

**South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council
Street Naming and Numbering Policy Document**



**South Hams
District Council**



**West Devon
Borough
Council**

Street Naming and Numbering Policy

Updated 2021

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Introduction

The naming and numbering of streets and buildings within South Hams is a Statutory function of South Hams District Council and is covered by Sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Public Health Act 1925 which was formally adopted by the Council on 18 March 1976.

The naming and numbering of streets and buildings within West Devon is a statutory function of West Devon Borough Council and is covered by Sections 17 and 19 of the Public Health Act 1925 (which was formally adopted by the Council (Minute No. 65(a) 1975/76)) and Sections 64 and 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 in relation to numbering only (which was formally adopted by the Council (CM 9b(ii))).

Decisions on these matters are made and controlled by South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council (the Councils).

The purpose of this control is to make sure that any new street names and numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring, amongst other things, the effective delivery of mail and that emergency services vehicles are able to locate any address to which they may be summoned.

Anyone wishing to change the name or number of their property or seeking an address for a new property or wish to change the name of an existing street should apply in writing to the Council following the procedures detailed in this policy.

As far as street naming proposals are concerned the Council encourages developers or owners to propose their own preferred names for consideration. However, it is recommended that more than one suggestion for a new name should be put forward, just in case one fails to meet the Council's criteria outlined in this policy. It is desirable that any suggested road name should have some connection with the area.

If proposals comply with the Council's Policy on Street Naming and Numbering and, for street names, do not meet with an objection from the Town/Parish Councils, the local Ward Member or the Royal Mail Address Development Centre, the new address will be formally allocated and all relevant bodies will be notified by the Council. See Appendix A for a list of those bodies informed by the Council.

To aid emergency services, the Council will endeavour to ensure that where appropriate, if a street name has street signs relating to that name, all properties accessed off it will be officially addressed to include that street name and also where appropriate, all new properties will be numbered.

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Statutory Context

Public Health Act 1925 Section 17 – Notice to Council before street is named

Section 17(1): Before any street is given a name, notice of the proposed name shall be sent to the Council by the person proposing to name the street.

Section 17(2): The Council, within one month after the receipt of such notice, may, by notice in writing served on the person by whom notice of the proposed name of the street has sent, object to the proposed name.

Section 17(3): It is unlawful to set up in any street an inscription of the name:

- a) until the expiration of one month after notice of the proposed name has been sent to the Council under this section; and
- b) where the Council have objected to the proposed name, unless and until such objection has been withdrawn by the Council or overruled on appeal;

Any person acting in contravention of this provision shall be liable to a penalty determined by the Magistrates' Court.

Section 17(4): Where the Council serve a notice of objection under this section, the person proposing to name the street may, within 21 days after service of the notice, appeal against the objection to the Magistrates Court.

Public Health Act 1925

Section 18 – Alteration of name of street

Section 18(1): The Council may, by Order, alter or amend the name of any street, or any part of a street, or assign a name to any street, or any part of a street, to which a name does not already exist.

Section 18(2): not less than one month before making an Order under this Section, the Council shall cause notice of the intended Order to be posted at each end of the street, or part of the street, or in some conspicuous position in the street or part affected.

Section 18(3): Every such notice shall contain a statement that the intended Order may be made by the Council on or at any time after the day named in the notice, and that an appeal will lie under this Act to the Magistrates' Court against the intended Order at the instance of any person aggrieved.

Section 18(4): Any person aggrieved by the intended Order of the Council may, within 21 days after the posting of the notice, appeal to the Magistrates' Court.

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Public Health Act 1925 Section 19 - Indication of name of street

Section 19(1): The Council shall cause the name of every street to be painted, or otherwise marked, in a conspicuous position on any house building or erection in or near the street, and shall, from time to time, alter or renew such inscription of the name of any street if and when the name of the street is altered or the inscription becomes illegible.

Section 19(2): if any person pulls down any inscription of the name of the street which has lawfully been set up, or sets up in any street any name different from the name lawfully given to the street, or places or affixes any notice or advertisement within 12 inches of any name of a street marked on a house, building or erection in pursuance of this Section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale and thereafter to a daily penalty.

Local Government Act 2003

Local Authorities have the power to charge for discretionary services where there is no other power to charge provided that the charge does not exceed the cost of providing the service.

Naming Streets and Numbering Dwellings

The Councils have responsibility for naming streets and to ensure that street names are displayed.

The Councils will name and number streets and dwellings in line with the 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 Councils' practices are compliant with the British Standard BS7666:2006.

Ensuring that the Councils have a comprehensive Street Naming and Numbering Policy that complies with BS7666:2006 is important because the Councils need to ensure:

- Emergency Services can find a property quickly – delays cost lives and money
- Mail is delivered efficiently
- Visitors can easily find where they want to go ○
- There is a reliable delivery of services and products
- Service providers have up to date and accurate records - poor record keeping is only a disadvantage to the customer
- The Council will bill the right person, in the right property, at the right time for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

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Procedure on receipt of suggested street name

Property developers can suggest names for new streets. These will be received by the respective Council and checked against the criteria (see later), then forwarded to the Town/Parish Council and the local Ward Member as appropriate for consideration. The Town/Parish Council will consider the name and may approve, otherwise they may suggest another name. If another name is suggested by the Town/Parish Council then the Council will forward this suggestion to the developer for consideration. Once both parties are in agreement the Council will officially allocate the street name.

In cases where both parties cannot agree on a street name, the decision will be made under delegated authority by the COP lead for Development Management.

In cases where a street name has been put forward by a property developer all costs for the erection of street nameplates will be borne by the property developer. There are Street Nameplate Specifications and Installation Guidelines available and the Council will inform the developer of this.

Maintenance of street nameplates becomes the Council's responsibility once a street has been adopted.

As stated above, under Section 17 Public Health Act 1925, it is not lawful to erect a street nameplate until the street name has been confirmed in writing by the Council.

Criteria for Naming Streets

The Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) Case Manager will use these guidelines when agreeing a new number or address and Developers and Town/Parish Councils should follow these guidelines for any suggested street names:

- New street names should try to avoid duplicating any similar name already in use in a town/village or in the same postcode area. A variation in the terminal words, for example, 'street', 'road', 'avenue' will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name. A common request is to repeat existing names in a new road or building titles. This is not allowed as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency.
- Street names should, where possible, reflect the history or geography of the site or area.
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- Street names must not cause offence and will be verified by the Street Naming and Numbering Case Manager to ensure that they do not do so,

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having particular regard to race, disability, gender, age, faith and belief and sexual orientation.

- Street names that could be construed as advertising will not be allowed.
- The use of North, East, South or West is only acceptable where the road is continuous and passes over a major junction. It is not acceptable when the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two.
- Phonetically similar names within a postal area should be avoided
- The use of a name that relates to a living or deceased person should be avoided.

All new street names should ideally end with one of the following suffixes;

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| • Street, | • Court, |
| • Road, | • Close, |
| • Avenue, | • Square, |
| • Drive, | • Hill, |
| • Way, | • Circus, |
| • Grove, | • Vale, |
| • Lane, | • Rise, |
| • Gardens, | • Row, |
| • Place, | • Wharf, |
| • Crescent, | • Mews |

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

- Walk,
- Path,
- Way.

Further notes:

For private houses it is sufficient that the name should not repeat the name of the road or that of any house or building in the same postcode area: see **Procedure for Address Changes** below.

Criteria for assigning a new Postal Address

After receiving a request for an address for property/properties, which currently do not have an address, the Council will first check for approved planning permission or building control approval. If this has been granted then the procedure to create a new address will commence. The Council will not address properties without the relevant planning permissions and will only address properties once the foundations have been laid on site. The reason for this is to ensure the numbering sequence of any street is not compromised and addresses are not created in error.

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Issuing an address to properties without planning permission will have no bearing on planning matters or be capable of being used in support of any planning appeal. We will still add your property to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and you will still be liable for Council Tax or NNDR.

Agricultural Land

Agricultural land parcels can be added to our LLPG. They are flagged as non-postal addresses. This is to assist emergency response and create a unique record for each property for future use.

The Council will only request an official address from Royal Mail where we have an operational requirement to do so or we believe the property is being used for permanent residency. Such addresses will have to meet Royal Mail's requirements for secure delivery points.

The Council's planning enforcement team will be informed about any believed change of use of the land.

Postal Address Format

For clarification, official postal addresses always take the following format:

Any Ltd	Company or Organisation Name*
123 Any Street	Postal Number/Name of Street
Anywhere	Locality*
ANYTOWN	POST TOWN
DEVON	County
TQ00 0AA	Postcode

* If applicable

When an approved address is agreed by all parties, Royal Mail will confirm a postcode. The maintenance and any future changes to this Postcode are the responsibility of the Royal Mail.

Localities within an official postal address are the responsibility of Royal Mail. Where applicants object to a locality name in their address, the SNN Case Manager will advise them to consult Royal Mail, who has a procedure laid down in their code of practice by the Postal Services Commission for adding or amending locality details.

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We will, however, remind applicants that postal addresses are not geographically accurate descriptions, but routing instructions for Royal Mail staff and they can and do contain names for villages, towns and cities that may be several miles away from the actual location of their property.

For further information about addresses, you are advised to read the Royal Mail's guidance, which can be found on their website: royalmail.com.

Guidelines for Numbering Buildings

A new street should be numbered with the odd numbers on the left and the even numbers on the right from the entrance of the street.

In the case of a small cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.

Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars, etc., should not be numbered.

All numbers should be used in the proper sequence. The number 13 will be excluded from a numbering scheme unless a request is made to include it. Once numbered we will not normally re-number properties. We will only renumber a property where there can be shown to be consistent delivery problems.

Where an existing street or similar is to be extended, it would be appropriate to continue to use the same street name. This will include the continuation of the street numbering.

Buildings (including those on corner plots) will be numbered (or named) according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found.

If a building has entrances in more than one street, is a multi-occupied building and each entrance leads to a separate occupier, then each entrance should be numbered in the appropriate road. Exceptions may be made, depending on circumstances, for a house divided into flats.

In residential buildings (i.e. a block of flats), it is acceptable to give a postal number to each dwelling where the block is up to six storeys in height. When the block exceeds this height or there are insufficient numbers available because of existing development, it should be given a name and numbered separately internally. Such building names will be put through the same criteria for issuing house names.

Where a property is sub-divided, or in the case of flats and apartments, individual properties should always be numbered or suffixed with a letter rather than

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described (i.e. Flat 1 or Flat A used rather than First Floor Flat). Where numbered properties are sub-divided, it is preferred that individual units retain the number of the 'parent' property (i.e. Flat 1, 36 High Street).

Royal Mail will only register properties which have their own entrance and/or their own secure letter box. Sometimes this can cause problems as people think their address/flat should be registered. If mail for a building is delivered to a single letter box, and occupants then collect their own mail, Royal Mail class this as a 'building in multiple occupation' and will only register the parent building and not individual flat numbering schemes within the building.

Legislation permits the use of numbers followed by letters. These will be suitable, for example, when one large house in a road is demolished, to be replaced by (say) 4 new smaller houses. To include the new houses in the existing numbered sequence of the road would involve renumbering all the higher numbered houses on the side of the road affected by the proposal. To avoid this situation, the new houses should be given the number of the old house with A, B, C or D added (i.e. 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D).

Where new houses are built in an existing road, where properties are named rather than numbered, it is essential that the houses be officially allocated names. The name should not repeat the name of the road or that of any house or building in the area. It should also be sufficiently different to other property names used locally. This situation normally applies on roads where there has been no formal property numbering scheme.

New properties in streets where the existing properties are numbered will be allocated a new number. Individual properties are generally built on infill land, large gardens, or on the site of previously demolished properties. These will be numbered within the existing sequence if possible, and letter suffixes (e.g. 16A) will be used if necessary. Where building takes place on the site of a demolished property, the new building will inherit the existing number.

Where two or more properties on a numbered street are merged, the numbers of the original properties should normally be retained. For example, 4 and 6 Fore Street being combined would become 4-6 Fore Street. There are however instances where it may be considered appropriate to use a single number. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

Where a property has a number, it must be used and displayed. Where application is made to add a name to a property with a number, the number must always be included. The number cannot be removed from the official postal address and it cannot be regarded as an alternative. This applies to both domestic and commercial property.

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The Councils will not normally register company/business names as part of an address unless the company name is the only way uniquely to identify the property in question.

The Councils are not responsible for erection or maintenance of nameplates on buildings or for directional signs to individual properties or groups of houses (these are the responsibility of the owner(s)). The Councils are also not responsible for traffic or highway directional signs – this is the responsibility of Devon County Council.

Procedure for New Developments

The property developer should not give any postal addresses, including postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (e.g. via solicitors or estate agents) before the respective Council has issued formal approval. The Councils will not be liable for any costs incurred or claims for damages caused by failure to comply with this.

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

For Roadways to be adopted by the Highway Authority

To register new development addresses, developers should send in a covering letter setting out the full details of the proposal. A development is considered to be two or more dwellings or properties.

All applications must be accompanied by the fee of £40.00 per property.

All proposals must also be accompanied by a site location plan - this should be at a minimum scale of 1:2500 and should contain sufficient detail to accurately locate properties. The confirmed layout drawing showing the road layout, plot numbers and any suggested house numbers (or names) is the most appropriate plan (for convenience a maximum size of A3 is preferred). For developments that include flats, internal layout plans are also required.

The applicant or developer may suggest a possible name or names for any new street(s). Several suggestions for names can be made in case the Council, Royal Mail or the Town/Parish Council object.

The proposed street names are then passed via email to the relevant Town/Parish Council and Ward Member for approval, copying in the portfolio holder for SNN. Town/Parish Councils and/or Ward Member can at this stage suggest their own names that conform to our Policy.

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Town/Parish Councils will contact us once the members have considered any proposal and within 21 days from the date of consultation. If the Town/Parish have been unable to meet and formally consider the proposal in the timescale given then the local Ward Member would be able to put forward an objection. If the Town/Parish Council, local Ward Member or the Council objects to the proposal, the Council will serve a notice of objection in writing and consult with the developer. Where no agreement can be made, final approval of street names is made under delegated authority by the COP lead for Development Management.

The developer will cover the initial costs of street nameplates and ensure they adhere to the Councils specification and installation guidelines (Appendix C). Normal street sign practice is to erect one sign at the entrance to a street; however two signs may be more appropriate where there is access to a busy street, or where visibility is restricted. Where appropriate, additional information regarding access to other streets may also be added e.g. 'Leading to ...' Each case will be considered on its merits and road safety should be a primary consideration.

The Council will cover maintenance costs after the street nameplate has been erected in accordance with our installation guidelines and appropriate specification. On occasions street nameplates may become damaged or defaced and will require replacement. Anyone needing to report a problem with a street nameplate should contact the Council on the main switchboard number.

Numbering of the new street(s) will be carried out following guidelines within this policy. All properties on newly named streets will be allocated numbers. All new properties on existing streets will be numbered if possible unless existing properties on that street all have official dwelling names and no numbers, or it is an infill development.

Where the development is an infill development on an existing street the Council will number the properties wherever possible, and suffix the number with a letter as appropriate in order to accurately define the location of the property on the street.

Where the street does not have an existing numbering scheme the developer should suggest property names. The property name must comply with the guidance set out in this policy.

When numbering and naming is complete the Council will contact the Royal Mail who will allocate the postcode to the address, and add the property to their 'not yet built' file.

Once the Royal Mail have allocated the postcode, the Council will write to the developer with official confirmation of the full postal address, and where applicable, any instructions for the erection of street nameplates.

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The Council will notify users who have requested address change information and supply a plan indicating the location of all the properties. A list of those notified is shown in Appendix A.

Where developers have not applied for an address and occupation of the property has taken place, the Council will endeavour to contact the owner or developer and ask for an official application to be submitted. If an application is not received within four weeks of the Council contacting them, the Council will allocate an address. If at a later stage, the owner wishes to change the property name, they will have to follow the official procedure to make the change and a charge will be made.

Procedure for Changing or Adding a Property Name

If you wish to change the name of your property, or add an official 'alias name' to your property you must use the following procedure and you should note that **The Royal Mail does not accept name changes from anyone other than a Council.**

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

To make an application, you can complete the application online or by filling in the relevant application form (Appendix B).

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

All applications must be accompanied by a site location plan - this should be at a minimum scale of 1:2500 and should contain sufficient detail to accurately locate the property.

All applications must be accompanied by the fee of £25.00 per property.

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 the acceptability of a chosen name change, in principal, 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. Under no circumstances will the Council allow a replicated house name in the same postal area; the SNN Case Manager can refuse such names. The Council also strongly recommends against using similar

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sounding names, although we will not refuse these requests. The Royal Mail cannot guarantee mail delivery if the Council's advice is ignored.

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

If the property already has a house number, it is not permitted to replace the number with a name. However the Council will allow you to add an 'alias name' to the address. The name will be held by the Royal Mail on their 'alias file' and 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.

Once all the checks have been satisfactorily completed and the necessary fees received the Council will change the name of the property and advise the relevant parties detailed on Appendix A.

The Council will then confirm the new official postal address in writing to the owner of the property.

Procedure to Rename an Existing Street, Renumber Properties or Name a Street that was previously Un-Named

Town/Parish Councils may from time to time request that the Council rename an existing street or name a street that was previously un-named. Town/Parish Councils can only make such a request if they can demonstrate that the owners/residents of all affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement to the change.

Applications can also be received by the Council direct from the residents but it is considered a courtesy to liaise with the Town/Parish Council before submitting an application to the Council.

Applications can be made online on the Council's website for a fee of £40.00 per property.

All proposals must be accompanied by a site location plan indicating the full length of the street to be named.

If the proposal is approved, a Notice will be erected on site and lodged with the Clerk to the Justices for one month whereby objections to the proposal can be received. After consideration a decision will be made on whether to approve the proposal using delegated authority by the COP lead for Development Management.

Once approved the Council will confirm the new street name is acceptable with the Royal Mail. The Royal Mail may issue a new postcode for the street. The Council will advise the residents/owners of their new official postal address as well as those Authorities detailed on Appendix A.

All costs associated with a change of address will be met by the owners/residents themselves.

All costs associated with providing and erecting street nameplates, except in exceptional circumstances, will be met by the residents/owners of the street or the Town/Parish Council as appropriate. Once erected the Council will maintain the street nameplate.

Sometimes, the Council may decide that in order to improve the delivery of mail, and the routing of emergency services a street needs to be renamed, or renumbered. The Council will only do this after consultation with the owners of the affected properties and will always give one month's notice in writing as detailed

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above. In these circumstances all costs associated with providing and erecting street nameplates will be met by the Council.

The Royal Mail may also approach the Council where they believe there is an operational necessity to make changes to addresses. The Council will only make such changes where we believe there is a need, and after consultation with the residents/owners of the properties affected.

Any appeals should in the first instance be made to the Street Naming and Numbering Case Manager at the Council. If this is not satisfactorily dealt with, appeals should be directed through the formal complaints procedure. Details are available on the Council's website.

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Charging for Street Naming and Numbering Service

The Council will charge for the Street Naming and Numbering process as specified below

Under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003, Local Authorities have the power to charge where they provide a service if they are authorised, but not required, to provide the service. The charge must not exceed the cost of providing the service.

For Street Naming and Numbering these charges are:

1. £25.00 per property for changes to house names;
2. £40.00 per property for changes to street names;
3. £40.00 per property for naming new developments.

These charges have to be paid prior to any changes being made.

Changes made without contacting us will not be registered with services and organisations listed in Appendix A. These organisations will not be informed until payment is received. The Council cannot be held liable for mail delivery problems caused by failure to inform us of house name changes.

These charges will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Council is keen to ensure all new developments are postally named and numbered correctly.

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Appendix A

Internal Departments (list used depends on location of application site)

Building Control; Council Tax/National Non-Domestic Rates; Electoral Registration;
Environmental Health; Environmental Services; LLPG Custodian; Land Charges;
Development Management Department (Planning)

External Departments (list used depends on location of application site)

- British Gas;
- Dartmoor National Park;
- Devon and Cornwall Police;
- Devon County Council Highways Department;
- Devon County Council Land Charges Department;
- Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue;
- Focsa Services Ltd;
- Geographer's A-Z Map Company;
- Plymouth & District Land Registry;
- Royal Mail Address Development Team and local sorting offices;
- South West Water;
- South Western Ambulance Service;
- Valuation Office;
- Wales & West Utilities Western Power