



# **STREET NAMING & NUMBERING POLICY**

**September 2016**

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Postcodes .....	5
3. New development .....	6
3.1. New properties .....	6
3.2. New streets .....	7
4. Street nameplates .....	9
5. Changes to existing properties/buildings .....	10
6. Renaming & Renumbering of Existing Properties and Streets.....	11
6.1 Renaming existing properties .....	11
6.2 Renumbering existing properties .....	11
6.3 Renaming existing streets .....	12
6.4 Discrepancies of street names .....	13
6.5 Renumbering existing streets .....	14
7. Notification .....	14
8. Decision and Discretion.....	15
9. Claims for compensation.....	15
10. Council responsibility .....	15

# GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING POLICY

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Street Naming and Numbering is carried out by Gravesham Borough Council under Section 17 and 18 of The Public Health Act 1925 and Section 64 and 65 of The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847
  - 1.1.1 Section 17 of The Public Health Act 1925 states that the Borough Council should be notified of proposed street names. The Council then has the power to object within one month after the receipt of such notice.
  - 1.1.2 It is unlawful to use the proposed name or to erect a street name plate until the street name has been confirmed in writing by Gravesham Borough Council. Contravention attracts a fine under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 37 (2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences). A daily penalty rate also applies in this case. The developer may appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days after the objection by the Council.
  - 1.1.3 Section 18 of The Public Health Act 1925 gives the Borough Council the power to alter the street name or any part of a street and assign a street name to all or part of a street where a name has not been given.
  - 1.1.4 Section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 requires the Council to ensure houses and buildings are "to be marked with numbers as they think fit". We also have a responsibility to make sure that the street names are displayed. Should any person destroy, deface or put up another number or name other than the official one, then that person shall be liable to a penalty under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 32 (2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences) for every such offence.
  - 1.1.5 Section 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 states that occupiers of houses and other buildings in the streets shall mark their houses with such numbers as the Council approve of and shall renew such numbers as often as they become obliterated or defaced.
  - 1.1.6 Under Section 64 and 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 we also have the authority to issue Renaming or Renumbering Orders where street names or numbers have been erected differently from what the Council approve of and see fit. Under Section 65, should any person fail to amend, replace or erect the approved number or name within one week after a Renaming or Renumbering Order is issued then that person shall be liable to a penalty under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 32 (2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences) for every such offence.

- 1.2 The address of a property is an increasingly important issue. It is vital that the Emergency Services can locate a property quickly and efficiently. If a property is not registered, the owner or occupier can experience problems being connected to utilities and in obtaining goods and services, such as applying for a credit card or mortgage. If an address is unregistered this impacts on Land Registry, Royal Mail and other private companies that hold addresses. If an address is not registered, it will not show on databases and therefore companies will assume the property does not exist.
- 1.3 The Council has the responsibility to maintain a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which is a database of property addresses within Gravesham. This information also feeds into the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). The purpose of this control is to make sure that any new street names and building names and numbers are allocated logically. It should be noted that the LLPG provides geographic location information for all properties in the Borough. Within the LLPG addresses are held under the BS7666 addressing standard of:
- Property number, house name or both
  - Name of street by which the property is accessed
  - Town
  - County
  - Postcode
- 1.4 If the property requires planning permission, we shall be unable to process any Street Naming and Numbering application until relevant Planning Permission has been granted.
- 1.5 We are unable to officially register mobile homes unless they are registered to pay council tax and have planning permission to be considered permanent dwellings. For information on registering annexes refer to Paragraph 5.4
- 1.6 Requests for changes can only be accepted from the owners of properties and not tenants. Tenants wishing to change the name of the property should make their request to the property's owner who, if they agree, will then apply to Gravesham Borough Council to change the name.
- 1.7 Anyone in the process of buying a house who does not like the property name must wait until after the completion date of the house sale before applying to change it.
- 1.8 Gravesham Borough Council will write and remind developers of the need to register for official addresses. If an application and payment of fees is not received within 3 months of the completion date, addresses may be allocated without postcodes to properties for the purpose of the emergency services, without further consultation with the developer. In this case external notifications, with the exception of the emergency services will not be sent out and properties may experience problems with services as described in Paragraph 1.2. Until the applicable fee is received, amendments will not be made or notification of new addresses sent out externally.

- 1.9 Applications will be verified before payment is taken, which will involve administration work. Therefore refunds will not be made for the street naming and numbering service.
- 1.10 If any part of the street naming and numbering certificate needs to be reissued, e.g. following changes to developer schedules due to internal layout changes, a new application will need to be submitted with the appropriate fee.
- 1.11 The Street Naming and Numbering rules within this document are applicable across all scenarios of each type of application and are laid out for ease of use by the applicant to prevent repetitive paragraphs.

## **2. Postcodes**

- 2.1 Gravesham Borough Council is not responsible for issuing new postcodes; this is the responsibility of Royal Mail. Royal Mail, however, will not issue a postcode for a new street or property until requested to do so by the Council. For any complaints relating to the delivery of mail the occupier should contact the Royal Mail Customer Services.
- 2.2 Royal Mail will not issue postcodes to plots of land, only to dwellings or premises that have delivery points such as a post box.
- 2.3 Postcodes for commercial premises are allocated in the same way as residential premises, but a large company or business can apply to Royal Mail for its own code - known as a large user code. Application for a large user code is the responsibility of the user, as they will know what volume of mail they generate. Enquiries about postcodes can be dealt with direct at: Royal Mail Address Management Centre. Searches for postcodes can also be carried out on the [Royal Mail Website](#).
- 2.4 Gravesham Borough Council is not responsible for the records held on Royal Mail's database.
- 2.5 A property developer or builder should not give any postal addresses, or postcodes, to potential occupiers, (for example via solicitors or estate agents) before formal approval has been issued by the Council because it is likely that any plot or unit numbering system used by the contractor or agent will not meet the requirements of the Council. The Council will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this

### **3. New development**

#### **3.1. New properties**

- 3.1.1 Once building has commenced, we would advise that the application is delayed until the skeleton structure /first fit has been completed, in case changes are made to the final layouts. Once numbering has been applied and the first issue of official addresses confirmed, it will not be possible to change it without an application for re-numbering and re-issuing the certificate and the appropriate fee paid. On larger developments, where the properties are built in phases, we will try and make allowances in the numbering to accommodate subsequent phases.
- 3.1.2 Properties in a new street will be numbered with even numbers on the right side and odd numbers on the left from the start of the street. Through roads are numbered odds and evens in the direction they would be accessed from the centre of the town or community. Odds will be on 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.
- 3.1.3 For small cul-de-sacs, which are not likely to be extended in future, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction will be applied, starting with number one on the left-hand side of the entrance to the cul-de-sac.
- 3.1.4 A proper sequence shall be maintained including the number 13. Numbers will not be omitted for superstitious or religious reasons.
- 3.1.5 Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found. The manipulation of numbering in order to secure a "prestige" address or to avoid an address, which is thought to have undesired associations, will not be sanctioned.
- 3.1.6 Developments built between existing properties or in the grounds of an existing property, (i.e. infill plots) will be given the same property number as that before the infill followed by suffix of A, B, C etc. If circumstances do not allow this, (i.e. for 6 or more new properties) the new properties may be separately numbered with a name of a "terrace" "row" or "mews" added within the existing street address. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Street Naming and Numbering Officer.
- 3.1.7 Where an infill development is named with a "terrace" "row" or "mews" suffix, sufficient signage and name plates must be erected by the developer to distinguish the infill houses from the existing property numbers on the existing street. Gravesham Borough Council cannot be held responsible for misdelivered mail; this is the sole responsibility of the delivery company.
- 3.1.8 For a block of flats it is usual to give a street number to the block. Where there are not sufficient numbers available because of existing development or the

block exceeds 10 dwellings, the block should be given a name. The following is a list of possible suffixes for block names:

Suffix	Reason for use
Court	Residential or commercial
House	
Point	High block residential or office
Tower	

- 3.1.9 Descriptive addresses for flats, e.g. Ground Floor Flat or Flat Above, will not be approved. New blocks of flats should be sequentially numbered from the lowest floor level upwards with numbers ascending from the nearest flat to the floor entry point in a clockwise direction.
- 3.1.10 Where flats are created above existing commercial premises which have a number/name in the road the same numbering rules as with a new block of flats will apply. Letters will not normally be approved, however there may be circumstances where the flats are given a suffix a, b, c etc. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Street Naming and Numbering Officer.

## 3.2. New streets

**This section of the policy applies to new streets being created not existing streets, which may not meet the criteria. For existing streets see Section 6**

- 3.2.1 For new small developments (i.e. less than 10 properties) which share an access, a new street will not be created. Where a small development is not likely to be extended in the future, a name will be applied to the development and properties numbered as part of the primary road where possible.
- 3.2.2 If a new development includes new streets to be named and numbered please include a location plan that shows all the plots concerned marked with unique individual plot numbers and proposed street names. Please include floor plans for flats to indicate which levels these refer to so that the allocated numbering will be logical. The numbering will be carried out by Gravesham Borough Council in accordance with standard procedure.
- 3.2.3 Where new streets are created, the developer will provide nameplates in accordance with the Council's specification. (See Section 4 for further information)
- 3.2.4 A numbering sequence, rather than names will be applied to properties on all new streets.
- 3.2.5 To shorten the road naming process, applicants are advised to carry out research into the local area to identify suitable new names for roads and buildings. This encourages the use of names that reflect the local history and

character of the area. When deciding, preference will be given to local community suggestions.

- 3.2.6 You may make three suggestions for street names, stating the order of preference. Suggested names will not be accepted if they are likely to cause offence or will duplicate the name of another property/street in the area, which would cause confusion. Naming after a person still living (full name, first and last), or other organisations or companies etc. will not be permitted. Naming a road after members of the developer's family will also be unacceptable. Street names that breach rules of common decency, promote (or could be confused with) an active organisation, individual or advertisement will not be permitted.
- 3.2.7 Use of names with Royal connotations or any reference to the Royal family or their residences will not be permitted without written consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office
- 3.2.8 It is the responsibility of the Street Naming and Numbering officer to make the final decision on street names. If there is an objection or dispute about a proposed road name, the final decision will rest with the Street Naming and Numbering Officer. The developer may appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days after the objection by the Council
- 3.2.9 Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell. They must not cause offence, and must not be named after a living person. Street names should not start with 'The' or end with 's' if the s suggests a plural such as "Lanes". Street names must only contain characters found in the English alphabet. Numbers, characters, punctuation or symbols will not be permitted under the BS7666 addressing standards.
- 3.2.10 Where an area, field or previous building has names; activities, features, wildlife etc. historically associated with it, it is usual to preserve these in street names. Where there is no information to suggest a road name, it will be the responsibility of the Street Naming and Numbering officer to choose a new name.
- 3.2.11 If a suitable "local" name cannot be identified then any attractive name can be chosen. Where several roads are involved, a "theme" linking the names can be used to help identify the area.
- 3.2.12 Where a new road is an extension of an existing road it is not normally necessary to give that section a new name. In circumstances where an existing street is extended, it would be appropriate to continue to use the same street name. This would be subject to the limitations of the existing numbering scheme.
- 3.2.13 New street names must avoid duplicating any similar name already in use in an area. This includes phonetically similar names e.g. Churchill Road and Birch Hill Road. In accordance with national guidance a variation in the suffix, for example "street", "road", "avenue" will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name (e.g. St Marys Way and St Marys Close).

3.2.14 Names that are aesthetically unsuitable must be avoided; e.g. Gasworks Road, Packemin Close, or names that are capable of deliberate misinterpretation e.g. Hoare Road, Typple Avenue

3.2.15 The use of North, East, South or West (as in Old Road East and Old Road West) is discouraged, and 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. This applies to new street names only, not existing streets.

3.2.16 The following is a list of possible suffixes for new streets

Suffix	Reason for use
Avenue	For residential roads
Drive	
Grove	
Lane	
View	
Mead	Only for exceptional circumstances. Near a navigable water course
Rise/Row	For residential roads. Only for exceptional circumstances
Vale/Dene	
Court	For small enclosed developments
Yard	
Road	For any thoroughfare
Street	
Close	For a cul-de-sac only
Crescent	For a crescent shaped road
Gardens	Subject to there being no confusion with any local open space
Hill	For a hill only
Mews	This is acceptable in appropriate circumstances, provided it does not repeat the name of the road from which access is gained.
Place	Subject to there being no confusion with any local open space and provided does not repeat the name of the road from which access is gained.
Square	For a square only
Terrace	For a terrace of houses but NOT as a subsidiary name within another name
Way	For a major road

3.2.17 All new pedestrian ways should end with Walk, Path or Alley.

## 4. Street nameplates

4.1 Developers will be expected to pay for and install nameplates for all new streets to the Council's specification. The developer will agree the proposed locations of the nameplates with Kent County Council.

- 4.2 The Council will attempt to ensure that, in due course and subject to available resources that every populated road in the district will have nameplates.

## **5. Changes to existing properties/buildings**

- 5.1 The Council will assume that a replacement dwelling or unit will retain the original property name / number. If the replacement dwelling requires a name change, a new application will be needed. Numbered replacement dwellings must retain the original number.
- 5.2 The merging of two or more existing properties will also require re-addressing. Properties will retain part of the previous address. For example properties merged at 4 High Street and 6 High Street would take on the new address of 4-6 High Street
- 5.3 Where a building is split into bedsits, the individual units within the building will not be given individual postal addresses, unless they each have a dedicated letter box or delivery point. Otherwise one main address will be given where post is delivered to one communal delivery point.
- 5.4 Annexes will not be issued with official postal addresses unless they follow the street naming and numbering process. If the planning permission requires them to be used as ancillary to the main dwelling, then the main dwelling should be used for postal address purposes. In this circumstance, addresses will not be allocated for the purpose of receiving services.
- 5.5 Gravesham Borough Council will not under any circumstances register or issue a postal address to holiday mobile homes, ancillary annexes or plots of land, whether for the receipt of post or services.
- 5.6 When commercial units or residential properties are converted and/or subdivided or have a change of use, an application should be made to the Council for the new units to be given official addresses.
- 5.7 Business properties will be allocated an address with a number within a street, or as a Unit number within a business park or industrial estate. Where commercial premises or units have not previously been allocated a number or name (other than the trading name of the occupant) the Council will apply a number or name to provide a consistent primary identifier. This will enable the emergency services to locate the property and will avoid the need for a new address application each time the unit/building changes hands.
- 5.8 Derelict properties that are uninhabitable will be held in the Gazetteer address database records with a reserved 'non-postal' address. Following the renovation of a derelict property the address will require activation.

## **6. Renaming & Renumbering of Existing Properties and Streets**

### **6.1 Renaming existing properties**

- 6.1.1 In streets where existing properties are not numbered it is essential that the houses are officially allocated names.
- 6.1.2 Applicants may make three suggestions for property names, stating the order of preference. Names that breach rules of common decency, or promote an active organisation or individual, will not be approved. Names deemed offensive in terms of race, faith/religion, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or inappropriate language will not be permitted.
- 6.1.3 Suggested names will not be accepted if they are difficult to pronounce, likely to cause offence or will duplicate or repeat the name of another property, building or street name in the surrounding area, which would cause confusion. For example duplicated house names along the same road or within the same postcode sector will not be permitted. A postcode sector is identified by the first character of the second part of a postcode e.g. DA12 3\*\*
- 6.1.4 Naming properties or buildings after a person still living (full name, first and last), or other organisations or companies etc. will not be permitted. This avoids the potential impact of any future negative publicity. Naming after members of the developer's family will also be unacceptable.
- 6.1.5 Use of names with Royal connotations or any reference to the Royal family or their residences will not be permitted without written consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office.
- 6.1.6 Building names must only contain characters found in the English alphabet. Numbers, characters, punctuation or symbols will not be permitted under the BS7666 addressing standards.
- 6.1.7 It is the responsibility of the Street Naming and Numbering officer to make the final decision on property names. This is based on a case by case basis and factors such as locality and duplicate addresses or addresses that could cause confusion for the emergency services will be taken into account

### **6.2 Renumbering existing properties**

- 6.2.1 Renumbering of properties is not acceptable. Once a property has been officially allocated a number, it cannot be changed or removed from the address and must be clearly displayed on the property. The owner is obliged

to use this number under Sections 64 and 65 of The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847.

- 6.2.2 Where a name has been added to a property with a number, the number must always be included; the name cannot be regarded as an alternative. The property name and number must be clearly displayed on the property by the owner and be visible from the highway. This is enforceable under Section 64 of The Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, where such persons shall be liable to a penalty under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 (Section 37 (2) Standard Scale Level 1 offences).
- 6.2.3 In the case of an inconsistency in an address, the version of address that is most commonly used on other databases such as Royal Mail and Land Registry will be accepted. For example a Flat that is referred to as both Flat 1 and Flat A by multiple organisations. Cases like this often occur when a customer is applying for a mortgage but have a non-registered address. In these circumstances all other databases will be checked and the final decision will lay with the Council.

### **6.3 Renaming existing streets**

**This section of the policy applies to existing streets. For new streets see Section 3.**

- 6.3.1 Renaming an existing street is to be avoided unless the benefits clearly outweigh the obvious disadvantages. On rare occasions where this becomes necessary it is usually only done as a last resort when there is confusion over the street's name
- 6.3.2 Where a road is renamed the naming rules in Section 3.2 still apply when suggesting a new street name.
- 6.3.3 There may be instances where a road has been formally named by the Council but does not appear on Royal Mail's Postal Address file. This is most likely in streets which do not have any properties that receive post. We will try to resolve any discrepancies wherever possible by consulting with Royal Mail. However, Gravesham Borough Council are not responsible for Royal Mail's database.
- 6.3.4 To change a street name, the Council will, under Section 18 of The Public Health Act, post a notice of the order at each end of the street and send consultation letters to the properties within the affected street.
- 6.3.5 The consultation process will run for 28 calendar days from when the consultation letters are sent and will be implemented before any agreement is given.

6.3.6 Any person aggrieved by the intended order of the Council to alter the street name may appeal to a Magistrates court within 21 days after the posting of the notice and consultation.

## **6.4 Discrepancies of street names**

6.4.1 Where the Council is made aware that a street name has possibly been recorded incorrectly or inaccurately it will:-

- Check any deeds and documents that the council has for any evidence of the street name used historically including historical Street Naming and Numbering certificates.
- Check historical maps, department records and any other records the council hold that may provide supporting evidence for consideration prior to making a decision.
- Check existing street name plates. Generally these are deemed to be correct unless proved otherwise
- Check Kent County Council Highways records
- Consult with the Parish Council (where the street is situated in rural areas)

6.4.2 If evidence comes to light that the street name currently recorded and/or on display is not correct, the Council will consider two courses of action:

- Where the error is inconsistency in spelling or composition the Council will make a decision based on the most frequent use, and earliest recorded form, of the street name.
- Where the error is more significant the Council will consult with, and ballot, the owners of the properties in the street. After the owners have been consulted, and after taking into consideration the factors listed above, we will consider making an order to change the street name following the same procedure detailed in section 6.3 of this policy.

6.4.3 In both circumstances of section 6.4.2 the Council will write to each property confirming the address of the property (i.e. whether we change the existing name or not). We will also circulate the official address to other council departments and interested parties such as the emergency services, Royal Mail and utilities to ensure address consistency.

6.4.4 Where the Council considers there is not sufficient evidence to justify the change, the existing name will remain, unless an application and subsequent fee is made to rename the road following the above guidance for requested changes.

6.4.5 We will consult with Parish Councils where necessary when there is the need for local knowledge, i.e. regarding pre-existing unofficial street names or where specified streets start and finish.

## **6.5 Renumbering existing streets**

6.5.1 Renumbering the properties in whole or part of an existing street is to be avoided unless the benefits clearly outweigh the obvious disadvantages. On rare occasions where this becomes necessary it is usually only done as a last resort when:

- There is confusion over numbering in the street
- New properties are built in an existing street and there is a need for other properties to be renumbered to accommodate the new properties. This is a very rare occurrence.
- Named-only properties in a street are deemed to be causing confusion for the emergency services, deliveries or visitors.

6.5.2 Properties will not be renumbered in circumstances whereby delivery companies fail to correctly deliver post. This is the full responsibility of the delivery company.

6.5.3 Existing residents and business owners will be consulted using the same procedure as that for renaming a street (Section 6.3). Royal Mail and the emergency services will also be consulted.

## **7. Notification**

7.1 We will notify the following of any numbering, naming or renaming:

- Council Tax
- Electoral Registration
- Emergency Services
- Kent Highways
- Land Registry
- NLPG (National Land and Property Gazetteer)
- Ordnance Survey
- Royal Mail Address Development Team
- Southern Water
- Valuation Office

7.2 It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify all their personal contacts.

7.3 A confirmation letter and schedule (if applicable) will be sent to the customer/developer when the application is completed. It is advisable this

letter is kept in a safe place with the deeds to the property as an administration fee will be applicable for a replacement copy.

## **8. Decision and Discretion**

- 8.1 The Council's decision is final for the naming of roads, re-naming of roads, numbering or re-numbering and is at the discretion of the Head of Service Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder/Ward Councillor delegated to the responsibility of the Street Naming and Numbering Officer.
- 8.2 If any resident/owner or interested party wishes to appeal against a decision of the Council they should in the first instance seek to do so through the Council's complaints procedure. If this fails to resolve the issue, they have the right to seek redress through the Magistrate's Court under the Public Health Act 1925.

## **9. Claims for compensation**

- 9.1 Misdelivered mail is the sole responsibility of the delivery company. Gravesham Borough Council is not liable for any claims for compensation arising directly or indirectly from the naming of roads, numbering or re-numbering of properties.
- 9.2 No refunds will be made for the Street Naming and Numbering process as per paragraph 1.9 of this policy.

## **10. Council responsibility**

Gravesham Borough Council is not responsible for the following:

- 10.1 Correspondence and deliveries not being delivered to the correct address. Any complaints should be directed to the Royal Mail, Customer Services.
- 10.2 The address being unavailable on databases used by third parties, such as retail outlets (including Internet based ones).
- 10.3 Ordnance Survey or other providers, maps or plans not featuring any new properties or roads.
- 10.4 Issuing postcodes is entirely Royal Mail's responsibility. Royal Mail will not issue postcodes to addresses such as plots of land that are not capable of receiving mail. If a property requiring a postcode does not meet Royal Mail's criteria for a postal address and a postcode is refused, we do not have the power to change this decision. Refer to Section 2 for further information on postcodes.

10.5 Whilst we will endeavour to do so, it is not the council's duty to inform Royal Mail of the occupation status of the new development. Unless the Street Naming and Numbering Officer is advised by the applicant that the property to be registered is already occupied then the postal address for a new build will be registered on Royal Mail's 'reserved' postal address 'Not Yet Built' database.