



Street name change request

Purpose

Request to support the proposal to change the name of the road from the traffic lights to the bottom of Marlow Hill from Abbey Way to Frances Dove Way.

For decision

Cllr Lesley Clarke OBE

9th March 2021

Proposal

I have been working with Mr Willie Reid to celebrate the 125 year anniversary of Dame Frances Dove and the founding of Wycombe Abbey School. This has resulted in the proposal to change in the name of the road from the traffic lights to the bottom of Marlow Hill from Abbey Way to Dame Frances Dove Way (or Frances Dove Way).

We have been working with the Council's Street Naming Officer - Kimberley Fountain - and have worked through the council's policy having got agreement of all the named residences and businesses to take forward the proposed name change.

We have now consulted with the householders on this stretch of road and businesses too, they have no objections. The business premises belong to the Council and they have no objections to the proposed name change. It has been mentioned at the meeting of the HW Society and they too have no issues with the proposal.

The next stage is to take this to the HW Town Committee for their comments and then to the HW Community Board

Background

DAME FRANCES DOVE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

A summary of what Dame Frances Dove did for the town of High Wycombe:

- Founded Wycombe Abbey in 1896 one of the most successful and prestigious girls schools in the UK. Told the girls attending WA that they were privileged to have this

first class education and should work hard. This would not only equip them for life but also allow them to be of service to others.

- In 1900 she was involved in the setting up Godstowe Preparatory School on Amersham Hill. Godstowe became the first all-girls Preparatory School in England.
- Also encouraged the setting up of Benenden School in Kent when WAA was oversubscribed.
- Strong believer that women should be given the same opportunities in education as men and should be paid the same amount for similar work.
- As such she set up a branch of the NUWSS suffragist society in HW in 1904. Suffragists were peaceful campaigners fighting to give women the vote.
- Set up the Central Aid Society in 1906 to help the poor of Wycombe, some of whom were often seen begging at the Abbey gates at a time when there was no welfare state. CAS continues today, indeed is the oldest charity in the town.
- When women were first allowed to stand in local elections in 1907 she stood and won a seat in the same year. As a Borough Councillor she served on the health, hospital and free library committees of the then High Wycombe Town Council.
- In 1908 she was nominated to become the first lady mayor in England but due to last minute intrigues, she failed to get elected by just 2 votes. She held no resentment.
- Having lost her seat in 1913 she continued to undertake voluntary work for the diocese and the county education committee.
- She was also a governor of 3 other Wycombe schools - RGS, Technical Institute, WHS - mentoring the Headmistress of the time too. She was also a Justice of the Peace.
- Paid for and set-up the Dove Window in All Saints Parish Church which depicts 17 famous women who have played their part in history. As an afterthought, perhaps, there are also inscribed the names of 15 other famous women along with an aeroplane.
- She was modest always praising the work of her staff and rejecting the often high praise given to her.
- She also introduced lacrosse into Britain, after seeing it being played when she visited Canada.