



Street Naming and Numbering policy

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I. Background

Street naming and numbering is a statutory function. West Oxfordshire District Council provides the street Naming and Numbering service under the provision 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. See [Appendix 2](#)

The purpose of this function is to make sure that any new street names and building names & numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring the efficient delivery of mail and emergency service vehicle are able to locate any address in an emergency situation.

The 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 in line with the National Land and Property Gazetteer data entry conventions and best practice for Street Naming & Numbering. Following these conventions will ensure our practices are compliant with the British Standard BS7666.

A simple process map outlining all the relevant stages can be found in [Appendix I](#) of the Policy.

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 try to 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 reserves the right not to adopt any unofficial marketing titles used by Developers in the sale of new properties, unless these have been officially proposed and approved. To avoid confusion / problems we will look to work with / encourage Developers to engage with the Council’s Street Naming and Numbering Team at the earliest opportunity so that marketing titles can be created which will eventually reflect the official naming scheme.
- Street names that may be considered or construed as obscene which would contravene any aspect of the council’s equal opportunities policies will not be acceptable.
- Street names that may be open to re-interpretation 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 developers 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 individuals-.

- Streets may be named after a deceased individual, provided permission is granted from next of kin. It is recommended that a period of 20 years should pass before using an individual's name. Exceptions to this will need to be approved by Cabinet.
- Forename plus Surname or Surnames only should be used where named after an individual.
- No punctuation will be used i.e. St. Stephens will be St Stephens and Harriet's Way will be Harriets Way.

All new street names should 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 residential roads)
- Close (for cul de sacs only)
- Court (for cul de sacs only)
- Crescent (for crescent shaped streets only)
- Circus (for a large roundabout)
- Drive (for any thoroughfare roads)
- Gardens (for residential roads)
- Grove (for residential roads)
- Hill (for a Hillside road only)
- Lane (for residential roads)
- Mews (for residential roads)
- Place (for residential roads)
- Rise (for residential roads)
- Road (for any thoroughfare)
- Row (for residential roads)
- Square (for a square 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. Guidelines for changing a street name

If a resident or group of residents are not happy with an existing road name, they can apply to the Council to rename the road. The Council will investigate the reasons for the change and will only continue with the application if there is a valid reason such as a problem with mail deliveries. A request to change for vanity reasons will not be accepted.

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

4. Guidelines for naming blocks of flats, buildings or terrace names

Where possible blocks of flats and buildings will be given a name and addressed off of an existing 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 for Terrace names.

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

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

5. Public buildings

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

6. 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 property number.
- Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars and similar will not be numbered.
- A proper sequence shall be maintained. Once numbered we will not normally renumber properties. We will only renumber a property where it can be shown that there are consistent delivery problems.
- Buildings (including those on a corner site) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found and the manipulation of numbering in order to secure a “prestige” address or to avoid an address, which is thought to be undesired will not be sanctioned.
- If multiple occupancy buildings have entrances in more than one street, then each entrance will be numbered in the appropriate road.
- A cul de sac will have sequential numbers.
- We will use numbers followed by letters where there is no alternative.
- Where a property has a number, it must be used and 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. This is enforceable under Section 14 of the Oxfordshire Act ([Appendix 2](#)).
- Flats and units shall be given individual numbers where possible; the sequence of the numbering depends on access to front doors of individual premises.

- All commercial properties will be given a number and will not use a commercial name as the primary name to identify it.

7. Procedure for new developments

The property developer 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 formal approval. We will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

Developers should always apply directly to the Council at the earliest opportunity for new postal addresses, i.e. as soon as development starts. Please see page 8 for list of current charges.

We require the following information:

- A copy of the approved site layout plan. This should clearly indicate:
 - Plot numbers (if applicable)
 - Individual property boundaries
 - The principle entrances to the properties
- Suggested road and/or property names if applicable.
- Copy of the proposed Section 38 plan if applicable

We will check the application for 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 Planning, Building Regulations or any other Legislation, and owners/occupiers risk enforcement action if any necessary approvals have not been obtained. Any requests for a postal address without the relevant planning permission will be forwarded onto our Planning Enforcement Team.

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

The proposed street names are then passed to the relevant Town or Parish Council for approval, they are given 5 weeks to approve the suggested names and can at this stage, if they do not agree with the developers proposal, suggest their own names that conform to our guidelines. If they do not agree with the developer's proposal, we will seek acceptance from the developer of the newly suggested names from the Town/Parish.

Where there is a disagreement which cannot be resolved West Oxfordshire District Council will give final approval of the street names. This process will involve further consultation with the Ward Member and the matter formally discussed at Cabinet and a final decision made at this point.

Numbering of the new street(s) will be carried out following the guidelines within this document. All properties on 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 the street does not have a numbering scheme, the developer should 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.

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 West Oxfordshire District Council.

Maintenance of the street signs becomes a District Council responsibility, once a street has been adopted. Signs erected 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, the Councils property inspector may inform us. We will endeavour to contact the owner or developer and ask them for an official application. If they do not apply within four weeks of us contacting them, we will allocate an address and invoice for the appropriate charges.

8. Holiday lets

All holiday lets will eventually be added to our property gazetteer, which forms part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer. They will be flagged as non-official and non-postal in systems that generate mail. This is to assist emergency response and create a unique record for each property for future use.

We will only request a postal 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 requirements for secure delivery points and we will inform our enforcement section about the believed change of use.

9. Providing postcodes

The District Council is not responsible for issuing new postcodes. That is the responsibility of the Royal Mail. Royal Mail will not issue a postcode for a new street unless requested to do so by the District 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, the street name and numbering team will advise them to consult with Royal Mail, which has a procedure laid down in their code of practice by the Postal Services Commission for adding or amending locality details.

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 of villages, towns and cities that are several miles away.

11. Procedure for changing or adding a property name

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

To request a change to a property name, the owner must complete the relevant application form or submit their request in writing. 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 exchange of contracts and the previous occupiers have moved out, although we can 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 name. Under no circumstances will we allow a name that is offensive or can be construed to be offensive. We will also refuse any replicated name in the same postal area.

To request a change to an address, the owner must give us the following information either by email or in writing;

- The existing house name, address and postcode
- The proposed new name
- A plan showing the exact location of the property, if the property is not easily identifiable from the existing address
- A date from which the house name should be changed (if not immediate)
- Payment of the appropriate fee

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, Council Tax, Local Land and Property Gazetteer team and Emergency Services.

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

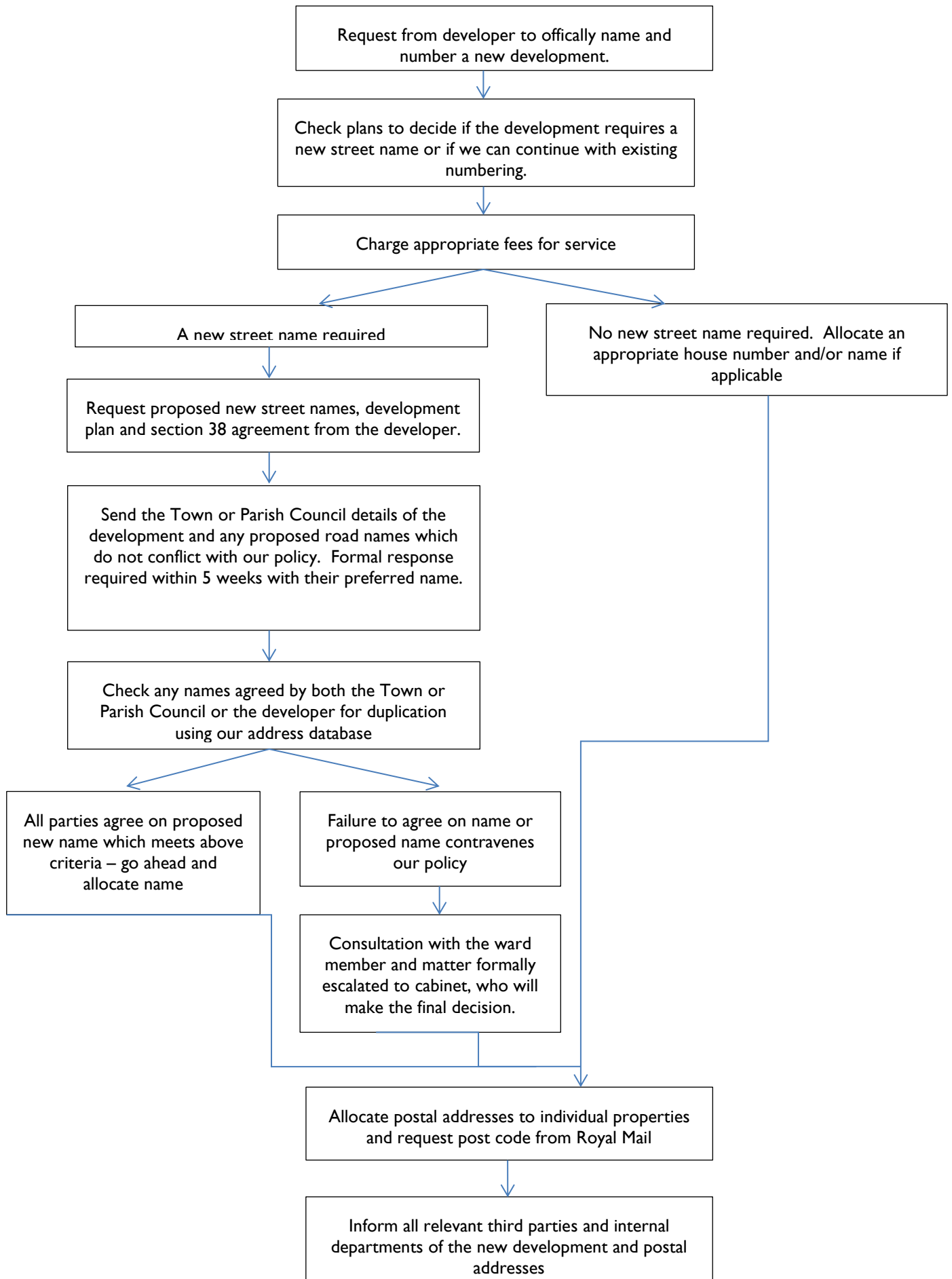
12. Charges for street naming and numbering from April 2025

Type of Work	Charge (£)
Amend an Existing Address	
Change of address	£77.00
Allocating a name to a property or allocating a number to a named property	£77.00
Change of a commercial building address	£77.00
Change of street name at residents, developers or parish/town council request	£459.00
Plus additional charge per property/unit where consultation with existing residents is conducted by WODC	£51.00
Providing a letter of certification (optional - by request only)	£25.00
Creation of a New Address	
Naming and numbering of new properties including commercial buildings:	
1 - 5 plots	£77 per plot
6 - 25 plots	£655.00
26 - 75 plots	£1,020.00
76 - 150 plots	£1,458.00
151 - 250 plots	£1,822.00
251 - 350 plots	£2,186.00
351 - 500 plots	£2,551.00
501 or more plots	£2,914.00
Naming and numbering of a block of flats	
Block of flats: up to 20 flats	£232.00
Block of flats: 21 - 50 flats	£300.00
Block of flats: 51+ flats	£400.00
Additional charges where new street names are required:	
1 - 5 new street names	£292.00
6 - 10 new street names	£583.00
11 or more new street names	£729.00
Additional charges where new Court names are required	
Per Court name	£172.00
Charge for a developer amending plans after naming and numbering has commenced (additional fee also applies if new plots added)	£155.00

Please send all applications including the appropriate fee to the following address:

Address Management Officer
West Oxfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Woodgreen
Witney
OX28 1NB
Email: addressmanagement@westoxon.gov.uk

Appendix I: Street Naming and Numbering Process



Appendix 2: Oxfordshire Act 1985

Oxfordshire Act 1985

Section 13

(1)

Subject to subsection (2) below a district council may name any street or any part of a street in their district which is without a name or which bears two names and may from time to time alter the name of any street or of any part of a street in their district.

(2)

(a) Where the district council proposes to alter the name of a street or part of a street they shall –

(i) post notice of the proposal in a conspicuous position at each end of the street or part which it relates; and

(ii) Serve a copy of the notice on the owner or occupier of every dwelling-house in that street or part.

(b) The notice under paragraph (a) above shall state the new name proposed and that objections to the proposal may be made in writing to the district council before a day, specified in the notice, not earlier than 28 days after the district council have complied with paragraph (a) above.

(c) Before determining any alteration of name in accordance with a proposal to which this subsection applies, the district council shall consider all objections made as provided in paragraph (b) above and, in the case of an objection by the owner or occupier of any dwelling-house in the street, give to the objector an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by a committee or sub-committee of the council.

(3)

A district council may from time to time cause the name of any street or any part of a street to be placed or marked on a conspicuous part of any building or other erection in their district in or near the street.

(4)

Any person who, without reasonable excuse, removes any such name shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

(5)

The following enactments shall cease to have effect in the county:-

- a. In the words in the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 introducing sections 64 and 65, the words “naming the streets and”;
- b. In the said section 64 the words from “and shall” to “to be known”, and the words “or name” wherever occurring;
- c. Section 21 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907; and
- d. Sections 17 to 19 of the Public Health Act 1925.

Section 14.

(1)

A district council may allocate to buildings in a street in their district such numbers as they think fit.

(2)

Where a number has, or numbers have, been allocated to a building under this section or any other enactment, the district council may serve on the owner or occupier of the building a notice requiring him within such period, not less than three weeks, as may be specified in the notice to mark the building with that number, or those numbers, in such a way as to make the mark legible from the street.

(3)

The owner or occupier of a building shall-

(a) Maintain the mark in such a way that it remains legible from the street; and

(b) Keep the view of the mark from the street unobstructed to such as is practicable.

(4)

A district council may alter the number or numbers allocated to a building and where they do so subsections (2) and (3) above shall apply to the altered number or numbers.

(5)

A district council may, instead of requiring a building to be marked with a number or numbers under this section, require it to be marked with such other means of identification as they may, at the request of the owner or occupier, allow; and subsections (2) and (3) above shall have effect accordingly.

(6)

An owner or occupier of a building who without reasonable excuse_

(a) Fails to comply with a notice served on him under subsection (2) above; or

(b) Contravenes subsection (3) above:

Shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

(7) The following provisions of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 shall cease to have effect in the county:

(a) In the words introducing sections 64 and 65, the words "and numbering the houses";

(b) In section 64 the words from "shall from time to time" to "think fit, and", and the words "number or" wherever occurring; and

(c) Section 65