



# **STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING PROPERTY NAME CHANGES GUIDELINES**

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# Street Naming & Numbering – Guidelines

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance document is to provide advice to developers and building occupiers on the naming and numbering procedure of West Somerset Council. The address of a property has become a very important issue. Organisations such as emergency services, postal deliveries, and the general public need an efficient and accurate means of locating and referencing properties.
- 1.2 The council has statutory powers under the Public Health Act 1925 and the Local Government Act 1972 to control the naming of streets and numbering of buildings within the District of West Somerset. 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, that emergency service vehicles are able to speedily locate any address to which they may be summoned and the effective delivery of mail.
- 1.3 Anyone wishing to change the name or number of their property or seeking an address for a new property should apply by completing the relevant application form.
- 1.4 As far as street naming proposals are concerned, the Council is happy for developers or owners to propose their own preferred names for consideration. However, it is recommended that two suggestions for a new name should be put forward in case one or more fails to meet the criteria outlined in this guidance. Proposed street names should wherever possible have a local geographical or historical association.
- 1.5 In line with most other Authorities there is a charge made for the administrative side of the street naming and numbering function and currently fees are shown on the relevant application form.

## 2 Naming Street and Numbering Houses

- 2.1 Applications can be made by:
  - Individuals or developers building new houses, commercial or industrial premises or
  - Individuals or developers undertaking conversions of existing residential, commercial or industrial premises which will result in the creation of new properties or premises.
  - Individual property owners wishing to change the name of their property (unless a numbered property in which case the property must still include the number)

- 2.2 Applications for new addresses should be submitted as soon as possible after planning permission for the proposal has been granted. This is important, as utility companies are often reluctant to install services where an official postal address has not been allocated.
- 2.3 Applications can be made by completing the relevant form, which can be downloaded at [www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/](http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/). The completed form and plans should be returned to the address at the end of the document.
- 2.4 If an application is submitted at a late stage of the development, problems could arise, especially if the street names suggested are rejected and purchasers have bought properties marketed under an unofficial marketing title. It should be made clear in any marketing literature distributed to prospective purchasers that marketing names for developments are subject to approval, and therefore liable to change. Some occupiers could feel aggrieved by the loss of a supposedly prestigious address and its replacement with an address that falls within the Council's guidelines as set out in this document.

### **3 Application Process**

- 3.1 Once an application has been received the GIS/Street Naming & Numbering Officer will check that there is no duplication of existing street names/property names within close proximity of the development.
- 3.2 The GIS/Street Naming & Numbering Officer will check that the proposed street names/property details are in accordance with the General Street Naming Conventions and Building Naming and Numbering Conventions as outlined in Section 4 and 5.
- 3.3 Views of the relevant Parish Council will be considered as appropriate. On occasions it may be necessary to obtain agreement for the proposed name/numbering from the relevant committee. This will be carried out at the discretion of the GIS/Street Naming & Numbering Officer.
- 3.4 Once a Street Naming and Numbering application has been approved the applicant will be sent confirmation detailing the approved address(es), together with a copy of the original plan edited to show the new street and property numbers if applicable.
- 3.5 Following approval, details of the street names and properties will be communicated to all the bodies listed in Appendix A.
- 3.6 The developer will be responsible for the cost and installation of street nameplates. Maintenance of street signs becomes the Council's

responsibility once a street has been adopted. Street nameplates must meet the specification as set out at Appendix B.

## **4 Street Naming Conventions**

When naming a new street the following conventions should be considered:

- 4.1 New street names should ideally not duplicate any similar name already in use in a town or village in close proximity or in the same postcode area.
- 4.2 Street names should not be difficult to pronounce, awkward to spell or where punctuation may give rise to variations.
- 4.3 Names will not be considered that may be construed as contravening any aspect of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy or would undermine the cohesiveness of local communities.
- 4.4 In order to avoid confusion with building names, street names must not include the word "The".
- 4.5 Where possible, the street name should reflect the history or geography of the site or area.
- 4.6 Names that may be taken as advertising (i.e. company name) will not be accepted.
- 4.7 All new street names should ideally end with one of the following suffixes:
  - Avenue – residential roads
  - Close – cul-de-sac
  - Court – cul-de-sac
  - Crescent – crescent shaped road
  - Drive – residential roads
  - Gardens – residential roads, subject to there being no confusion with local open space
  - Grove – residential roads
  - Hill – residential roads
  - Lane – residential roads
  - Mews – residential roads
  - Place – residential roads
  - Rise – residential roads
  - Road – any thoroughfare
  - Row – residential roads
  - Square – square only
  - Street – any thoroughfare
  - Vale – residential roads
  - Way – any thoroughfare

- 4.8 The use of a name, which relates to people either living or those alive during living memory, should be avoided if possible. In certain circumstances a person's name may be accepted if it is used to commemorate achievement or notable service to the community.

## **5 Building Naming and Numbering Conventions**

When naming/numbering a new building the following conventions should be considered:

- 5.1 A new street should be numbered with the odd numbers on the left and the even numbers on the right from the entrance of the street, except in the case of a cul-de-sac, where consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- 5.2 All numbers should be used in the proper sequence. West Somerset has for a number of years, and will continue to exclude number 13 from the numbering sequence. Once numbered the Council will not normally re-number properties. The Council will only re-number a property where there can be shown to be consistent delivery problems or during the course of a development.
- 5.3 Where an existing street or similar is to be extended, it would be appropriate to continue to use the same street name. This would include the continuation of the street numbering.
- 5.4 Buildings (including those on corner plots) will be numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found. The manipulation of numbering in order to secure a prestigious address, or to avoid an address with undesirable associations, will not be authorised.
- 5.5 If a building has entrances in more than one street, is a multi-occupied building and each entrance leads to a separate occupier, then each entrance should be numbered in the appropriate road.
- 5.6 Flats will be numbered in the form of Flat 1, Flat 2 etc. Any other form of naming or numbering is discouraged (e.g. First Floor Flat or Flat A is unacceptable and will be known as Flat 1).
- 5.7 The Council will endeavour to follow the existing numbering sequence for a street, or to use numbers followed by letters where there is no alternative. For example these are included 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 A, B C etc added. In fill developments will be given suffixes relating to the lower numbered property (e.g. two properties between 15 and 7 would be 15A and 15B). Suffixes will not be used for development situated prior to a numbering sequence. In this case individual property names would be requested..

- 5.8 Historically, rural areas do not always have a numbering sequence. Individual houses and small developments in these areas on existing unnumbered roads will require property names. The name should not repeat the name of the road or that of any houses or building in the area.
- 5.9 Where a property has a number it must be used and displayed. Where a name has been given to a property together with its official number, the number must always be included and displayed as well as the name. The name alone cannot be regarded as an alternative.
- 5.10 The official address will be the property number and any name will be held in the LLPG as an alternative for completeness of identification only. This applies to both domestic and commercial properties. This is to ensure consistency of records over time, reduce costs and aid delivery of mail and emergency service response.
- 5.11 Requests to change a property name can only be accepted from the owners of properties and not tenants, if the Council is in any doubt that the applicant is not the owner, proof of ownership may be requested.
- 5.12 The council cannot formally change a property name where the property is in the process of being purchased, that is, until the exchange of contracts, although guidance can be given on the acceptability of a chosen name before this.

## **6 Renaming and Renumbering of Existing Streets**

- 6.1 On rare occasions it may be necessary to rename or renumber a street and is usually only done as a last resort when:
  - There is confusion over a streets name and /or property numbering
  - The residents are unhappy with their street name
  - The number of named-only properties in a street is deemed to be causing confusion for emergency services, visitors or deliveries.
- 6.2 In such instances it is the responsibility of those requesting a change to canvass existing residents and conduct a ballot of the local residents on the issue. This will ensure that residents' views are taken into account and the results must be submitted to the Council. In addition they must consult the Royal Mail for their position on the issue. To change a

street name we will require 75% support from the local residents on the issue as any subsequent change can be very disruptive and cause individuals to have to change all their personal address details. This is a very time consuming process and can be very emotive for those involved and should therefore only be contemplated as a last resort.

## **7 The NLPG and LLPG**

- 7.1 The Council is responsible for maintaining information relating to West Somerset in the national Address Base products. This is done by maintaining a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG).
- 7.2 The LLPG and NLPG will be updated to include all authorised new street names, building names and numbering. These will be made in accordance with British Standard BS7666 – Spatial Data-sets for geographical referencing.
- 7.3 West Somerset Council is not responsible for issuing new postcodes. Through liaison with Royal Mail, the Council will be advised of postcodes for new addresses but they will not issue a postcode for a new street or property until requested to do so by the Council. Any queries about postcodes for existing properties can be dealt with by Royal Mail by calling 0906 302 1222 (postcode enquiries) or via their website at [www.royalmail.com/portal/rm/](http://www.royalmail.com/portal/rm/)



## **8 Further Information and Advice**

For further advice on any aspect of street naming and numbering, please contact Karen Wright Authority Address Custodian on 01643 703704 or email [kwright@westsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:kwright@westsomerset.gov.uk).

These guidance notes together with appropriate forms can be found on our website – [www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk](http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk) or the Council Offices, West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton, Taunton Somerset TA4 4QA or Customer Centre, 1 – 3 Summerland Road, Minehead TA24 5BP.

## **Appendix A**

Organisations the Council informs of new or changed addresses.

Externally:

Outside agencies such as emergency services and other government departments are notified as part of the update process for the LLPG via the national central hub.

Internally:

Council Tax  
Electoral Register  
Building Control  
Planning

## Appendix B

### West Somerset Council Street Name Sign Specifications

Normally two street nameplates will be required in black 100mm MOT capitals on a white 200mm plate, stating STREET NAME , complete with No Through Road symbol (816.1 Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2002) (if required). The No Through Road Symbol should be for the full depth of the sign.

Letters should be 100mm (or 50mm) MOT revised or 90mm (or 50mm) Kindersley black or brown on white background.

Plates should be 3mm UV stabilised polycarbonate-non-reflectorised 200mm (or 100mm) in depth. 3mm 11 SWG Die Pressed Aluminium can also be used (see note below re Conservation areas)

Name plates fixed to backing boards are to be secured with double sided high adhesive tape or a suitable adhesive at the top and bottom edge of the nameplate, and capped top and bottom with black powder coated aluminium channels to protect exposed edges of sign face. These should be fixed with anti-vandal black stainless steel screws.

Name plates must be fitted by either of the following two methods,

- Pavement areas / Conservation areas, Black Galvanized Frame
- Roads or Highways, Black Re-cycled plastic units.

Nameplates should be sited at a 40 ° splay to the junction

The top of the street nameplate should be 915mm above ground level

The signpost legs should be set in a depth of at least 400mm. The legs are to be 80 x 80mm minimum recycled plastic with the top bevelled to a point.

Recycled material should be used where ever possible.

### Conservation Area

Where the nameplates are to be erected within an area of conservation plastic signs and post sets must **NOT** be used, only metal is permitted. If unsure you are advised to contact the council at an early stage to establish the classification of the area and whether consultation with other agencies is required i.e. Exmoor national park etc as other specifications may come into force

## **Nameplate Locations**

Street nameplates should be fixed as near as possible to street corners, so as to be easily readable by drivers as well as pedestrians. The nameplate should normally be within 3 meters of the intersection of the kerb lines, however given some more rural locations this may not be practicable and so may be varied up to a maximum of 6 meters.

Street nameplates should be mounted so that the lower edge of the sign plate is approximately 1 metre above ground level at sites where they are unlikely to be obscured by pedestrians or vehicles, and at approximately 2.5 meters where obscuration is a problem. They should not be lower than 0.5 meters or higher than 3.5 meters.

Street nameplates should normally be fixed at each street corner. At minor crossroads, particularly in residential areas, one street nameplate on the side of the street positioned on the offside of traffic emerging from the road may be sufficient, except where road names join.

At T-junctions the street nameplate should be placed directly opposite the traffic approaching from the side road.

Where the street name changes at a point other than cross-roads, both names should be displayed at the point of change. It has proved useful to include arrows to indicate clearly to which parts of the street the names refer.

On straight lengths of road without intersections nameplates should be repeated at reasonable intervals with priority given to places such as well-frequented areas such as car parks and places of interest and large road intersections. Given the rural and remote locations of our area sign repetition must be decided upon carefully.

Where two streets branch off obliquely from a common junction with a third street, plates on fingerpost mountings can be useful, however they must not obscure any traffic sign or cause reasonable vision for drivers.

The nameplates should be fixed so that there is a clear space of a least 300mm in every direction between them any other notices, advertisements or other printed or written signs. They should not be incorporated in other direction sign assemblies, but kept distinct and mounted in as standardised manner as possible.

Care should be taken when deciding on the sign location to avoid trees and other plantings that may obscure the sign.

If possible nameplates should be fixed so that they will be illuminated by streetlights.