

# **Naming and Numbering of Streets and Buildings**

## **Introduction**

The following is based on previous guidance issued by the London Fire Brigade and policies in place at Sutton Council, along with additions agreed at a meeting between the Street Naming and Numbering [SNN] officers.

## **Legislation**

There are four principal pieces of legislation that apply to the Naming and Numbering of Streets and Buildings in London.

- London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Part II
- London Government Act 1963 Section 43(1) (a) & (2)
- London Government Order 1965 Article 3 (11)
- Local Government Act 1985 Schedule 8 Section 14 (1) (a)

## **Overview of the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 Part II**

The Council are responsible for naming and numbering streets and buildings in the borough and providing information on good standard street nameplates. We carry this out under the present powers which control street naming and numbering matters in the Greater London area; these being derived from Part II of the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939, which was subsequently amended by Section 43(1) of the London Government Act 1963. The original Act referred to only the inner London area and the amendment extended its application to the whole of Greater London.

The main consideration which led to this amendment was that a consistent application across the enlarged area of London was needed to ensure the continuation of a policy, which over many years, had enabled the duplication of street names to be materially reduced and, where practicable, eliminated.

This benefits not only the public and postal authorities but also the emergency services. It also determined that there was a need for a comprehensive register of all streets in Greater London.

During its existence, the Greater London Council adopted varying practices of applying the legislation involving partial delegation to the outer-London Boroughs.

With the abolition of the GLC in 1985, the functions were wholly devolved to the 32 London Boroughs and the City of London.

## **The present position**

All London Boroughs are now responsible in law for the functions of naming and numbering streets and buildings throughout London.

This includes responsibility for:

- information on erecting the names of public streets
- ensuring that the names and/or numbers of buildings are displayed by the owners in accordance with the Regulations made by the Boroughs
- informing all owners/occupiers of naming and numbering orders.

## **When do I need this service?**

Customers should contact the council for the following:

- name / number new building(s)
- subdivide an existing building(s)
- name new streets and pathways
- re-naming or re-numbering a property
- if you are experiencing postal delivery problems

If you are not the freeholder of the property concerned, you must seek the owner's permission. This must be in writing. You will need to forward a copy to the Street Naming and Numbering Team before any changes can take place.

For large developments, it can take several months for the street naming and numbering process to be completed. Therefore developers should apply to us as soon as possible. Please note that marketing names may not be suitable as an official address, for example, "Station Mews", but will be given due consideration.

The Street Naming and Numbering team deals with issues such as:

- naming streets
- numbering new properties
- flat conversions
- changing existing names
- adding a name for your address.

Once we have agreed street names and numbers, Royal Mail will allocate each address a postcode, and that will be the "official" address.

No organisations or Council functions, other than the Street Naming and Numbering team have the legislative powers to create or allocates property number/names or street/road names. Examples of organisations that use addresses but don't have legislative powers include:

- Value Office Agency [VOA],
- Royal Mail
- Land Registry
- Utility companies
- Insurance companies
- Financial Institutions
- Electoral Services
- Council Tax
- Planning
- Building Control

### **Street naming**

The Council is responsible for naming streets in the borough. We carry this out under Part II of the London Buildings Act 1939.

- When a street name is required, we will need a list of at least 3 choices, preferably with a local historical connection.
- All new street names should end with one of the following suffixes:
  - Street [for any thoroughfare]
  - Avenue [for residential roads]
  - Boulevard [for any thoroughfare]
  - Broadway [for commercial roads]
  - Circus [for a roundabout only]
  - Close [for a cul-de-sac only]
  - Crescent [for a crescent shaped road]
  - Dene [for residential roads]
  - Drive [for residential roads]
  - Gardens [for residential roads – subject to there being no confusion with local open space(s)]
  - Grove [for residential roads]
  - Hill [for a hillside road only]
  - Lane [for residential roads or development of a historic byway]
  - Mead [for residential roads]
  - Mews [for residential roads]
  - Place [for residential roads]
  - Reach [for any thoroughfare]
  - Rise [for residential roads]
  - Road [for any thoroughfare]
  - Row [for residential roads]
  - Square [for a square only]

- Terrace [for a terrace of houses, but not as a subsidiary name within another road]
  - Vale [for residential roads]
  - View [for residential roads]
  - Way [for major roads]
  - Wharf [for residential roads]
  - Yard [for non residential cul-de-sacs]
- All new pedestrian walkways should end with one of the following suffixes:
    - Walk
    - Path
    - Way
- Not acceptable street or pedestrian walkways prefixes include:
    - The
    - A
- Not acceptable street suffixes include:
    - End
    - Court
    - Cross
    - Side
    - Path
    - Walk
    - Park
    - Meadow
    - Gate
    - Common
- New street names should not duplicate any existing street name or similar name already in use in a borough or neighbouring boroughs. That includes town; locality; street; building or block names. A variation in the suffix, for example, 'Street', 'Road' or 'Avenue', would not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name. Sutton and Kingston would be examples of names that would not be considered acceptable, as would be Bow Road if Bow Avenue was already in use.
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- Avoid having two phonetically similar sounding names within a postal area or within a borough, e.g. Churchill Road and Birch Hill Road.

- Avoid names open to misinterpretation like Access Way; Dead End Road and Austyn Close.
- The word 'Royal' should not be used in street naming without written consent from the Lord Chamberlain's Office.
- The use of North, East, South or West (as in Alfred Road North and Alfred Road South, or Alfred Road East and Alfred Road West) is only acceptable where the road is continuous and passes over a major junction.
- Naming a Street after a living person would not be approved, In the case of a deceased person's name being used, they must have passed away for at least 75 years. The person must have served the local community or must have been born or lived in the area. In such cases, the family or estate administrators must be contacted for approval.
- We normally only consider a request to change a street name when:
  - changes occur which cause or are likely to cause problems for the occupiers; emergency services; Royal Mail or other delivery companies
  - there is confusion over the existing street name

In all cases we would hold a 30 day consultation with the people affected. In some cases we may also consult with ward councillors and the emergency services. A two-thirds majority is required from the freeholders of properties on the street.
- When naming a new street there will be a 30 day consultation period with the ward councillors and the emergency services. For changes to an existing street name, we will also consult with the general public. All associated costs with deeds and land registry changes are to be met by the customer.

### **Naming of a building**

- It is the council policy to number properties wherever possible. However, blocks of flats and commercial offices may be assigned a name.
- Whilst it is no longer council policy to assign names to most properties, you can use an unofficial name but it won't form part of your official address.
- When a building name is required, we will need a list of at least 3 choices, preferably with a local historical connection.
- All new building names should end with one of the following suffixes:
  - House [for residential or commercial buildings]

- Court [for residential or commercial buildings]
  - Boulevard [for high block residential buildings only]
  - Tower [for high block residential or commercial buildings only]
- Not acceptable building prefixes include:
  - The
  - A
- New building names should not duplicate any existing building name or similar name already in use in a borough or neighbouring boroughs. That includes town; locality; street; building or block names. A variation in the suffix, for example, 'Court, 'Tower' or 'House', would not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name. Sutton and Kingston would be examples of names that would not be considered acceptable, as would be Martin House if Martin Court was already in use.
- Building names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- Avoid having two phonetically similar sounding names within a postal area or within a borough, e.g. Churchill House and Birchill House.
- Avoid names open to misinterpretation like Tennis Court and Steven Boulevard.
- The word 'Royal' should not be used in building naming without written consent from the Lord Chamberlain's Office.
- Naming a building after a living person would not be approved, In the case of a deceased person's name being used, they must have passed away for at least 75 years. The person must have served the local community or must have been born or lived in the area. In such cases, the family or estate administrators must be contacted for approval.
- We normally only consider a request to rename an existing building(s) when:
  - changes occur which cause or are likely to cause problems for the occupiers; emergency services; Royal Mail or other delivery companies
  - there is confusion over the existing name(s)

In all cases we would hold a 30 day consultation with the people affected. In some cases we may also consult with ward councillors and the emergency services. A two-thirds majority is required from the people living in a block of flats or a larger development. All associated costs with deeds and land registry changes are to be met by the customer.

## Numbering of buildings on streets

- A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other, with the exception that for a cul-de-sac consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- Private garages and similar buildings used for housing cars, should not be numbered.
- In the interest of equality and diversity, no numbers will be omitted from a numbering sequence.
- Buildings (including those on corner sites) are to be numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is located.
- When there is infill development, for example, a large old house between two other houses is demolished and replaced by four smaller houses, it is not always possible to use the next number in a sequence. In these cases each new house shall be given the number of the old house with either A; B; C or D, or a terrace name applied.
- Where multiple flats are accessed from a single entrance they will be numbered in the following form: flat number, building number, street. For example Flat 2, 21 Smith Street and not 21B Smith Street, which might already be used by an adjoining infill building or be required later on. For larger developments the buildings will be named.
- All internal flat numbers should start with flat 1 at the lowest unit of the building and number upwards in a clockwise direction.
- Property owners have a legal duty to display their number prominently where they can be easily read from the public highway during the day and especially at night.
- We normally only consider a request to renumber an existing building(s) when:
  - changes occur which cause or are likely to cause problems for the occupiers; emergency services; Royal Mail or other delivery companies
  - there is confusion over the existing numbering on a street

In all cases we would consult with the people affected and for changes to take place, a two-thirds majority is required from the people living on the street

and/or building impacted. All associated costs with deeds and land registry changes are to be met by the customer.

### **Street nameplates**

When a road is built as part of a new development, it is the developer's responsibility to arrange the installation of a street nameplate built to our specification.

Please contact our Highways department for further details and specifications.

Email: [highwayemergency@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:highwayemergency@sutton.gov.uk)

### **Apply to us for our approval**

You should apply if you are building new houses, commercial or industrial premises or undertaking conversions of residential, commercial or industrial premises, which will result in the creation of new properties or premises.

You should apply once you have started building work, or conversion has started. Utility companies will not install services without an official postal address and postcode.

We require an email with the following when applying:

- Planning application number
- Site location plan
- Plans highlighting the entrance of each unit clearly marked
- Details of freeholder
- Invoice details including
  - Company name
  - Registered address
  - Email
  - Daytime contact number

These details need to be emailed to [street.naming@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:street.naming@sutton.gov.uk) or posted to:

Street Naming & Numbering

Civic Offices

St Nicholas Way

SUTTON

SM1 1EA

If your request relates to a new address on an existing street under normal circumstances we will allocate a postal address within 15 working days of payment.



If your request involves the naming of new streets, due to the consultation process with local ward councillors and emergency services, under normal circumstances we will allocate a postal address within 30 working days from receipt of payment.

If your application relates to a large and/or complex development please contact us as early as possible as this may take several months to complete.

For multiple accommodation, floor plans are required. Each entrance that is to be numbered should be indicated on the plan with a red arrow.

Once approved we will notify the following organisations of the new or changed address(es):

- Council Tax
- Electoral Registration
- Royal Mail
- Emergency Services

Although we do inform the Land Registry of new addresses, the Land Registry has its own internal process for data amendment. Therefore we advise that it is vital that a register proprietor keeps their address for service up-to-date. The GOV.UK website provides advice and guidance on this.

<https://www.gov.uk/protect-land-property-from-fraud>.

### **Postcodes and postal delivery problems**

Please note it is the responsibility of the council to request postcodes for new properties from Royal Mail, who allocate them. Royal Mail will aim to respond within 10 working days with the postcode(s).

If you are experiencing problems with the delivery of your mail, you should contact Royal Mail Customer Services [[www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)] or Royal Mail Address Management Team.

Royal Mail Address Management Team

Admiral Way

Doxford International Business Park

SUNDERLAND

SR3 3XW

Telephone: 08456 011 110 and press option 3 and then option 1 to speak to an advisor.

Email: [addressdevelopment@royalmail.com](mailto:addressdevelopment@royalmail.com)