

# Street Naming and Numbering Advice Policy Within the Isle of Wight Council

## ADVICE ON NAMING AND NUMBERING OF STREETS AND BUILDINGS

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The appropriate naming of streets, and naming and numbering of buildings forms the basis for identifying property related information for the purposes of:

- Record keeping e.g. legal transactions, taxation.
- Delivery of post by the Royal Mail and courier services.
- Responses to emergencies by ambulance, police, and fire services.
- Help in enabling e-government initiatives.

In this context it is important that the names and numbers are considered appropriate, and displayed in an appropriate manner, at present there does not appear to be any formal policy regarding the approach, and this document sets out to address this short fall and add some consistency to the Councils approach. The **Isle of Wight Council** has the legal powers to authorise names and numbers, and ensure that the authorised name and number is displayed in an appropriate manner. The purpose of this advice is to provide guidance to developers and building occupiers on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings.

The guidelines are relevant both to new developments, and the renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings. As a general rule the Council will require a submission for all new development. The renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the occupiers, Post Services, or emergency services.

### 2. STATUTORY CONTEXT

The **Isle of Wight Council** is the street naming and numbering authority. All proposals for new street names/changes of name in the district must, by law, be sent to the Council for approval prior to being brought into use.

There are two principal pieces of legislation that apply to the Naming and Numbering of Streets and Buildings in Isle of Wight Council:

- Town Improvement Clause Act 1847 Section 64 & 65
- Public Health Act 1925 Section 17)

This includes responsibility for:

- Erecting the names of public streets and ensuring that the names and/or numbers of buildings are displayed by the owners in accordance with the Regulations made by the Council.

### 3. WHEN TO APPLY - GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

It should be noted that the above procedure can be a lengthy one. It is therefore advisable to consult the Council at the earliest possible stage of a proposal, preferably before building work commences, and ideally before an unofficial name has been marketed or legal documentation drafted.

If an application is submitted to the Council at a late stage and is subsequently rejected, numerous problems can arise, especially if purchasers have bought properties marketed under an unapproved name.

It is therefore advisable to be cautious in the use of the names for marketing purposes if the name has not been authorised. It should be pointed out in the literature distributed to prospective purchasers, for example, that marketing names are subject to approval and thus too possible change.

### 4. THE PROCEDURE

On receipt of an application for a new street/building name, the Council checks to ensure that the proposal:

- does not duplicate existing names (and numbers), and
- is in accordance with general naming conventions, street naming conventions, and building
- naming and numbering conventions (as set out below).
- For requests that involve the naming of streets or buildings the Council will then consult the following authorities:
- Royal Mail;
- Parish Councils
- Other relevant Council Departments;

Under normal circumstances the Council does not consult in instances where the application is solely for the numbering/naming of a single building. However, there are occasionally instances (for example cases of renumbering or where locations of main entrances are changed from one street to another) where the Council would wish to consult to ensure that no problems would subsequently arise.

If any of the above services object to the name(s) proposed, then the applicant is invited to submit alternatives.

**The Public Health Act 1925 Section 17 states that the urban authority has one month to object to street name suggestions. Where the urban authority serves a notice of objection under this section, the person proposing to name the street may, within 21 days after the service of the notice, appeal against the objection to a petty sessional court.**

## 5. NAMING OF NEW STREETS

### Naming of new streets is carried out under Section 17 Public Health Act 1925

When a new housing development is built, the responsibility for naming new streets rests with the Council who have an approved policy for road naming which should be:-

- The name(s) should have a proven historical connection to the land intended for development.
- It will not be a persons name unless there is a historical connection to the land intended for development.
- The names will not be the same or similar to any existing names in the area.
- If the development contains a new network of streets a theme may be chosen, taking care not to repeat the theme elsewhere.
- If no suitable historical name can be found to the land then adjacent areas may be utilized. Suggestions for road names may be submitted by the developer for consideration.

To prevent new road names which are close to, and may conflict with those in adjoining towns, Royal Mail will be consulted.

The emergency services prefer this method for naming new roads as they then know there is only one road with that name within the area.

**Developers** or **interested parties** wishing to consult the Council with suggestions for road names should contact the **Searches Officer** in the first instance on 01983 823777 or email:

[highways.development@iow.gov.uk](mailto:highways.development@iow.gov.uk)

### STREET NAMING CONVENTIONS

1. Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell. In general, words of more than three syllables should be avoided and precludes the use of two words except in special cases.
2. Avoid aesthetically unsuitable names such as Gaswork Road, Tip House, Coalpit Lane, or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation like Hoare Road, Typple Avenue, Quare Street, etc.
3. Preferably no street or building name should start with 'The'.
4. Subsidiary names (i.e. a row of buildings within an already named road being called '.....Terrace') should not be used.

5. All new street names should end with one of the following suffixes:

- Street [For any road]
- Road [For major roads]
- Way
- Avenue
- Drive
- Grove
- Lane
- Gardens (Subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Place
- Crescent - For a crescent-shaped road
- Close - For a cul-de-sac only
- Square - For a square only
- Hill - For a hillside road only
- Terrace - For a terrace of houses (provided it is not a subsidiary name).
- Vale
- Dene [For residential roads only]
- Rise [For exceptional use]
- Mead

Suffixes needing careful consideration as it may give a false impression of location:

- End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Wharf, Walk, Park, Meadow.

(All these words can, of course be incorporated in a street name provided it terminates with an appropriate suffix (i.e. Mile End Road).)

Exceptions: Single or dual names without suffixes in appropriate places (i.e. Broadway – for Major roads only).

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

- Walk
- Path
- Way

The use of the North, South, East or West (as in Alfred Road North and Alfred Road South) is generally not acceptable when the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two. In such a case one half should be completely renamed.

Avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible within the district, i.e. Alfred Road and Alfred Close or Churchill Road and Birchill Road.

## 6. BUILDING NAMING AND NUMBERING CONVENTIONS

### Postal Numbering

**Postal numbering is carried out under Sections 64 & 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847**

The Council is responsible for the numbering of new properties. Numbers are allocated to enable easy and rapid location of buildings by both routine and emergency callers, on the following basis:

- At the **Isle of Wight Council** a house number is the preferred option but where this is not practical house names are issued.
- Where properties have a name and no number the Council does have the power to create numbering schemes and make residents use house numbers. However this power is not used very often.
- Emergency services prefer a numbering system.
- Any change of number / name of a property can only be authorized by the Council.
- Royal Mail and all statutory undertakers i.e. Electricity, Gas, Water and Telephone together with the Emergency Services, Land Registry, Electoral Registration, and the Council Tax Section are then advised of the new addresses.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST A DEVELOPER ALLOCATE NUMBERING AS PART OF THEIR MARKETING STRATEGY, IT CAN ONLY BE THE COUNCIL WHO ISSUES THE FORMAL POSTAL NUMBER.**

For further information please contact:

**The Searches Officer** in the first instance on 01983 823777 or email to [highways.development@iow.gov.uk](mailto:highways.development@iow.gov.uk)

### Building Numbers

Numbering sequences can be attributed in many different ways but the most popular are:

- As you enter a development it should be - odds on left, evens on right
- If a small development, they can be numbered consecutively e.g. 1- 8.
- If one or more dwellings are built between two others usually a suffix of "a" "b" "c" etc.is added to the number
- Blocks of flats and apartments may be given a NAME with each dwelling and be numbered consecutively
- All new block names should end with one of the following suffixes:
  - House
  - Court - residential only.
  - Point - high block residential only.
  - Tower - high block offices or residential.
- There should be no sanction given to the avoidance of any numbers i.e. 13 etc. and a proper sequence should be maintained.

- Buildings (including those on corner sites) 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 have undesired associations, should not be sanctioned.
- Short cul-de-sac usually has consecutive numbering whilst through roads and longer cul-de-sac has an odds and evens scheme ascending away from the town centre.

## House Names

The allocation of a house name may be permitted but where a numbering scheme is in place it would be an addition to that number and not a replacement.

Please note that the original number should always be displayed on the property, and quoted within an address on all correspondence, for example:

Blank Lodge  
99 Any Street or Road  
Shanklin  
Post code

When considering a name for your property contact the Council to find out if the preferred name is already in use in the immediate area.

## Post Code

Having established the address up to the postal town we then consult the Royal Mail, which is responsible for allocation of the full postcode and having received that we inform the developer or householder as appropriate.

In the case of developments in existing roads where no new street name is required, or in existing roads where there are no street numbers, the owner in consultation with the council may be allowed to choose the house name.

## 7. NATIONAL STREET GAZETTEER (NSG), AND NATIONAL LAND AND PROPERTY GAZETTEER (NLPG)

Isle of Wight Council is responsible for maintaining information relating to the authority in both the National Street Gazetteer (NSG), and National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Both the NSG and NLPG will be updated to include relevant authorisations made by the Council for both street naming, and building naming and numbering. The entries to the NSG and NLPG will be made in accordance with British Standard 7666; "Spatial data-sets for geographical referencing". The relevant NLPG ref. is included in the authorisation. It is important to maintain this standard and so attention to detail with regards to spelling etc. is of paramount importance.

## 8. THE DISPLAY OF NAMES AND NUMBERS

The regulations made require numbers and names to be displayed in an appropriate manner. This was introduced to ensure that buildings are clearly identified for the convenience of the public, and in order that the emergency services may attend and react efficiently when called to an accident or other incident.

The following guidelines apply:-

1. Every number or name, or number and name, of any building in any street, way, place, row of houses or block shall be marked:-

- a) On the building, the entrance gate, boundary wall or fence immediately adjacent to the gate or entrance of such a building, or in such other position as to be clearly visible from the street or way in which the building is situated.
  - b) With numerals or lettering of such colour as to contrast with the background against which they are displayed.
  - c) With numerals or letters of sufficient size to render them clearly visible from the street or way in which the building is situated.
  - d) In durable, non-absorbent material, which expression shall be deemed to include paint.
2. Where the number or name, or number and name, is marked on the building to which it relates, such number or name, or number and name, shall be not more than 6.0 meters above the level of the ground.
  3. Where the number or name, or number and name, is marked in a position other than on the building on which it relates, such number or name, or number and name, shall be not more than 2.44 metres or less than 0.75 metres above the ground.
  4. The numerals of which any number is composed shall be Arabic in character. Of particular concern to the Council is the number of shops not adequately displaying the appropriate name and number this will need adequate policing to maintain standards.  
In addition to these guidelines developers and building owners should be aware that planning permission maybe required in the following instances:
    - Listed buildings: if the proposed display would affect the special character of the building. Even relatively small-scale displays or alterations may require listed building consent.
    - Advertisement Control: it is possible that a display may be deemed to be a sign requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

If you are in doubt about the display of the name and number you are advised to consult the Regulations and contact the Department of Planning for further advice.

## **9. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES**

The Acts, in appropriate circumstances, allows Councils to affix approved street numbers to buildings and to recover costs incurred. In addition, the provisions of the Act result in offences being committed when owners or occupiers remove, cover or obliterate street numbers.

The normal Council approach is to encourage occupiers to display the correct name / number in an appropriate manner. Where it is evident that failure to do so could result in failure of postal delivery services or emergency services to identify adequately the premises, then the Council will pursue enforcement action.

## **10. FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

Further information, advice and submissions for authorisation can be made to:

**Highways Development Control  
Highways and Transport  
County Hall  
Newport  
Isle of Wight  
PO30 1UD**

### **References:**

Town Improvement Clause Act 1847 Section 64 & 65.  
Public Health Act 1925 Section 17).  
Local Government Act 1985 Schedule 8 Section 14 (1) (a).