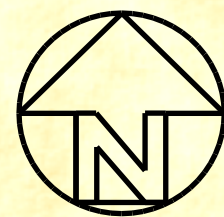
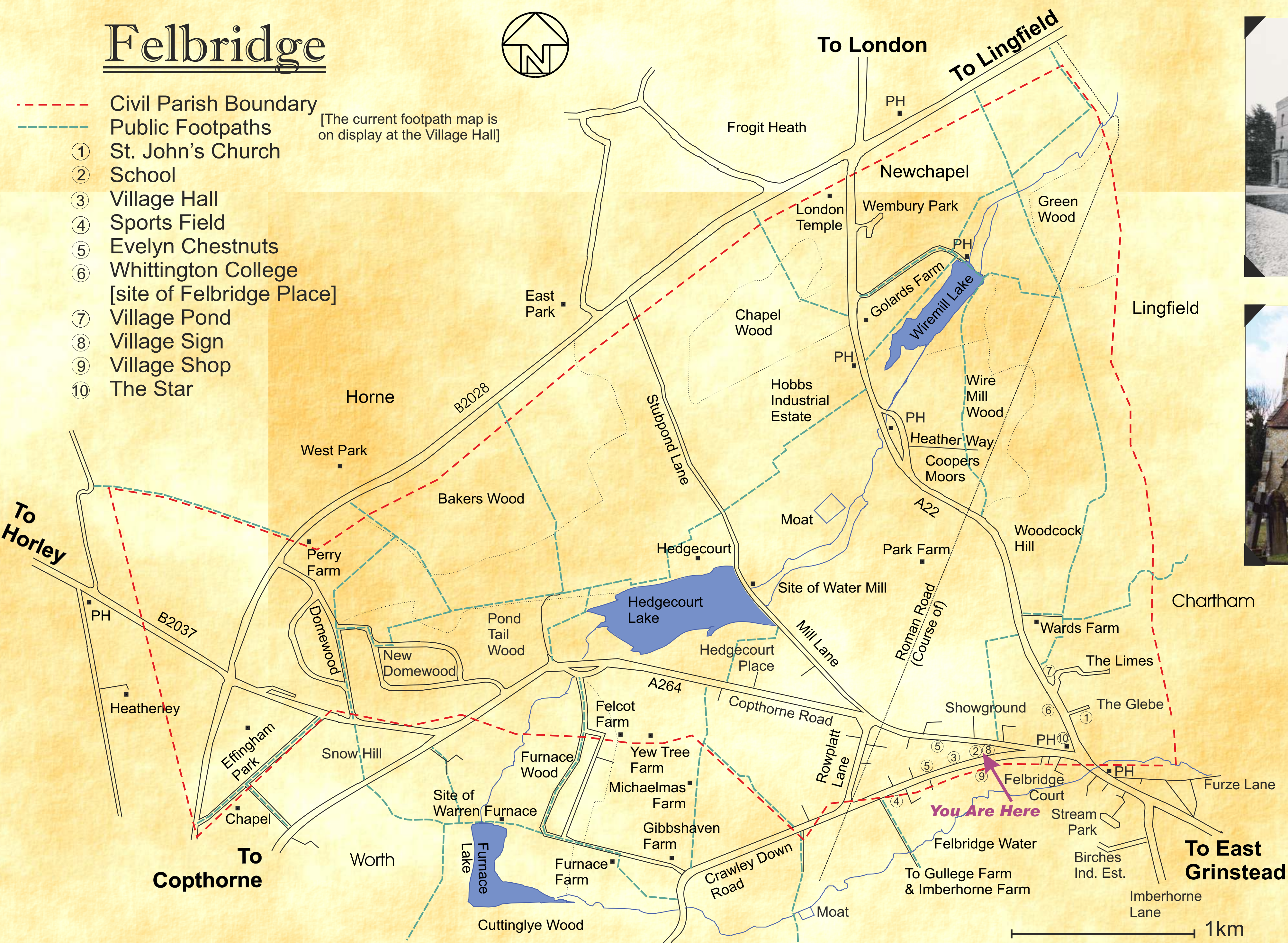


Felbridge



--- Civil Parish Boundary
 --- Public Footpaths
 [The current footpath map is on display at the Village Hall]

- ① St. John's Church
- ② School
- ③ Village Hall
- ④ Sports Field
- ⑤ Evelyn Chestnuts
- ⑥ Whittington College
[site of Felbridge Place]
- ⑦ Village Pond
- ⑧ Village Sign
- ⑨ Village Shop
- ⑩ The Star



⑥ **Felbridge Place (1910) now the site of Whittington College**
 The Felbridge branch of the Evelyn family had originated in Nutfield and had made their money producing gunpowder for the Crown. The Evelyn family first purchased part of 'Felbridge Heath' in 1588. Felbridge House (later Felbridge Place) was built about 1692 by George Evelyn, being later modified and extended in 1763 by James Evelyn after he inherited the estate from his father Edward. By 1748, the Edward Evelyn owned the manor of Hedgecourt and the original Felbridge lands extended from Felbridge Water to West Park Road and from Snow Hill to Chartham.
 In 1965 the Worshipful Company of Mercers bought Felbridge Place and its immediate pleasure grounds to provide land for the relocation of Whittington College. The Whittington College almshouses were founded in 1424 from the fortune of Richard 'Dick' Whittington, Lord Mayor of London.



① **The Church of St. John the Divine**
 The church was constructed by the Gatty family in 1865 to replace a small chapel built by the Evelyn family that stood opposite. George and Frances Gatty had purchased the Evelyn Estate in 1855. George Gatty had initiated the idea of building a church in Felbridge but unfortunately did not live to see the project completed. His son, Charles Henry Gatty took over the project and in 1865 the church was completed. The church is built of Wealden rubble by William Henry White, an eminent architect who had studied under Sir George Gilbert Scott.
 Unfortunately all of the original stained glass windows were destroyed by a bombing raid in August 1940. They were replaced after the war, the east and one of the north windows being designed by Geoffrey Webb, master glass painter whose trade mark is a spiders web.



⑤ **The Evelyn Chestnuts**
 The avenues of sweet or Spanish chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*) were planted in 1714 by the Evelyn family to celebrate the return of a protestant monarch (George I) after his succession to the English throne through the act of settlement. This act ensured that the English crown could only pass to protestant descendants of James I.
 There were originally 104 trees planted with 52 trees in each avenue. One avenue is very visible along the Crawley Down Road whilst the other follows the side of an old road across the common and is best seen in the grounds at the rear of the Village Hall.
 The trees were each planted half a chain (33 feet or 10m) apart. Only 40 of the original trees have survived, the three largest trees stand at the junction of Twitten Lane and Rowplatt Lane with a girth of 6.2m.



Hedgecourt Lake and Mill (1884)
 The three lakes in Felbridge are all man-made, being flooded in the mid 1500's to serve the iron industry which was being re-established. Iron working in Felbridge had been taking place at a much smaller scale during the Roman period. In the 16th century the iron blast furnace operated from Furnace Wood whilst Hedgecourt and Wiremill lakes provided water for a hammer mill at what is now The Wiremill, whilst Hedgecourt Mill operated as a corn mill until the early 20th century.



② **Felbridge School (1910)**
 Felbridge School was established in 1783 by the formation of a School Charity by James Evelyn to provide an education for 8 boys and 4 girls from the local area. James Evelyn was the lord of the manor of Felbridge and lived at Felbridge Place (see above). The original school house faces the Village Green and is also where the schoolmaster lived. The school house is the oldest surviving school building in Surrey still used for its original purpose.



⑩ **Star Inn (1910)**
 The Star has operated as a public house since at least 1797 located on the junction of the London to Eastbourne road with the road to Crawley. Opposite the Star stood a blacksmiths shop where the horses would have been shod. The star is the emblem of both the sheriffs of Sussex and Surrey, appropriate as it stands at the county boundary. The exterior appearance of the Star hides a much earlier timber framed building dating to at least the 16th century when this was a small farmstead known as Heath Hatch.



⑧ **The Felbridge Village Sign**
 The sign was erected at the tip of the village green in 1984 and was crafted by Jon Jones, blacksmith of Reddick Forge after a design by Parish Councillor, Ken Housman. The design incorporates many of the elements of Felbridge history; the bridge over Felbridge Water with an Evelyn Chestnut. The canon and cannon balls are for the iron industry that flourished in the area, a mill wheel to remind us of the watermill that once stood at Hedgecourt. The squirrels at the bottom are the emblem of Felbridge School.
 The Chestnut trees and a bridge over the water were already used as the badges of the Felbridge Bowling Club and the Felbridge Rifle and Pistol Club. The combined design has since been used by the Parish Council for its Chairmans badge of Office and logo.

This board has been prepared by the
Felbridge & District History Group
 for Felbridge Parish Council. 2012

