



**STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING
POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPERS
JULY 2024**

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1. Background

Street naming and numbering is a statutory function. Cherwell District Council alone provides the street naming and numbering service for the Cherwell area under the provisions of the Oxfordshire Act 1985 (part 3). This Act embodies the relevant sections of the Local Government Act 2003, the Public Health Act 1925 and the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847.

The purpose of this function is to make sure that any new street names and building names and numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring the efficient delivery of mail and so that the Emergency Services are able to locate any address quickly.

Royal Mail requires all new properties and amended addresses to be approved by the Local Authority prior to adding the addresses to the Royal Mail database.

We will name and number streets and dwellings and units in line with the National Land and Property Gazetteer data entry conventions and best practice for street naming and numbering. Following these conventions will ensure our practices are compliant with British Standard BS 7666.

2. Street naming guidelines

Where developments take place which incorporate the building of new access roads, the names for these roads must be approved by the Local Authority. The selection of new street names is a matter which requires careful consideration to ensure that they are suitable for the area and will not conflict with or duplicate any existing names within the same locality.

- New street names should avoid duplicating any similar name already in use in the town/village or in the same postcode area. A variation in the terminal word, for example “street”, “road”, “avenue”, will not be accepted as a sufficient reason to duplicate a name (for example a request for “Park Road”, “Park Avenue” and “Park Gate Drive” in the same area). This is not allowed as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency situation.
- We will avoid having two phonetically similar names within the postal area, for example Churchill Road and Birch Hill Road.
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- Where possible, names should reflect the history of the site or acknowledge the geography of the area.
- The Council will encourage the use of themes on developments requiring many new street names. However, we will aim to minimise the number of new names needed.
- The Council reserves the right not to adopt any unofficial marketing titles used by developers for the sale of new properties unless these have been officially proposed and approved.
- Street names that may be considered or construed as obscene or which would contravene any aspect of the Council’s equal opportunities or diversity policies will not be

acceptable.

- Street names that may be open to reinterpretation by graffiti or shortening of the name should be avoided.
- Any street name that promotes a company, service or product may not be allowed. Names based on a developer's trading name are seen as advertising and are not acceptable. An exception to this may be made for a company that no longer exists, if used solely in a historical context and the claim of advertising cannot be made.
- Streets should not be named after living persons.
- Streets may be named after a deceased individual where it is widely recognised that the individual has made a positive contribution to the benefit of the local community, provided permission is granted from the next of kin where this is reasonably practical. It is recognised that sensitivities might arise when naming a street after a deceased person and therefore in the public interest a process of due diligence will be followed before such decisions are made. This may involve both internal and external consultations.
- Streets cannot be named after royal persons without the written consent of the Lord Chamberlain's Office.
- The surname of an individual should be used in preference to a forename and surname in order to keep the street name as brief as possible whilst complying with other guidance.
- No punctuation will be used, i.e. "St. Stephen's Road" will be "St Stephens Road". This is to comply with Royal Mail's database protocols.
- All new street names should normally end with one of the following suffixes appropriate to the street type and layout but alternatives may be considered if appropriate to the locality:
 - Avenue (for thoroughfare residential roads)
 - Close (for cul-de-sacs only)
 - Court (for cul-de-sacs only)
 - Crescent (for crescent shaped roads only)
 - Circus (for a large roundabout)
 - Drive (for any thoroughfare roads)
 - Gardens (for residential roads)
 - Grove (for residential roads)
 - Hill (for hillside residential roads)
 - Lane (for residential roads)
 - Mews (for residential roads)
 - Place (for residential roads)
 - Rise (for hillside residential roads)
 - Road (for any thoroughfare)
 - Row (for residential roads)
 - Square (for squares only)
 - Street (for any thoroughfare)
 - Vale (for residential roads)
 - Way (for residential roads)
 - Wharf (for residential roads)

All new pedestrian ways should end with one of the following suffixes:

- Path
- Walk
- Way

3. Street Name and Number Plates

The provision of street name and number plates (where a plate is needed to indicate a specific range of numbers) on a new development is the developer's responsibility. The Council has two specifications for nameplates (for those to be located in Conservation Areas and outside Conservation Areas respectively) and will supply the specifications on request. No other specification will be allowed. We can also provide details of suppliers who are known to be able to supply street nameplates to our specification.

Where relevant nameplates will include a "T" (no through road) symbol which we will specify.

We will provide drawings showing where street name and number plates are to be provided. The locations will normally be on existing highway land or land that is to become highway.

We aim to avoid street clutter and will only sanction nameplates containing the words "leading to" by exception.

4. Guidelines for changing a street name

If a resident or group of residents are not happy with an existing street name, they can apply to the Council to rename the street. Under such circumstances the Council has a duty to consult widely on the request. The Council will only process the request if it has the express written agreement of all those who could be affected. In these circumstances the Council will recharge all its reasonable costs to those who propose the change of street name.

A notice advising of the proposed new road name will be placed in a conspicuous position at each end of the street to which it relates. A notice will be sent to every property along this road advising of the proposed change.

Any objections to the proposed change received in writing by a specific date will be considered. The final decision will be made by the Council.

The Council will generally resist any request to rename a street unless there are cogent reasons for it.

5. Guidelines for naming blocks of flats, buildings or terraces

Where possible blocks of flats and buildings will be given a name and addressed off a road. The developer can propose a name for consideration. The criteria for a building name should follow the same guidelines as a new street name. The proposals will be sent to the Town or Parish Council for comment. This also applies to names for terraces.

All named blocks should end with one of the following suffixes, appropriate to the type of layout:

- Court For flats and other residential buildings
- House Residential blocks or offices
- Mansion Other residential (generally large) buildings
- Tower High residential or office blocks (five or more floors)

6. Public buildings

In cases of new buildings or amendments to names of buildings of public interest or in prominent locations, the Council reserves the right to follow the same consultation process as streets.

7. Guidelines for numbering

- New streets shall be numbered with odd numbers on the left hand side and even numbers on the right commencing from the primary entrance. Where the street is a thoroughfare between two other streets, the numbering shall commence at the end of the street nearest the centre of the town or village.
- Additional properties in streets which are currently numbered will always be allocated a alphabetic property number suffix.
- A logical numbering sequence will be maintained. Once numbered we will not normally renumber properties. We will only consider the renumbering of a property where it can be shown that there are consistent delivery problems, and a more appropriate alternative exists.
- Buildings (including those on a corner site) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is located. The manipulation of numbering in order to secure a “prestige” address or to avoid an address will not be allowed.
- If multiple occupancy buildings have entrances in more than one street, each entrance will be numbered off the appropriate street.
- A cul-de-sac will generally have sequentially numbered properties in a clockwise direction
- The Council will use the number 13 in all its numbering schemes where relevant. Similarly, no other numbers will be avoided.
- We will use numbers followed by letters where there is no alternative.
- Where a property has a number, it must be used and conspicuously displayed. Where a name has been given to a property together with its official number, the number must always be included. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative.
- Flats and units shall be given individual numbers where possible. The sequence of the numbering will depend on the access to the front doors of individual premises.
- All commercial properties will be given a number to be used to indicate its primary address.

8. Procedure for new developments

Developers should not give any postal addresses, including postcodes, to potential occupiers,

either directly or indirectly (for example via Solicitors or Estate Agents) before we have issued the approved address. We will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

Developers should always apply direct to the Council at the earliest opportunity for new postal addresses, i.e. as soon as development starts.

We require the following information:

- Completion of the street naming and numbering application at

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/40/building-control/203/street-name-and-numbering>

- A copy of the site layout plan which has received Planning Consent. The plans submitted should have plot numbers and the entrances to the properties and their boundaries clearly shown so that street names and numbers can be issued in a logical manner. If the development includes flats floor plans should also be submitted.

We will check that the application has an approved planning permission:

The allocation of a postal address (or addresses) does not serve as confirmation that any building, structure, or use is authorised under the Planning Regulations, the Building Regulations or any other legislation, and owners/occupiers risk enforcement action if any necessary approvals have not been obtained.

The choice of new street names lies with the Council's Assistant Director Planning and Development in consultation with our relevant Ward Members and the Town or Parish Council.

The numbering of properties in new streets will be carried out following the guidelines within this document. All properties in newly named streets will be allocated numbers. All new properties on existing streets will be numbered unless the existing properties on that street all have official dwelling names and no numbers.

Where the development is an infill on an existing street we will try and number properties wherever possible. If this is not possible, or if the street does not have a numbering scheme, the developer can suggest property names. The property names should comply with the guidance set out in these guidelines.

When numbering and/or naming is complete we will contact Royal Mail who will allocate the postcode to the address and add the property to their "not yet built" file. Once Royal Mail have allocated the postcode, we will write to you with official confirmation of the postal address and where applicable any instruction for the erection of street nameplates, and number plates if needed.

All costs for the erection of signs for new streets will be paid for by the developer. A specification for street nameplates will be provided by Cherwell District Council. Maintenance of the street signs becomes a District Council responsibility once a street has been adopted. Street nameplates on roads remaining private remain the responsibility of the residents/Management Company concerned.

Where developers have not applied for an address and occupation of the property has taken place we will endeavour to contact the owner or developer to ask for an official application. If

we do receive an application within four weeks we will allocate an address.

9. Allocating postcodes

Cherwell District Council is not responsible for issuing postcodes. This is the responsibility of Royal Mail. Royal Mail will not issue a postcode for a new street or property unless requested to do so by the Council. The maintenance and any future changes to this postcode are Royal Mail's responsibility.

10. Address locality

Localities within the official postal address are the responsibility of Royal Mail. Where applicants object to a locality name in their postal address we will advise them to consult with Royal Mail which has a procedure laid down under the Code of Practice of the Postal Services Commission for Adding or Amending Locality Details.

Postal addresses are not necessarily geographically accurate descriptions. Their primary purpose is to enable the efficient delivery of goods mail and services and to enable properties to be readily found by the Emergency Services.

11. Procedure for changing or adding a property name

If a property has a house number, it is not possible to replace the number with a name. However, we will allow the addition of a name to the address (an alias). Royal Mail will hold the property name in a separate alias database. They will not accept name changes from anyone other than the Council.

To request a change to a property name, the owner must complete the relevant application form found at

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/40/building-control/203/street-name-and-numbering>

Requests can only be accepted from the owners of properties and not tenants.

We cannot formally change a property name where the property is in the process of being purchased until the exchange of contracts has taken place and the previous occupiers have moved out. We can, however, give guidance on the acceptability of a chosen name before this.

A check is made by us to ensure there is no other property in the locality with the same or similar name. Under no circumstances will we allow a name that is offensive or can be construed to be offensive. We will also refuse any names that replicate or closely replicate an existing name in the same postal area.

No formal consultation is undertaken with any parties or organisations for individual residential property name changes. Once all checks are satisfactorily complete we will change the name of the property and advise the relevant parties including Royal Mail, Land Registry, Ordnance Survey, the Council Tax and Local Land and Property Gazetteer teams and the Emergency Services.

We will recover all our reasonable costs from the party requesting the name change.

We will confirm the new official address in writing to the owner of the property.