

Street Naming and Property Numbering Protocol

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Change Control

Section No.	Change type	Document version	Date	Content
6.2	Amendment	2.0	16/03/10	"Appropriate Ward Councillors" amended to "Ward Councillors"
1.2	Amendment	3.0	12/04/11	Removed text "For instance statutory undertakers..."
9.3	Amendment	3.0	12/04/11	Removed text "Convention requires number one always to be on left hand side of a road".
9.5	Amendment	3.0	12/04/11	Added " unless local conditions dictate otherwise".
19	Amendment	3.0	12/04/11	Expanded Glossary items
9.8	Addition	3.1	07/06/11	Added " except where the number has been assigned a suffix"
9.2	Amendment	3.2	22/06/11	Changed from "..will always be omitted.." to "..may be omitted.... and this will be the preference."
19 - point 4	Amendment			Change 1967 to 1982 Replaced "£25 and £20 respectively" to "set at £200".

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Background

The Street Naming and Numbering process was reviewed in Autumn 2008 and proposals for changes were agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 15th July 2009. Further changes to the process were made in March 2010.

The document has been created in order to clarify the responsibilities of the Council and others within the role of address creation for new and amended properties and to provide a guide for the public to understanding the reasons behind decisions that are made.

It is intended that this is a public document.

1. Reasons for Street Naming and Property Numbering

1.1 It's not just the postman who needs properly identified streets and sensibly ordered property numbers. In fact most properties are known to the Post Office service and mail gets delivered despite being poorly addressed. However, the casual visitor such as delivery services, emergency services and indeed Council staff need to clearly identify and find properties. These may be persons on foot but more often are in vehicles and these vehicles can be a serious traffic hazard when drivers are distracted looking for ambiguous names and numbers. In emergencies, particularly at night the need to find addresses quickly by doctors and emergency services can be a matter of life or death.

1.2 Legal transactions associated with properties are sometimes withheld until they can be identified by street name and numbers.

1.3 As part of the process new address information is passed to organisations who then update their address databases. These include companies that sell address listings to many other commercial companies. Undoubtedly there are sometimes delays between new properties becoming occupied and support companies receiving new address information but unless new properties pass through the SNN process address information is often created with errors, delayed or inconsistently between organisations. This can contribute towards a poor service being provided to those customers occupying new properties.

2. Postcodes

2.1 The postal service assigns the postcode but will not do so until the Local Authority has given the property an address.

2.2 Details of existing post codes and full postal addresses can be found by contacting the Royal Mail or on their web page using their Postcode-Finder function.

2.3 For any complaints relating to the delivery of mail the occupier should contact the Royal Mail Customer Services in the first place.

2.4 The Royal Mail should instruct occupiers to contact Reading Borough Council for approval of any amendments to their current address.

3. Powers used by Reading Borough Council

3.1 A Local Authority's powers regarding Street Naming and Property Numbering are contained in:

- The Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, sections 64 and 65
- The Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907, Section 21
- The Public Health Act 1925, Sections 17, 18 & 19.

3.2 The powers used by Reading Borough Council are as follows:

- Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, Sections 64 & 65.

3.3 Under the Council's existing processes the following items are taken to Planning Applications Committee where proposed names are presented and the final decision is made:

- Street naming - providing a road name to a new road or an existing road with no name;
- Re-naming existing streets - this is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services.

In all cases the Street Naming and Property Numbering Section will consult with Council and Ward Members for comments to be included in the report to Committee.

3.4 Under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, the Head of Planning and Building Control has power to approve the following:

- Allocation of numbering to developments.
- Re-numbering existing properties and buildings - this is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services and the inclusion of additional development (item 9.6).
- Allocating house numbers to properties that only have a house name.

4. Legislation

4.1 The Local Authority's powers to require street numbers and road names to be displayed are contained in the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 sections 64 & 65 as set out below.

4.2 Section 64 : Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847
Houses to be numbered and streets named.

"The commissioners shall from time to time cause the houses and buildings in all or any of the streets to be marked with numbers as they

think fit, and shall cause to be put up or painted on a conspicuous part of some house, building, or place, at or near each end, corner, or entrance of every such street, the name by which such street is to be known; and every person who destroys, pulls down, or defaces any such number or name, or puts up any number or name different from the number or name put up by the commissioners, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding [level 1 on the standard scale] for every such offence”.

**4.3 Section 65 : Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847
Numbers on houses to be renewed by occupiers.**

“The occupiers of houses and other buildings in the streets shall mark their houses with such numbers as the commissioners approve of, and shall renew such numbers as often as they become obliterated or defaced; and every such occupier who fails, within one week after notice for that purpose from the commissioners, to mark his house with a number approved of by the commissioners, or to renew such number when obliterated, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding [level 1 on the standard scale], and the commissioners shall cause such numbers to be marked or to be renewed, as the case may require, and the expense thereof shall be repaid to them by such occupier, and shall be recoverable as damages.

5. Resolution of the Council

5.1 Reading Borough Council has resolved to use the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 Sections 64 and Sections 65 in order to number properties and name streets.

6. Consultation and Notification

6.1 The Royal Mail is always notified of any new names and where similarly spelt or similar sounding names already exist in the area they will not be accepted.

6.2 Ward Councillors are consulted on the proposed names for developments in their areas. Lead Councillors for Planning & Transport are consulted in all cases. Options are presented to Planning Applications Committee where the final decision is made.

6.3 Where it is necessary to change existing road names the appropriate consultation will take place with Ward Councillors, local occupiers and Planning Applications Committee, where the final decision is made.

6.4 Notification letters will be sent to occupiers if there is a change of road name, re-numbering or a numbering allocation to properties with just house names. In making such changes Reading Borough Council is exercising statutory powers and its decision is final.

7. Naming of new streets

7.1 Where it is necessary to assign a new street name, the Street Naming and Numbering Section will consult on proposed names with Council and Ward Members for comments to be included in a report to Planning Applications Committee, where the final decision is made.

8. Choice of street names

8.1 Where an area, field or site historically associated with it for reasons such as activity, landscape or occupancy, it is usual to attempt to preserve these in new street names. Where there is no information to suggest a road name, a new one will be chosen. In other cases road names can be used to record local dignitaries or characters that the Council wishes to honour. Generally the names of persons who are still in office or are politically active are not used.

8.2 If a "local" name is not suitable then there is no reason why any attractive name cannot be chosen. Where several roads are involved, a "theme" linking the names can be used to help identify the area.

8.3 The purpose of addressing properties is to assist in locating them. Small roads with few properties are usually difficult to find. Where a development contains less than 5 properties OR the access road for the properties is less than 50m in length, it is usual for the properties to be addresses as part of the existing primary road from which they are accessed.

8.4 Cul-de-sacs accessed off a road which is itself a no through road are confusing, requiring long descriptive "leading to" name plates. In these circumstances it is often appropriate to use just one street name to describe all the roads which are linked to form a no through road.

8.5 Where a new road is an extension of an existing road it is not normally necessary to give that section a new name.

8.6 Duplication of road names in the same area is not permissible.

8.7 Names which could give offence are not used nor are names which encourage defacing name plates.

8.8 Street name suffixes are not always essential but if used must be descriptive of the road, e.g., Road, Street or Drive to indicate a thoroughfare and Close or Grove to indicate a cul-de-sac.

8.9 The following is a list of possible suffixes. It is not exhaustive and sometimes other descriptive words are more appropriate.

Description	Suffix
Residential roads including major roads,	Avenue, Parade, Place, Way
Small residential roads	Lane, Path, Row, Terrace, View, Villas, Walk
Residential roads (subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)	Chase, Croft, Gardens, Green, Fields, Lands, Lawns, Paddock, Park, Valley
Circular road or roundabout	Circle, Circus
Cul-de-sac only	Court, Close, End, Grove, Mews, Vale
Crescent shaped road	Crescent
Hillside road only	Hill, Ridge, Rise
Any thoroughfare	Road, Street, Drive
Square only	Square, Quadrangle

9. Numbering sequence and allocation

9.1 Reading Borough Council has the power to assign numbers to houses and buildings 'as they think fit' and require the number to be displayed (Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, Sections 64 & 65).

9.2 The number 13 may be omitted from number sequences, and this will be the preference.

9.3 Through roads are numbered odds and evens in the direction they would be accessed from the centre of the town or community. Convention is to number odds on the left and evens on the right when travelling away from the Town Centre, however numbering also depends on the layout of the development and roads.

9.4 Cul-de-sacs are usually numbered sequentially in a clockwise direction starting with number one on the left-hand side of the entrance to the cul-de-sac. Where it is apparent that a cul-de-sac development is likely to be extended in the future it may be appropriate to either number the development with odds and evens or initially leave some numbers within the range spare to allow the numbering scheme to be extended at a future date. This would allow future properties to be

numbered as if they were part of the original development and reduce the likelihood of confusion over suffixes (22A, 22B etc).

- 9.5 In residential buildings (e.g., blocks of flats) it is usual to assign the street number to the whole building, with the individual units being addressed within it from number 1, (e.g. Flat 1, 24 *Street Name*). Flats within a building will not normally be assigned property numbers from the street range, unless local conditions dictate otherwise.
- 9.6 When properties (including converted houses) contain flats they will normally be addressed with numbers and not letters. (i.e. Flat 1, 24 *Street Name*, NOT Flat A, 24; nor 24A).
- 9.7 It is usual for infill plots (properties built between existing properties or in the grounds of an existing property) to be given the same house number before the infill followed by suffix of "A", "B" etc. e.g. 24A, 24B etc., unless a new street name is assigned to the development (see 8.3).
- 9.8 Two buildings in one street may not have the same number, except where the number has been assigned a suffix (see section 9.7 above).
- 9.9 Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars and such like should not be numbered.
- 9.10 Buildings on corner plots are numbered with the street towards which the main entrance faces. If pedestrian access is not possible from that street, the building may be numbered with the street giving access. Occupier's preference will not be a relevant consideration.
- 9.11 Generally if a building is demolished the existing numbering sequence is retained and reused in any new development as far as possible. Where this is not the case, for instance if a new street is created on the site, then totally new addresses will be created.
- 9.12 If additional plots are added to a proposed development at a later date (e.g. due to a revised layout) where possible the plots will be numbered within the existing range or will be allocated existing numbering with suffixes of "A", "B" etc. e.g. 24A, 24B etc.

10. Re-numbering existing properties or buildings

- 10.1 The re-numbering of existing properties or buildings usually causes disruption and cost to individual occupiers and should be avoided wherever possible. For new developments within an existing street the use of suffixes of "A", "B" etc, or re-numbering where just a few properties are affected is preferable to wholesale re-numbering of a large street. However, this is not always possible and the renumbering of properties will be at the discretion of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

10.2 Re-numbering existing properties and buildings is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services, for residents seeking to access Council services or the inclusion of additional developments (paragraph 9.7).

10.3 The Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, Sections 64 and 65 allows a Local Authority to require buildings to be marked with numbers "as they think fit". There is no right of appeal or requirement for formal consultation but if there is a re-numbering of properties Reading Borough Council will send notification letters to occupiers.

10.4 Re-naming a street is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services.

11. Allocation of house numbers to properties with names only

11.1 Where the Council receives a request from members of the public to allocate a number to a property that has an existing name only, we will consider such a request but are not under an obligation to process it. Re-addressing of properties is only normally considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for Emergency services or for residents seeking to access Council services.

12. House names

12.1 Where the Council receives a request from members of the public to allocate a name to a property that is currently not named or numbered, where possible we will consider allocating a number rather than a name. If it is felt necessary for addressing purposes, we may allocate both a number and a name to the property.

12.2 Where the Council receives notification from a property owner that their existing property name has been amended, if we feel it is appropriate we will process the notification and inform other organisations as part of the usual process.

12.3 If the council receives a request to "officially" add a house name to an existing property that is already numbered by passing the request through the "Street Naming and Numbering process", it is usual that such a change would be seen as cosmetic and therefore unnecessary. This does not inhibit residents from adding a name to their property if they wish to do so but this would not be "official" and therefore Reading Borough Council would not endorse the change or pass that information on to other organisations.

12.4 Where a property has been named as well as numbered the property number will have to be used in conjunction with the house name but the number must always be included and displayed. The name cannot be

regarded as an alternative to the number. This is enforceable under the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847, section 65.

13. Notification

13.1 Reading Borough Council will notify the Royal Mail, emergency services, public utilities and Council services of any numbering, naming, re-numbering or re-naming.

14. Claims for compensation

14.1 Reading Borough Council is not liable for any claims for compensation arising directly or indirectly from the naming of roads, re-naming of roads, numbering or re-numbering of properties.

15. Decision

15.1 The Council's decision is final for the naming of roads, re-naming of roads, numbering or re-numbering of properties.

16. Charges

16.1 Any charges applied to requests for Street Naming and Numbering are detailed on the Reading Borough Council website. (www.reading.gov.uk).

17. General responsibilities of the Council.

The Council is responsible for:

- Assignment and notification of new addresses within the Borough.
- Notification of new addresses to Emergency Services and Utilities.
- The erection and replacement of Street Name plates.

The Council is NOT responsible for:

- The postcode: This is issued by the Royal Mail and will be held in 'reserve' until the Royal Mail are notified by either the developer or the home owner that the property is occupied.
- Correspondence and deliveries not being delivered to the correct address. Any complaints should be directed at the Royal Mail Customer Services.
- The address being unavailable on databases used by third parties, such as retail outlets (including Internet based ones).
- Ordnance Survey maps or plans not featuring any new properties or roads.
- Notifying anyone other than the external organisations listed on the Reading Borough Council Website (www.reading.gov.uk).

18. Reference

18.1 All references to Council Local Authority relate to Reading Borough Council

19. Glossary:

- Commissioner; A person or organisation appointed by commission to carry out some specified work. In this case Reading Borough Council.
- House naming; Amending a name or adding a name to a property.
- In-fill: A property built between two existing properties or in the grounds of an existing property
- Level 1 of standard scale; Values for incorrect Street Name displays or incorrect property numbers displayed as detailed in the Criminal Justice Act 1982. Currently set at £200.
- Numbering; Allocating numbers and suffixes to properties e.g. houses, bungalows, flats, maisonettes, caravans (static), industrial units, retail outlets, etc.
- Plot; A new property or part property that requires an address.
- Re-naming; Changing an existing name for another.
- Re-numbering; Changing the house number or suffix for another.
- Road naming; Allocating a name to a new street or existing street with no name.
- Suffix; Letter following a number e.g. 24A, 24B.