



**Medway Council**  
**Street Naming and Numbering Policy**

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## Document History

This document was created to replace the 2008 Street Naming and Numbering Conventions.

- Version 0.1, initial draft created by the Corporate GIS Team on 20 October 2023.
- Version 0.2, updated links, refined the conventions for streets and properties, and confirmed the legal basis. Change made by the Corporate GIS Team on 31 October 2023.
- Version 0.3, confirmed the conventions for streets and properties and the delegated council officer. Change made by the Corporate GIS Team on 7 November 2023
- Version 0.4, updated the legislation used to allow for alterations to street names. Change made by the Corporate GIS Team on 20 February 2024.
- Version 0.5, minor drafting amendments and the introduction of an exemptions process for recently deceased persons. Change made by the Corporate GIS Team on 12 June 2024
- Version 0.6, minor drafting amendments and clarification on non-postally addressable properties. Change made by the Corporate GIS Team on 21 June 2024

### 1. Objectives

- 1.1. Street Naming and Numbering is an important function as many legal transactions associated with properties can be withheld until they are identified by a street name and number.
- 1.2. This policy sets out the conventions, processes and services applied by the Council in its Street Naming and Numbering functions. Their application will allow consistent and efficient naming and numbering to take place.
- 1.3. This policy should be reviewed five years after its approval by Cabinet; earlier review may be required if there are significant changes to the legislation, standards or guides used to inform this policy.

### 2. Legal framework

- 2.1. Medway Council has legal powers to ensure that all streets and properties are correctly named and numbered.
- 2.2. The Council carries out these powers under:
  - Section 10 of the County of Kent Act 1981
  - Section 111, Local Government Act 1972
  - Section 64 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847
  - Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023
- 2.3. These Acts allow the Council to set all elements of an address, except for the postcode and post town, including:
  - Altering existing street names (subject to a consultation) or assign a street name to a previously unnamed street; this can be for all or part of a street.
  - Objecting to street names proposed to the Council.
  - Ensuring that street names are displayed.
  - Giving new properties numbers, or renumbering existing properties,
  - Objecting to a numbering scheme proposed to the Council.
  - Ensuring properties are marked with appropriate numbers.
  - Ensuring that street names and property numbers displayed are those approved by the Council.
  - Giving a name to a property.
- 2.4. Residents and/or other responsible parties, such as developers and businesses, have the following responsibilities:
  - To notify the Council of proposed street names, and property numbers and names.
  - To display the approved number on their property.

- To display the approved street name.

### 3. Purpose of street naming and numbering

3.1. Street Naming and Numbering is an important function as it allows:

- The creation of a unique and unambiguous address for every property in the authority .
- Emergency Services to find a property quickly and effectively.
- The efficient delivery of post.
- The identification of properties for visitors, delivery of goods and other services.
- Statutory undertakers, for example electricity, gas and water, to connect their services to premises and link them to a postal address for billing.
- Referencing and recording of addresses and streets, as part of Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteers (LSG).
- Companies to accept an address for official purposes. For example, insurance, credit rating, contract acceptance etc.

### 4. Service provision

4.1. The Council's Street Naming and Numbering service provides the following services:

- naming of new streets,
- renaming existing streets,
- numbering of properties on new streets,
- numbering, or in exceptional circumstances naming, new properties on an existing street,
- renumbering properties on an existing street,
- changing or adding a name to a property,
- allocation of numbers to properties with names only,
- addition of a name to a numbered property,
- registration of a property that was not previously registered.

### 5. Address and street gazetteers

5.1. The Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPG) and Local Street Gazetteers (LSG) are the central corporate database for all property addresses and streets within Medway.

5.2. The LLPG and LSG ensure that there is one record for each property address and street, each being held using a unique reference number. The information recorded in the gazetteers is shared across the public sector and is used commercially.

5.3. The creation and use of these gazetteers is important for:

- Better coordination of information, helping to make sure the right services get to the right people.
- Knowing where residents and businesses are and which public services they are using.
- Supporting departmental back-office systems such as telephone and online services.
- Supporting evidence-based decision making.
- Improved partnership working between organisations locally.
- Improvements in the quality of council tax and non-domestic rate records.
- Improved electoral register records.
- Managing streetworks.

5.4. To ensure the quality of addresses and street information held, the data needs to conform to BS7666, the British Standard that specifies a standard format for holding details on every property and street.

5.5. The practical application of BS7666 is further defined in [data creation and maintenance guides](#) published by GeoPlace, the organisation responsible for collating, managing and maintaining the national address and street gazetteers. These guides set out the current interpretation and application of BS7666 when creating new addresses and properties, they underpin the conventions the Council uses for Street Naming and Numbering.

5.6. Both BS7666 and the data creation and maintenance guides are continually being reviewed. Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that this policy aligns with those changes, differences in update schedules may mean that naming and numbering schedules or advice provided to applicants could vary from the conventions in this policy. We will only vary from this policy to ensure compliance with BS7666 and will always tell you why we have made a change.

## 6. Naming conventions

### 6.1. Naming of new streets

6.1.1. The Street Naming and Numbering Officer, or other nominated officer, will use the following guidelines to determine if a new street name is acceptable:

- 6.1.1.1. New street names should not duplicate any name already in use within Medway, even if an alternative ending is proposed. You should [check existing street names](#) in use in Medway to avoid delays in your application.
- 6.1.1.2. The Council will look to use street names with a local, historic or heritage significance to the area. Anyone applying for a street name should explain the significance of their suggested names, these reasons will support the assessment of their suitability made by the Council.
- 6.1.1.3. Large developments are encouraged to have street names with a common theme, preferably with a local, historic or heritage significance to the area being developed.
- 6.1.1.4. Any street name that promotes a company, service, or product, or is based on a developer's trading name, will not be allowed as they are seen as

advertising and are not acceptable. An exception may be made for a company that no longer exists, where the name has historical significance, and its use cannot be seen as advertising.

- 6.1.1.5. Names of a living person or someone recently deceased are not permitted to be used as a street name. The Council will apply a period of 20-years before considering an individual's name, this is to allow sufficient passage of time to assess that individual's local, historic or heritage significance. When the name of a deceased person is proposed to be used, where possible, consent would be required from living direct relatives or descendants.
- 6.1.1.6. In exceptional circumstances, where an individual has given or been recognised for outstanding service to Medway and its communities, an exemption process can be initiated 1 year after that individual's death. This would allow consideration for the naming of a street to ensure the honourable perpetuation of their memory within the community. This process is outlined in Section 9.
- 6.1.1.7. Street names that may be considered or interpreted as obscene, racist or would breach the council's equal opportunities policies are not acceptable.
- 6.1.1.8. Street names that may be open to re-interpretation by graffiti or shortening of the name will be avoided.
- 6.1.1.9. New street names will not be assigned to a new development where it can be satisfactorily included in the current naming and numbering scheme of the existing street.
- 6.1.1.10. Street names are unacceptable if they are likely to cause spelling difficulties, as these may lead to confusion in an emergency or result in demands for a change of address from occupiers.
- 6.1.1.11. Phonetically similar street names should be avoided, for example Cook Close and Hook Close.
- 6.1.1.12. Streets where the name differs only by their suffix should be avoided, for example Acre Close and Acre Grove.
- 6.1.1.13. Street names should not:
  - a) start with the word 'The'.
  - b) contain punctuation, including apostrophes.
  - c) contain special characters, for example '\$', '&' etc.
  - d) end with an 's', where it could be considered as belonging to someone (a possessive) or a plural.
  - e) contain numbers, either in their numerical or written form.
  - f) contain North, South, East or West.

- 6.1.1.14. Proposals for street names should not leave existing properties separated (orphaned) from the street to which they are numbered. These properties should either be renumbered to the new street or where practical the existing street should continue.
- 6.1.1.15. 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.
- 6.1.1.16. Streets should end with a suitable suffix, only those listed below are considered acceptable.
- Avenue
  - Circus, for a roundabout only
  - Close, for a cul-de-sac only
  - Court, for a small, enclosed development in exceptional circumstances
  - Crescent, for a crescent shaped road only
  - Dene, for residential roads in exceptional circumstances
  - Drive
  - Gardens, for residential roads, subject to there being no confusion with local open space
  - Grove
  - Hill, for a hill only
  - Lane
  - Mead, for residential roads in exceptional circumstances
  - Mews, for a small, terraced development but not as a subsidiary name for the terrace within another road
  - Path, for properties with only a pedestrian access
  - Place
  - Rise, for a hill only
  - Road
  - Row, for residential roads in exceptional circumstances
  - Square, for a square only
  - Street
  - Terrace, for a terrace of houses but not as a subsidiary name for the terrace within another road
  - Vale
  - Walk, for properties with only a pedestrian access

- Way, for properties with only a pedestrian access
- Wharf, for residential streets where the street fronts a river
- Yard, for a small, enclosed development

There may be some historic cases, where Suffixes in use may not adhere to the conventions in this policy and shall continue to be used. However, from the implementation of this policy we will not accept any suffixes that do not adhere to these conventions, except for exceptional circumstances.

- 6.1.2. Names suggested by an applicant that comply with these guidelines, may be used, so long as there are no objections made by Medway Council, by Ward Councillors, or by Parish Councillors (for street names within a parished area).
- 6.1.3. Any disagreements will be escalated to senior officers with responsibility for the Street Naming and Numbering team. In the event of unresolved disagreement, a final decision will be taken by the Chief Operations Officer who has delegated powers to approve street names; there will be no right of appeal.

## **7. Numbering conventions:**

### **7.1. Property naming and numbering**

- 7.1.1. The Council will check the LLPG and review every request for property naming and numbering.
- 7.1.2. The Street Naming and Numbering Officer, or other nominated officer, will use the following guidelines to determine if the proposed name and/or numbering for a new or existing property is acceptable:
  - 7.1.2.1. All new property developments will be numbered rather than named. We will also number new and replacement properties on streets with solely named properties when redevelopment takes place.
  - 7.1.2.2. Properties on new streets should be numbered with the odd numbers on the left and the even numbers on the right from the entrance of the street. Where a street is a thoroughfare between two other streets, numbering will start at the end closest to the town or village centre.
  - 7.1.2.3. Consecutive numbering can be used in a cul-de-sac, preferably in a clockwise direction, or for small developments up to 30 properties, with no available land for future development.
  - 7.1.2.4. All numbers should be used in the proper sequence (including 13). However, should the developers make a request, the exclusion of 13 may be permitted.
  - 7.1.2.5. Replacement properties will retain their original property number, and if used name. If the replacement property requires a name change, a new application will be needed.



- 7.1.2.6. When new properties are built on an existing street and there are no available numbers to use whilst retaining the current numbering sequence, a letter shall be used as a suffix, e.g. 21A.
- 7.1.2.7. The merging or splitting of two or more existing properties will also require re-addressing. Properties will retain part of the previous address. For example:
- If 2 High Street, 4 High Street, and 6 High Street were to become a merged property their new address would be 2-6 High Street.
  - If 1-3 High Street were to be split into two properties their respective addresses would be 1 High Street and 3 High Street.
- 7.1.2.8. Properties will be numbered to the street which provides direct access to the property, this is generally the street that the front door of the property faces.
- 7.1.2.9. If a property is set away from the street, for example a farm along a track, it will be addressed to the last street used to access the property.
- 7.1.2.10. A block with two or more access points to the street but no internal access between blocks can have the same block name, but each access point will be numbered individually to the street which provides direct access to the properties in that block.
- 7.1.2.11. Flats, units, apartments, and other forms of property subdivision should be numbered, this applies to new builds and conversions. For example, Flat 1, 20 High Street and Flat 2, 20 High Street is acceptable, but a naming scheme such as Flat A and Flat B or Ground Floor and First Floor Flat will not be used.
- 7.1.2.12. Each flat, unit, apartment, or other form of property subdivision will be given individual numbers; the sequence of their numbering will depend on the access points of individual properties.
- 7.1.2.13. The main building of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), retirement properties, other properties with shared basic amenities, or properties that are not self-contained should be named and numbered as it is postally addressable.
- 7.1.2.14. Rooms in House in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), retirement properties, other properties with shared basic amenities, or properties that are not self-contained are not considered postally addressable and therefore cannot be named and numbered. Landlords or owners should ensure there is a logical naming and numbering of sub-divisions to support their use by their occupiers.
- 7.1.2.15. Caravans and chalets will only be named and numbered if they are expected to be semi-permanent features i.e. be static for at least 12 months and there is a need to obtain services.
- 7.1.2.16. Private garages and properties used for housing vehicles or similar purposes, will not be numbered.

- 7.1.2.17. A piece of land, for example a field, cannot be given an official address, only a property on that piece of land can have a conventional address for the purposes of delivering mail and services.
- 7.1.2.18. Business properties will be allocated an address with a number within a street, or a Unit number within a business park or industrial estate.
- 7.1.2.19. There will not be more than one property with the same name or number along a street.
- 7.1.2.20. The number is the official identifier a property and must always be included in all uses of the address. In addition to the number, a property may also be given a name. The property name is an informal part of the address and cannot be regarded as an alternative to the number.
- 7.1.2.21. Applications to add a name to a property must be submitted to Street Naming and Numbering for approval so that the relevant checks can be carried out and to ensure that there is no duplication in the immediate vicinity.
- 7.1.2.22. Properties will not normally be named using just the business name, this is to prevent future renaming exercises if the property is no longer occupied by the same named business.
- 7.1.2.23. Where business properties or units have not previously been allocated a number, the Council will apply a number as part of any renaming to provide a consistent primary identifier.
- 7.1.2.24. Property names are unacceptable if they are likely to cause spelling difficulties, as these may lead to confusion in an emergency or result in demands for a change of address from occupiers.
- 7.1.2.25. Names of a living person or someone recently deceased are not permitted to be used as a building name. The Council will apply a period of 20-years before considering an individual's name, this is to allow sufficient passage of time to assess that individual's local, historic or heritage significance. When the name of a deceased person is proposed to be used, where possible, consent would be required from living direct relatives or descendants.
- 7.1.2.26. Anyone applying to name a property after an individual should explain the significance of their suggested names to the local area. These reasons will be considered by the Council.
- 7.1.2.27. In exceptional circumstances, where an individual has given or been recognised for outstanding service to Medway and its communities, an exemption process can be initiated 1 year after that individual's death. This would allow consideration for the naming of a building to ensure the honourable perpetuation of their memory within the community. This process is outlined in Section 9.
- 7.1.2.28. Any property name that promotes a company, service, product, or is based on a developer's trading name, will not be allowed as they seen as advertising and are not acceptable. An exception may be made for a

company that no longer exists, where the name has historical significance, and its use cannot be seen as advertising.

7.1.2.29. Property names that may be considered or interpreted as obscene, racist, or would breach the council's equal opportunities policies are not acceptable.

7.1.2.30. Property names should not:

- a) start with the word 'The'.
- b) contain punctuation, including apostrophes.
- c) contain special characters, for example '\$', '&' etc.
- d) end with an 's', where it could be considered as belonging to someone (a possessive) or plural.
- e) contain numbers, either in their numerical or written form.

7.1.2.31. Where a property is considered ancillary to the main property, i.e. it is considered as another part of the main property, or is a separate independent accommodation, i.e. both the main and ancillary properties are occupied by a single family, then it will be given a name that includes "annexe" and will make reference to the main property address. Annexes will not be given a post code as the main property will be the address to receive post.

7.1.2.32. Groups of properties or named blocks, not prefixed by 'Unit', should end with a suitable suffix, only those listed below are considered acceptable.

- Court, for flats and other residential properties
- Mansions, for residential blocks
- House, for residential blocks or offices
- Point, for high residential blocks
- Tower, for high residential blocks or offices
- Lodge, for residential properties
- Apartments, for residential properties

There may be some historic cases, where Suffixes in use may not adhere to the conventions in this policy and shall continue to be used. However, from the implementation of this policy we will not accept any suffixes that do not adhere to these conventions, except for exceptional circumstances.

7.1.3. Any disagreements will be escalated to senior officers with responsibility for the Street Naming and Numbering team. In the event of unresolved disagreement, a final decision will be taken by the Chief Operations Officer who has delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways

and Enforcement, to approve street naming and numbering on behalf of Cabinet; there will be no right of appeal.

### **7.2. Changing a house name or adding a name to a numbered property**

- 7.2.1. The Council will check the LLPG and review every request to add or change an existing property name; these will be subject to the conventions outlined in 7.1.
- 7.2.2. Where a property has a number, it is the responsibility of the property owner to check the street the property is on to ensure the name is not already in use.
- 7.2.3. A property with a number must always use and display that number. Where a property has a name and an official number the number must always be included in the address and displayed on the property. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative. This is enforceable under Section 10(3) of the County of Kent Act 1981.
- 7.2.4. Any request to remove a number from an official address will be refused.
- 7.2.5. Where a change is made, the Council will update its systems and will notify the Royal Mail; these changes will be made within a timely manner. Any amendments can take several months to filter through to end users of Royal Mail Postcode Address File or Ordnance Survey AddressBase data. This will happen as external companies update their own databases with the latest updates. Any changes could potentially cause problems where companies need to use or validate an address and are working with old data.

### **8. Renaming and renumbering of existing streets and properties**

- 8.1. The changing of a street name or sequence of property numbering will be avoided unless there is specific and sufficient reason to do so. Reasons for a change may include:
  - A new development in the street.
  - Significant confusion regarding the naming and/or numbering of existing streets or properties.
  - A request from the emergency services.
  - New information that calls the suitability of a street name into doubt.
- 8.2. Should a change to a street name or its numbering be proposed, evidence will be gathered from all relevant sources these may include relevant bodies, ratepayers, and the appropriate Ward and Parish Councillors.
- 8.3. If there is specific and sufficient reason for that proposal to be formally considered a Street Name Change can be considered, and if agreed made, using S81 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023. As the regulations to define which changes have sufficient support are yet to be defined, the Council will continue to apply the approach it used previously using S21 of Public Health Amendments Act 1907. These are set out in sections 8.4 to 8.8 of this policy.
- 8.4. A consultation will be held with all affected ratepayers, both residential and non-residential, regarding the proposed change.

- 8.5. Any new street name suggested as part of a consultation should comply with the guidelines set out in Section 6.1 and numbering should comply with the guidelines set out in Section 7.1.
- 8.6. A report detailing the outcomes of the consultation will be created for consideration by the Chief Operating Officer. The results of the consultation will determine the action to be taken:
- a) If at least two-thirds, or more, of council tax and business rate payers are in favour of the proposed change:
    - i. A report will be made to Cabinet recommending the approval of the change to the street naming and/or its numbering.
    - ii. If the recommendation is approved by Cabinet a registration notice will be published, after the 7-day call in period expires, to confirm the change of street name and/or its numbering.
    - iii. If the recommendation is rejected officers will work to resolve the specific issues identified by Cabinet and resubmit the report.
  - b) If less than two-thirds of council tax and business rate payers are in favour of the proposed change, then no alteration will be made to the street name and/or its numbering.
- 8.7. Where a request to rename or renumber a street is made, the costs of doing so must be borne by those wanting the change. This will include all advertising costs, consultation costs, replacement street nameplates and all other associated costs of the change.
- 8.8. Where a change is made, the Council will update its systems and will notify the Royal Mail; these changes will be made within a timely manner. Any amendments can take several months to filter through to end users of Royal Mail Postcode Address File or Ordnance Survey AddressBase data. This will happen as external companies update their own databases with the latest updates. Any changes could potentially cause problems where companies need to use or validate an address and are working with old data.

### **9. Exemptions process for using the name of a recently deceased person**

- 9.1. A nomination to exempt the 20-year reflection period can be made 1 year after someone's death. This exemption must be applied for with reference to a specific site or development and when it can be considered that person had given or been recognised for outstanding service to Medway and its communities.
- 9.2. Any application for an exemption must include consent, where possible, from living direct relatives or descendants of the deceased and explain the reason why this person can be considered to have given or been recognised for outstanding service to Medway and its communities, and why a street name or building name is more appropriate than another form of memorial.
- 9.3. Research would be conducted into the deceased person to collate evidence as to the exceptional nature of the outstanding service to Medway and its communities and

identify any information in the public record that could suggest a name is unsuitable for use.

- 9.4. The relevant ward members and the portfolio holder will be consulted about the proposal.
- 9.5. A report of the findings, risks (financial and reputational), consultee views, and officer recommendations will be prepared for consideration by Cabinet.
- 9.6. The final report would be presented to Cabinet who will decide the matter; the decision which would be subject to the standard council processes including call-in for overview and scrutiny of the decision.

### **10. Postcodes**

- 10.1. Allocation of postcodes is managed by the Royal Mail and must be confirmed by them. Royal Mail will not assign a postcode to an address until the Council has notified them of the official address as the Street Naming and Numbering Authority. The maintenance of postcode information, and any future change to individual postcodes or postcode sectors, is the responsibility of the Royal Mail.
- 10.2. As part of a Street Naming and Numbering application Medway Council will undertake the postcode application process on the applicant's behalf. The Council will inform the applicant and other interested parties of the postcodes allocated. The Council reserves the right to complete a Street Naming and Numbering application without the providing a postcode or post town information.
- 10.3. The Council accepts no responsibility or liability for omission of postcode or post town information, nor for any failure of services arising from this omission.

### **11. Fees and charges**

- 11.1. The council charges to recover its costs in providing the Street Naming and Numbering service; all fees and charges will be published on the Council's website.
- 11.2. Fees and charges will be reviewed on an annual basis and agreed at full council.

### **12. Application process**

- 12.1. Applications can be made by:
  - 12.1.1. Individuals or developers of new houses, commercial or industrial premises with or without the creation of new streets, or;
  - 12.1.2. Individuals or developers undertaking conversions of existing residential, commercial, or industrial premises which will result in the creation of new properties or premises with or without the creation of new streets.
- 12.2. When making an application for a plot or development to be given street names and/or numbered, the applicant should refer to the relevant application methods on the Council's website.
- 12.3. When necessary, additional information may be asked for to assist in the processing of a request.

- 12.4. The application will normally be assessed within 20 working days. Any objections or changes to suggested names or numbers will be raised with applicants at the earliest opportunity.
- 12.5. Once the provisional naming and numbering schedule has been produced it will be subject to a statutory consultation for new street names. This is a 2-week consultation process, undertaken with Emergency Services, Royal Mail, Ward Councillors and, where relevant, Parish Councillors.

### 13. Notification

- 13.1. Any objections and changes received at this point will be discussed with the applicant; with revisions being agreed between all parties.
- 13.2. The Council will inform the following agencies on completion of a street naming and numbering application:
- All internal council departments
  - The Royal Mail
  - Emergency Services
  - The Valuation Office Agency.

### 14. Disclaimer

- 14.1. The issuing of a certificate of street naming and numbering does not certify the suitability of a property for use, all applicants should ensure that they have all relevant permissions, such as Planning and Building Control.
- 14.2. The Council is not responsible for:
- 14.2.1. Correspondence or deliveries not being delivered to the correct address.
  - 14.2.2. The address being available in other third-party address databases, for example retail stores, online maps, or the Royal Mail Postcode Address File
  - 14.2.3. Maps or plans, from the Ordnance Survey or other providers, not featuring new properties or roads.
  - 14.2.4. Issuing postcodes, this is the responsibility of Royal Mail, if a request for 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.
  - 14.2.5. informing Royal Mail of the occupation status of the new development.