

Worcester City Council

STREET NAMING & PROPERTY NUMBERING POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Worcester City Council is the Local Authority responsible for street naming and property numbering (SNN) within the city of Worcester.

Anyone seeking the creation of addresses for new properties or an address change on an existing property must apply to the City Council (following the procedures outlined in this document).

The address of a property is a very important issue. It is imperative that emergency services, Royal Mail, delivery companies and the general public are able to locate properties quickly and efficiently. Clear, unambiguous property addressees are therefore essential.

The overall objective when undertaking street naming and numbering processes is to allocate unique and logical addresses whilst complying with the recommendations and guidelines provided by GeoPlace. GeoPlace is a public sector limited liability partnership between the Local Government Association (LGA) and Ordnance Survey. GeoPlace oversees the production and maintenance of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) and the National Street Gazetteer (NSG)

Decisions relating to street naming and numbering are controlled by the City Council. No other organisations have legislative powers to create or allocate property numbers or names and street names.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy provides a framework for the City Council to operate its street naming and numbering function effectively and efficiently for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors. It also provides guidance to developers and building occupiers on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings within the city.

In addition to complying with the appropriate legislation, this policy (at the time of implementation) incorporates the guidance and best practice prescribed by GeoPlace www.geoplace.co.uk

1.3 THE NATIONAL LAND AND PROPERTY GAZETTEER (NLPG)

The NLPG is the de facto addressing solution for local authorities and increasingly so for its partners. Local Government has invested heavily in creating the NLPG and is committed to using the NLPG for all of its addressing requirements and services.

The NLPG is the definitive address list that provides unique identification of properties and conforms to the British Standard, BS7666:2006. The NLPG

covers the whole of England and Wales and contains more than 30 million residential, business and non-mailing addresses and is now marketed commercially.

The NLPG is a comprehensive and continually updated database, created by those with local knowledge in each local authority, the body with legal responsibility for street naming and numbering of a property. As local authorities are the originators of addressing information and address dataset, developed and maintained at source by users of the data, will inevitably have the highest level of currency and completeness.

All properties are allocated a 12 digit Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN). This permits additional information such as co-ordinates to be accessed, allowing the property to be precisely located on a map.

The City Council is committed to this initiative through its own Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which, together with the other local authorities in England and Wales, makes up the NLPG. Street naming and numbering is the single most important source of address change intelligence for the City Council's LLPG and therefore NLPG.

1.4 STATUTORY CONTEXT

Worcester City Council has statutory responsibilities and discretionary powers, within the context of adoptive legislation, for the naming of streets, alteration of street names and indication of street names.

The Council has the power to approve or reject property and street addresses that are submitted by developers or other parties. This power extends to commercial property as well as domestic.

1.4.1 LEGISLATION

There is no single Act of Parliament for local authorities to discharge their SNN obligations. Numerous Acts dating back to 1847 provide the basis for SNN practice. The City Council's powers in relation to street naming and property numbering are contained in two sets of legislation:

- Sections 64 and 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (TICA) – *for numbering procedures*
- Sections 17 and 18 of the Public Health Act 1925 (PHA) – *for street naming procedures*

1.4.2 DISCRETIONARY SERVICES

A local authority may charge for discretionary services. The power to charge falls under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. Discretionary services are those services that an authority has the power but not the duty to provide. Whilst the Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that streets are named

and properties numbered, it can charge for elements of the naming and numbering function which are discretionary or go beyond the statutory duty.

2 SNN APPLICATIONS

2.1 WHO SHOULD APPLY?

- Individuals or developers building new houses, commercial or industrial premises
- Individuals or developers undertaking conversions of existing residential, commercial or industrial premises which result in the creation of new properties or premises
- Property owners wishing to amend their existing house name or add a house name to an existing numbered property

2.2 WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

It should be noted that the street naming and numbering procedure can be a lengthy one. Most utility companies are reluctant to install services where an official postal address has not been allocated. It is therefore advisable to consult the Council at the earliest possible stage of a proposal, preferably before building work commences and ideally before an unofficial name has been marketed or legal documentation drafted.

2.3 HOW TO APPLY

2.3.1 ONLINE APPLICATION FORM

Street Naming and Numbering applications must be made online using the appropriate application form at www.worcester.gov.uk/street-naming-numbering

If you are unsure which form to use please contact the Street Naming and Numbering team for clarification snn@worcester.gov.uk

If you are unable to carry out the process online please email the Street Naming and Numbering team for guidance snn@worcester.gov.uk

2.3.2 WHAT SHOULD THE APPLICATION BE ACCOMPANIED BY?

- A plan showing the street layout with existing street name or suggested street names. The plan should be at a scale of 1:2,500, 1:1,250 or 1:500 and should include a North Arrow.
- 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.
- An internal layout, if appropriate, for developments that are sub divided at unit or floor level, e.g. a block of flats. The main entrance to the flats shall be clearly marked in relation to the adjacent street.

2.4 HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO PROCESS MY APPLICATION?

The time taken to process applications can depend on a number of factors, such as the complexity of the site and time required to carry out consultation. Larger development sites generally take longer, as the process is often reliant upon new street names being approved. The process can be lengthened further if there are objections to any part of the proposal. There are currently no statutory targets for Naming and Numbering functions however the Council will endeavour to process and determine applications in the most efficient manner possible given the resources.

3 NAMING STREETS AND NUMBERING/NAMING PROPERTIES

The Council will follow best practice and will name and number streets and dwellings in accordance with Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) data entry conventions for the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Following these conventions ensures the Council's practices are compliant with British Standard BS7666:2006 confirming the precise identification of a property or plot of land.

www.geoplace.co.uk/helpdesk/library/technical-guidance-addresses

The emergency services have requested nationally that Councils no longer address properties and streets with the same or similar names with differing suffixes in an area which historically was acceptable. They have requested that street names and property names are unique and easy to spell in order to allow for efficient identification of a property to avoid delays in deploying emergency services.

3.1 STREET NAMING

3.1.1 STREET NAMING PROCEDURE

The Council has a strict procedure for allocating new street names under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1925. Road naming powers under the Public Health Act 1925 have been delegated to the appropriate Council Officer. Generally speaking, the Council will implement a new street name for a development with a new access road consisting of five or more new properties. New street names can be submitted to the Council and will be subject to a consultation process.

1. Submission of the completed application form, numbering schedule and payment of appropriate fee.
2. The Historical Environment Records (HER) Archaeology service is consulted on names for new streets.
3. The Council checks the request against existing records in the gazetteer.
4. The Council consults the Royal Mail and other interested parties.
5. The change is assessed against the street naming policy.
6. Numbering of properties is to be decided by the Deputy Director for Economic Development and Planning under delegated powers.
7. A decision is issued to the applicant and notifications are sent to Royal Mail, Ordnance Survey, emergency services, utility companies and other Council departments.
8. Approved changes are added to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.
9. Changes are submitted daily to the National Land and Property Gazetteer.

Whilst this is strictly a Council function, any alterations to street names are notified to Worcestershire County City Council who hold and maintain the Local Street Gazetteer as this information is essential for highway management responsibilities.

3.1.2 GUIDANCE FOR STREET NAMING

The following is a list of guidelines to be followed when proposing new street names within the City:

1. Proposals should not duplicate existing street names within the City. To prevent new road names which are close to, and may conflict with those in adjoining Districts, the Royal Mail will also be consulted.
2. Avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible, within the city: for example Gibson Street and Gibson Close.
3. Wherever possible a street name should have a proven historical connection to the land intended for development.
4. Proposals relating to a person's name will not be permitted, unless there is a proven historical connection to the land intended for development; or a proposal is put forward for commemorative purposes; or the individual in question has a local connect and has demonstrated a significant contribution to the lift of the City, the country or internationally.
5. Any proposal relating to a political or historical event must have a clear local connection and must not relate to recent political issues.
6. Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell and aesthetically unsuitable names should be avoided.
7. Street naming suffixes require careful consideration to avoid giving a false impression of location.
8. Street names that require an apostrophe should be avoided, but where approved, the apostrophe shall be used.
9. Legislation permits the use of numbers followed by letters. These are needed, for instance, when one large house in a road is demolished and replaced by four smaller houses. To include the new houses in the numbered road sequence it would involve renumbering all the higher numbered houses on that side of the road. If a considerable number of other houses would be affected, then the new house should be given the number of the old house with either A, B, C or D added.
10. The use of letters would not be sanctioned if the new development were to lie prior to the numbering scheme commencing, i.e. if 4 houses were built prior to the first property number 2. The new dwellings would not become 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D. In this case four property names may be requested or a review of adjacent streets will be made.

3.2 STREET NAMEPLATES

Section 64 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (TICA) places a duty on the local authority to see that street names are conspicuously indicated in or near the street. This may be in the form of a free-standing street nameplate, or a sign painted or fixed to a building. The Act also states that the initiative may come from the developer. The Council therefore, will expect the developer to provide the initial nameplates for any new developments.

The standard nameplate shall not be used in conservation areas. Where a new street is named in a conservation area the Council shall specify a detail that would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in question.

If a nameplate is broken or becomes illegible on an adopted highway, the Council has a duty to renew the sign (repair or replace it) by virtue of TICA 1847.

Any person who damages, obscures or removes a street name plate showing the name of the street approved by the Council is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of £200.00.

Any person who erects a street name plate in a street without the authorisation of the Council is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of £200.00.

3.3 PROPERTY NUMBERING

Once new road names have been established, it is the Council's responsibility to produce the numbering scheme for a new development, under section 64 and 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847. This is undertaken by consulting the developer's plans and allocating each plot number with a house number. Developers should note that only the City Council can issue the formal postal number and developers should not allocate their own numbering as part of their marketing strategy.

When numbering properties within new roads, the Council will usually adhere to the following conventions, as outlined in DETR Circular 3/93 "Street Name Plates and the Numbering of Premises" Government advice:

1. Street numbering schemes allow for odd numbers on the left-hand side, and even numbers on the right.
2. In small developments properties can be numbered consecutively.
3. For infill developments of one or two houses it may be necessary to use an alphabetical suffix, for example 9a.
4. Succeeding numbers should be approximately opposite one another.

5. Side roads should be numbered ascending from its junction with the main road.

6. It should be noted that new properties are always numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is situated. The manipulation of numbering by developers or homeowners, in order to secure a perceived more prestigious address, will not be acceptable to the Council.

7. In blocks of flats each flat should be numbered so that the numbers run logically, preferably clockwise on each floor. The block may also be allocated a name, for example, Flat 2, Blake House. The number of the flats contained in each block should be clearly displayed at the entrance in a position clearly readable from the roadside.

3.3.1 POSTAL ADDRESSES FOR RURAL AREAS AND BARN CONVERSIONS

The area covered by the Council is predominantly urban, but there are rural areas on the edge of the city. It is therefore rare that rural addresses will be required. Where possible rural properties should be identified by a number but new properties built in rural areas or barn conversions may be identified by name only.

Where numbering schemes are non-existent within the rural areas of the City the Council will intervene to ask the property owners to allocate a name to the dwelling as soon as possible. Steps are taken as follows:

1. An officer reviews the location, orientation and accessibility of the new property.
2. Upon receipt of the applicant's choice of name, the Council will check that there is no other property within the immediate area of the same name. If there is, the owners will be required to produce an alternative name.

3.3.2 POSTAL ADDRESSES FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Where commercial properties are allocated a number, the number shall be clearly displayed at the main entrance to the building.

When new entrances/shop fronts are created, the proposals shall make provision for the incorporation of the number of the property.

3.4 RENUMBERING & NAMING PROPERTIES

3.4.1 PROPOSALS TO ALTER EXISTING NUMBERING SCHEME

The alteration of an existing street numbering scheme is a discretionary power of Council under Section 64 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, and is considered as follows:

1. The Council is obliged to take account of the effect of alteration on statutory service providers (e.g. gas, electric and water), the emergency services and local residents.
2. The Council will only recognise an alteration to an existing street naming/numbering scheme in exceptional circumstances, where the proposed alteration is in the wider public interest, and not where it is only for the benefit of private individuals.
3. The proposed alteration of an existing approved scheme would take account of the Government's DETR Circular 3/93 advice for convention in street numbering.
4. The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed alteration is in the wider public interest. The pros and cons under the present system must be balanced with those of the proposed alteration. The ultimate question being "would the house be easier to find under the new scheme?"

3.4.2 PROPERTY NAMING

If you wish to change the name of your property, or add an official 'alias name' to your property you must follow this procedure. Royal Mail does not accept name changes from anyone other than the Council.

If the property already has a house number, it is not permitted to replace the number with a name. However, the Council will allow the addition of an 'alias name' to the address. The 'alias name' will not form part of the official address. The alias name can only be used with the property number, not as a replacement of it. The property number must still be displayed and referred to in any correspondence.

To request a change to a property name, the owner must complete the relevant online application form and pay the appropriate fee.

Requests can only be accepted from the owner of the property and not tenants.

The Council cannot formally change a property name where the property is in the process of being purchased, that is, until exchange of contracts has been completed; although the Council can give guidance on acceptability of a chosen name, in principle, before exchange of contracts.

A check is made by the Council to ensure there are no other properties in the locality with the same name. In no circumstances will the Council allow a replicated house name in the same postal area. The Council also strongly recommends against using similar sounding names.

Under no circumstances will the Council allow a name that is offensive or can be construed as offensive.

The Council can refuse to change a property name where the name is the sole method of locating the property and the name of the property is well known, having historic links to the surrounding area.

If a proposed property name is refused, then the owner will have the option to provide further suggestions or retain the current address.

Where an amendment to a property name is carried out, the Council will inform those bodies listed in Appendix 9.1.

4 POSTCODES

Royal Mail has no statutory responsibilities or powers to either name a street or to name, number, rename or renumber a property. Royal Mail has sole responsibility for assigning a postcode following notification of new or amended address details by Worcester City Council.

4.1 ALLOCATION OF POSTCODES

Postcodes identify a group of postal delivery points and area defined by the Royal Mail in order to facilitate the sorting and delivery of mail. The Royal Mail postcode centre allocates a postcode to a new dwelling or other property upon the receipt of new naming and numbering information. The Council therefore has no involvement in the allocation of property postcodes. If you are experiencing problems with your postcode or wish to obtain a new code, please contact the Royal Mail Customer Services on 03457 740740 or visit www.royalmail.com.

5 NOTIFICATIONS

There are no statutory requirements for Local Authorities to provide details of changes to existing or new developments to any external organisations. However, it is recognised that the provision and sharing of this information facilitates better service delivery to the citizen and business communities.

The Council will therefore notify external organisations and internal Council departments of any naming, numbering or renaming/renumbering. Details of these bodies can be found in Appendix 9.1.

Notifications are via a combination of email and the GeoPlace Hub.

6 FEES AND CHARGING

6.1 APPLICATION OF CHARGES

Worcester City Council applies charges for the following:

- New development, conversion, or change of use to include the naming of new streets and numbering of properties
- New development, conversion or change of use on an existing street (numbering of properties only required)
- Renumbering of a development scheme following a developer's re-plan of site layout (after the notification of numbering issued)
- Renaming and/or renumbering of existing premises or street.
- Confirmation of an official address allocated by Worcester City Council.

6.2 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

The schedule of charges for street naming and numbering can be found on the City Council's website at: www.worcester.gov.uk/street-naming-numbering

Charges are not subject to VAT.

If you are unsure which fee is applicable please contact the Street Naming and Numbering team for clarification snn@worcester.gov.uk

6.3 PAYMENT

We require fees to be paid in advance of processing of an application. If payment of fees is not received within three months of a completion date, we may allocate official addresses for emergency services purposes with no further consultation.

If payment of fees is not received in relation to adding, amending or removing an existing property name, the official name will remain unchanged.

If amendments are received to an application once the Naming and Numbering processed has commenced, a new application should be submitted, together with a new application fee.

Once an application has commenced fees will not be refunded.

7 LIMIT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPLAINTS

7.1 CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

The Council is not liable for any claims for compensation arising directly or indirectly from the naming of streets, re-naming of streets, numbering or renumbering of properties, renaming/renumbering of properties.

7.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The property developer must not give any postal addresses, including the postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (e.g. via solicitors or estate agents) before the official naming and numbering scheme has been issued by the Council. The Council will not be liable for any costs of damages caused by failure to comply with this.

The Council is not responsible for the following:

- Correspondence and deliveries not being delivered to the correct address. Complaints of this nature should be directed to Customer Services at Royal Mail.
- The address being unavailable on databases used by third parties, such as retail outlets or Sat Nav companies.
- Ordnance Survey maps of plans not featuring any new properties or roads
- Notifying any personal contacts e.g. doctors, dentists, banks etc.

7.3 COMPLAINTS

If you feel we have acted in a way that is not in accordance with this policy document you can make a complaint using the Council's complaints procedure. Further information on the Complaints process and the necessary details can be found on the Council's website.

8 REVIEW

8.1 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every five years or sooner if a major change in the process is required through the introduction of new legislation for example.

8.2 CHARGES REVIEW

Charges will be reviewed on an annual basis and publicised through the Council's usual communication channels, including the external Council website.

9 Appendix

9.1 Distribution List for Street Naming and Numbering Information

List of bodies that are informed of new address and change of address information:

Internal

- Local Land & Property Gazetteer custodian
- Planning Services/Building Control
- Land Charges
- Council Tax
- Business Rates
- Electoral Register
- Environmental Operations.

External

- Developer/Applicant/Householder
- Royal Mail
- Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue
- Ambulance Service
- West Mercia Constabulary
- County Council Highways
- Severn Trent Water
- Valuation Office
- British Telecom
- Current Electricity and Gas supplier operating in the area
- Land Registry
- Ordnance Survey.

9.2 New Street Name Suffixes

New street names should end with one of the following suffixes:

Avenue	For residential roads (usually lined with trees)
Drive	For residential roads
Grove	For residential roads (usually area of trees)
Lane	For residential roads
Place	For residential roads
Street	For major roads / thoroughfare
Road	For major roads / thoroughfare
Way	For major roads / thoroughfare

The following suffixes will be considered when they meet the specified criteria:

Alley	For a narrow passageway between or behind buildings
Circus	For a large roundabout
Close	For a cul-de-sac only
Court	For a cul-de-sac only
Crescent	For a crescent shaped road
Dene	A vale, especially the deep, narrow, wooded valley of a small river
End	For a street which comes to a natural end with no further possibility for development beyond
Gardens	For residential roads (subject to there being no confusion with local open space)
Hill	For a hillside road
Mead or Meadow	For residential roads (a former grassland site where development includes, proposes, or is adjacent to a field)
Mews	Officially a term for converted stables in a courtyard or lane but could be considered for small terraced developments
Park	For a former area of recreational land
Rise	For residential roads (usually upward rising hillside)
Row	For residential roads, not a thoroughfare (for a particularly narrow street, lined with identical houses)
Square	buildings surround an open rectangular/square yard only

Terrace	A group of attached properties (provided it is not a subsidiary name)
Vale or Valley	For residential roads (for low area between hills)
View	The word used as the prefix to 'View' must be visible from the proposed street. E,g. 'Castle View' must have a view of the castle
Wharf	For development adjacent to a harbour or river where vessels can dock or moor

9.3 New Pedestrian Way Suffixes

Pedestrianised streets should use the following suffixes:

Alley	
Arcade	For a covered walkway with retail units
Passage	
Path	
Walk	
Way	

9.4 New Building Name Suffixes

New building names may end with one of the following suffixes when they meet the specified criteria:

Apartments	Residential only
Buildings	Business or residential
Court	Residential only
Heights	For a high block, business or residential
House	Business or residential
Lodge	Residential only
Point	Business or residential
Mansions	Residential only
Tower	Business or residential

9.5 Glossary of Terms

• House naming	Amending a name or adding a name to a property
• Infill	Property built between two existing properties or in the grounds of an existing property
• LLPG	Local Land and Property Gazetteer
• NLPG	National Land and Property Gazetteer
• Numbering	Allocating numbers and suffixes to properties e.g. houses, bungalows, flats, maisonettes, caravans (static), industrial units, retail outlets, etc
• Plot	A new property that is being built
• Renaming	Changing the name of an existing street
• Renumbering	Changing the house number or suffix for another
• Street naming	Allocating a name to a new street
• SNN	Street Naming and Numbering