

Street Name and Numbering Policy

Reviewed

October 2008

Policy Number

G002 – version 4

Policy Approval

Full Council 12 October 2005.

Policy Statement

The naming and numbering of streets and buildings in East Devon, is controlled by East Devon 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 us 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.

If proposals comply with our Policy on Street Naming and Numbering and, for street names, do not meet with an objection from the Town/Parish Councils 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 informed by us.

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 and also where appropriate, all new properties are numbered.

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 and to achieve the targets set out in the Performance Monitoring section.

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 us 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 Clauses Act 1847

Section 21:

This section gives the power to us to alter the street name or any part of a street and assign a street name to all or part of a street 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. We will consider this if the Town or Parish Council 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.

An appeal would be to the Local Government Ombudsman – 21 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1.

Section 64:

We can cause to be put up or painted the numbers to the houses, as we think fit.

Section 65:

The Occupiers of houses and other buildings in streets must mark them with such numbers as we approve and they **must** renew them whenever we 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 our cost 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 best value 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.

So the Council cannot 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 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 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 Town or Parish Council, 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, then forwarded to the Town or Parish Council for consideration.

The Town or Parish Council will consider the name and may approve, otherwise they may suggest their own. We will follow the suggestion of the Town or Parish Council as long as it meets the naming criteria. In cases where their suggestion does not meet the criteria a decision will be made by the Corporate Director - Central Services in conjunction with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

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

Maintenance of street signs becomes our responsibility once a street has been adopted.

It is not lawful to erect a street nameplate until the street name has been confirmed in writing by the District Council:

Note: Contravention attracts a fine under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 37(2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences). A daily penalty rate also applies in this case.

Criteria for naming streets

The Street Name and Numbering team will use these guidelines when agreeing a new number or address. Developers and Town and Parish Councils 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 allowed as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency situation. This is in line with Government guidance found in circular 3/93 .
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- We will not adopt any unofficial ‘marketing’ titles used by developers in the sale of new properties.

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 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)

Exceptions:

Single or dual names without suffixes are acceptable in appropriate places (for example, Broadway for major roads only) such names will have to get Parish/Town Council approval 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 when the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two.

We 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. Only exceptional circumstances will be given consideration and justifications will be required.

The use of tree names should be avoided mainly due to the duplication of many existing streets already named within East Devon. We will only do this if those requesting them show that such confusion is not likely to take place and that the tree name has local relevance. This includes all names based on "Orchard"

Criteria for assigning a new Postal Address

After getting a request for an address for property/properties which currently have no address we will first check for approved planning permission. If this has been granted then we will start the process to create a new address.

If the dwelling does not have Planning Permission

We will start the addressing process if the properties have been successfully assessed for Council Tax and as long as these properties have a secure mail delivery point.

We will not number properties without relevant planning permissions. Only dwelling names will be accepted. If an applicant fails to provide an acceptable dwelling name 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, which may ultimately result in their removal.

Note: It may be necessary to number such a property (if it is situated on a numbered street) once planning permission has been granted.

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 (for a business or residential premise) or an assessment for council tax or NNDR being in place. This includes agricultural and other land. We will not allocate a postal address purely for deliveries or satellite navigation systems unless there is a registered business on site with a secure delivery point. This conforms with Royal Mail policy and guidelines.

Holiday Lets

All holiday lets will eventually be added to our property gazetteer which forms part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer. They will be flagged as non-official and non postal in systems that generate mail. This is to assist emergency response and create a unique record for each property for future use.

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. Such addresses will have to meet Royal Mail's requirements for secure delivery points and we will inform our enforcement section about the 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 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 Street Name and Numbering team will advise them to consult Royal Mail, who have a procedure laid down in their code of practice by the Postal Services Commission for adding or amending locality details.

We will 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 are several miles away.

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.
- Additional properties in streets which are currently numbered, will always be allocated a property number.
- 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 omitted unless specifically requested. 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 and the manipulation of numbering in order to secure a "prestige" address or to avoid an address, which is thought to have undesired associations will not be sanctioned.
- 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 (example, 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.
- We 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.

- Individual houses in existing unnumbered roads will normally require property names. For an infill of two or more properties accessed via a private drive, where we feel it is appropriate, we will agree with the developer a 'sub-road' name, for example 1 – 4 Curlew Cottages, High Street.
- 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. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative. This is enforceable under section 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847. We do not need to be informed of name changes to properties that have official numbers and do not normally store such property names on our systems.

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.

- We will enforce numbering of properties without numbers, for example in streets where all properties have names or those where numbers are not being displayed where this causes serious mail delivery problems or emergency service response issues.

Procedure for New Developments

The property developer should not give any postal addresses, including postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (for example via solicitors or estate agents) before formal approval has been issued by us. We will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

Applicants are encouraged to contact us prior to a formal application in order to get advice on our naming 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 we, Royal Mail or the Parish/Town Council object.

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, otherwise Town/Parish Councils suggestions will be the only ones considered.

The proposed street names are then passed to the relevant Town or Parish Council(s) for approval. Town or Parish Councils can at this stage suggest their own names that conform to our and Royal Mail policies.

While we are the authority for naming streets, in practice we follow the recommendation of the Town or Parish Council, as long as it meets the naming criteria.

Where the Parish or Town Council cannot agree, final approval of street names will be given by the Corporate Director–Central Services in consultation with Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

The developer will cover the initial costs of the street nameplates. We 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 we will contact all the bodies listing in Appendix A.

Procedure for Address Changes

We do not need to be informed of name changes to properties that have official numbers and do not normally store or use property names in such cases.

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–Central Services in consultation with Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee will decide. These will only be considered where it can be shown that the current numbering system causes delivery problems or emergency response issues. Also, if more than one property is affected then the agreement of all owners affected will have to be obtained.

To request a change to an address, the owner must give us either by email or in writing,

- the existing house name, address and postcode
- the proposed new name
- a 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 and not tenants.

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 us 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 local names. 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.

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

We will then confirm in writing to the owner of the property, the new official address.

Procedure to name/re-name an existing street

All such requests have to originate from the relevant Town/Parish Council. Town/Parish Councils can only make such a request if they can demonstrate that the owners/residents of all affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement.

Once raised by the Town/Parish Council we will confirm with Royal Mail that the name is acceptable and seek final confirmation from the Corporate Director–Central Services in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

All costs associated with providing and erecting name plates, except in exceptional circumstances, will have to be met by the Town/Parish Council. Once sited, we will maintain all name plates.

Charging for Street Naming and Numbering Process

We will charge for the Street Naming and Numbering Process as specified in Appendix C.

Local Authorities can charge only where they provide a service if they are authorised, but not required, to provide the service. The charge must not exceed the cost of providing the service.

For Street Naming and Numbering this charge is for:

- renaming existing properties
- alterations in either names or numbers to new developments after initial naming and numbering has been undertaken
- contacting the bodies listed in Appendix A of new/altered addresses.

These charges have to be paid prior to any changes made.

Changes made without contacting us will not be registered with services and organisations listed in Appendix A. These organisations will not be informed until payment is received. We cannot be held liable for mail delivery problems caused by failure to inform us of name changes.

These charges will be reviewed on an annual basis and new charges approved by the Corporate Director–Central Services.

Outcomes

- A modern Street name and Numbering policy which is clear and easily understandable by our staff, developers and members of the public
- Appropriate involvement of all interested groups, including our Town and Parish partners
- Address and street number systems which comply with the needs of the Royal Mail and emergency services.
- Addresses entered and maintained in our systems in British Standard 7666 format
- Recoverable costs for house renaming and where developers seek to renumber and/or rename after their initial proposals have been dealt with.

Who is responsible for delivery?

The Street Name and Numbering team within the ICT Service in consultation with Planning, Council Tax and the Development Control Committee.

Performance Monitoring

The Street Name and Numbering team will pass all requests for new street names to the relevant Town or Parish Council. Once the Town or Parish Council pass their recommendation to us, we will normally complete the process within 30 days.

All requests for property name changes will be dealt with in 10 working days. It may take at least six months for name changes to take effect in 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-Central Services and Legal and Member Services and has been discussed by the Strategic Management Team.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years. Charges and standard correspondence will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Service – ICT in conjunction with the Corporate Director – Central Services.

Related Policies and Strategies

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Customer First Policy

Appendix A – Organisations we inform of new or changed addresses

Valuation Office Agency
Address Development Centre
Plymouth Land Registry Survey Services
Quail Map
BT Newsites
British Gas Transco
West Country Ambulance Service
British Gas Trading
Devon Fire & Rescue Service
Geographers A-Z Map Company
Navigation Technologies Ltd
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Devon County Council Highways
Ordnance Survey
Estate Publications

Internally:
Planning Administration, including Land Charges
Electoral Registration
Council Tax

Appendix B Contact Details

Main East Devon District Council Address

Council Offices
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

Tel: 01395 516551

Fax: 01395 517507

e-mail eddc@eastdevon.gov.uk

Street Name and Numbering

Street Name and Numbering
Council Offices
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

Tel: 01395 516551 ex 2589

Fax: 01395 517509

e-mail snn@eastdevon.gov.uk

Street Scene

Street Scene Services
Council Offices
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

Tel: 01395 517528

Fax: 01395 517504

e-mail: streetscene@eastdevon.gov.uk

Appendix C

Schedule of Street naming and Numbering Charges

Approach to charging

- We are keen to postally address new properties and developments
- We will charge for 'cosmetic' changes and 'reworking' previously completed developments

Renaming a Single Property	£129
Rework to an existing named/numbered development	£129 per address

- Issues which do not fall into the two charging categories above, but which require a 'cosmetic' change to a property address (or property addresses) will be charged in multiples of £129 at the discretion of the GIS office supervisor.