

Uttlesford District Council

Street Name and Numbering Policy

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1.1 Policy Statement

Uttlesford District Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that streets are named and properties are numbered. The authority has the power to approve or reject property addresses submitted by the general public, developers or to prescribe its own addressing schemes. Uttlesford District Council uses the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (sections 64 and 65) in conjunction with the Public Health Act Amendment Act 1907 section 21 for the purpose of naming streets and numbering properties. This power extends to both domestic and commercial property.

All property development and addressing change within the Uttlesford District is subject to the official street naming and numbering process. Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard of naming streets and numbering or naming of properties is essential as it facilitates:

- Consistency of property based information across local government and within the community of address users
- Emergency services finding a property promptly
- Reliable delivery of services to properties
- Reliable locational information for properties
- Electoral Registration via Individual Electoral Registration (IER)

Anyone seeking an address change, or the creation of an address for a new property, must apply to Uttlesford District Council in writing following the procedures outlined in this policy.

Proposals for street names from developers and the Parish/Town Councils are welcome for consideration. However it is recommended, when making an application, that more than one name is put forward in case the first choice does not comply with the guidelines in this policy. It is advantageous for all suggested street and building names to reflect the local area or have a connection with Uttlesford and where possible avoids duplication of names. If suggestions conform to this policy on Street Naming and Numbering and, for street names, do not meet with an objection from local Town/Parish Councils, the new address will be formally allocated and relevant bodies will be notified.

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 Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847.

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 from that street will be officially addressed to include that street name and also where appropriate, new properties are numbered.

In addition to complying with appropriate legislation, this policy is compliant, at the time of implementation, with the document "Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer", available from GeoPlace LLP at www.geoplace.co.uk.

1.1.1 Applicable Legislation

Street naming and numbering is a statutory Council function:

- The Acts are Sections 64 and 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, and Section 21 of the Public Health Act Amendment Act 1907.
- These Acts require the local authority to prepare street naming and numbering schemes and to maintain a good standard of street name plates. Both are essential for the efficient functioning of postal and emergency services as well as for the convenience and safety of the general public.
- The Public Health Amendment Act 1907, Section 21 gives authorities the power to consult in relation to street names and amendments.
- This Acts also makes it illegal to pull down or remove a street name, which has been lawfully set up, or to fix a notice or advertisement within close proximity to the sign. Anyone found guilty of infringing these requirements can be liable to a fine imposed by a Magistrates Court
- These acts also give the authority the ability to produce regulations concerning the erection of signs for the names of public streets and, ensure that the names and numbers of all buildings are displayed by their owners in accordance with these regulations.

The primary purpose is to create addresses, which are logical, consistent and to ensure that properties can be located quickly in all situations. This is important as various organisations, delivery, postal, emergency services and the general public need an efficient way of locating and referencing properties.

Street naming and numbering is an important aspect of modern life that is often taken for granted, but it is sufficiently important to need legislation to enforce the requirements of government and local government in this area.

1.2 Charging for the Street Name and Numbering service

Under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 provision is given for the charging of the service of Street Name and Numbering.

These charges cover the cost of consultation with Parish/Town Councils, Royal Mail, production of letters and schedules to developers, site visits to determine positioning of name plates, confirmation letters to emergency services and utilities and entering onto the Council database systems.

Details of the charges can be found on our website at <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/planning>

1.3 Street Naming and Numbering

Property developers and Parish/Town Councils may suggest names for new streets. These should be submitted to the Street Naming and Numbering Service for consideration against the criteria.

Consultation will take place with Parish/Town Councils. The Parish/Town Councillors may either accept the suggestion or object to it and offer their own alternatives. Any alternative suggestion will again be checked to ensure that it meets the naming criteria. If a suggestion does not meet the naming criteria it will be rejected no matter who suggests it. Once a

suitable suggestion from the Parish/Town Councillors has been selected by the Street Naming and Numbering Service, agreement will be sought with the developer.

Where a street is created as all or part of a new development, all costs for the erection of new street name plates will be paid for by the property developer. There is a specification for the plates and their locations and the authority should be contacted for advice. Maintenance of street name plates becomes the responsibility of Uttlesford District Council only once the developer has left the site and the street has been adopted.

No street name plate is allowed to be erected until the street name has been confirmed in writing by the Uttlesford District Council Street Name and Numbering Service.

1.4 Criteria for Naming a Street

The Street Naming and Numbering Service will use the following guidelines when consulting on new street names. Parish/Town Councils and developers will need to follow these guidelines when considering any names for streets within the District

The use of a common theme within larger developments is encouraged, especially if there is a local or historic significance with the area. This however is not sufficient cause to reject a name that fails to meet this criterion.

Street names that promote services, products or companies will not be allowed. Trading names are viewed as advertisement of said companies and will not be acceptable. There may be an exception to this when using a historic company name if used in a historical context where any claim of advertisement cannot be made.

A developer may suggest a name to be used and that the suggested name complies with the street naming procedures and that there is no objection from the Street Name and Numbering Service and the appropriate Parish/Town Council. If there is any unresolved disagreement, there will be a maximum of two attempts to resolve any dispute, and then the Assistant Director of Planning who has the delegated powers to approve street names will undertake the final decision with no right to appeal.

Street names that are derived from living persons will not be permitted to prevent offence either through inclusion or exclusion. If the inclusion of a surname in the street name is from someone who is deceased the Parish/Town Council will need to provide written permission from any living relatives in order for the application to proceed using said name.

1.5 Guideline for Naming Streets

New street names will be unique and duplicates will not be permitted. Street names that are phonetically similar to other streets will not be permitted. Any street names that can be construed as obscene or racist will not be acceptable. Distinctions through suffix within the same or adjoining area will be avoided. Street names that may be open to re-interpretation through graffiti or shortening of the name shall be avoided. New street names will not be assigned to new developments when such developments can be satisfactorily included in the current scheme of the street providing access. No new streets will be named after a living person in order to avoid offence either through inclusion or exclusion.

New street names shall not end with a 's' where it can be construed as either possessive or plural, neither will they begin with the word 'The'. All punctuation, including apostrophes shall be avoided. Words of more than three syllables and the use of more than two words will be avoided (exception being thoroughfare types). Street names that are open to spelling mistakes are to be avoided as these may lead to confusion with emergency services or result in demand for a name change by residents. All new street names should end with a suffix to reflect the nature, history and/or location of the street e.g.

- Avenue – tree lined residential road
- Bank – street on a bank
- Court - residential flats
- Close – a residential cul-de-sac only
- Crescent – a crescent shaped road
- Drive – residential roads
- Gardens – residential roads
- Grove – residential road
- Hill – a hillside road only
- Lane – single track or narrow road
- Mews – converted yard or stable
- Mount – high point of road
- Place – residential road
- Rise – road which has a rise
- Road – any thoroughfare
- Row – road (not pedestrian access route)
- Square – Square only
- Street – any thoroughfare
- Terrace – for a terrace of properties (not a subsidiary to another street)
- Suffixes that are not acceptable are:-
End, Foot, Cross, View, Walk, Flat and Way.
These may however be incorporated into a street name provided it ends in the appropriate suffix (Hook End Lane)

1.5.1 Consultation with Parish/Town Councils – Street Names

The number of new streets within a development will be determined by the Street Name and Numbering Service. Suggested street names will be sought from the developer, typically there will be a requirement for at least three suggestions per identified street. The suggestions will then be presented to the Parish/Town Council for consideration. The Parish/Town Council will be encouraged to submit any alternatives they feel necessary if they do not feel the developers suggestions are in keeping with the surrounds or history of the site. Agreement must be found between the developer and the Parish/Town Council on the official name for the designated street. If no agreement is found then the Street Name and Numbering Service will consult with both parties to resolve the issue. Two attempts will be made to reconcile the differences before the Assistant Director Planning will be requested to make a decision on the name of the street. The Assistant Directors decision is final.

1.5.2 Renaming an existing street

Renaming an existing street is to be avoided unless the benefits outweigh the obvious disadvantages. Provision for the change of a street name is given in Section 21 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907.

On rare occasions where this becomes necessary, it is usually only done as a last resort when:

- There is confusion over a street's 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 or deliveries.
- Where a street becomes split, e.g. via new development or new road building scheme splitting an existing street

In such instances it is the responsibility of those requesting a change in the first instance to contact the Parish/Town Council to ask them to raise the issue with the Street Name and Numbering Service.

The following procedure will be followed when a name change request is received by a Parish/Town Council and a name change is proposed by Parish/ Town Council.

1. A written request for a street name change will be made to the Street Name and Numbering Service. The details need to include
 - i. The current street name
 - ii. Who has made the initial request e.g. resident or emergency services
 - iii. The nature of the issues
2. Upon receipt of the request, and in accordance with the change criteria listed above, the Street Name and Numbering Service will ask the Parish/Town Council to conduct a ballot with all those on the street who are liable to pay council tax.
3. The results of the ballot will then be presented to the Street Name and Numbering Service, if two-thirds (66.6%) of those whom were balloted are in favour of the change then the street name change shall proceed. If there is less than two-thirds (66.6%) in favour then the street name will not be changed.
4. A request for a new street name suggestion will be made to the Parish/Town Council from the Street Name and Numbering Service.
5. The street name suggestion will be testing against the criteria for new street names, Section 1.4, and if the name meets the criteria it will be adopted.
6. Notices of address change will be issued to the properties on the street that are affected by the change.
7. There will be a period of four weeks from the date of the notice of address change before the changes take effect.

8. At each end of the street a notice of a street name change will be posted detailing the old name, new name and date of the change.
9. New street name plates will be erected at each end of the street.

1.5.3 Adoption of a street name in a postal address

Where a street has no official name or is omitted from a postal address then the following criteria and procedure will be followed.

Criteria for consideration of the adoption of an official street name in a postal address will be

- Where there is confusion in locating a number of properties on an unnamed street.
- The emergency services have requested that a street name be adopted.

Those seeking the adoption of a street name should contact the Parish/Town Council and ask them to raise the issues with the Street Name and Numbering Service.

The following procedure will be followed when a name change request is received by a Parish/Town Council and a name adoption.

1. A written request for a street name change will be made to the Street Name and Numbering Service including the following details
 - i. The nature of the issues
 - ii. Who has raised the initial request e.g. residents or emergency services
 - iii. Brief description of the street – where it starts and where it ends
2. Upon receipt of the request the Street Name and Numbering Service will ask the Parish/Town Council conduct a ballot with all those on the street who will be affected by the adoption of a street name.
3. The Street Name and Numbering Service will consult with Royal Mail with regard adoption of a street name and any potential changes to postcode.
4. The results of the ballot will then be presented to the Street Name and Numbering Service, if two-thirds (66%) of those whom were balloted are in favour of the change then the street name adoption shall proceed. If there is less than two-thirds (66%) in favour then the street name will not be adopted.
5. At each end of the street a notice of a street name adoption will be posted and a request for a street name suggestion will be made to the Parish/Town Council from the Street Name and Numbering Service.
6. The street name suggestion will be testing against the criteria for new street names, Section 1.4, and the name will be adopted.
7. Notices of address change will be issued to the properties on the street that are affected by the change.

8. There will be a period of four weeks from the date of the notice of address change before the changes take effect.
9. At each end of the street a notice of a street name change will be posted detailing the new name and the adoption date.
10. New street name plates will be erected at each end of the street.

1.6 Criteria for Naming and Numbering of Properties

1.6.1 New Properties

An application for a plot or a development to be numbered, the developer must provide the following information preferably electronically (or in hard copy if electronic copies are unavailable)

- Planning application number – Street Naming and Numbering can only be administered once planning approval has been given, without this no address will be allocated.
- Building regulation number to confirm commencement of works or completion.
- Submission of clear plans showing plot numbers, the location in relation to existing land and property, indication of placement of front doors or primary access on each plot and internal layout plans for developments that are sub-divided in to units/flats together with their floor level.

N.B. If submitting plans with copyright please ensure that the copyright holder has given written permission for use of the plans for the purpose of Street Name and Numbering. Omission of this can cause delays in the Street Name and Numbering process

1.6.2 Guidance of addressing property

1. All new property development will use numbers rather than be named.
2. Official Street Name and Numbering will take place for all domestic and commercial properties.
3. New streets will be numbered with odds on the left hand side and evens on the right hand side, with commencement from the primary entrance to the road. If the road is a thoroughfare between two other streets the numbering shall commence at the beginning of the street nearest the centre of the settlement or for rural developments from the centre of the District.
4. Consecutive numbering may be used in a small cul-de-sac, which is circular in nature where no further development will be possible.
5. The property number will be allocated to the street onto which the main front entrance faces. If the entrance provides no direct access to a street it will be placed on the last logical street used to access it as deemed by the guidance notes of the NLPG data entry conventions. This is especially relevant to properties with a main entrance to the side.
6. Numbers will remain in sequence and there shall be no exclusion of any number due to superstition, personal preference or inclusion of out of sequence numbers.
7. Flats and units will be given individual numbers; the sequence of the numbering depending on the access to individual front doors and naming/numbering conventions in the given location.

8. When numbering property that has been converted into flats, the flats will be numbered sequentially with the prefix 'Flat', e.g. Flat 1, 11 High Street. A numbering scheme such as Flat A/Flat B, First Floor Flat or Apartment will not be used. Guidance for numbering of other property subdivision types will be taken from the NLPG Data Entry Conventions.

9. If a block of flats is to be built in a numbered street and cannot be integrated into the current numbering on that street, a name will be given to the block¹ and the flats numbered internally², e.g. Flat 1², Plovers Baron¹

10. When new properties are built on an existing street and there are no available numbers to use whilst retaining the current sequence a suffix will be used e.g. 22a.

11. New street names shall not be assigned for the sole purpose of avoiding numbers with a suffix.

12. On an existing street without numbers and where an established naming convention is being used, a property will be named. All named properties will be unique to the settlement and postal area for which they are situated. Repetitive or phonetically similar names in a postal area will not be allowed.

13. On a street with a mixture of names and numbers the number will take priority over the name.

14. No allocated property number will be sacrificed in favour of a name.

15. Commercial properties will be numbered in accordance with local conventions that are in use at the location in which the property sits.

16. Commercial subdivisions within a property will be numbered in accordance to floor level and suffixed with a letter for example Suites 1A-1Z (ground floor offices) and Suites 2A-2Z (first floor offices). This removes the use of terms such as First Floor or Second Floor as part of the address as the use of these terms does not comply with national addressing guidance.

17. A business name shall not take the place of a number or a building name all new business premises must have a number and display the numbering in a prominent position on the front of the building.

18. Private garages and buildings used to house vehicles and similar purposes will not be officially numbered

19. A parcel of land e.g. fields cannot be given an official address; only a property on that piece of land that has the ability to receive mail can have a conventional address.

20. Re-naming of communal properties, e.g. block of flats, can only be done upon receipt by the Street Name and Numbering Service evidence that all occupiers of the property have been consulted and have given in writing their consent to the change.

1.6.3 Notification of Address

All address changes will be notified to the developer or owner in the form of an official notice. This will state the official address as issued by the Street Name and Numbering Authority. No other public body has the statutory right to issue an address. The postal address is given for the purpose of delivery of goods and services to the property. There may at times be a difference in the address held by the Council for the purpose of addressing under the data entry conventions for the National Address Gazetteer.

1.6.4 Retrospective Naming and Numbering

Where requests for confirmation of an address are sought by internal and external bodies the Council will use the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and archive records to determine the address as known by the Council. It shall liaise with Royal Mail in the event of determination of the postal address if it is deemed to be different from that held by the Council. Correct address information will then be given as a retrospective street name and numbering notice.

1.7 Responsibility

All elements of an address, with the exception of postcode and post town, are defined by Uttlesford District Council. The numbers and names assigned to property and the official names assigned to streets are the intellectual property of the authority.

Allocation of postcode and post town is managed by the Royal Mail and must be confirmed by them. Uttlesford District Council may undertake this process on the applicant's behalf and inform the applicant and other interested parties. The authority reserves the right to complete a Street Naming and Numbering application without the provision of a postcode or post town. The maintenance of postcode information, and any future change to individual postcodes or postcode sectors, is the responsibility of Royal Mail. Uttlesford District Council accepts no responsibility or liability for omission of postcode or post town information, nor for any failure of services arising from this omission.

Where a new street name has been commissioned for a new development then it is the responsibility of the developer to obtain and install said street name plates. Specifications can be obtained from the Street Name and Numbering Service.

It is the responsibility of the developer of new properties to inform the Royal Mail when they become occupied for the first time.