
Street Naming and Numbering

Introduction

The Heritage and Environment Section of West Lancashire Borough Council maintains the Street Naming and Numbering register. This is a statutory function and the powers are contained in Sections 64 & 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 and Sections 17-19 of the Public Health Act 1925. All new addresses are allocated according to the British Standards Regulations BS7666-2006. The definitive record LLPG (Local Land and Property Gazetteer) of all street names and property addresses is also maintained.

Why street naming and numbering is important

The address of a property is increasingly becoming a very important issue. More organisations, postal and emergency services and the general public need an efficient means of locating and referencing properties.

If a property is not “registered” through the street naming and numbering process it will not appear on the main address database and the owner/occupier will encounter difficulties in obtaining mail, goods and services from a variety of sources, for example applying for a credit card or obtaining goods by mail order.

The main address database is used by the Council, Royal Mail, all statutory undertakers, emergency services, credit agencies, satellite navigation system suppliers and many private companies.

The whole aim of Street Naming and Numbering is to ensure that every property in West Lancashire has a unique, unambiguous and logical address. Individuals and developers should not allocate their own house numbers, building or street names.

Who should apply

You need to contact us if:

- You want to rename your existing property.
- You are undertaking conversion of residential, commercial or industrial premises, which will result in the creation of new properties or premises.
- You are planning to build a single property/small development
- You are a developer planning a new housing or commercial development

Please remember that all properties must display their name or number at all times.

When should you apply

Once you have received planning permission you should apply for a postal address in the early stages of any new build or conversion. You should definitely apply before

any new build or conversion is substantially complete. Utility companies will not install services without an official postal address and postcode.

How to apply

- download the application form
- contact Sylvia Mason on 01695 585273 or sylvia.mason@westlancs.gov.uk

With effect from 1 November 2011 the Council has introduced a charge for this service (Please refer to the Schedule of Fees).

How long will it take

We always aim to deliver a high quality efficient service.

If your request relates to a new address on an existing street under normal circumstances we will allocate a postal address the following working day from receipt of a valid application.

If your request involves the naming of new streets, due to the consultation process with Local Ward Councillors and Parish Councils, under normal circumstances we will allocate a postal address within 28 working days from receipt of a valid application.

In both cases your address is allocated without a postcode and Royal Mail normally take another 24hrs to allocate a postcode.

Naming or re-naming your house

Naming a numbered property

If you wish to add a name to your numbered property, there is usually no problem with this. All you are required to do is inform us of your intention to name your house and what the name is, so that we can check if there are any similarly named properties in the area. The name may only be used on an informal basis and will not be registered by the Council. This is because omitting postal numbers in place of a name causes complications for deliveries as well as for the emergency services. Your property will always be known by the number.

Changing from a number to a name

This is not allowable. All main streets in residential areas are numbered to ensure that they are unique, unambiguous and logical to find. The only time a house is given a name as opposed to a number is in rural areas where there are few properties on one road and there is no logical way of numbering them, or if properties are built on a stretch of land that precedes No. 1 of any street. You may, as stated above, give your house a name, but the number of the house must be retained in the address. For example if you wish to name your house 'Rose Cottage', providing there are no other 'Rose Cottages' in the area, your address should read:

Rose Cottage
1 My Road

Anytown
Etc.

Renaming a named property

If you live in a rural area in a named property that has no number, and you wish to change the name of your home, you must apply to us for this change. We will then ensure that there are no other properties in the area with the same or a similar name to the one you are proposing. It may cause confusion if more than one property in the same road or vicinity has the same name. This confusion may cause delays for emergency services.

We will then inform the relevant agencies of the change of name.

Please note that names such as 'The Barn' or 'The Bungalow' are no longer acceptable names as they are popular names that have been used time and time again.

Turning An Existing Building Into Flats

Sub-division of residential property is always numbered rather than described or lettered, i.e. Flat 1 used rather than 'First Floor Flat' or 'Flat A'

Conversions of house to flats shall result in the creation of 'child' records referenced to a parent property rather than the creation of suffixed street numbers, i.e. Flat 1 at 36 rather than 36A

Small Developments

Small developments will be named and numbered according to where they are built.

Infill developments will be numbered in sequence with the road they are on. For example, if a house is built on a plot of land between 35 and 39, then it will be numbered 37. If, however, it is built on a plot of land between 35 and 37 it will then be numbered 35A. Letters are only added to addresses where there is no gap in the numbering sequence. They are given the number that precedes their property with A added, moving to B and C, etc for any additional properties. The only exception to this is if a property is built on a plot of land preceding No. 1. These properties will normally be named.

If a single property is built on a plot of land away from the road, it will be considered to stand on the street from which the house is accessed, i.e. the street the driveway begins on. It will be numbered in sequence with the property before the beginning of the access i.e. if the driveway stands between 40 and 42, the property will be numbered 40A.

If there are a number of properties built on a small plot of land away from the road, their naming and numbering will depend on the road from which they are accessed and the style of the development. If there is a large enough gap in the numbering of the access road, i.e. the house before the access road is 22 but the house after is 30, then the houses will normally be considered part of that road and be numbered 24, 26, etc. If this is not the case, they may be numbered 22A, 22B, etc.

In some circumstances, the new development may be allowed a street name of its own, as in a Close or Mews. If this is the case, please refer to the guidelines for New Major Developments below for how to choose a name and for how they will be numbered.

New Major Developments

Suggestions for names of streets should be put forward by the developer, but there are a number of things to bear in mind when doing this:

- No street name should start with 'The'
- Street names cannot be duplicated within the area
- Subsidiary names cannot be created, for example Kings Mews coming off King Street, as this could potentially cause confusion
- Similar sounding names should be avoided, i.e. Churchill Road & Birch Hill Road
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell
- Names of living persons are not allowed
- Names of deceased persons where there are living relatives, i.e. family names, should only be used if the permission of the family has been obtained i.e. Tolkein Street should first be approved by the holder of the Tolkein Estate
- Street names that could be construed as advertising will not be allowed
- Street names that could be considered offensive, i.e. racist, obscene or would contravene any aspect of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy will not be acceptable
- Names should preferably have less than 3 syllables
- The street names should, where possible, reflect the history or geography of the site or area
- Tree names have been used in all areas of West Lancashire and so should be avoided.

If you have difficulty finding suitable names, we suggest that you contact either the relevant Parish Council, The Ormskirk Heritage Society, or that you make use of the Local Libraries in West Lancashire, particularly Skelmersdale Library, where there is a wealth of information regarding the local history of the area. For names and addresses of any of the above, please refer to our website: www.westlancs.gov.uk

The suffix used for the street names also needs to conform to the following guidelines:

- Street (for any thoroughfare)
- Road (for any thoroughfare)
- Way (for major roads or pedestrian ways)
- Avenue (for residential roads)
- Drive (for residential roads)
- Place (for residential roads)
- Lane (for residential roads)
- Grove (for residential roads)
- Mews (for residential roads)
- Gardens (for residential roads – subject to there being no confusion with local open space)
- Crescent (for a crescent shaped road)
- Close (for a cul-de-sac only)
- Court (for a cul-de-sac or for flats and other residential buildings)

- Square (for a square only)
- Hill (for a hillside road only)
- Circus (for a roundabout only)
- Terrace (for a terrace of houses, but not as a subsidiary name within another road)
- Vale (for residential roads in exceptional circumstances)
- Row (for residential roads)
- Wharf (for residential roads)
- Walk (for pedestrian ways only)
- Path (for pedestrian ways only)
- Footpath (for pedestrian ways only)
- Mall (for pedestrian ways only)
- Mansions (other residential buildings)
- House (for flats and other residential buildings)
- Tower (high residential blocks or office blocks)

Unacceptable suffixes

- End, Cross, Side, View, Park, Bank, Meadow unless used with a further suffix i.e. Long Meadow Lane
- North, South, East or West should only be used for a continuous road split by a junction.

We suggest that a developer always puts forward at least three suggestions per street in the development, one preference and at least two others. These suggestions will then be checked by both ourselves and the Royal Mail to ensure that there are no other streets in the area of the same name or a name similar enough to cause confusion. These names will then be sent to the Parish Council, Ward Councillor and other relevant Councillors for consultation. Providing there are no objections, these names will then be officially registered.

Streets will be numbered with the odd numbers on the left hand side of the street going away from the Town Centre or the main access road, even numbers being on the right. The only exception is where there is a small cul-de-sac, where the houses would be numbered in sequence, providing that there is little to no likelihood of the road being extended in the future. If there is a chance that the road could be extended, then the road would be numbered with odds on the left and evens on the right.

It has become recognised procedure to omit the number 13 in any numbering of roads unless the developer specifically requests that it be included.

Once the street names and numbers have been allocated, we will notify the relevant organisations. The developer will be responsible for seeing that street name plates are erected at the entrance to each street. Details of style and supplier will be forwarded with the confirmation notification. Once the street has been adopted, the Council will be responsible for the upkeep of these name plates.

These are General Guidelines, for more specific advice please contact the Street Naming & Numbering Section on 01695 585239 or write to:

Street Naming & Numbering
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