

Street naming and numbering policy



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1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 References to **‘the Council’** mean Mid Sussex District Council.
- 1.2 References to **‘local council’** mean the relevant town or parish council.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The appropriate naming of streets, and naming and numbering of buildings forms the basis for identifying property related information for the purposes of:
- Record keeping, for example, legal transactions, taxation
 - Delivery of post by the Royal Mail and courier services
 - Responses to emergencies by ambulance, police, and fire services
 - Delivery of central and local government services.
- 2.2 In this context it is important that the names and numbers are allocated consistently and displayed in an appropriate manner. This document sets out the Council’s approach to its street naming and numbering obligations and provides guidance to developers and building occupiers on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings.
- 2.3 Mid Sussex District Council has the legal powers to allocate names and numbers, and ensures that the allocated name and number is displayed in an appropriate manner.
- 2.4 The guidelines are relevant both to new developments, and the renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings. The Council will require a submission for all new developments. The renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the occupiers, post services or emergency services.

3.0 Statutory context

- 3.1 Mid Sussex District Council is the street naming and numbering authority. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that any new development is properly assessed and provided with street names and property numbers where the Council considers it is necessary.
- 3.2 The principal piece of legislation that applies to the naming and numbering of streets and buildings in the Mid Sussex area is the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, Section 64 and 65.
- 3.3 This includes responsibility for erecting the names of streets and ensuring that the names and/or numbers of buildings are displayed by the owners in accordance with the regulations made by the Council. The Council uses Department for Transport Circular Roads 3/93 as the basis for its approach in this regard.
- 3.4 The Council is also obliged to maintain a central database of street names and property addresses (the Local Land and Property Gazetteer) using the British Standard for addressing, known as BS7666. All addresses created must adhere to this standard.
- 3.5 The Council does not have statutory powers relating to property naming. Property names are largely a matter for property owners. However, in order for a name to have practical effect it must be agreed with the Royal Mail who will only accept it once the local authority has verified it. This is to ensure that unauthorised development is not legitimised by the provision of a postal address.

4.0 The role of local councils

Street names

- 4.1 Local councils have an important role to play in ensuring that new street names have local support and are relevant to the area and its history.
- 4.2 Mid Sussex District Council will always consult with the relevant local council over proposed street names. In cases where there is difference between the name submitted by a developer and that preferred by the local council, Mid Sussex District Council will generally support the adoption of the name proposed by the local council.

Property names

- 4.3 Mid Sussex District Council will not normally consult when a proposal is received to add or change a property name. Where a new named development, such as a block of flats, is proposed, local councils are advised to contact the developer directly if they wish to have a dialogue over possible naming options.

5.0 The role of the Royal Mail

- 5.1 The Royal Mail, contrary to popular belief, is not responsible for addresses. The Royal Mail's only role in address creation is to provide a valid postal code. However, their postal data products such as PAF™ are used by the majority of consumer service providers and private delivery firms and so non inclusion within Royal Mail data can lead to considerable problems for occupiers.
- 5.2 The Royal Mail will only take instruction on street naming and numbering from local authorities. In addition, they will not approve a property name, without it first having been accepted by the local authority.

6.0 Applications for street naming and numbering

- 6.1 The Council should be consulted at the earliest possible stage of a proposal, preferably before building work commences. If an application is submitted to the Council at a late stage and is subsequently rejected, numerous problems can arise, particularly if purchasers have bought properties marketed under an unapproved name.
- 6.2 Developers are welcome to submit their own suggestions for street names and these will be considered by the Council.
- 6.3 Developers must be aware that marketing names are not to be confused with street names. It should be pointed out in the literature distributed to purchasers that marketing names used for the development may not form part of the final postal address. The Council reserves the right in all circumstances to replace a marketing name with a street name/s of its choosing.
- 6.4 In order to process an application for street naming, the Council will require the following:
 - i. A plan showing the street layout with existing street name or suggested street names. The plan should be at a scale of 1:2500, 1:1250 or 1:500 and should include a North arrow;

- ii. A detailed plan of the development clearly marked with the plot numbers of the proposed scheme. This plan must indicate the main entry point for each property in context with the adjacent street;
- iii. An internal layout, if appropriate, for developments that are subdivided at unit or floor level, for example, a block of flats. The main entrance to the flats shall be clearly marked in relation to the adjacent street.

6.5 Where such information has been provided as part of the planning application, reference can be made to the planning application number.

7.0 Consultation procedure

7.1 Suggestions for road names may be submitted by the developer or owner for consideration. The Council will then consult the following:

- Relevant local councils
- Royal Mail
- Other council departments and organisations, as necessary.

7.2 The Royal Mail will be consulted in order to prevent new road names conflicting with those in adjoining settlements sharing the same post town. The emergency services prefer this method for naming new roads as they then know there is only one road with that name within the area.

8.0 Street naming

8.1 When naming a street, the Council will give consideration to the following criteria:

- i. The name does not duplicate existing names (and numbers);
- ii. The name should reflect the history and heritage of the land intended for development. If no suitable historical name can be found to the land then adjacent areas may be utilised;
- iii. With the sole exception of the immediate royal family, the use of the names of living persons will not be permitted, as the future conduct of individuals cannot be guaranteed;
- iv. Deceased persons names should only be used where there is a historical connection to the locality;
- v. Avoid street names that are difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell. BS7666 does not allow the inclusion of punctuation within names, so hyphenated names, possessive nouns or contractions requiring hyphens or apostrophes, for example, St. Paul's on-the-Green should not be used;
- vi. Names should not be similar to any existing names in the area. Avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible within the district, i.e. Maple Drive and Maple Close or Twineham Road and Wineham Road;
- vii. Names should not be perceived to have more than one meaning or be offensive. Avoid aesthetically unsuitable names or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation, like Dyke Road;
- viii. Subsidiary names (i.e. a row of buildings within an already named road being called '..... Terrace') should be avoided;
- ix. New street names should end with a suitable (and relevant) suffix such as:

- Street
 - Road
 - Way
 - Avenue
 - Mead
 - Crescent - For a crescent-shaped road
 - Close - For a cul-de-sac only
 - Square - For a square only
 - Hill - For a hillside road only
 - Terrace - For a terrace of houses (provided it is not a subsidiary name)
- Drive
 - Grove
 - Lane
 - Gardens
 - Mews
- Place
 - Vale
 - Dene
 - Rise
- x. Suffixes like End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Walk, Park, Meadow, need careful consideration as they may give a false impression of location.
- xi. All new pedestrian ways should end in with one of the following suffixes:
- Walk
 - Path
 - Way
 - Twitten
- xii. The use of the North, South, East or West (as in Muster Green North and Muster Green South) is generally not acceptable when the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two.

9.0 Provision of street nameplates

Nameplates for new developments

- 9.1 The developer shall be responsible for providing the nameplates for a new street once the name has been agreed with the Council. New street nameplates must adhere to a specification provided by the Council. The specification for nameplates is available upon request.
- 9.2 Unless otherwise agreed with the Council, street nameplates should be positioned on each corner of the new road where it enters from the existing street scene. This is to ensure that the street name is immediately visible to road users approaching from either direction. Where a new street has multiple access points, then nameplates will be required at each access point.
- 9.3 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 name plate should normally be within three metres of the intersection of the kerb lines, but where this is not practicable the distance may be varied up to a maximum of six metres.
- 9.4 Street nameplates should be mounted so that the lower edge of the plate is approximately one metre above the ground at sites where they are unlikely to be obscured by pedestrians or vehicles and at approximately 2.5 metres where obscuration is a problem. They should never be lower than 0.6 metres or higher than 3.6 metres.
- 9.5 Where a developer fails to install the nameplates or provides nameplates that do not meet with the Council's written specification, then the Council reserves the right to carry out appropriate remedial work and charge the developer on a time and materials basis.

Local council street nameplate colour preferences

9.6 Each local council has expressed a preference as to the colour of the nameplates to be used within their area. A table is included as Appendix 1 to this policy that sets out these requirements.

Replacement and maintenance

9.7 Following installation, the Council will take over responsibility for the future maintenance and replacement of all street nameplates, provided they have been installed to the Council's specification.

Provision of street nameplates on private roads

9.8 The Towns Improvements Clauses Act 1847 draws no distinction between public and private roads. Whilst the initial provision of signage shall be the responsibility of the developer, the Council will undertake to repair and maintain street nameplates relating to private roads. This is to ensure that proper identification of streets can be maintained at all times, regardless of ownership.

9.9 Private residents' associations are at liberty to install their own signage provided that it meets with a suitable and durable specification and does not in itself constitute a breach of planning control. Where a private residents association can be found or identifies itself to the Council, then the Council will be happy to work with that association to ensure that appropriate nameplates are provided.

10.0 Building numbering

10.1 The Council is responsible for the allocation of numbering of properties. Numbers are allocated to enable the easy and rapid location of buildings by both routine and emergency callers.

10.2 The Council will develop naming and numbering schemes for new developments having regard to:

- i. The nature of the development and its position within any existing street scene;
- ii. The requirements for local authorities, as set out in the guide to 'Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG' published by Information House and available from the NLPG website at www.nlpg.org.uk.

10.3 The primary focus of the numbering scheme is to ensure the development is easily identifiable, particularly to emergency services. Cosmetic concerns or those relating to perceived prestige or property value are not material considerations.

10.4 House numbers will be applied to all new developments. The use of names will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

10.5 Properties will be numbered into the street from which they are primarily accessed. Primary access is generally taken to mean the front door. The Council will not entertain requests for properties to be numbered into adjacent streets unless there are exceptional circumstances such as emergency service access requirements.

10.6 Being a rural area, the use of property names is widespread. Where properties have a

name and no number the Council has the power to create numbering schemes for existing roads and make residents use house numbers. Because of the disruption this may cause to residents, this would only be undertaken if significant problems with addressing were brought to the Council's attention.

- 10.7 Developers must not allocate numbering as part of their marketing strategy.
- 10.8 Private garages, outbuildings and similar, used for housing cars or storage, and so on, will not be numbered. This is to prevent the unauthorised use of premises being afforded the legitimacy of a postal address.
- 10.9 Numbering sequences can be attributed in many different ways. The Council will generally adhere to the following conventions:
- As you enter a development, numbers should appear - odds on left, evens on right;
 - If a small development, properties will be numbered consecutively, for example 1- 8;
 - A short cul-de-sac will usually have consecutive numbering whilst through roads and a longer cul-de-sac have an odds and evens scheme;
 - If one or more dwellings are built between two others usually a suffix of 'a' 'b' 'c' etc. is added to the number;
 - Blocks of flats may be given a name with each dwelling being numbered consecutively;
 - All numbers will be used in their proper sequence and no consideration will be given to omitting any number for any reason (for example No.13);
 - Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found.

11.0 Building naming

- 11.1 As stated, there are no statutory controls over the naming of buildings. However, residents and developers are strongly advised to contact the Council when adding a new name or changing an existing name to ensure that name is officially recognised. The Council consults with the Royal Mail to ensure the name is not duplicated within the local area. A name will not be officially recognised if it duplicates an existing name in the same postcode area or if it is likely to cause offence.
- 11.2 For existing properties, the addition of a house name is permitted where a numbering scheme is in place. It must be clear, however, that the name is an addition to the number and not a replacement. The original number must be displayed on the property, and quoted within an address on all correspondence. Under no circumstances may a name replace a number as the primary form of address.

12.0 The display of names and numbers

- 12.1 Every number or name, or number and name, of any building in any street, way, place, row of houses or block shall be marked:-
- On the building, the entrance gate, boundary wall or fence immediately adjacent to the gate or entrance of such a building, or in such other position as to be clearly visible from the street or way in which the building is situated;
 - With numerals or lettering of such colour as to contrast with the background against which they are displayed;
 - With numerals or letters of sufficient size to render them clearly visible from the

- street or way in which the building is situated;
 - In durable, non-absorbent material, which expression shall be deemed to include paint.
- 12.2 The number or name, or number and name, shall ideally be marked not more than 3.6 metres or less than 0.75 metres above the ground.
- 12.3 The numerals of which any number is composed shall be Arabic in character.
- 12.4 In addition to these guidelines, developers and building owners should be aware that planning permission maybe required in the following instances:
- Listed buildings: if the proposed display would affect the special character of the building. Even relatively small-scale displays or alterations may require listed building consent;
 - Advertisement Control: it is possible that a display may be deemed to be a sign requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.
- 12.5 If anyone is in doubt about the display of the name and number, they are advised to consult the regulations and contact the Planning Department for further advice.

13.0 Renaming of streets

- 13.1 On rare occasions, it may be necessary to rename a street. This is usually only done as a last resort when:
- There is confusion over a street's name
 - A group of residents are unhappy with their street name
- 13.2 The Council will in the first instance consult with the local council and the Royal Mail.
- 13.3 The Council will then undertake a written consultation with residents of the affected street and where there is a simple two-thirds majority in favour, the change will be made and residents informed in writing of their new street name.

14.0 Renumbering of streets

- 14.1 On rare occasions, it may be necessary to renumber an existing numbered street, or add numbers to a street comprising named properties. This is usually only done as a last resort when:
- New properties are built and there is a need for other properties to be renumbered to accommodate the new properties;
 - The number of named-only properties in a street is deemed to be causing confusion for visitors, delivery or emergency services;
 - A group of residents are unhappy with the naming/numbering used within their street.
- 14.2 In the first instance, the Council will attempt to work with all parties for a resolution by consensus. Normal consultations will be carried out with the local council and Royal Mail.
- 14.3 The Council may seek to impose a change where it can be demonstrated that it is required for reasons of proper public administration. A formal report will be brought before the appropriate area planning committee for consideration and decision. Residents will be

informed of this report and given the opportunity to make representations through the normal procedures outlined in the Council's constitution. The decision of the Council shall be final, and residents will be informed in writing of their new addresses, if the Council decides to alter the numbering system in use.

15.0 Enforcement procedure

- 15.1 The 1847 Act, in appropriate circumstances, allows councils to affix approved street numbers to buildings and to recover costs incurred. In addition, the provisions of the Act result in offences being committed when owners or occupiers remove, cover or obliterate street numbers.
- 15.2 The normal council approach is to encourage occupiers to display the correct name / number in an appropriate manner. Where it is evident that failure to do so could result in failure of postal delivery services or emergency services to identify adequately the premises, then the Council may pursue enforcement action.

16.0 Further information and advice

- 16.1 Further information, advice and submissions for authorisation can be made to:

Street Naming and Numbering Officer
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Email: addressqueries@midsussex.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/streetnaming>
Tel: 01444 477175

- 16.2 Postcode enquiries should be directed in the first instance to the Royal Mail Address Management Centre. Phone: 08456 045060

17.0 References

- 17.1 The following documents were referred to by the Council in developing this policy:
- Lewes District Council – Street Naming and Property Numbering Policy 2009
www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_snandnpolicydoc.pdf
 - Chorley Borough Council - Street Naming and Numbering Policy
<http://www.chorley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3770&p=0>
 - Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 - Section 64 and 67
Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 - Section 21
Public Health Act 1925 – Sections 17-19
www.statutelaw.gov.uk/Home.aspx
 - Department for Transport Circular Roads 3/93
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tal/circulars/ular393streetnameplatesa4055.pdf>
 - British Standard for Addressing - BS7666
 - Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the NLPG
www.iahub.net/docs/1184161851899.pdf

Appendix 1

Colour preferences for street nameplate design for local councils.

PARISH	COLOUR PREFERENCE
Albourne	White lettering - green background
Ansty and Staplefield	White lettering - green background
Ardingly	White lettering - green background
Ashurst Wood	White lettering - green background
Balcombe	White lettering - green background
Bolney	White lettering - green background
Burgess Hill	Black lettering - white background
Cuckfield	Black lettering - white background
East Grinstead	Black lettering - white background
Fulking	White lettering - green background
Hassocks	White lettering - green background
Haywards Heath	Black lettering - white background
Horstead Keynes	White lettering - green background
Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common	White lettering - green background
Lindfield	Black lettering - white background
Lindfield Rural	White lettering - green background
Newtimber	White lettering - green background
Poynings	White lettering - green background
Pyecombe	White lettering - green background
Slaugham	White lettering - green background
Turners Hill	White lettering - green background
Twineham	White lettering - green background
West Hoathly	White lettering - green background
Worth	White lettering - green background



