of 4 houses built in 1989 and is located on the south side of Pinnock Lane very near its junction with the A229. It was built on land which formed part of the back gardens of several of the properties in the Quarter, hence the name. It was built by Trysix, a venture by six people one of whom was Mr Sylvester, a local builder, who lived at The Quarter at the time.

GEORGE STREET.

George Street is named after the George family who lived at the Grange, formally Moat Farm. The Grange lies on the section of George Street between the A229 and Crumps Corner which was realigned after the original route was cut by the line of the railway when it was built in the 1840s. This realignment made things much easier for all the occupants of George Street who thus avoided having to access the main road via the level crossing..

GOUDHURST ROAD.

Goudhurst Road is very obviously the road to and from Goudhurst. It starts at Pinnock Lane goes past Ely Court, Monks Farm, Rabbits Farm and Mathurst Farm and crosses the parish boundary at the sharp bend just to the south west of Bede House, until recently an Anglican Convent, at Bounds End Farm, appropriately enough.

GRAVE LANE.

Grave Lane, also shown on some maps as Carpenters Lane, gets its name from a legend that has it that a lady is buried in the field at the Marden end of the lane. It connects between Clapper Lane and Summerhill Road in Marden Parish.

The Carpenters Lane connection derives from the name of the person who owned(s) most of the land along one side of it

GREENHILL.

This road is part of the newest estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family. Three daughters still live in the village. The land was originally bought by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types and to this end the estate includes 32 houses managed by a housing trust.

The name derives from the name of one of the fields as noted on the tithe map of 1842.

GYBBON RISE.

Gybbon Rise is named after Major John Gibbon who in 1705 set up a charity by investing £1661 15/6d for educating and apprenticing poor boys. This charity has helped many local lads with their crafts and was instrumental in reducing the size of classrooms from 40 pupils to 25 to 30 pupils by funding the salaries of additional pupil teachers, £15 per year for the Boys school and £10 per year for the Girls' school. It also funded half the cost of a wireless set and aerial in 1939.

Today, the Gibbon Trust has been combined with the Bathurst Trust (The Gybbon Charitable trust) and still provides, in that combined form, help for young people in their education and training. The Trustees are appointed under the will of the founders and include the incumbent ministers of All Saints Church and the United Reformed Church. The Board of Trustees meets annually, chaired by the Rector of All Saints, and reports to the Parish Council.

Gybbon Rise was originally to be called Meadow Rise but was renamed at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 June 1961. At this meeting several intended road names were changed to ones which recognised people who had, over the years, been associated in some way with the village.

HALLWARDS.

Hallwards is a cul-de-sac situated on the Henhurst Farm estate built by Tilbury Benstead in the late 1960s. It is named after the Misses Hallwards, daughters of the Vicar of Frittenden who was himself son in law of Henry Hoare of Iden Manor. *Does anyone know anything about them?*

HANMER WAY.

Mr John Hanmer, from whom Hanmer Way gets its name, lived and farmed at Saynden. He moved there in 1901 and bought it in 1904 when the Iden Manor Estate was broken up. He died in 1937 in his 82nd year.

After leaving Oxford University he spent the early years of his working life at a sheep and cattle station in Australia returning to this country in 1887 and working first at managing the Manydown Estate near Basingstoke and then at Bobbing in Kent. He is described in his obituary as a pioneer agriculturist and a man who took a keen interest in church and parochial activities. Indeed, at the time of his death, he had been a churchwarden for 35 years, virtually the whole of the time he had lived in the village. He was for many years a member of the East Kent Yeomanry and was a Justice of the Peace for the County, frequently sitting on the Cranbrook Bench.

Hanmer Way is on land which was previously part of Henhurst Farm and was built in the late 1960s by Tilbury Benstead.

HARP FARM LANE

This is the name recorded by the Borough Council in 2000 for the road connecting Five Oak Lane and Pagehurst Road. Quite why it would be called that is unclear as there is no farm of that name in the locality. Other suggestions for the name of this road are Thorn Lane, West End Lane and Five Ash Lane. However signs have recently been erected identifying it as Five Ash Lane.

HAWKENBURY ROAD.

On the assumption that this starts at the River Beult and goes to the north, then it is not in the parish as the river is the boundary at that point. It is in postal Staplehurst.

HEADCORN ROAD.

Headcorn Road clearly goes to and comes from Headcorn. It starts at the cross-roads on the A229 in the village and becomes Hawkenbury Road just to the north of the bridge over the River Beult. It crosses the parish boundary at the river.

There is a clapper bridge alongside the road between the railway and river bridges due to the frequent flooding of the road which occurs at that point.

HIGH STREET.

Many street names relate to the road or street itself, giving information about its importance, size nature or function. One of the most familiar of these is the High Street. This is found in most towns as that of the present or past commercial centre and is still the expected locality of shops and businesses.

The name should not be taken literally. It does not mean that the street is elevated, although it happens to be in front of Little Loddenden, but that it is important. Staplehurst's High Street has more than the recognised local importance however as to this day its strategic importance to the highway network is recognised by it having a primary route status, the next step down from a trunk road.

HURST CLOSE.

Hurst, as in Staplehurst, is an old name for a wood, a wooded slope or a sandbank. I am not aware that there was a wood at this site prior to the road being built in 1962/63 but it may simply be that the word was taken from the village name. The builder was W F Childs from Chatham and the land was bought from Mr Simms, a butcher in Chatham, who owned quite a bit of land in the area and lived in various properties around the village including that which is now Trinity Court.

The road was originally 'a close' as it ended at numbers 40 and 47 at a hedge and a ditch which can still be seen today on each side. The road was completed and opened up when Newlyn Drive and Fishers Road were built in the mid 1960s by Woodgate. The houses at the north end of Hurst Close as it is now were also built as part of that Woodgate development.

HUSHEATH HILL.

Quite simply this is the road which goes up the hill to and past Hushheath Manor, hence the name. It leaves the parish at the top of the hill just past Hushheath Cottages but for the whole of the length of the hill it lies on the parish boundary. The current owner of the Manor believes it was called Husneath in the early days but has no idea as to the derivation of its name. *Any clues?*

IDEN CRESCENT.

This is named after the shape of the road, which forms a crescent off Hanmer Way, and the Iden Manor Estate which lies in the south east quadrant of the parish. From 1840ish until 1904 this estate was in the ownership of the Hoare family, first Henry and then William, who built the present house. Both of them eventually went bankrupt but equally both of them were seemingly considerate and loyal employers and always willing to allow the use of their estate for village functions on high days and holidays. The estate was then broken up and sold off with the Iden Manor portion being bought by Dr A Seligman who laid out a nine hole golf course and apparently entertained royally.

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd Order came to the estate in the 1930s. Their convent was initially at Lake House but then they built their own convent, chapel and other facilities, primarily a residential school, St Mary's, which they ran for girls who had been in difficulties. They also took over both Iden Manor and Staplehurst House, the Old Manor. Whilst the Old Manor was an extension of their convent facilities, Iden Manor was both a nursing home for elderly ladies and a primary treatment centre for women suffering from addictions. In its latter years this centre was one of the top treatment facilities in the country.

The school closed in the early 1970s. The Lake House, The Old Manor and Iden Manor have all been sold and the latter two are now private nursing homes. The Convent was sold in 2006 and has since been demolished. A new clinic is now on the site.

JAGGARD WAY.

Charles Jaggard, from whom Jaggard Way gets its name, founded a charity in 1822 investing £100 in public funds for the supply of bread for the poor on New Years Day. At some time past it was amalgamated with the Elizabeth Usborne 'Bread' Charity and the Rev. Thomas Crick's 'Widows Mite' Charity to form the Staplehurst Charities. This combined charity has since been paid into the Bathurst and Gibbon Trust, now the Gybbons Charitable Trust, the Board of Trustees of which is chaired by the Rector of All Saints.

It was originally proposed that this road be called Bell Lane but this was changed at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 June 1961. This road is part of the big Tickner and Emmerton estate built in the early 1960s on land owned by the Offen Family.

JEFFERY CLOSE.

Jeffery Close was part of Wimpey's Marden Road estate built in the mid 1970s in which all the roads are named after people with connections with the school. Mr Jeffery was an assistant master in the Boys School for many years. He retired in 1939 but was to be asked if he would return to supervise a lunchtime canteen which was subsequently introduced. The record is unclear as to whether or not he did this. He was seemingly well liked by the boys and his nickname was 'monkey' because of his beard. He lived in the Headcorn Road and was an active member of the Congregational Church.

KIRKMAN COURT.

Kirkman Court is named after Dr Kirkman who was a general practitioner in the village from about 1920 to 1937 when he was succeeded by his Brother in law Dr McCabe. He came back to stand in for Dr McCabe during the Second World War. He lived in Bangweolo (in Rhodesia) before he came to Staplehurst and gave his house that name. This is now Minton House.

It is fitting that the two streets of sheltered housing in the village built in 1986/87 by Maidstone Borough Council are named after people who gave much of their lives to the care of villagers.

KNOWLES WALK.

Knowles Walk is named after Miss Kate Christine Knowles who lived at Spilsill Court and died in 1965 at the age of 75. She used to arrange pageants for the village using the whole community as the cast and so involving the whole village in amateur dramatics. She also was awarded the OBE for her efforts in sending parcels to prisoners of war in the 1939/45 war.

Her memorial plaque in the Spilsill Chancel of All Saints Church says 'In sure and certain hope'.

LAMPARD CLOSE

This is a development of 5 dwellings by Golding Homes off Winches Garth at the North End of the village which was completed in 2013. It is named after Stanley, Richard, Charles Lampard, known as Dick or Dickie, who owned the garage at the junction of Station Approach with Station Road, not very far from the site of this development. He bought the premises with his brother in 1938 and traded as P&S Lampard.

They sold new and second hand cars, were a dealer for Standard Triumph, did major and minor repairs and sold petrol. During the war years they also worked on all kinds of agriculture and military vehicles. In 1959 he took control of the business and it was renamed Lampard Limited until its closure sometime in the 1970's I think. Overall it was a very successful and important local business. Ken Collins, the illustrator and mastermind of the Staplehurst Calendar, was an apprentice there in the early 1950's, his foreman being Percy Town who many years later became my father in law.

Dickie Lampard was born in Maidstone and did his apprenticeship in the County Garage there. He had a strong love for motor cycle racing and car rallying, participating in competitions countrywide, and was an enthusiastic member of the Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club.

During all his years of business in Staplehurst he gained many friends and was involved in a variety of projects and events, probably the most well-known of which

was the annual charity cricket match between The Railway Tavern and Lampard Limited which took place at the Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club.

The first suggestion for the name of this street considered by the Parish Council at its meeting on 20 December 2010 was 'Dickin's Lair' (the spelling is from the Parish Council minutes). However this was not popular as a lair was a place where animals lived and so the matter was deferred to the next meeting on 4 January 2011. Here a number of other names, not recorded, were considered and Lampard Close, suggested by local resident Mr Ron Hegarty with supporting information, again not recorded, was agreed by majority.

LIME TREES.

This road is the entrance road onto the estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was originally primarily a small farm called Lime Trees, hence the name. It was owned by the Tomlin Family and three daughters of the family still live in the village. The land was bought from the family by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types and to this end the estate includes 32 homes managed by a housing trust. The builders named their sections of the estate Sherbourne Grange and Hedgefield respectively.

LINDRIDGE LANE.

Lindridge Lane connects between Clapper Lane and Marden Road just to the south of and parallel to the railway line. It gets its name from the farm of the same name, now three dwellings, which is not actually on the lane but on the Marden Road nearby.

LITTLE FIELD.

This road is part of the estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family. Three daughters still live in the village. The land was originally bought by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types.

Little Field is so called because that is how the family used to refer to it.

LODGE ROAD.

Lodge Road houses Staplehurst's Industrial Estate and was built in 1980s by Honeycrest Properties Ltd. It is on land which was previously part of Horns Lodge Farm, owned by Mr Simms, a butcher in Chatham, who owned quite a bit of land in the area.

LOVEHURST LANE.

This lane goes from the A229 Cranbrook road to Lovehurst Manor hence its name, and passes Chittenden Farm on the way. It joins Cork Lane at the entrance of the drive to the manor.

MAIDSTONE ROAD.

Maidstone Road is the road to (and from) Maidstone. It starts at Station Approach, goes over the railway bridge and crosses the parish boundary on the line of the stream going under the road in the culvert at Home Farm House just to the north of Cross at Hand. The railway bridge was rebuilt and widened in the early 1990s and there used to be a highways divisional office and depot at Sweetlands Corner where the two bungalows on the west side of the road are today. The last Divisional Surveyor there was John Sadler, a past colleague of mine and a very pleasant and competent man who served Staplehurst very well during his time there.

Another place of interest in this road is Knoll House which was the home of John Samuel Newlyn after whom Newlyn Drive is named.

MARDEN ROAD.

This is obviously the road to and from Marden which starts at the High Street/ Station Road junction and crosses the parish boundary 400 yards east of its junction with Park Road. The Martyrs' Memorial is at the junction of Marden Road with the A229 and the old gas holder was also located along the road.

MARIAN SQUARE.

This is named after the Marian martyrs who are commemorated by the monument at the main cross-roads in the centre of the village. This was erected in 1904 by the "Protestants of Staplehurst and District" in memory of Alice Potkins, Joan Bradbridge and Alice Benden of Staplehurst, and of Edmund and Katharine Allen of Frittenden on land presented by W Brooks.

It is part of the Headcorn Road Estate built in the mid to late 1970s by Abbey Homes and Wards on land which was part of Oaks Farm and Loddenden.

MARKET STREET.

This street existed long before there was any record of a market at the site but was presumably subsequently so named because it was eventually the entrance to the cattle market which was held there fortnightly from the 1860s to the mid 1930s. The market was started by disaffected cattle dealers from Ashford and a convenient railway siding allowed some animals to be transported by train, the others being brought by road, 'driven!!', by drovers. The first homes were built in the early 1950s by Maidstone Rural District Council but since that time a new development of flats, Pankhurst House, and more recently 4 semi-detached houses have been built there.

MARLFIELD.

This road is part of the estate developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson on land which was primarily Lime Trees, a small farm owned by the Tomlin Family. Three daughters still live in the village. The land was originally bought by Rydon Homes who sold it on to Wimpey who then sold on part of the site to Gleeson to get a better mix of property sizes and types.

The name derives from the name of one of the fields as noted on the tithe map of 1842.

MARTIN'S HILL

This is part of the A229 Cranbrook Road between the entrance to Iden Manor and the turning to Lovehurst Lane and derives its name from St Martin on the Hill Cottage on its brow.

MAXTED CLOSE.

This is the name of the road on the development built on the old Gasworks site off the Marden Road. The name relates to the Maxted family who lived in Staplehurst for many years and ran the hardware shop on the site now occupied by Doves Funerals. There is a tragedy behind this as Mr Maxted, the last owner, was killed crossing the road to his

home in the row of cottages next to the chemist's shop.

The Parish Council had originally suggested Percy's Field for the name as the Percy Family used to farm the land and it was known by local children as that, but this was rejected by the Developer, Rydon Homes.

McCABE CLOSE.

Dr R A McCabe, after whom this road is named, was a general practitioner in the village from 1937 until 1 January 1963 when he retired. During the war years, when he was on active service, his brother in law, Dr Kirkman, stood in for him. In fact Dr McCabe had taken over from Dr Kirkman in 1937 and for much of his practice he was

assisted by his sister, who was married to Doctor Kirkman but retained her maiden name, Dr Evelyn McCabe, professionally. Dr McCabe was an impressive man, severe looking, very proper and very caring but woe betide you if you were wasting his time! He introduced hot drinks at lunchtime in to the school.

His waiting room was a glasshouse, in the garden of his house, then called Bangweolo now called Minton House, which was blown up when the doodle bug which demolished Fir Trees hit. The house lost all its glass in the same incident. He built a new waiting room with the war damage money he received and this today is the kitchen of Minton House.

Upon his retirement the Parish Council arranged a presentation for him. They sent him a cheque in the post and presented him with a leather bound book of subscribers. He was succeeded by Dr McKay.

McCabe Close was built by Maidstone Borough Council in 1986/87 on land that was part of Henhurst farm and accommodates sheltered housing bungalows, a house for the warden and a hall, the McCabe Centre, which is much used for the elderly and infirm in the village and surrounding area.

MILL LANE.

Mill Lane, or at least that part of it within Staplehurst, connects between the south end of Park Wood Lane and Maplehurst Mill. It is considerably longer than this and gets its name simply from the fact that it is the lane on which the mill is situated. There is also a Mill Lane, which is private, which runs off the High Street in the middle of the village alongside the butchers to where the old mill stood.

NEWLYN DRIVE.

Newlyn Drive is named after John Samuel Newlyn who was a director of several leading companies and well known in the city of London. He lived in Staplehurst, in Knoll House which he had built and is situated in Maidstone Road to the north of the railway bridge, from 1915 until his death in March 1929 at the age of 74. He was very active in village organisations being variously a prominent member of the Parochial Church Council and vice president of both the Village (Cricket?) Club and the Gardeners Society. He was also a very generous supporter of local charities and philanthropic institutions.

Following the death of his wife, Louisa, in July 1925 at the age of 70, he founded to her memory the Newlyn Trust which provided annually for 43 residents of the age of 70 and upwards to receive in value £1 each. In connection with this a commemoration service was held every year in the parish church on 21 April, the date of Mrs Newlyn's birthday. This Trust was also for the upkeep of her grave which is on the left immediately in front of the main entrance to All Saints Church.

Another Trust was set up by Mr Newlyn on 25 August 1927 the scheme of which was very wide, providing for a district nurse, some money towards the upkeep of All Saints Parish Church and also towards the organ. However, the main part of the Trust was to deal with the provision of payment of relief in money to poor persons and relief in kind if necessary.

These Trusts are now combined and registered as The J S Newlyn Charity Trust which is chaired by the Rector of All Saints but otherwise most of the Trustees are drawn from outside the parish. The Trust is still very active.

Newlyn Drive is on the Fisher's Farm Estate which was built in three stages in the 1960s, this part being built by Woodgate, and completed in the mid 1960s.

NICHOLSON WALK

This is the path from the High Street to Surrenden Playing Field and which also accesses the school, the scout hut and Crowther Close. This facility was part of the land transfer agreed in the mid 1930s between the then Rural District Council, the Parish Council and a Mrs Nicholson, who owned Surrenden at that time, to provide a recreation field for the benefit of the community of Staplehurst. As part of this settlement she gifted the access footpath from the High Street and this is all protected by covenant for the public use. Following recent improvements to the surface, the walk has been named after Mrs Nicholson in belated recognition of her generosity.

NORTHDOWN.

Northdown (one word), although there is a tendency now to write it as two, is the only entrance off the Marden road into the Corner Farm estate which was built by Tickner and Emmerton in the mid to late 1960s on land that was originally part of Corner Farm. There is apparently no deep reasoning behind the name other than that the Parish Council for a change wanted to have a name of one word without using road, street, lane, rise, close, etc.

It would be nice to speculate that it could have been 'to balance South Bank at the other end of the village', or that it was 'down at the north of the village' but no, there is no other reason behind it.

OFFENS DRIVE

Offens Drive is one of the two original entrances into the 'Tickner and Emmerton' Estate and is behind the parade of shops in the middle of the village. It connects between the High Street and Bathurst Road and has junctions with The Parade, Usborne Close, Jaggard Way, Gybbon Rise and Fletcher Road.

It is named after the Offen family who were big land and property owners in the parish. There were three brothers and they owned much of the land on which this estate is built including the land on which Offens Drive is located. They also ran the butcher's business in the centre of the village from the same shop where the existing butcher is today, relinquishing the business in the 1950s. May (Beeching) Offen and May (Walter) Offen, the wives of William and Henry Offen owned the 1st and 2nd ladies bikes in the village so it is said. Not a lot of people know that!

The estate was built in the early 1960s by the builder Tickner and Emmerton and it was the real start of the huge escalation in the size of the village over the second half of the 20th century.

OLD BELL PLACE

At this time, this will be the newest road in the village and it is accessed from Bell Lane which for its part is one of the oldest roads. This development of 6 houses by 'Oakensure', which has only just started, is on land which was previously the garden of The Bell Public House and it is from this connection that it gets its name.

The obvious source of 'The Bell' is the nearby church of All Saints which currently has a ring of 10 bells, an extra 2 being installed, thanks to private donations, in January 1997 when the original ring of 8 bells were rehung having been sent to the Bell Foundry earlier in 1996 for restoring and retuning. A new steel bell frame was installed to accommodate the changed ring. This was placed above the old timber frame which had to be retained for heritage reasons.

OLD RECTORY LANE

This is a small cul de sac off the High Street on the hill to the south of All Saints Church feeding three houses built in 1994/95 on land which formed part of the Old Rectory which still stands on the adjacent plot, hence the name. Two of the houses were built by a partnership between Homeleigh Timbers and a local builder. The lane was only formally named in 2009, born of necessity to enable emergency services to locate the site quickly.

OLIVER ROAD.

Staplehurst School, when first opened in 1873, was split into three, the Boys' School, the Girls' School and the Infants. Mr Oliver was the first head of the Boys' School, a post he held from 1873 to 1909.

Oliver Road is on the Marden Road estate which was built by Wimpey in the mid 1970s and on which all the roads are named after people associated with the school. The land was owned by Mr Simms, a butcher in Chatham, who had previously built a very modern bungalow on the site and around which the new estate was built. That bungalow is situated on Oliver Road.

Mr Oliver was succeeded by Mr Stanley who also has a road on the same estate named after him.

PAGEHURST ROAD.

Pagehurst Road, also in part known as Thorn Lane deriving from Marden Thorn, is named after the two main houses along it, Great Pagehurst and Little Pagehurst. It crosses the parish boundary just to the east of its junction with Park Road in Marden Parish. The name Pagehurst derives from 'poecces hyrst' meaning arable and wooded hill.

PARISFIELD CLOSE

Parisfield Close is a development of 12 houses of 2 and 3 bedrooms off the Headcorn Road just east of the crossroads in the middle of the village. They were built by Woldingham Homes in the early 2010's

It is on land previously occupied by a house called 'Parisfield' and from which it gets its name. The house, Parisfield, was built by local builders George and Martin and completed in the early 1960's for Major and Mrs Simpkins, who were previously resident I understand at Little Pagehurst. It was built on land that had been the playing field of a private school run by Mr Parrington at Hurst House, one of the adjacent buildings fronting on to the High Street.

Apparently this little area was known as 'The French Quarter' because three properties there were named St Helier, 'Rozel' and 'Chantilly'. It is thought therefore that the name Parisfield recognised both this fact and that the land was previously a (playing) field. So the French Quarter is still very much alive.

The owners after the Simpkins were Barry and Kathy Lamb both of whom were very active in the village. Kathy sadly died in 1983 and it is in recognition of her work with the local guides that the Kathy Lamb Guide Centre was built and so dedicated. Barry played his part too being on the Carnival and Fete Committee for many years and also actively involved in the Parents Associations of various schools in this part of Kent including our own. The last incumbents of Parisfield were Barry and his second wife, Liz.

PARK WOOD LANE.

Park Wood Lane which runs between Frittenden Lane and Mill Lane, the lane to Maplehurst Mill, actually forms the parish boundary along its length. Its name derives from the fact that the west side of the lane is the edge of Park Wood, presumably so called because it was part of the park of Maplehurst.

PILE LANE.

Pile Lane connects between Couchman Green Lane/Sweetlands Lane and the Headcorn Road. It is named after Pile Farm which is the only building along it and which in turn gets its name from the Poyle family, earlier inhabitants.

The farm has a training track for greyhounds.

PINNOCK LANE.

A pinnock is a culvert or an arch bridge and this lane derives its name from the twin arch bridge at The Quarter which carries the ditch alongside Pinnock Lane under the A229. There are also pinnocks under the entrances to the cottages on the south side of the lane and now, following drainage works by Maidstone Borough Council in the 1990s, there is actually a culvert running along and under the carriageway of Pinnock Lane between Hanmer way and The Quarter. This however is made of precast concrete box shaped units.

The Lane runs from The Quarter to the junction with Goudhurst Road and Five Oak Lane at Albion Cottages.

POPE DRIVE.

The Pope family live large in the life of Staplehurst over the last 150 years. They were the Pope of Pope and Hayward, bottlers and suppliers of mineral water from their Crown Works behind the High Street until driven to move to Paddock Wood because of difficulties and delays over a possible location on the Lodge Estate. Previously they were wheelwrights and also landlords of the Crown Inn which was badly damaged by a doodlebug in 1944 but was rebuilt as a private dwelling and remains that way today.

Also the Pope men were plentiful enough to field a whole ringing band for the church bells. They were also a big presence in the village cricket and football teams.

However, Pope Drive is named after Mrs Pope who was head teacher of the infants' school from 1890 until she retired in 1930 at which point the infants were amalgamated with the Girls school under Miss Reeves. In 1903 a new Education Act gave control to local authorities and abolished the school boards. One of the Board's last acts was one of defiance to the new authority by serving notice on Mrs Pope who was pregnant. She was saved by the handover to the County Council and continued to serve the school for a further 27 years until her retirement.

It is part of the Wimpey Marden Road Estate, built in the mid 1970s and connects onto Bathurst Road on the Tickner and Emmerton Estate.

POYNTELL ROAD.

Poyntell Road is named after the Reverend Daniel Poyntel. He was the Rector of All Saints Parish Church in the 17 Century but after a while, in his preaching, he refused to conform to the Church of England. He was formally ejected in 1662 but such was his relationship with the then Archbishop of Canterbury that he was still allowed on occasions to preach from the pulpit. However, the new incumbent did not find this at all satisfactory as the two clerics' views did not coincide.

The Rev. Poyntel then set up a sect of his own on the site of the exiting United Reformed Church where he preached to big congregations but came to a tragic end when he caught a chill as he spoke with the windows open on a cold day so that those who could not get in and who had travelled far to hear him could do so.

He was known as the 'learned Poyntel' not only in all of Kent but all over England.

Poyntel Road is on the Headcorn Road 'Oaks Farm Estate, built in the mid to late 1970s, on land from the farm and Loddenden, by Abbey Homesteads and Wards

PRISTLING LANE.

At one stage Lovehurst Manor belonged to a religious order of priests and it is thought that as they travelled to their work at Tonbridge it is along this road they would have travelled. Hence the name Pri(e)stling. It continues to join Five Oak Lane near Clarke's Farm.

REEVES CLOSE.

Reeves Close is on the Marden Road Estate which was built in the mid 1970s by Wimpey on land that was originally part of 'Aydhurst' owned by Mr Simms, a butcher in Chatham who owned quite a lot of land in the area. It is named after Mrs and Miss Reeves.

Mrs Ann Marie Reeves was, as Miss A M Carter, the first schoolmistress (headmistress) of the Girls' School from 1873. She married Mr Reeves in 1878 and remained in the post until 1910. She came from St Helier and she gave that name to her house which it retains today. She was succeeded by her daughter Miss Edith May Reeves. Miss Reeves remained headmistress of the Girls' School, incorporating the Infants' School in 1930, until she retired in 1939 upon the amalgamation with the Boys' School to form the primary school we know today.

However, there were other connections with other Reeves which are worthy of note:

A Mr Reeves (*Mrs Reeves eventual husband?*) proposed at a meeting of ratepayers in 1871 'That it is expedient to have a School Board'. This was following the Elementary Education Act of 1870 which empowered local authorities to provide schools on the rates to fill the gaps in the existing education provision of the churches and the voluntary bodies. These schools were to give an elementary education for children, usually up to the age of 13, and were the beginning of mass education in this country

William Reeves, *one assumes the same man*, was one of the founding members of the School Board (21/8/1871) and was present on 15 December 1873 when 47 boys were enrolled into the Boys' School.

The Reeves family were builders, millers and farmers and Mr Richard Reeves, himself a carpenter, lived at 'The Firs' the first of a terrace of three clapboard houses which he built just up the hill from what is now Minton House in the High Street. Unfortunately 'The Firs' was demolished by a doodlebug in August 1944.

In 1805 William Reeves, along with Charles Ingram, built the windmill behind All Saints church which was burnt down on Coronation Day 1911 by village youths who had been refused a celebratory bonfire.

ROYAL OAK MEWS

Royal Oak Mews is a small development of 4 houses on land at the rear of what was a Public House (PH) latterly called 'The Pride of Kent' but for most of its life it was 'The Royal Oak'. Its pub sign as the Royal Oak was unique in that on one side was an oak tree and on the other a naval vessel representing the battleship 'The Royal Oak' which was commissioned in 1916 and sunk in Scapa Flow in October 1939. Several hundred men lost their lives and it is now a designated war grave. In an annual ceremony to mark the loss of the ship, Royal Navy divers place a White Ensign underwater at her stern.

The name of the Street obviously relates to its PH History but there is also a reference in the developers notes for the site to the conversion of Victorian stables (No. 4) and so this would relate to the use of 'Mews' in the name. The builder was Raspberry Homes and they named the scheme 'The Pride of Kent Development' in recognition of the name of the property when they took possession.

The scheme also included significant work to the main building which has an upstairs flat with commercial premises below, currently 'Helen's Coffee House', and is now named Royal Oak House. The work was completed in 2015.

SCAR LANE.

Scar lane went from Fuller house, through the Iden Manor Estate and out on to the Frittenden Road. It was closed in 1865 by Henry Hoare of Iden Manor who wanted to extend his lake over it. Sections of it are still visible today.

SHERENDEN LANE.

Sherenden Lane runs west from its junction with Wilden Park Road (Wildenbridge Road), opposite the end of Five Oak Lane, to the Marden to Goudhurst Road. It actually forms the parish boundary between Hobbs Wood and Jubilee Cottages at which point it leaves Staplehurst and runs into Marden Parish and alongside Sherenden Wood from which it gets its name.

SKINNER CLOSE

Skinner Close is one of the Streets on the Taylor Wimpey 'Saxon Mead' Estate, built between 2014 and 2016 and which comprises of 53 houses. Of these 21 are owned by Golding Homes, 12 of which are for affordable rent and 9 for shared ownership. A Nature Reserve has also been provided on adjacent land to the south and west which will be managed by the Parish Council.

The street is named after Dr Richard Skinner who was a much loved General Practitioner in the village from 1963 until his (second) retirement in the early 'noughties'. He had initially retired in 1995, although he still did locum work, but a few years later, along with Dr Davies, he came out of retirement to cover a shortfall of GP availability in the village, carrying on for another 2 to 3 years.

Initially he and his family lived at Whiteways in Sissinghurst and then Blairfield in the High Street here (which is now the New Rectory) and during this time his surgery was in Bert Seth's front room in 'Green Court'. Then in 1968 they took up residence in Minton House and one of the front rooms there became his surgery which was an easy move for the patients as it was just across the road.

Richard was very active in village life being involved at various times and at various levels in the Parish Council, The Parochial Church Council of All Saints, The Monarchs Football Club, The McCabe Centre, Village Hall, Sobell Lodge, Choral Society, Staplehurst Fellowship of Churches (*now Churches Together in Staplehurst*) and various Charities and Trusts especially relating to Leprosy and Taize.

He was born in Kobe, Japan in 1935 but moved to Hongkong shortly after and then to Australia, for safety, during the war years. After the war he came to England boarding first at Yardley Court Preparatory School in Tonbridge and then Tonbridge School. His Doctor training was in The Royal London Hospital before National Service saw him returning to the Far East. He was always a keen sportsman and locally took an active interest in both Gillingham FC and Maidstone United FC.

Sadly his final retirement was marked with years of serious ill health and he died in 2010. The attendance at his Memorial Service in All Saints was indicative of the respect and affection in which he was held by many people from all walks of life.

Throughout all of his life in the village he enjoyed the unfailing support of his wife Shirley who survives him and still lives here and who also has immersed herself in the life of our village and Parish Church.

SLANEY ROAD

Slaney Road is named after Slaney Place Farm which is just a little way along the Headcorn Road and which in turn is named after Richard Slaney, a previous owner and farmer. This is part of the estate which was built on land originally part of Oaks Farm and Loddenden in the mid to late 1970s by Abbey Homesteads and Wards.

SLEEPER ALLEY.

Sleeper Alley is so called because the 'road surface' was originally made of timber sleepers. These were visible until 1999 when the lane was stoned and rolled.

It lies just off the High Street between the Youth Club and Moat Lodge on one side and 'Onu', built in 1911 and 'The Limes', a later property, on the other. It leads to Surrenden Cottages so called because of their original connection with the big house of the same name on the other side of the main road as dwellings for house and garden servants.

SNOAD LANE.

Snoad Lane is so called because it borders Snoad Wood in the south west part of the parish. A Snoad is woodland that was the King's property in pre- medieval times.

SOUTH BANK.

This is so named because it is on the bank at the south end of the village or on the south side of the ridge. Another connection is that when it was built in 1950/51 by Corbens for the Maidstone Rural District Council it was also the year of the Festival of Britain on the 'South Bank' (of the Thames).

The estate comprising of South Bank and Church Green won an award for its designer.

STANLEY CLOSE

Stanley Close is one of the roads on the Wimpey (Marden Road) estate built in the mid to late 70s on which all the roads are named after people associated with the school. Mr Henry D. Stanley was head teacher of the Boys' School from 1909 to 1938, sandwiched between Mr Oliver and Mr Butcher who also have roads named after them on the estate. He was a keen gardener and in fact introduced gardening to the school which proved a useful lesson especially when problems with the heating system meant that the classrooms were too cold for study.

The land was previously part of Aydhurst which was owned by Mr Simms, a butcher in Chatham, who owned quite a bit of the land which has been developed in the village.

STAPLE DRIVE.

Staple Drive is part of the Headcorn Road Estate, built on land which was part of Oaks Farm and Loddenden, and which was started by Abbey Homesteads and completed by Wards in the late 70s. There are those who say its name derives from the fact that it, together with Hurst Close on the other side of the Headcorn Road, combine to make Staplehurst. It is a fact that the Staple is the same as in the village name which I am told means a post, presumably located at the crossing of the roman road with the boundary between two 'Hundreds'.

A Hundred was an ancient unit of administration, below that of a Shire.

STATION ROAD AND STATION APPROACH.

The derivation of these names is obvious, both roads leading to the station built in 1842. Station Road is the main A229 between the Marden Rd./Headcorn Rd. cross-roads and Station Approach. It is the northern continuation of the High Street.

Station Approach is a cul-de-sac which terminates at the station. This was originally part of an old road which ran from the Railway Tavern and past Horns Lodge Farm to Crumps Corner which was dissected by the building of the railway approximately where the existing surface crossing is, just to the west of the station. The road on the north side was subsequently realigned to its current route parallel the railway and is called George Street after the George family who lived in The Grange, originally Moat Farm. This provided a better alternative access to the main road for the residents of Crumps Cottages than having to cross the railway.

Station Approach also leads to the Lodge Estate.

SURRENDEN COURT

Surrenden Court is a development of 4 houses by Clarendon Homes which was completed in 2015. Its name derives from the fact that it is built in what was part of the grounds of the main house Surrenden. The last incumbents of the main house as a family residence were the Elwell Family who moved there in 1976. In 1987/88 they converted it into a nursing home which they ran until selling the property in 2000 after which it was later converted into two dwellings. I have been unable to determine the origin of 'Surrenden'.

SURRENDEN ROAD.

Surrenden Road takes its name from the big house 'Surrenden' which is on the High Street between the path to the playing field and the path to Chestnut Avenue and which, at the start of the new Millennium, was a nursing home. It services the north access to the 'new' primary school and for much of its length runs alongside the playing field which is on land bought by the Maidstone Rural District Council in 1936 from the then owner of Surrenden on condition that it was made available for the use of the village as a public open space. The playing field was opened by Lord Cornwallis on Jubilee Day and today Maidstone Borough Council lease it to the Parish Council for a nominal fee.

So the road is built on land which was either part of or abutted Surrenden

The road is part of the big Tickner and Emmerton estate completed in the early 1960s.

SWEETLANDS LANE.

Sometimes this is used, wrongly, for Couchman Green Lane and both names are derived from places in the lane namely Sweetlands Couchman Green, which is half way along it, and Sweetlands Farm which was located at the junction of the lane with the A229. Couchman Green had 'Sweetlands' added when the owner of Sweetlands Farm bought it. Sweetlands comes from a Mr Sweeting who owned the farm at some stage.

Currently the street signs show Couchman Green Lane going from the A229 to Pile Lane and Sweetlands Lane carrying on from Pile Lane to Headcorn Road, the exact opposite of what might be expected.

THATCHER ROAD.

Thatcher Road is the entrance from the Marden Road to the first Tickner and Emmerton estate. It is named after the Reverend Thomas Thatcher, a Minister of the Congregational Church in Staplehurst from 1881 to 1925. He was chairman of the school managers/governors from 1913 to 1921 and again from 1932 until his death in 1936 at the age of 84. His wife, Muriel died the morning after him. They had been married for 57 years.

The Reverend Thatcher joined readily in the social life of the village. He was a playing member of the local cricket club for 30 years. He was also chairman of the committee for the erection of the Martyrs' Memorial Fund. His last public appearance was on Jubilee Day when he spoke at the opening of the new playing field (Surrenden Road) by Lord Cornwallis.

Coincidentally his daughter was a teacher at the school for many years and used to live in No 17 Marden Road which is just about next to the junction of the Marden Road with Thatcher Road.

THE BARTONS

The Bartons is one of the Streets on the Taylor Wimpey 'Saxon Mead' Estate, built between 2014 and 2016 and which comprises of 53 houses. Of these 21 are owned by Golding Homes, 12 of which are for affordable rent and 9 for shared ownership. A Nature Reserve has also been provided on adjacent land to the south and west which will be managed by the Parish Council.

The Bartons is named after two brothers from the village who were killed in the First World War and who are commemorated on the Memorial in St George's Chapel in All Saints Church:

- Rifleman F. Ronald Barton DCM of the 13th Battalion, The Rifle Brigade, who died on 6 November 1918 aged 23 and is buried in the Caudry British Cemetery in France and

- Lance Sergeant James Miles Barton MM of the 2nd Battalion, The Rifle Brigade, who died on 29 November 1917 aged 26 and is buried in the Haringhe (Bangdaghem) Military Cemetery in Belgium.

Both were awarded their decorations for 'bravery in the field' and were the sons of John and Ellen (or Helen) Barton of 3 Willow Cottages at the east end of Chapel Lane. Since then nos. 3 and 4 Willow Cottages have been converted into a single dwelling now called 'The Willows'.

THE PARADE

The Parade was built in the early to mid 1960s, on the opposite side of the High Street to the then main shops in the village, on what were then called Slaughter House Fields. It houses other retail units and car parking for people who use them. The roads and car parks are on private land and are not part of the public highway.

One definition of Parade is 'a public square or promenade (often as name of a street)'. Hence this name is appropriate as it is for the public's use and also the phrase 'a parade of shops' has come into common use.

THE QUARTER.

The Quarter is that part of the A229 Cranbrook Road between Pinnock Lane and the entrance to Iden Manor. Its derivation is unknown.

THORN LANE.?

Thorn Lane was so called because it led to Marden Thorn. It originally went from Marden Thorn, passed by the Wild Duck Public house to Little Pagehurst Cottage and either ended here or turned south down to Five Oak Lane at West End. The first section from Marden Thorn to the junction is now called Pagehurst Road but the remainder from the junction to Five Oak Lane until recently did not appear to have a clear name, Thorn Lane was but one possibility. Other suggestions received were West End Lane, Harp Farm Lane and Five Ash Lane. The Borough Council did have it recorded earlier as Harp Farm Lane but recently signs have been erected identifying it as Five Ash Lane.

So there is no Thorn Road today in Staplehurst.

TOMLIN CLOSE.

Tomlin Close is part of the Corner Farm Estate and is named after the Tomlin family who owned the small farm on the land adjacent to the estate. The family lived in Lime Trees on the Marden Road and two of the daughters resided there until the house was demolished to make way for the Lime Trees estate which was completed just after the turn of the Millennium.

The Tomlins are a Staplehurst family and three daughters still live in the village.

USBORNE CLOSE.

Usborne Close is named after the Usborne family who owned Loddenden Manor from 1534 to 1903. They were farmers and tanners and some of the family went to London to become leather sellers and bankers. Obviously over that time they were heavily involved in village affairs. For example Major Thomas Starling Usborne was a founding member of the School Board in 1871 and was present for the enrolment of the first intake of 47 boys on 15 December 1873.

They also became connected, through marriage, to the Toke family who owned Spillsill Court and that property too became part of the Usborne estate.

Various Trusts have been set up by the family. Elisabeth Usborne founded a charity in 1839 for providing bread for the poor at Christmas, £100 being invested in public funds for this purpose. At some time past it was amalgamated with the Charles Jaggard 'Bread' Charity and the Rev. Thomas Crick's 'Widows Mite' Charity to form the Staplehurst Charities. This combined charity has since been paid into the Bathurst and Gibbon Trust, now the Gybbons Charitable Trust, the Board of Trustees of which is chaired by the Rector of All Saints.

Also Charles Usborne gave by will to the trustees of the Congregational (now URC) Chapel £100 to be invested for charitable purposes. There was another seemingly for mothers 'laying in' after they had given birth. Originally these Trusts were administered by the Elders of the Church but in the 1990s, because they were realising so little money, they were disinvested and the money transferred to the Bathurst and Gibbons Trust.

The Usbornes were a long lived family, all surviving into their late 60s, 70s or even 80s. Indeed there is a tomb to Mrs Elizabeth Usborne, daughter of John and Mary Usborne, next to the south wall of All Saints and she was 94. One exception was Frances Margaret Usborn, wife of Nicholas Toke Usborn, who died early at the age of 26 in 1783.

There are memorial plaques to members of this family on the walls of both All Saints (in St George's, originally Spilshill, Chapel) and the URC Chapel, with a remarkable inconsistency in the spelling of the name.

Usborne Close is part of the first big post war estate which was built in the early 1960s. on land owned by the Offen family and connects with Offens Drive.

VINE WALK AND VINE CLOSE.

Vine Walk is a development of 4 detached houses built by Bill Bailey of Hanmer Way in 1985. It is so called because it is built on land that was part of the garden of Vine House, the large Victorian building near the top of the hill in the centre of the village. Originally called 'The Limes' it was renamed at some time during or after the Second World War, presumably because of the large and well established vine tree in the garden which was lost in the storm of 1987. In the late 20th century it was the country home of John Silkin, the late MP for Deptford and his wife, the actress Rosamund John, after which it lay unoccupied for a while before being converted to the three dwellings it forms today.

Vine Close, off the High Street, is similarly derived.

WATKINS CLOSE.

Watkins Close is named after one of the owners of Corner Farm, Mr Watkins. The estate in which it is situated was mostly built on what was Corner Farm land and is called the Corner Farm Estate. Mr Watkins had farmed there for many years, probably longer than anyone else, but retired and sold on shortly before it was resold to the developers Tickner and Emmerton.

WEAVERS CLOSE.

Weavers Close is on the Headcorn Road Oaks Farm estate developed by Abbey Homesteads and then Wards in the mid to late 1970s on land from Oaks Farm and Loddenden. It is so named because of the history of Staplehurst as a sheep market and the strong woollen trade which developed from that.

WELD CLOSE.

Weld Close is part of the Headcorn road estate built in the 1980s on land from Oaks Farm and Loddenden, which was started by Abbey Homesteads in the mid 1970s. It was completed by Wards. The name derives from weld, a plant used by dyers, which is also called Dyers Green Weed, and which relates to Staplehurst's time as a sheep market and the strong woollen trade which developed from that.

WEST END LANE ?

West End Lane was one suggestion for the name of the lane running from Five Oak Lane to Pagehurst Road past 'West End'. Enquiries originally of one of the property owners at the north end of this road failed to confirm this however as they had been told to use Pagehurst Road as their address because they are very near to the junction with it. Other suggestions received for the name of this lane were, Harp Farm Lane as recorded by the Borough Council in 2000, Thorn Lane and Five Ash Lane. However signs have recently been erected identifying it as Five Ash Lane.

WIGHTWICK CLOSE
(Pronounced Wittick)

Wightwick Close is a development of 6 dwellings built around Fishers Oast, off the east end of Fishers Road, and is a Private Street. The Developer was Wright Holdings Ltd (Kent Stone Homes) and work was completed in 2015.

It is named after two brothers from the village who were killed in the First World War and who are commemorated on the Memorial in St George's Chapel in All Saints Church:

- Private Oswald Wightwick of the 18th Battalion, The London Regiment (The Royal Irish Rifles) who died on 9 October 1915 aged 23 and is buried in La Treport Military Cemetery, Seine-Maritime, France and
- 2nd Lt. Sydney Wightwick of the 9th Battalion (Queen Victoria's Rifles) The London Regiment who died on 9th September 1917 aged 28 and is buried in the Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery and Extension at Leper in Belgium. Sydney seemingly had lived in Canada and was a Private in the Canadian Infantry before his service in the London Regiment.

I understand that there was a local suggestion that the road be named Dickens Close because of its proximity to the site of the train crash at the River Beult in which Charles Dickens was involved in 1865. However, this was not accepted.

WILDENBRIDGE ROAD/WILDEN PARK ROAD

Wildenbridge Road, as it was called until recently, has a very logical name in that it runs in part alongside Wilden Wood and crosses the stream at the north end of the wood by a single span brick arch bridge. This is also the point where it leaves Staplehurst Parish and goes into Marden. However it has recently been re-signed as Wilden Park Road

At its south end it leaves the parish at Harts Heath farm and in some maps this southern part is called Harts Heath Farm Road. Apart from the A229, which has several names as it passes through Staplehurst, this is the only road which crosses the parish boundary twice.

WINCH'S GARTH.

Winch's Garth was built in the early 1950s by the Maidstone Rural District Council on land originally occupied by the Staplehurst cattle market. It is named after Mr Winch, the Cranbrook auctioneer, who held a fortnightly market there.

A Garth is a yard and so reflects the nature of the site as a cattle market.

WILLOW CRESCENT.

Willow Crescent is a cul-de-sac off Market Street which was built in the early 1950s by Maidstone Rural District Council. It is thought that its name derives from willow trees which were around a pond on or adjacent to the site. The Station Master's house was originally on this site.

THE STREETS OF THE PARISH OF STAPLEHURST. SOME OTHER NAMES

Water Lane.

In her little booklet “Staplehurst and The Weald of Kent”, Gertrude Keech describes going to Bletchingly by way of Water Lane. Is this perhaps the small stretch of road from Five Oak Lane to Pristling Lane, shown on the map as part of Pristling Lane?

Sierra Passage, Charlie Bank and Bravo Close.

In their street plan produced to advertise “Mid Kent Fostering”, Kent Social Services give the above names respectively to:

- Sleeper Alley
- The lane leading to Aydehurst
- The service road fronting the houses in Marden Road opposite Northdown.

This is clearly using the phonetic alphabet to locate properties on streets which either have no name or which otherwise might be difficult for people to find or to describe their location.

Harp Farm Lane, Thorn Lane, West End Lane and Five Ash Lane.

As described in the individual derivations, these are all names promoted for the stretch of road between Pagehurst Road and Five Oak Lane. Harp Farm Lane was the name in 2000 proffered by the Kent Highways Maidstone Highway Unit and Maidstone Borough Council. Most recently signs have been erected identifying it as Five Ash Lane.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The author would like to thank Anita Thompson, John Cramp, Richard Skinner and the late Alan Rimmer for their time and assistance in compiling and checking the facts, and also Andy Moon whose time and skill in producing the sketch maps has added so much to the finished document.

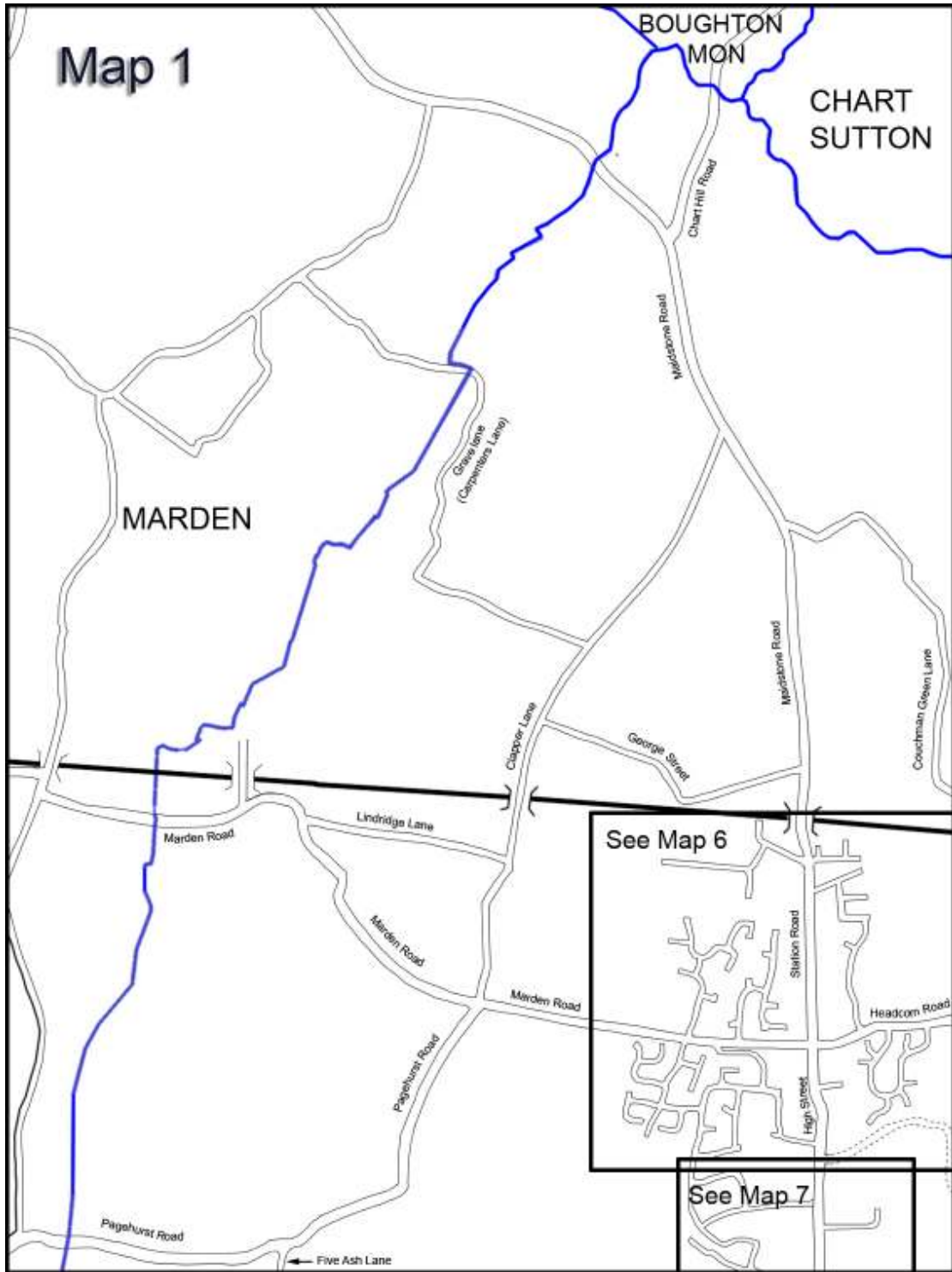
There were others who at various times also assisted and whose support is gratefully acknowledged.

Tony Norfolk

THE STREETS OF THE PARISH OF STAPLEHURST.

APPENDIX

MAPS

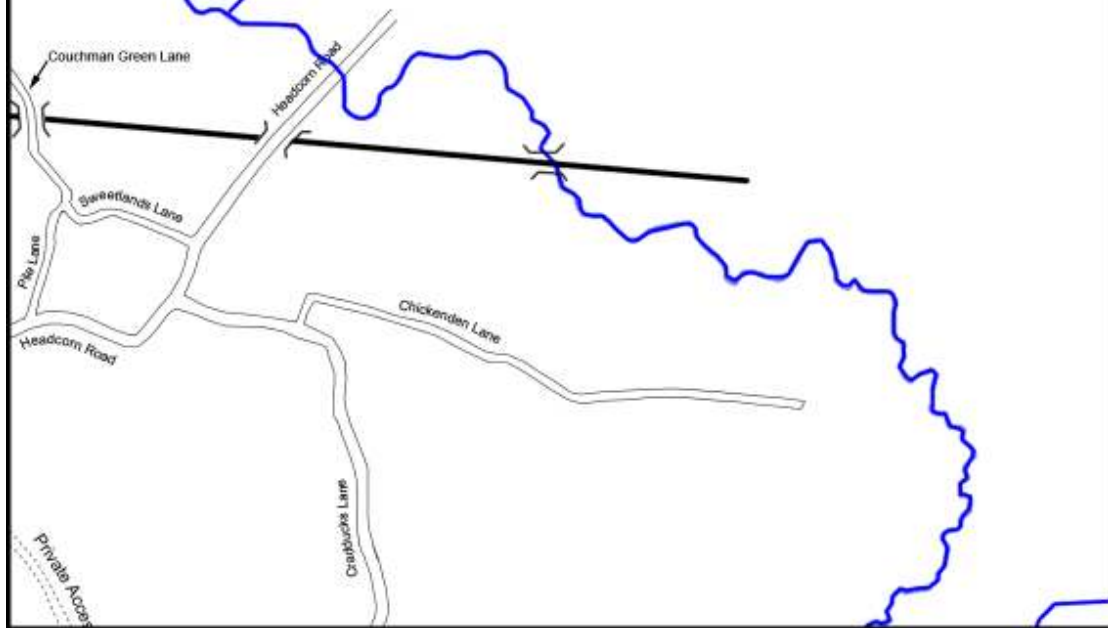


Map 2

CHART SUTTON

SUTTON VALENCE

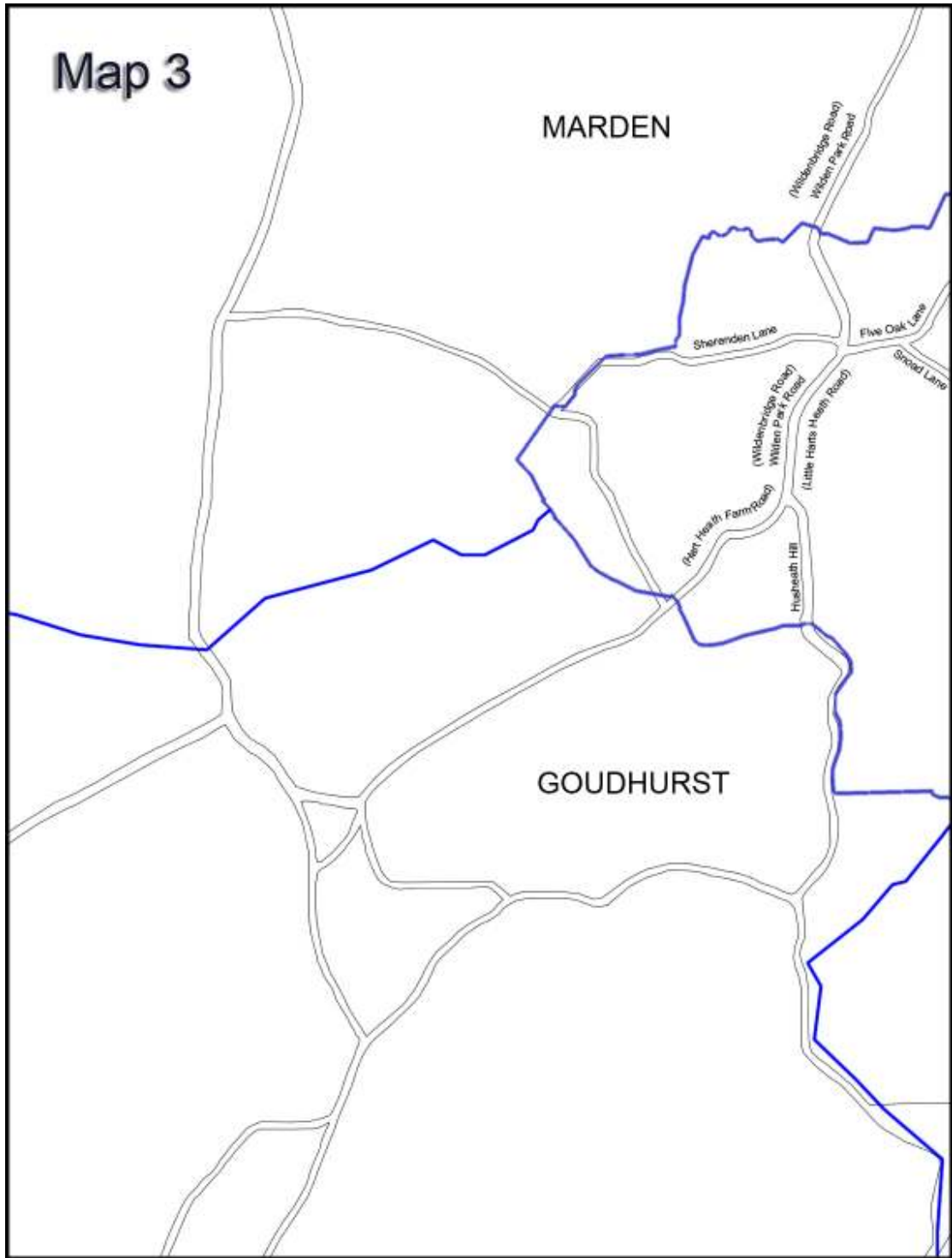
HEADCORN

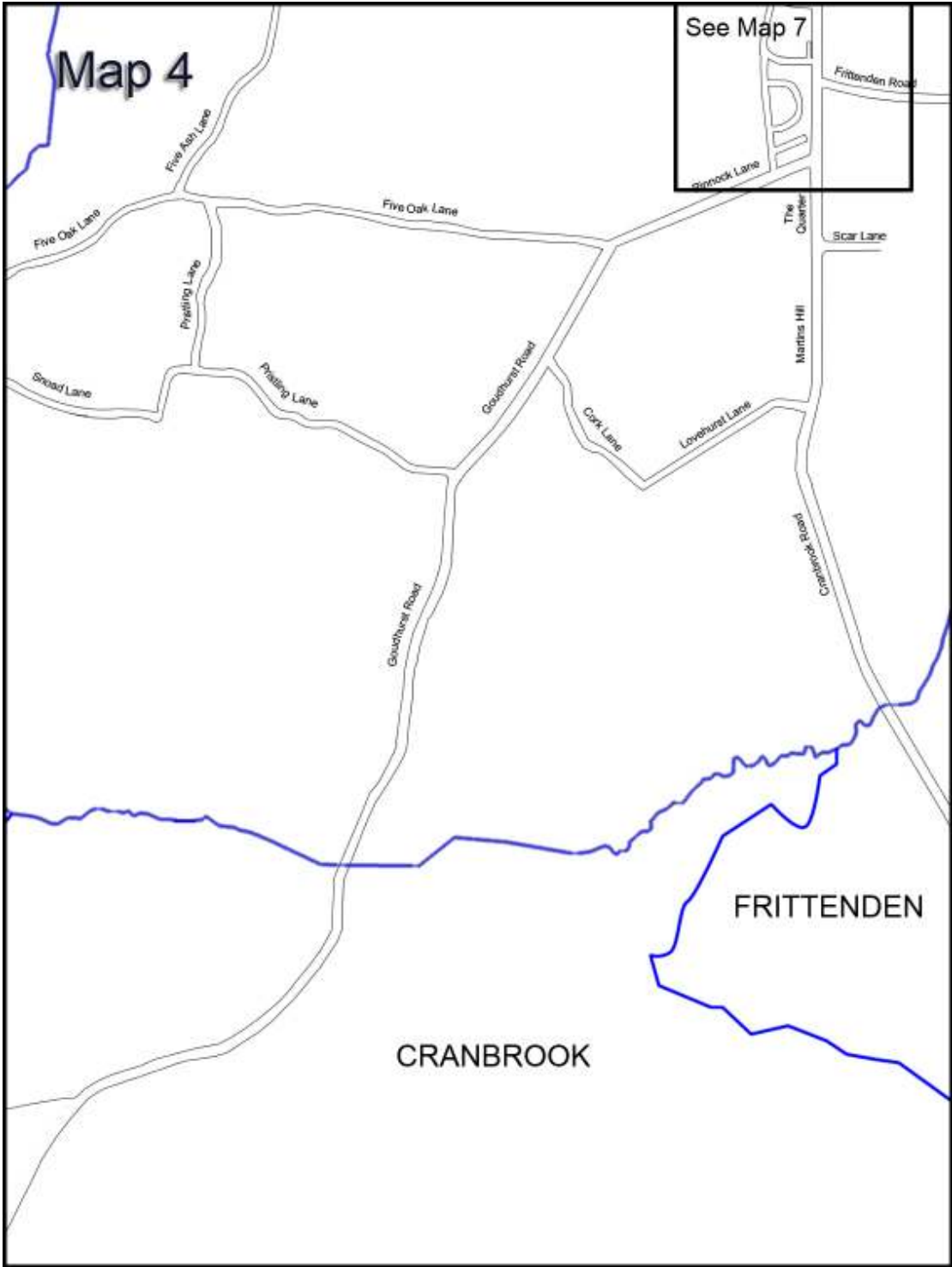


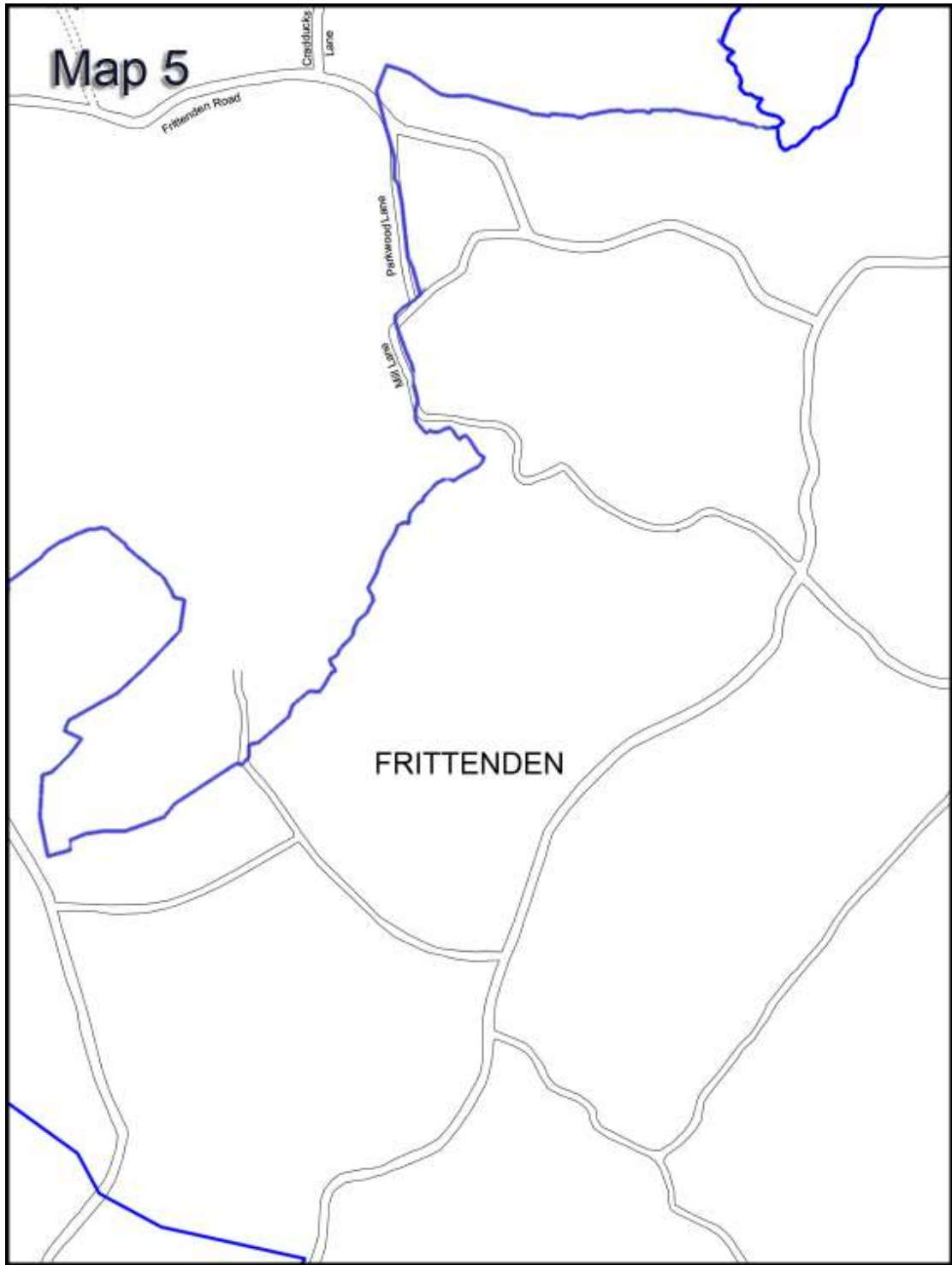
Map 3

MARDEN

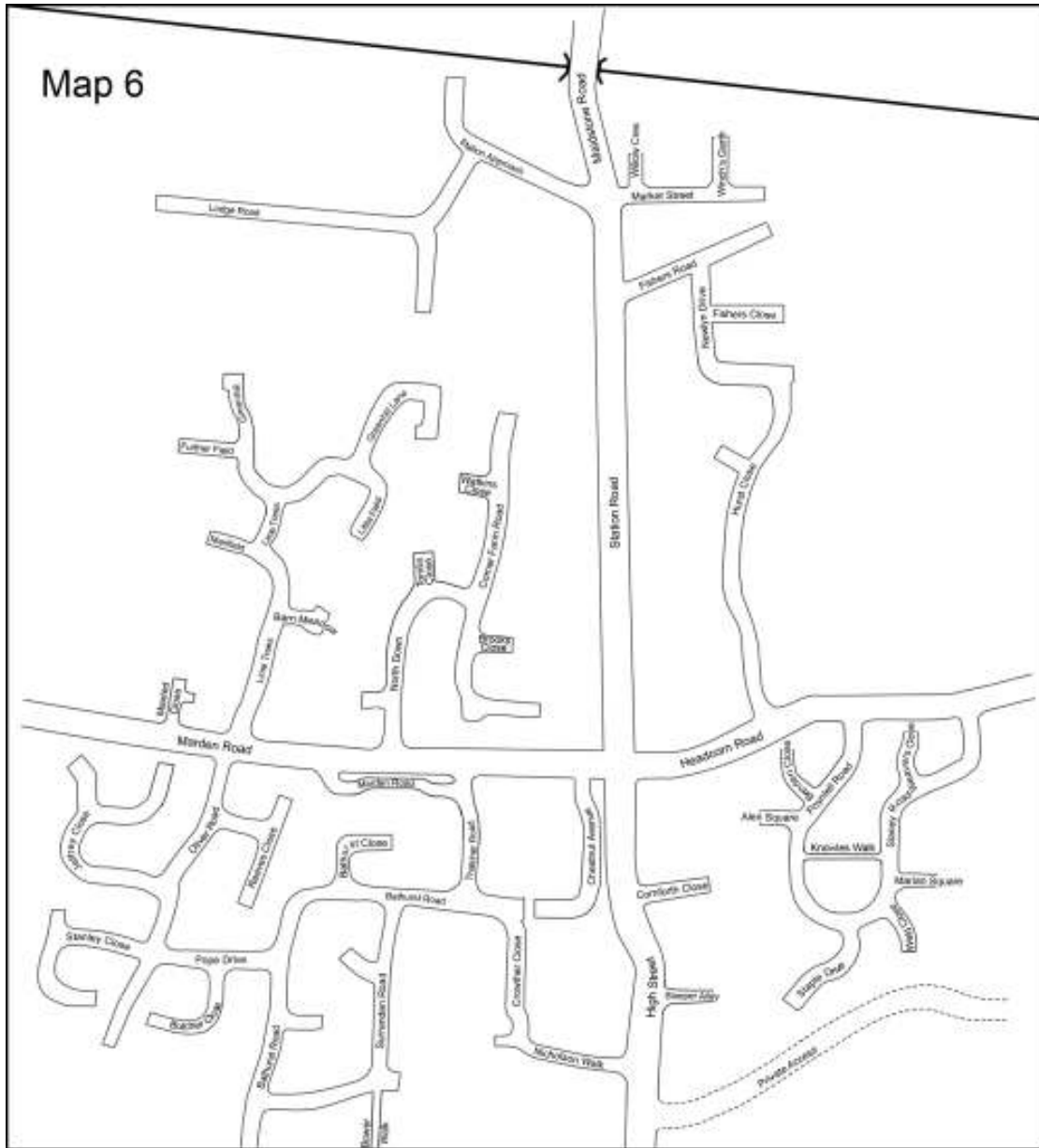
GOUDHURST







Map 6



Map 7

