

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Street naming and numbering guidance

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1.0 General

- To apply for street naming and numbering you must be the legal owner of the site, or a legally appointed representative acting on behalf of the owner.
- If you are purchasing a property, you must have completed the sale. No address changes can be made at the 'exchange of contracts' stage.
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (the Council) will not accept applications unless planning permission has been granted for new developments.
- Most applications incur a fee. The fee will be made clear when completing the online application.
- Marketing names will not always become registered block or building names, or registered street names. Applicants should make the prospective purchasers aware of this.
- The Council will determine if a new street is required for certain developments. The number of properties, access to the site, and locality will be considered.
- The Council only maintains existing street nameplates.
- All addresses should be clearly signed from the highway where possible. If no post box, letterbox, or bank of letterboxes is available for postal deliveries, Royal Mail may remove the addresses from their live database.
- All addresses created through street naming and numbering will appear on the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) which feeds the National Address Gazetteer managed by GeoPlace LLP, as well as Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) database.
- The LLPG is BS7666 compliant, and the Council utilises GeoPlace LLP's national data entry convention documentation.
- The data conventions do not allow for punctuation in house or street names, or duplication of any part of a property or street name that already exists in the surrounding area.
- Where this document refers to Royal Mail, the reference is to Royal Mail's Address Management Unit that maintains the PAF database. This document can be viewed on the [Royal Mail website](#).
- No other organisations (VOA, Land Registry, Royal Mail etc.) have legislative powers to allocate property numbers or names and street names.
- Postcode allocation is the sole responsibility of Royal Mail
- The Council is not responsible for the time it takes for addresses to appear on drop-down address lists online. The Council is also not responsible for the data held by Sat/Nav/GPS companies.

2.0 Purpose and process

2.1 Purpose

The Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that streets are named, and properties are numbered and/or named. The Council has the statutory power under the 1925 Public Health Act to approve or reject property addresses submitted by the applicant or prescribe its own addressing schemes.

All property development and address changes within the borough of Tunbridge Wells are subject to the official street naming and numbering process. Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard address database is essential as it facilitates:

- Consistency of property-based information across local government and withing the community of users and addresses
- Emergency services finding properties efficiently and effectively
- Reliable delivery of services and product
- Local of addresses for commercial and leisure purposes

2.2 Process

The basic process is shown as a flowchart in figure 1 below. For applications which include the naming of new streets please see section 2.0 and appendix A the [street naming and numbering policy](#) documentation.

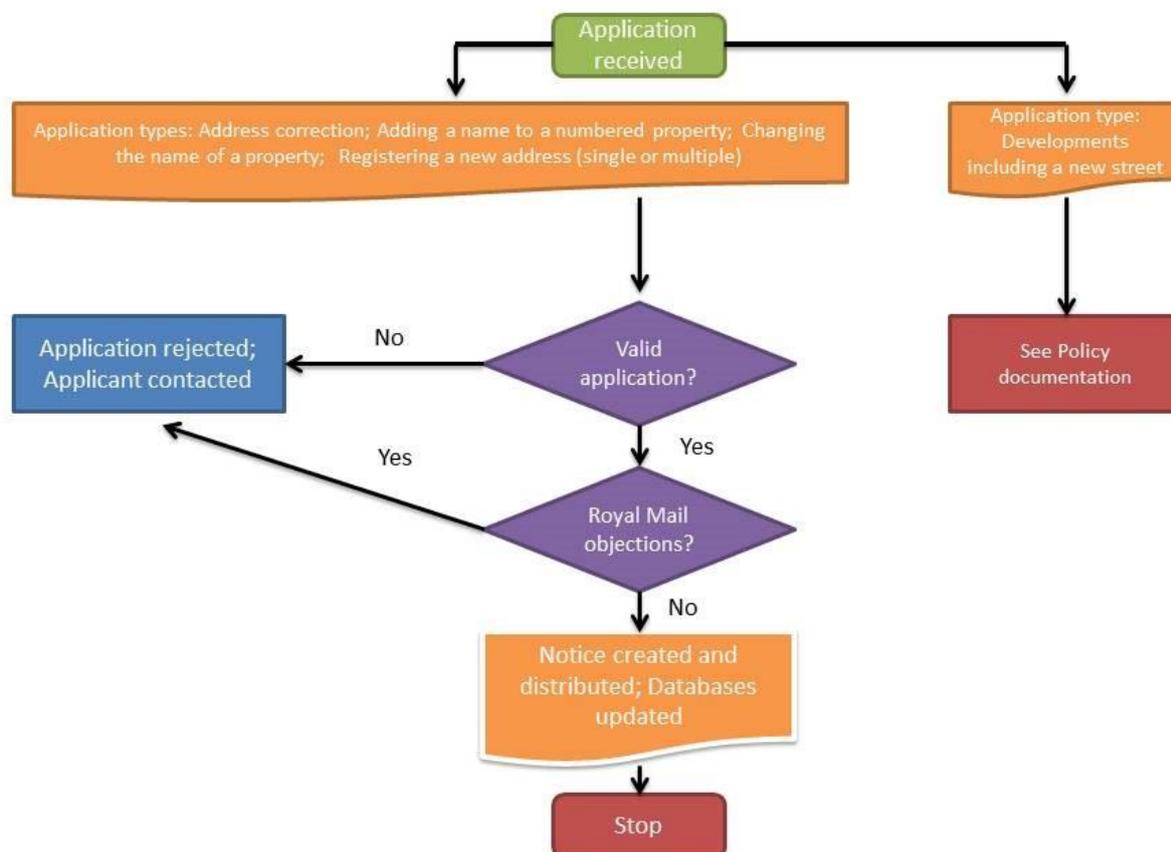


Figure 1 – basic street naming and numbering process flowchart.

To apply online for street naming and numbering please visit the [Council's online application page](#). Your application will be sent to the Council as an email. Before applying, please check that your proposals do not duplicate existing addresses by visiting the [Royal Mail website](#). If you cannot apply online, please contact the Street Naming and Numbering team.

The Council will check existing address databases before consulting with Royal Mail on the proposals.

The timescale for applications that do not include new streets is two to three working weeks due to the need to consult Royal Mail.

For applications that include new streets, the timescale is longer due to an extensive consultation process. Full details can be found in the [street naming and numbering policy](#) documentation.

If successful, the Council will issue a notice outlining the approved address format and the postcode (as appears on Royal Mail's PAF). For larger developments a schedule will be included showing plot to property numbers/names. Applicants will be asked to pass this information onto prospective purchasers and other relevant parties.

All information in the notice must be adhered to.

2.3 Reasons for application rejection

The Council will reject your application if:

- There is no approved planning permission for the site(s).
- The address proposals duplicate existing addresses. For example, within the same street, postcode sector, parish etc. Each application will be considered on its own merit.
- The address proposals could contravene any aspect of the Council's [equality policy statement and objectives](#) (for example, proposals considered rude, obscene, or racist etc.)
- The address proposals could cause spelling or pronunciation problems.
- We request further information from you to proceed with the application and it is not supplied within 28 days.

3.0 Application types

3.1 Address correction

This is the application type for when the applicant encounters their address appearing differently on various databases. This includes postcode mismatches, misspelt addresses, and problems with addresses on internet sites such as Amazon.

Example: your property name is spelt incorrectly, or your address does not appear on Royal Mail's database.

The Council will interrogate databases to compare addresses and may conduct internal and external consultations. The applicant may be required to provide evidence of the address error.

The Council will liaise with Royal Mail, make any necessary corrections, and inform the applicant once complete.

In the example that Royal Mail is missing a street in their PAF database, the Council can request that they add the street held in the LLPG. However, the Council cannot guarantee that Royal Mail will update their PAF database.

To apply for an address correction, please complete the Council's [online application form](#).

3.2 Adding a name to a numbered property or changing the name of an existing numbered property

This is the application type for applicants wishing to add a name to (or change the name of) a property already numbered to an existing street.

Example: you wish to add the house name 'Rose Cottage' to your numbered property address (1 Main Street).

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.

Royal Mail refer to these type of addresses as 'alias identifiers' as the true address is the property number. It can take 28 days for the property name to be appended to the numbered address on the Royal Mail PAF database.

To apply to add a name to a numbered property, please complete the Council's [online application form](#).

3.3 Changing the name of a property

This is the application type for applicants wishing to change the name of their property.

Example: you wish to change your property name from 'Bramble Cottage' to 'Willow Cottage'.

To apply to change the name of a property, please complete the Council's [online application form](#).

3.4 Registering a new address (single or multiple) in an existing street

This is the application type for applicants wishing to register a new address or new addresses in an existing street. This also covers property conversions.

If the development is for more than one property a plan showing the plot numbers must be provided, and the relevant approved planning permission number must be supplied. Plot to house numbers will be issued by the Council. This data is required by utility companies and statutory bodies.

If the street contains both named and numbered properties, the Council will decide if the new development should be named or numbered.

To apply to register a new address, please complete the Council's [online application form](#).

3.4.1 In a street containing numbered properties

New addresses will be numbered within the existing sequence. National best practice documentation permits the use of numbers followed by letters (for example 1A, 1B, and 1C).

The new property numbering can include any required suffix if no consecutive number is available in the current sequence (i.e., this can follow or precede existing numbering for example 1A, 1B, 1, 3, 5, 5A, 5B etc.); this prevents the re-numbering of the existing addresses in the street which is considered unacceptable.

Developments built in the grounds of a numbered property will be numbered to that property using suffixes of A, B, C etc. unless the development is at the end of a street and can take the next available number(s) in sequence.

If a property is demolished and a new one built in its place, the new development will retain the number of the demolished property and will include suffixes if necessary.

The Council will number new properties in an ascending order from the most important street from which they lead or in a direction travelling away from the centre of a settlement.

At this stage a name can also be added to a numbered property.

3.4.2 In a street containing named properties

In this scenario, new addresses will be named. It is up to the applicant to suggest names for consideration by the Council.

3.5 Developments including a new street or streets

3.5.1 Meeting

The applicant can request a meeting with the Street Naming and Numbering team to discuss their proposals before submission. Please email snn@tunbridgewells.gov.uk to do so.

3.5.2 Application submission

The applicant will need to complete the online application form that poses a number of questions relating to the development. Applicants will need to supply a plan showing plot numbers or the relevant planning permission number alongside the approved drawing number. The Council also requires detailed plans showing all floor levels and access points for blocks of flats and houses within the development. Full details can be found in section 2.0.6 of the [street naming and numbering policy](#).

Applicants will be requested to supply up to three proposed street names per street and the reasons behind the proposals for the consultation process. The proposed names must not duplicate existing street names; for example, within the same postcode sector, parish, village/town etc.

If there is the potential for the street to be extended in the future, the Council must be made aware of this as early in the process as possible for numbering reasons.

Each application will be considered on its own merit.

3.5.3 Street name consultation

For full details regarding this stage, please see the [street naming and numbering policy](#). There are many potential routes through this step as bullet pointed below. The term Councillors below refers to the relevant Ward Councillors and where applicable Parish/Town Councils.

- The applicant can choose to submit street name proposals
- If they do, these are sent to the relevant Councillors for a 14-calendar day consultation
- If they do not, the Councillors are asked to propose street names
- If the Councillors agree to the applicant's proposals, these are forwarded to Royal Mail for consultation
- If the Councillors object, they will be asked to propose their own street names. The Council will inform the applicant and ask the applicant to accept the Councillors' proposals.
- If the applicant objects to the Councillors' proposals, the Council will put the applicant and Councillors into direct communication with one another.

If no decision can be made, the Council will make the final decision.

3.5.4 Plot to postal drafting

Properties in the new streets will be numbered with even numbers on the right side and odd numbers on the left except that, for in a cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.

Flats will be numbered from the ground floor upwards, in a clockwise manner from the main access point. Full details can be found in section 3.2 of the [street naming and numbering policy](#). There are two options for flat numbering:

- Flat <x>, <Block Name>, <Street Number and Name>, <Post Town>, <Postcode>
- <Street Number and Name>, <Post Town>, <Postcode>

The draft plot to postal schedule will be shared with the applicant. Any objections will be discussed, and amendments made where necessary in line with the [street naming and numbering policy](#).

3.5.5 Royal Mail consultation

Once the street names have been agreed, the Council will put forward the proposals to Royal Mail along with the plot to postal numbering schedule for consultation. Royal Mail may object and provide comments. If objections are raised the applicant will be contacted. If Royal Mail approves the proposals the post town and postcode elements of the new addresses will be provided to the Council. Royal Mail will enter the new addresses into their Not Yet Built (NYB) file.

3.5.6 Notice of new addresses

Once Royal Mail has approved the proposals, the Council will produce and distribute a street naming and numbering notice including the plot to postal schedule.

The applicant is required to erect street nameplates to the specification included with the notice, and in the agreed location for the emergency and postal services.

The new addresses should be clearly marked to be visible where possible from the highway.

4.0 Distribution of address data

The following is the list of who the Council send street naming and numbering notices to:

4.1 External organisations

- Centrica Gas
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- Kent Police
- Land Registry
- Royal Mail
- Scotia Gas Networks
- South East Coast Ambulance Service
- South East Water
- Southern Water
- Valuation Office Agency

4.2 Internal council departments

- Council Tax
- Environment and Street Scene – refuse services
- Electoral Registration
- Land Charges

4.3 New street distribution list

- KCC Highways
- Depot (TWBC) – for maintenance of street nameplate signs

Please note, it is the responsibility of the applicant requesting the change to notify their banks, insurance companies, personal contacts etc. of the new addressing.

5.0 Royal Mail

Royal Mail will refer applicants to the local authority to carry out amendments or alterations to postal addresses. The Council will only accept requests from property owners or a legal representative acting on the owner's behalf.

5.1 Postcode Address File (PAF)

PAF is a registered trademark of Royal Mail and means the database, or any part of it, known as the Postcode Address File containing all known address and postcode information in the United Kingdom as may be amended from time to time.

5.2 Live PAF database

Addresses can be placed on the live database. This is normally for properties already occupied, for new developments near completion, property name changes or addition of house name to numbered property application types

5.3 Not yet built file

This is for new dwellings or developments that are in the stage of being built and some way from occupation. This allows address names and postcodes to be secured with Royal Mail. At this stage the addresses will not appear on the Royal Mail Live PAF database.

To make the new addresses live and available for inspection on the Royal Mail PAF database, please call 08456 011110, option 3, option 1. This should be done when the properties are near occupation or when utilities need connecting.

5.4 Alias identifiers

The PAF alias file contains alternative names for premises, streets, localities and counties

The alias name should not be used without the main identifier being used (the street number) when giving out an address for mail to be sent to the addressee. Royal Mail holds the alias name for their use so they know that a property may be displaying both a name and a number.

Alias identifiers can take up to 28 days to appear on the Royal Mail database.

This correction can take several months to filter through to end users of live PAF database.

6.0 Fees

Certain applications require payment of a fee. The current fee will be displayed when you apply online. The fees are subject to change. If you cannot pay online, please email snn@tunbridgewells.gov.uk.

The fee for 'developments including a new street or streets' will be calculated once the application is received and approved by the Council.

7.0 Useful links

7.1 Street naming and numbering homepage

You can [view information about the Council's street naming and numbering services online](#).

7.2 Application form

You can apply for any of the Council's street naming and numbering services by completing the [online application form](#).

7.3 Street naming and numbering policy

The Council publishes its [street naming and numbering policy](#) online.

7.4 Accessibility

If you require an alternative way to apply, other than online, please send an email to the Street Naming and Numbering team at snn@tunbridgewells.gov.uk.

7.5 Royal Mail website

Full details of the services provided by Royal Mail can be found on the [Royal Mail website](#).

7.6 Privacy notice

The Council's [street naming and numbering privacy notice](#) explains how we capture, process and retain your data.