

# STREET NAMING & NUMBERING PROCESS

Finance



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## INTRODUCTION

Plymouth City Council is the Street Naming and Numbering authority for the administrative area of Plymouth. We have a statutory power to name and number streets and to approve and register official property addresses. This statutory function is carried out in accordance with the Public Health Act 1925 (sections 17-19) and is critical in allowing Plymouth City Council to maintain a comprehensive address database which in turn enables:

- Emergency services to locate a property quickly, potentially saving lives
- Post to be delivered efficiently
- Visitors to locate their destination
- Reliable delivery of goods and services by courier companies
- Service providers to maintain their records, whether they are internal departments (for example, ensuring council tax and/or refuse collection) or external companies such as credit rating agencies or utility companies
- An immediate benefit of maintaining a corporately recognised reference address database, the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG), is that anyone within the organisation can gain value from using it.

Street Naming and Numbering is an important function of Plymouth City Council as it allows the Council to maintain a comprehensive, unambiguous and accurate list of addresses covering all properties in Plymouth. We are also responsible for the maintenance of all street nameplates.

This procedure document sets out:

- The legal powers used by Plymouth City Council to exercise its duty in respect of Street Naming and Numbering
- The process to be followed by applicants and the consultation the Council will undertake with affected parties.
- Guidelines for naming and numbering streets and houses that are designed to enable us to meet the overall objective of maintaining a comprehensive, unambiguous and accurate database of all properties within the Plymouth administrative boundary.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to establish the correct process and procedures for the following activities:-

- Naming of new streets
- Allocation of postal numbers to new properties or sub-divisions of existing properties
- Renaming an existing street and allocating appropriate postal numbers accordingly
- Renumbering a property within an existing street

Plymouth City Council, local residents, businesses, visitors and external organisations are all affected by the contents of this procedure.

## STATUTORY CONTEXT

The function consists of statutory obligations and a number of local and national drivers that make it necessary for the Council to define a process for address management:-

**Statutory** – The Council made a resolution to adopt the Public Health Act 1925, sections 17, 18 and 19. This came into operation on the 16th December 1925. This legislation applies to the statutory requirements for naming and renaming of all streets (adopted and unadopted) and the provision of street nameplates.

Numbering / renumbering is also applied under the same Act by necessary implication (AGNEW v. STOCKTON UPON TEES CORPORATION (1968))

**Local** – A number of local protocols have been adopted over the years in line with industry best practice and/or national conventions incorporating our own local approach. The provision of correct address information is of critical importance to local emergency services. Examples:

- A policy was approved by the then Transport Committee, (Minute 78(ii) 23/7/98 refers) to adopt the guidelines as set out in the Department of Transport's Circular Roads 3/93 to avoid using similar sounding or duplicated street names within the same locality.
- At the request of Emergency Services and Royal Mail the practice of using Terrace names as a subsidiary name within another road is no longer allowed to be used. This came about due to difficulties associated with trying to locate named properties quickly. As a consequence a number of major renaming/renumbering schemes were carried out during the 1970s to some roads within Plymouth that were previously made up of named properties within terraces.
- See the [Street Naming Criteria](#) for further details

## **Delegation**

The Council's scheme of delegation gives authority to the Cabinet member to:

- Name or rename roads and streets *on principal routes or the city centre*
- Renumber properties *when less than two-thirds of the residents agree*

This means that the naming or renaming of roads and streets that are either not on principal routes or not in the city centre is an officer decision, subject to the appropriate consultation with Ward Councillors. In the same way, officers have authority to renumber properties where more than two-thirds of the residents agree.

## **POWERS FOR CHARGING AND FEES**

The Local Government Act 2003, Section 93, gives the authority the power to charge for providing the discretionary service associated with this statutory function.

There are a large number of interested parties, statutory undertakers etc, who wish to be made aware of the existence of new addresses. The council has resolved to make a charge for this aspect of the street naming and numbering service.

For each new property created and allocated a number, a fee of £25 is required. In the case of a block of flats £25 per floor level is required.

## **NATIONAL AND LOCAL DRIVERS**

There are a number of drivers that make it necessary for the Council to define a procedure for address management:

### **I. National**

- The Public Health Act 1925 places a statutory obligation on the Council to supply and maintain correct addressing for every property within the Authority.
- All address changes are required to be sent to the NLPG Hub at least once a month to be incorporated within the National Land and Property Gazetteer for onward use by adjoining and partner Authorities such as Police, Fire and Ambulance Services.
- To produce a gazetteer that adheres to the NLPG Data Entry Conventions

## **2. Local**

- The provision of correct address information is of critical importance to local emergency services, postal and delivery services
- The creation of the LLPG is a key building block in the Authority's Value for Money and efficiency saving programmes. By utilising a single address database, Customer Services will be able to accurately record actions against streets and properties which are then input directly into back end systems.

### **The National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)**

All Local Authorities are required to develop a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which is a definitive master list of all land and property addresses within the Authority. This forms part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). The Council is obliged under the Data Co-operation Agreement to create and maintain its own LLPG for transfer to the national hub for inclusion into the NLPG. This agreement is issued to all District, County and Unitary Authorities in England and Wales and provides a legally binding document underpinning a recognition by Government of the substantial social and economic benefit that core reference geography brings.

The LLPG is the definitive master address list for all services to use and has links to other major systems, namely Customer Relation Management (CRM), Electoral Registration, Planning and Local Land Charges.

There are obvious benefits from this, both in terms of efficiency savings and business delivery. By merging system gazetteers we can bring financial and other benefits by discovering properties known by one department but completely unknown to another. Establishing this single corporate address gazetteer avoids duplication of data, maintenance of multiple address gazetteers and enables a joined up response to customer enquiries.

### **The National Street Gazetteer (NSG)**

The Council is obliged under the same Data Co-operation Agreement to maintain a list of all streets within the Authority area. As part of the street naming and numbering process the Authority creates new streets and makes changes to existing streets within its area.

## **NAMING OF STREETS**

When new roads are built, the City Council follows the statutory procedure under the Public Health Act 1925, section 17 for determining street names. The developers of the site are entitled

to submit their own street name suggestions, which should conform to the council's street naming criteria.

In accordance with the Public Health Act Section 17 (2) and (4) the Authority has one month after receipt of a proposed street name to object to the proposed name(s) that the developer has submitted. Where the Council objects to the proposed name the developer has the right to appeal to the local Magistrates Court within 21 days of receiving notice of the Council's objection.

From time to time developers request the Street Naming & Numbering Officer's assistance in finding suitable names for submission. A database of potential names for new roads which have been put forward by members of the public, Councillors etc. is held by the Street Naming & Numbering Officer and further suggestions are welcomed provided they meet with the [Street Naming Criteria](#)

### **Ward Councillors' Consultation**

When the Street Naming & Numbering Officer initially contacts the developer to commence the street naming and numbering process, the appropriate Ward Councillors will also be advised by email of the proposed development. This will give the Councillors opportunity to make contact with the developers in order to put forward or discuss any street name(s) suggestions on behalf of the local residents. Suggested names should comply with the council's street naming criteria as detailed within this policy.

Once a suitable street name is put forward by the developer, the Street Naming & Numbering Officer will consult with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder for Transport regarding the suggested street name. The Ward Councillors have two weeks to respond to the consultation, in which time they can consult further with the local residents.

Subject to majority approval from the Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder the new street name will be officially allocated and published on the Street Naming & Numbering web pages at [Plymouth City Council - Street naming and numbering](#).

If a majority of the Ward Councillors object to the proposed street name the Portfolio Holder for Transport will be consulted for the ultimate decision on whether to serve a notice of objection to the developer.

If the objection is served and the developer is not happy with this outcome they have the right of appeal to the local Magistrates Court within 21 days of being served this notice. The final decision regarding the street name will then lie with the local Magistrates.

### **Street Naming Criteria**

- The name submitted should not duplicate an existing name or sound too similar to an existing road name, this includes using a variation of any name already in use, e.g. Sutton Road is an existing name, therefore Sutton Avenue or any other derivative would not be acceptable (this policy was approved by the then Transport Committee, Minute 78(ii) 23/7/98 refers)

Note: The Street Naming & Numbering Officer will check the Authority's own Local Street Gazetteer (LSG), consult with neighbouring authorities and Royal Mail in order to avoid duplication or similar names within the same postal towns, e.g there are many addresses with the post town of 'Plymouth', which are located within South Hams District Council's boundary.

- The spelling should not give rise to difficulties that are likely to lead to variations causing confusion that could result in early demands for a change of name
- In order to avoid causing offence either by inclusion or exclusion, or to appear biased, a street should not be named after any living person or individual. This is a clear recommendation within the National Data Entry Conventions document (DEC- NLPG) and is considered best practice amongst the NLPG / SNN user community
- In exceptional circumstances should a proposal be made to name a Street after a living individual, on the grounds of them having made an outstanding contribution to the City and its people, these will be permitted if both approval by the individual and unanimous agreement between the Portfolio holder for Transport and appropriate Ward members is received.
- A deceased person's name should not be submitted unless the family of that person has been contacted and given their written permission for the name to be proposed. Dispensation of this requirement will be given in the case of historical names where it can be demonstrated that there are no known living descendants / family members.
- Due consideration will be given to commemorate service men and women with a demonstrable personal connection with Plymouth, who have lost their lives in service of their nation since 1914 (when the borough of Plymouth was formed). With the agreement of the families and provided the names comply with the aforementioned criteria, their names may be proposed for new street naming by way of a respectful memorial to them. Preference will be given to those individuals proposed who have attained a Distinguished Service Award or demonstrated Notable Service.
- Street names that may be considered or construed as obscene, racist or which would contravene any aspect of the council's equal opportunities policies will not be acceptable.
- Street names that may be open to re-interpretation by graffiti or shortening of the name shall be avoided.
- New street names shall not be assigned to new developments when such developments can be satisfactorily included in the current numbering scheme of the street providing access
- The use of Royal names and titles, including the title 'Royal', requires the approval of the Queen, who acts on the advice of the Home Secretary. It can be a lengthy process to seek permission for a Royal name and this should be carried out by the developer / applicant prior to submitting the suggestion to the city council.

## **Naming protocols**

All new street names should end with terminal words such as:

Road

Street

Avenue

Drive

Lane

Place

Gardens

Way

The following names will be used only as indicated:

- Crescent - for a crescent-shaped road only
- Close - for a cul-de-sac only
- Square - for a square only
- Hill - for a hill only
- Mews - officially a term for converted stables in a courtyard or lane but would be considered acceptable for most small terraced developments
- Terrace - for a terrace of houses but not a subsidiary name within another road (this practice was ceased many years ago at the request of Emergency Services and Royal Mail due to the difficulties associated with trying to locate named properties quickly)

All new pedestrian ways will be named as follows:

- Walk
- Path
- Way

## ALLOCATION OF POSTAL NUMBERS TO NEW PROPERTIES OR SUB-DIVISIONS OF EXISTING PROPERTIES

The developer must provide the Authority with a written request to number the site including relevant site plans, preferably before work commences on site. Allocation of addresses will be carried out as early in the development as possible in order to provide address information.

### Numbering Protocols

- Numbering will be allocated with odd numbers on the left side of the road (when entering from the principal road) and even numbers on the right.
- Where a cul-de-sac is developed, the numbering shall be consecutive and in a clockwise direction.
- If the development forms part of an existing street then it will be numbered sequentially into an existing numbering system.
- If the development is an infill site and there are no spare numbers within the sequence, then letters will be suffixed to the numbers (i.e. 10A, 10B etc).
- Number 13 is always omitted when numbering new developments as over the years there have been many requests to the council to renumber properties that were originally numbered 13.
- Where there is a gap in the road where the development is taking place, spare numbers will be retained to allow for any possible future development. Please note however, that this does not indicate any likelihood of planning consent being given.
- Please note that the allocation of a postal address does not serve as confirmation that any building or structure has been authorised under Planning, Building Control or any other

legislation. Owners and/or occupiers may be at risk of enforcement action if any necessary approvals have not been obtained.

## RENAMING AN EXISTING STREET AND ALLOCATING APPROPRIATE POSTAL NUMBERS ACCORDINGLY

Under Section 18 of the Public Health Act 1925 the Council can alter the name and numbers of any street if there is a particular need to do so.

### **Street Renaming Guidelines**

Street renaming will not be undertaken lightly. A renaming request is normally only considered where problems have occurred (or are likely to) for residents, such as problems with emergency services, Royal Mail etc locating properties.

The Council makes a charge for the renaming of a street of £50 per property, plus costs for replacement nameplates. No charge is made if the requirement for the renaming of a street has been requested by the Emergency Services due to confusion or problems in locating a particular street.

Upon receipt of a request to change a street name the Council will give careful consideration to the proposal along with consulting with the Royal Mail and/or Emergency Services if appropriate. Councillors within the relevant ward will be notified of any renaming requests to provide them with an opportunity to consult separately with local residents

### **Renaming Procedure**

- A request to change, alter or correct the name of a street can be made directly to the Council's Street Naming & Numbering Officer, who will summarise the request and then consult the local ward Councillors with details of any recommendations for further action.
- Subject to the Ward Councillors' approval it will necessary to conduct a consultation exercise with all residents living along the street to be changed to obtain their views. This consultation will be open for a period of 4-6 weeks or until enough responses are received from residents to give a clear view of their preference. Residents will be informed of any associated charges and advised that they will only hear again from the Council regarding this matter after the specified timescale, if the formal process for the proposed renaming is to proceed.
- The change of name of a street will only proceed if at least two thirds of the residents are in agreement with the proposed change. If a clear majority is not in favour of the change then the Street Naming and Numbering Officer will confirm to the original applicant(s) and the Ward Councillors that no further action will be taken.
- If the majority of residents are in favour for the proposal to change the name of the street, the Street Naming & Numbering Officer will notify the local Ward Councillors and request approval for the formal process to proceed.
- Once approval has been gained from the respective Ward Councillors, Public Health Act Street Renaming Notices are to be displayed in conspicuous positions at both ends of the street to be renamed for a period of one month (this is a statutory requirement under the Public Health Act 1925, section 18)

- This gives the opportunity for any person aggrieved by the proposed Renaming Order to lodge an appeal with the local Magistrates Court within 21 days of the posting of the Notices.
- If any appeals are lodged it will be necessary to await the outcome of the Magistrates decision.
- Should no objections be submitted or all objections rejected, the Street Renaming Order will come into effect on the date indicated on the Public Health Act Street Renaming Notices.
- The Street Naming & Numbering Officer will confirm in writing to all residents living along the street, and notify all statutory bodies of the new street name.

## **RENUMBERING A PROPERTY WITHIN AN EXISTING STREET**

On rare occasions it may be necessary to renumber a property. This could be due to the principal access changing (therefore requiring the property to be addressed from a different street) or a resident requesting they be renumbered as they do not wish to have the number 13.

### **Renumbering Procedure**

- When a request is received from a householder to change the postal number of their property the Street Naming & Numbering Officer will carry out a site visit to check whether the request is acceptable and review the request with their line manager.
- If acceptable an official Street Naming and Numbering plan is to be drawn up showing details of the proposed renumbering.
- The applicant must pay the appropriate fee of £50 for the renumbering service. This is £25 for drawing up a Renumbering Certificate and £25 for advising all statutory bodies.
- Confirmation will be sent to the applicant giving a date to change the number, together with a Renumbering Certificate.
- The statutory bodies are notified of the renumbering giving at least one months notice of the effective date for the new numbering.

### **Major Renumbering Scheme**

- If the renumbering is a major scheme i.e more than ten properties to be renumbered, it will be necessary for the Street Naming & Numbering Officer to first consult the respective Ward Councillors for their views on the proposals.
- Subject to the Councillors approval a letter will then be sent to each householder giving details of the proposals along with any associated charges and inviting any objections to be made in writing by a given date.
- At least two-thirds of the householders must be in agreement with the proposed renumbering scheme for it to proceed or if less than two thirds a decision to renumber can be made by the Cabinet Member.
- Subject to at least two-thirds of the householders agreement, a second letter is circulated to the householders, confirming the Council's approval of the renumbering scheme, the date from which it becomes effective and enclosing a copy of the Renumbering Certificate.

- The statutory bodies are notified of the renumbering scheme giving at least one months notice of the effective date.

## PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPERS

When development of new properties or sub-division of existing properties takes place within the city it is necessary that such properties be allocated postal numbers as quickly as possible. This is to enable early identification by the statutory bodies, emergency services and visitors.

To enable the council to allocate appropriate numbering to new/sub-divided properties, it is essential that suitable drawings be submitted to the street naming and numbering section in accordance with the following procedure:

The developer or owner of any new property or properties requiring to be numbered shall submit the completed SNN1 form (see link below), together with one copy of the relevant drawing to the Street Naming and Numbering Officer.

 [Street naming and numbering form SNN1](#) [9KB]

 [Form SNN1 guidelines](#) [37KB]

Following the submission of this information, the Street Naming and Numbering Officer will allocate postal number(s) to the new property or properties concerned in accordance with the [Numbering Protocols](#) detailed in this document

Where a development includes new streets, the developer is requested to submit proposed street names in accordance with the [Street Naming Criteria](#) detailed in this document.

## POSTCODES

Royal Mail is the sole provider of postcode information and Plymouth City Council do not have the ability to change or alter postcodes unless asked to do so by Royal Mail.

When a new address has been created the Council informs Royal Mail's Address Development Centre who will allocate the new postcode. They will not issue postcodes for new properties unless requested to do so by the Local Authority. Also, Royal Mail does not have the ability to change or alter an official address unless asked to do so by the Local Authority.

For further enquiries regarding postcodes contact Royal Mail on 08457 111222 or visit their website at [www.royalmail.com/postcode-finder](http://www.royalmail.com/postcode-finder)

## STREET NAMEPLATES AND DOOR NUMBERS

It is a legal requirement under the Public Health Act 1925 that there is adequate signage erected in a clear, prominent position in relation to the buildings showing any street names.

On new developments, it is the developers' responsibility to erect the appropriate signage once the buildings are ready for occupation. Plymouth City Council will take responsibility for the maintenance of nameplates once adoption of the highway has taken place.

To report a street nameplate that is missing, damaged or vandalised, please contact the Corporate Property Support Desk on 01752 304588 or email [SNN@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:SNN@plymouth.gov.uk)

Where possible, nameplates will be erected on property or boundary walls as this has proven the most effective way of trying to ensure the longevity of the nameplate. It also keeps the highway clear of additional hazards. If a wall mounted nameplate requires temporary removal to allow for house/property maintenance please contact the Corporate Property Service Desk. Arrangements will be made to remove the nameplate while the work is carried out and then replace it once the work is completed. There will be no charge for this service, however a charge will be payable in the case of a request from a property owner to move a nameplate for the purpose of creating a new access. This charge will be waived if the property owner agrees to an alternative suitable location for the street nameplate on their property.

Any number and/or property name that is associated with identifying individual properties must be displayed in a clear, prominent position that can be read from the roadside. Numbers should be a minimum of 62.5mm in height. It is the duty of house owners / occupiers to ensure that correct property numbers are displayed. Any person who does not display the correct property numbers after being served notice by the Authority will risk liability to a penalty not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or if a major change in the process is required, for example, through the introduction of new legislation. Charges will be reviewed on an annual basis, usually for the start of the new financial year on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

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