

The Naming and Numbering of Streets and Buildings

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Policy Statement

The naming and numbering of streets and buildings in Bromsgrove, is controlled by Bromsgrove District Council under the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847. The purpose of this control is to make sure that any new street names and building names and numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring, amongst other things, the effective delivery of mail and that emergency service vehicles are able to locate any address to which they may be summoned.

Anyone wishing to change the name or number of their property or seeking an address for a new property should apply in writing to the Council following the procedures detailed in this policy.

As far as street naming proposals are concerned, we are happy for developers or owners to propose their own preferred names for consideration. However it is recommended that more than one suggestion for a new name should be put forward just in case one fails to meet the criteria outlined in this guidance. It is desirable that any suggested road name should have some connection with the area concerned.

If proposals comply with our Policy on Street Naming and Numbering and, for street names, do not meet with an objection from the Council, the local Parish Council(s) or the Royal Mail Address Development Centre, the new address will be formally allocated and all relevant bodies will be notified. See Appendix A for a list of those to be informed by this Authority.

Where street names or previous numbers have been established without reference to us, we have the authority to issue Renaming or Renumbering Orders, under section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act.

To aid the emergency services, we will endeavour to ensure that where appropriate, if a street has a name and has street signs relating to that name, all properties accessed off of it will be officially addressed to include that street name.

The Council Commitments

- To treat everyone in a fair and equal manner in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- To endeavour to deliver best value and to place the customer first.
- To meet our statutory duties

Statutory Context

Definition of a street

The naming of a street includes any road, square, court, alley or thoroughfare, within the limits of the Towns Improvements Clauses Act 1847 or relates to any thoroughfare which when named will be included in an official postal address.

Public Health Act 1925

Section 19 (Adoptive Provision)

Provides the Council with the duty to ensure that the name of every street which is maintained at public expense is shown in a conspicuous position and also to alter or renew it if it becomes illegible.

Anyone found guilty of damaging or removing a sign is liable to prosecution.

Signs for private streets are the responsibility of the residents.

Town Improvement Clause Act 1847

Section 21:

This section gives the power to the Council to alter the street name or any part of a street and assign a street name to all or part of a street name where a name has not been given.

We may, with the consent of two thirds of the rate payers and people who are liable to pay council tax in any street, alter the name of the street or any part of the street name. The Council will only consider this if it has received the request and can provide proof of consent from the required number of residents.

In such instances we will consult with Royal Mail, Fire Authorities and Police Authorities.

In the event of an appeal, details would be sent to:-

(continued)

Jerry White

Local Government Ombudsman

The Oaks No 2

Westwood Way

Westwood Business Park

Coventry CV4 8JB

Phone: 024 7682 0000

Fax: 024 7682 0001

For further information go to www.lgo.org.uk

Section 64:

The Council can initiate to be put up or painted the number(s) to the house(s), as it thinks fit.

Section 65:

The Occupiers of houses and other buildings in streets must mark them with such numbers as the Council approve and they must renew them whenever the Council think it reasonably necessary.

Where an occupier fails to do this in a week from the notice from us, they are liable to a fine in the magistrates' court if we decide to pursue them. We can mark or renew the numbers and the occupier must pay the Council costs of the work where we have had to take this course of action.

Power to charge under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003

A practicing value for money authority may charge a person for providing a service if the authority is authorised, but not required, to provide the service – that is the service must be discretionary. There must be a power to provide the service, the person receiving the service must agree to its provision, and the charge must not exceed the cost of providing the service.

The Council is not permitted to charge for street naming services (since the duty to provide this service is not discretionary), but it can charge for the numbering of houses and other buildings (which is a discretionary service) by virtue of section 64 and 65 of the 1847 Act coupled with section 93 of the Local Government 2003 Act.

Specific Policy Areas

Naming Streets and Numbering Houses

Section 64 of The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 requires Councils to ensure houses and buildings are “marked with numbers as they think fit”. We also have a responsibility to make sure that the street names are displayed. Should any person destroy, deface or put up another number or name other than the official one, then that person shall be liable to a fine of £200 under the provisions of Criminal Justice Act 1982 for every such offence.

While we are the authority for naming streets, in practice we follow the recommendation of the Street Naming and Numbering team, as long as it meets the naming criteria.

Property developers may also suggest names for new streets. These will be received by us and checked against our criteria.

The Authority will consider the name(s) and may approve, otherwise they may suggest their own. The Council will follow any suggestion of a Parish Council as long as it meets the naming criteria. In cases where the Parish Council suggestion does not meet the criteria a decision will be made by the Corporate Director - Services in conjunction with the Head of Service for Planning and Environmental Services.

All costs for the erection of signs for new streets will be borne by the property developer. There is a recommended specification for the signs and their preferred locations and we must be contacted for advice.

Maintenance of street signs becomes the Council’s responsibility once a street has been adopted.

It is unlawful to erect a street nameplate or a property nameplate until the said name has been confirmed in writing by the District Council:

Note: Contravention attracts a fine of £200 under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 37(2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences). There is also a daily penalty not exceeding £1.

Criteria for naming streets (Residential and industrial)

General Information

The Council will use these guidelines when agreeing a new number or address. Developers and individuals should follow these guidelines for any suggested street names:

New street names should try to avoid duplicating any similar name already in use in a town/village or in the same postcode area.

A variation in the terminal word, for example, "street", "road", "avenue", will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name. A common request is to repeat existing names in a new road or building title (for example a request for "St Mary's Close" off an existing St Mary's Way, near St Mary's Church) This is not acceptable as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency situation.

This is in line with Government guidance found in **Department of Transport Circular No Roads 3/93**

In general the following guidelines should be adhered to:-

1. Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell, in general, words of more than three syllables should be avoided.
2. Avoid aesthetically unsuitable names such as Gasworks Road, Tip House, Coalpit Lane, or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation like Hoare Road, Typple Avenue, etc.
3. Preferably a new street or building name should not begin with 'The'.
4. Subsidiary names (i.e. a row of buildings within an already named road being called '.....Terrace') should not be used.
5. **We will not adopt any unofficial 'marketing' titles used by developers in the sale of new properties.**

6. All new street names should ideally end with one of the following suffixes:

Street (for any thoroughfare)

Road (for any thoroughfare)

Way (for major roads)

Avenue (for residential roads)

Drive (for residential roads)

Grove (for residential roads)

Lane (for residential roads)

Gardens (for residential roads) subject to there being no confusion with any local open space

Place (for residential roads)

Crescent (for a crescent shaped road)

Court/Close (for a cul-de-sac or a specific building only)

Square (for a square only)

Hill (for a hillside road only)

Circus (for a large roundabout)

Vale (for residential roads)

Rise (for residential roads)

Row (for residential roads)

Wharf (for residential roads)

Mews (for residential roads)

Terrace - For a terrace of houses (provided it is not a subsidiary name).

Dene ([For residential roads only)

Rise ([For exceptional use)

Mead

Suffixes needing careful consideration as it may give a false impression of location

End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Wharf, Walk, Park, Meadow.

(All these words can, of course be incorporated in a street name provided it terminates with an appropriate suffix (i.e. Mile End Road).)

Exceptions:

Single or dual names without suffixes are acceptable in appropriate places (for example, Broadway for major roads only) such names will have to be approved and be appropriate for the locality.

All new pedestrian ways should end with one of the following suffixes:

Walk

Path

Way

For private houses it is sufficient that the name should not repeat the name of the road or that of any other house or building in the same postcode area, see Procedure for Address Changes below.

The use of North, East, South or West (as in Alfred Road North and Alfred Road South, or East or West) is only acceptable where the road is continuous and passes over a major junction. It is not acceptable to have the road, if the road is two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two sections to be called the same.

The Council will avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible, within a borough. For example, Alfred Road and Alfred Close or Churchill Road and Birch Hill Road.

The use of a name which relates to people either living or those alive during living memory should be avoided if possible.

The use of tree names should be avoided mainly due to the duplication of many existing streets already named within Bromsgrove District This includes all names based on "Orchard"

The use of names that pertain to the Royal Household should also be avoided, as to use such a name may require Royal Assent from the Privy Council.

The Council's criteria for assigning a new Postal Address

After getting a request for an address for property/properties which currently have not been addressed, the Council will first check for approved planning permission. If this has been granted then we will start the process of creating a new address.

If the dwelling/industrial unit does not have Planning Permission

The Council will start the addressing process, providing the properties have been successfully assessed for Council Tax or National Non-Domestic Rates and as long as these properties have a secure mail delivery point.

The Council will not give a **number** to properties without relevant planning permissions. Only dwelling names will be accepted in these circumstances. If an applicant fails to provide an acceptable dwelling name to a non-permitted development then a descriptive name will be issued. Such names can be changed later by the applicant following the standard procedure (this will incur our standard fee). The reason behind this is to ensure the numbering sequence of any street is not disrupted by additional properties which have not gained proper planning permission and therefore are likely to be subject to enforcement action.

Issuing an address to properties without planning permission will have no bearing on planning matters or be capable of being used in support of any planning appeal.

Under no circumstances will we grant an official address without either planning permission or an assessment for council tax being in place. This includes agricultural and other land. This conforms to Royal Mail policy and guidelines.

Houseboats

All moored houseboats will form part of the Council's property gazetteer which in turn forms part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer.

We will only request an official address from Royal Mail where we have an operational requirement to do so or we believe the property is being used for permanent residency in the District and therefore subject to Council Tax. This will assist any emergency response and create a unique record for each property for future use. Such addresses will have to meet Royal Mail's requirements for secure

delivery points and we will inform our enforcement section about the any believed change of use.

Providing Postcodes

When an approved address is agreed by all parties, Royal Mail will confirm a Postcode. The maintenance and any future changes to this Postcode are The Royal Mail's responsibility.

Address Locality

Localities within the official postal address are the responsibility of Royal Mail. Where applicants object to a locality name in their postal address, the Councils Street Name and Numbering team will advise them to consult Royal Mail, who has a procedure laid down in their code of practice by the Postal Services Commission for adding or amending locality details.

The Council does however; remind applicants that postal addresses are not geographically accurate descriptions, but routing instructions for Royal Mail staff and they can and do contain names for villages, towns and cities that can be several miles away.

General Guidelines for numbering buildings

- A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other except that, for a cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars and similar will not be numbered.
- A proper sequence shall be maintained, with the number 13 not normally being omitted unless specifically requested. And once numbered we will not normally re-number properties. We will only renumber a property where there can be shown to be consistent delivery problems.

- Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the **main entrance** is to be found.
- If a multiple occupancy building has entrances in more than one street, then each entrance can be numbered in the appropriate road if required.
- In residential buildings (e.g., blocks of flats) it is usual to give a street number to each dwelling where the block is up to six storeys in height. When the block exceeds this height or there are not sufficient numbers available because of existing development, it should be given a name and numbered separately internally. Such names will be treated in the same way as house names.
 - All new block names should ideally end with one of the following suffixes:
 - House
 - Court – residential and office block only.
 - Point – high block residential only.
 - Tower – high block offices or residential.
- The Council will use numbers followed by letters where there is no alternative. For example these are needed when one large house in a road is demolished and replaced by a number of smaller houses. To include the new houses in the numbered road sequence would involve renumbering all the higher numbered houses on that side of the road. To avoid this each new house should be given the number of the old house with either A, B, C or D added. Letters will also be used if the new development were to lie prior to the numbering scheme commencing. For example, if 4 houses were built prior to the first property number 2. The new dwellings would become 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D. This is to aid emergency service response and mail delivery.

We will endeavour to avoid using suffixes to numbers wherever possible. For new developments where additional properties have been requested after initial numbering we will renumber the entire street. This will incur a per property charge.

- For private houses in existing unnumbered roads it is essential that the houses are officially allocated names, which are registered with the emergency services. Anyone wishing to change the name of their unnumbered house must also apply to have the property registered.

Where a property has a number, it must be used and displayed.

Where a name has been given to a property which also has an official number, the number must always be included in any correspondence. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative.

This is enforceable under section 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847. The Council do not need to be informed of name changes to properties that have official numbering, however if provided the authority will store the property name as data on our systems as an alias reference only.

This applies both to domestic and commercial property. This is to ensure consistency of records over time, reduce costs and aid delivery of mail and emergency service response.

- The Council will enforce numbering of properties without numbers, for example in streets where all properties have names or those where numbers are not being displayed.

In addition to these guidelines developers and building owners should be aware that planning permission maybe required in the following instances when adding a physical address to a building:

- Listed buildings: if the proposed name/number display would affect the special character of the building.

Even relatively small-scale displays or alterations may require listed building consent.

It is also possible that a nameplate attached to a listed building could be regarded as an advertisement and the following condition maybe applied

- Advertisement Control: it is possible that a display may be deemed to be a sign requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

Allocation of Postal Addresses to New Developments, (both individual & multiple)

The property developer should not give any postal addresses, whether implied or by using development names, including a postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (for example via solicitors or estate agents) before formal approval has been ratified and issued by Bromsgrove District Council We will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

Applicants must contact Bromsgrove District Council prior to a formal application in order to get advice and guidance on our naming/numbering policy and the positioning of nameplates.

The applicant or developer may suggest a possible name or names for any new street(s). Several suggestions for names can be made in case the Council, Royal Mail or public make an objection.

Initial approval for street names will be sought from Royal Mail. If Royal Mail objects to a name an alternative will need to be suggested, in which case those suggestions forwarded by the relevant Parish Councils will be the only alternative ones considered.

The proposed street names are then forwarded to the relevant Parish Council(s) for their approval. Parish Councils can at this stage object and suggest their own names that conform to the Council's and Royal Mail policies, however there will be a strict time limit of 30 days to object and suggest new names.

While we are the authority for naming streets, in practice we will follow any recommendation of the Local Parish Council affected, as long as it meets the naming criteria.

Where the Council cannot agree, final approval of street names will be given by the Corporate Director–Services in conjunction with the Head of Service for E-government and Customer Services.

The developer will cover the initial costs of ordering and sighting of the street nameplates. The Council will cover maintenance costs once the street has been officially adopted.

Numbering of the new street(s) will be carried out following the guidelines within this policy. All properties on newly named streets will be allocated numbers. All new properties on existing streets will be numbered unless the existing properties on that street all have official dwelling names and no numbers, or in the exceptional circumstances outlined under the section “Guidelines for numbering buildings”

When numbering is complete the Council will contact all the bodies listing in Appendix A.

Procedure for individual requests for Address Changes

If the property has a house number, it will not normally be possible to replace the number with a name. In cases of dispute the Corporate Director– Services in conjunction with the Head of Service for Planning and Environmental Health Services will decide. These will only be considered where it can be shown that the current numbering system causes delivery problems or emergency response issues, evidence of this will be obtained via the records of the body making the complaint. Also, if more than one property is affected then the agreement of all owners inconvenienced will have to be obtained if a global change is required.

To request a change to an address, the owner must give us either by email [llpgqueries@bromsgrove.gov.uk] or in writing, the following

- the existing property name, road name and postcode
- the proposed new property name
- a suitable plan showing the exact location of the property if the property is not easily identifiable from the existing address.
- a date from which the house name should be changed (if not immediate)

Requests can only be accepted from the owners of properties; tenants wishing to change a property name must seek the permission in writing of the owner and submit a copy of the authorisation letter to the Council.

We cannot formally change a property name where the property is in the process of being purchased, that is, until exchange of contracts, although we can give guidance on the acceptability of a chosen name before this.

A check is made by the Council to ensure there is no other property in the location with the same or similar name. Royal Mail will then be asked for their opinion on the suitability of the chosen name in case it may cause delivery problems due to the similarity with other locally named properties. Royal Mail cannot guarantee mail delivery if their advice is ignored. In these situations, we will formally advise the applicant against the name and also contact those other affected properties. Owners/residents of affected properties may take legal action if they have delivery problems caused by such name changes that are contradictory to advice given.

Once all checks are satisfactorily complete and any necessary fees received, the Council will change the name of the property and advise the relevant parties including Royal Mail, Ordnance Survey, and Council Tax, the Local Land and Property Gazetteer team and emergency services. A full list of those to be informed is included in Appendix A.

The Council will then confirm in writing to the owner of the property, the new official address, along with a map extract where applicable.

Procedure to name/re-name an existing street

All such requests should originate from either the relevant Parish Council, or Councillor for the Ward concerned. Parish Councils/Councillors can only make such a request if they can demonstrate that the request is for a bona fide concern that is causing problems and also owners/residents of all the affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement.

Once raised by the Parish Council/Councillor and the request for change is accepted by the Council, we will confirm with Royal Mail that the new name is acceptable and seek final confirmation from the Corporate Director–Services in conjunction with the Head of Service for Planning and Environmental Health Services.

All costs associated with providing and erecting name plates, except in exceptional circumstances, will be met by the Council, and once sited, the Council will maintain all necessary name plates.

Who is responsible for delivery?

The Street Name and Numbering team within the ICT Service in consultation with the Planning and Environmental Health Department, Council Tax section and Elections Service.

Performance Monitoring

The Street Name and Numbering team will pass all requests for **new street names** to the relevant Council officers as mentioned above, , who will pass back their recommendations; the Council will normally complete the process within 30 days. If no recommendations or comments are received within the time period given then it will be deemed to be accepted and the next stage of notification will commence

All requests for property name changes will be dealt with in 10 working days. *Please note, it may take at least six months for name changes to take effect in the systems used by other companies and organisations.*

Policy Consultation

This policy has been written by the Street Name and Numbering team in consultation with the Corporate Director-Services and Legal and Democratic Services and has been discussed by the Corporate Management Team.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years. All charges and standard correspondence will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Service – E-Government & Customer Services in conjunction with the Corporate Director – Services.

Appendix A – Organisation who we inform of new or changed addresses

Valuation Office Agency

Land Registry

BT Newsites

British Gas Transco etc

Ambulance Service

Power Distribution Services

Hereford & Worcestershire Fire & Rescue Service

Navigation Technologies Ltd

Geographers A-Z Map Company

National Land & Property Gazetteer

West Mercia Constabulary

West Midlands Constabulary

Worcestershire County Council (Various departments)

Severn Trent Water

Ordnance Survey

Royal Mail Delivery Office Manager –

Internally:

Council Tax

Planning

Environmental Health,

Land Charges

Electoral Registration

Appendix B Bromsgrove Council Contact Details

Principal GIS Officer
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove B60 1AA
Tel: 01527 881425
Fax:

e-mail j.knott@bromsgrove.gov.uk

GIS Support Officer
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove B60 1AA
Tel: 01527 881684
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e-mail l.farmer@bromsgrove.gov.uk or s.atkins@bromsgrove.gov.uk

General Enquires
e-mail llpgqueries@bromsgrove.gov.uk