

Thurrock Council
Naming and numbering of
streets and highway assets policy
May 2021

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1. Introduction

Thurrock Council is responsible for the administration of the street naming and numbering (SN&N) process to ensure all properties within the borough are officially addressed. With the address of a property becoming ever more a very important issue, organisations such as Royal Mail and the emergency services and the ever-increasing delivery companies require an efficient and accurate means of locating and referencing properties.

In conjunction with the above, we are pivotal to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) management of address data both locally and nationally in providing the foundation for effective and efficient operation of a range of both public and private services.

As the highway authority, we have the statutory obligation to create official addresses for every property within the borough, ensuring all residents and property owners have a verified street name.

This ultimately allows residents or developers to notify the council of any new developments or changes to existing properties without having to repeat the process with multiple service areas both within and outside the authority (see Appendix C for those services notified by us at the time a postal address is created or amended).

Within this policy there would also be the ability, if required to enable the council to formally name and register highway assets such as bridges and roundabouts.

2. Purpose of street naming and numbering policy

This policy is intended to establish the correct process for naming public and private roads, ensuring authorised streets are named, and properties numbered, appropriately. It also requires that street name plates are erected, and property numbering is displayed in an appropriate manner.

We provide guidance and advice to all applicants, be they property developers, property owners or residents, to enable the council to achieve its overall policy objective of maintaining a comprehensive and accurate database of all properties within Thurrock.

Applicants should be aware from the outset of any application submission that this is a fee-paying service. Guidance on the likely cost can be given in advance of an application on request, with the proviso that a final cost will be given once the full application details are made available.

Street naming and numbering fees are reviewed on an annual basis during the council's budget setting process. Current fees are available on the council's website at thurrock.gov.uk/fees

3. Legal framework

Under Schedule 14 of the Local Government Act 1972, paragraphs 23, all provisions of the Public Health Acts (PHA) 1875 to 1925 apply throughout England and Wales, subject to specified exceptions.

Thurrock Council has the power under the above to approve or reject property addresses submitted by developers or the public. This power extends to both domestic and commercial properties as defined in the following provisions of the Public Health Act 1925:

- **Section 17** – notice to local authority before a street is named – before any street is given a name, notice of the proposed name shall be sent to the local authority by the person proposing to name the street
- **Section 18** – enables the council to alter both the name of a street as well as provide a name to an un-named – the council does not have a statutory obligation to amend an existing premises name or number in line with property owners' wishes, and as such this is a discretionary service.
- **Section 18 (under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003)** – enables the council to charge for its street naming services
- **Section 19** – the council shall cause the name of every street to be signed in a conspicuous position

The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 Sections 64 and 65 allows the council to require buildings to be marked with a number/s, name, or both. There is no right of appeal or requirements for formal consultation, but the council will notify occupiers and give them as much notice period as practicable to display the new number/s, name, or both.

Where an owner, occupier or developer fails to display the appropriate signage, and following notice from the council, they may be liable to a penalty under Section 19 of the Public Health Act 1925. The council may choose to mark the properties with essential signage as per the official numbering scheme and reclaim costs from the occupier / owner.

Authority to fulfil the obligations of the council to perform and make final decisions on all matters pertaining to the SN&N function under the Public Health Act 1925 is delegated to the relevant service director.

The council is not liable for any claims for compensation arising directly or indirectly from the naming of streets, re-naming of streets, numbering or renumbering of properties.

4. Exclusions

Some tasks fall within the responsibility of Royal Mail and are therefore not for the council to resolve. These include:

- **postcodes** – these are the sole responsibility of Royal Mail, who will not assign any postcode to new premises without official notice from the council
- **failed delivery of items to an official address** – this is the responsibility of the local Royal Mail delivery service
- **third-party databases** – the council has no responsibility for, or control over, the way third-parties manage their address databases – for example, utility companies – or the frequency with which they update them
- **third-party map providers** (including satellite navigation systems and ordnance survey) not showing new properties, streets, or roads

5. Pre-application advice for SN&N submissions, in conjunction with Appendix A

The formal naming and numbering of a street this does not imply that the street will be adopted and become publicly maintained. This should have been decided at the initial planning and highways development stage.

Developers should endeavour to apply to the council at the earliest opportunity for the allocation of the official addresses – that is, as soon as development starts. Failure to do so can impact on the abilities of new occupants to arrange basic service provision.

Problems could arise should purchasers have brought a property marketed under an unapproved name. The council will not adopt any unofficial marketing titles used by developers, nor be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to do so.

Royal Mail criteria

Royal Mail has no statutory responsibilities or powers to either name or rename a street, or number or renumber a property. Royal Mail has the sole responsibility for assigning a postcode and postal town following notification of new or amended address details via the council.

Applicants are reminded that postal addresses are not geographically accurate descriptions, but routing instructions for Royal Mail staff. It is possible that postal addresses can contain names for villages and towns that may be several miles away from the actual location of their premises. Where applicants may object to a locality name in their postal address, they are advised to contact Royal Mail, which has a procedure for adding or amending these details.

A piece of land cannot be given a postal address without relevant planning consent. Only premises capable of receiving mail can be allocated a postal address for the purposes of delivering mail via a building's entrance door or a secure letter box. Land owners are strongly advised to seek guidance from our planning service.

Royal Mail does not publish new addresses on its website where the construction is not complete, or a property remains unoccupied.

This information is held under their 'As Not Yet Built' database, which is not published. This means some addresses that have been officially allocated and issued by the council may not, for a while, be visible on their website.

It will be the responsibility of the developer to inform Royal Mail by phoning **03456 045 060** as and when a property becomes occupied. They will have been instructed by us at the time of postal addresses being provided. Once informed, Royal Mail then place the new property onto their published website, which may take 7 days.

This may mean other organisations using the Royal Mail database will also be unable to validate an address, therefore they will also need to ring the above number.

The council is not liable or responsible for third parties, including Royal Mail, updating their databases with official address information.

For the allocation of new postal addresses, you will be required to provide the relevant planning approval reference. Without such approval the street naming and numbering process may cease until resolved.

Owners / occupiers may be at risk of enforcement action if necessary approvals have not been correctly obtained. A property developer must not give any addresses or postcodes to potential occupiers – for example, via solicitors or estate agents – before formal approval has been issued by the council. Problems could arise should purchasers having brought a property marketed under an unapproved name.

The council will not adopt any unofficial marketing titles used by developers. It is strongly advised that prospective buyers are notified of this. The council will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to do so.

The applicant (developer / property owner) may have the opportunity to propose street names for consideration where criteria guidance can be found within Appendix B.

All applications received will be checked against the above criteria as part of the application process to ensure sufficient signage is provided.

6. Application submission

- 6.1. Application forms can be found on Thurrock Council's website at www.thurrock.gov.uk/street-signs-and-name-plates/new-streets-and-developments

Applications forms must be signed by the property owner or accompanied with the written consent of the owner or developer.

- 6.2. Applicants must provide site plans illustrating the location of existing streets and proposed development layout including the internal floor plans for sub-divided buildings.
- 6.3. Applicants must provide details of the intended method of postal deliveries. Royal Mail require to know whether letter boxes are to be placed either outside or within the ground floor lobby area where there are sub divided buildings of either flats or businesses. Should it be intended that each individual property within a sub-divided block is to receive its own individual delivery then we are required to number the properties in a logical way for ease of Royal Mail delivery purposes.
- 6.4. Applicants must provide the planning approval reference. No new street names, premises or numbers will be allocated without the relevant approved planning permission. Should we believe a postal address is being requested without a valid form of planning permission the council's Planning Enforcement service will be notified.

A variety of other council departments regularly monitor new developments – for example, Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates for either residential or commercial developments.

- 6.5. Should the applicant, developer or property owner have suggested a new street names, preference will be given ideally to those listed within the SN&N criteria within Appendix B.
- 6.6. Once all elements of the application are defined, email the council via pro@thurrock.gov.uk whereby we shall complete all necessary checks to ensure a full and thorough understanding of the development site and property layouts are understood.

The applicant will then be informed of the fee required. Once all is agreed by both parties, the council shall then submit an application to Royal Mail.

- 6.7. Upon Royal Mail's determination of the official address, the council will notify the applicant along with relevant internal and external bodies listed under Appendix C.

There are no statutory requirements for local authorities to provide details of changes of existing or new developments to any external organisations. However, it is recognised that the provision and sharing of this information facilitates a better service delivery to both residents and businesses.

7. Right of appeal and complaints

If any applicant or interested party wishes to complain about a decision of the council, they should first seek to do so through the council's official complaints procedure or other legal challenge remedies that might be available, such as judicial review by way of appeal to the Magistrates Court.

8. Summary

This policy sets out the operational framework for the delivery of the council's street naming and numbering process. It also confirms delegation of authority to the Assistant Director for Highways, Fleet and Logistics where required for the official determination of applications for street naming and numbering, and the allocation and amendment of official street names, premises names and numbering sequences.

Contact:

- post – Highways Information Team, Thurrock Council, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays. RM17 6SL
- email – prow@thurrock.gov.uk
- phone – 01375 366 100

Appendix A

A.1. Re-naming existing streets

On occasion the council may be requested to rename a street or for the sequence of postal numbering or property names to be changed. Generally, this will only be considered when it is in the public interest, or there is confusion over a street name, premises name or numbering system causing a significant issue for emergency services, deliveries and visitors or the residents are unhappy with their street name.

The renaming of a street is always a last resort.

For the consideration of a change to a street name the council requires 100% of premises owners to be in agreement.

It will initially be the responsibility of those requesting the change to canvass existing residents / premises owners of the street and consult with Royal Mail. This evidence should then be submitted to the council.

Thurrock Council will send notification letters to all occupiers and property owners clarifying the changes that have been requested. In making such changes the council is exercising its statutory powers and our decision will be final.

All costs, except in exceptional circumstances, associated with the above changes will be met by those requesting the change.

It will be permissible to rename an existing street to an Avenue of Remembrance or suchlike, but this would ordinarily only be considered when the road is without residential or commercial properties in it. Consideration should always be given to whether a road is befitting of such a name change. Part of the assessment will require the road to be assessed on safety grounds due to the risk imposed by members wishing to visit it.

A.2. Premises and street signage

The council will name or number premises in accordance with national guidelines and ensuring compliance with BS7666. On new developments it is a legal requirement under the Public Health Act 1925 that there is adequate signage erected in a clear, prominent position showing any street names and sub names (for terrace or block names). It is the developers' responsibility to erect the appropriate signage once the premises are ready for occupation.

Where a developer or occupier fails to display the appropriate signage within one week from receiving notice from the council, they may be liable to a penalty under Section 19 of the Public Health Act 1925. The council may also choose to sign / mark the properties with essential signage as per the official numbering scheme and reclaim the costs from either developer or occupier.

It is unlawful to erect a street nameplate until the street name has been confirmed in writing by the council. New street nameplates will be provided and paid for by the developer, the design of which must be approved by the council.

Future maintenance of street nameplates only becomes the responsibility of the council once a street has been officially adopted by council. The council's main responsibility is to

maintain nameplates at the junctions of a street and repeater signs where deemed necessary. The council is not responsible for individual property access signage or to blocks of flats.

A.3. Numbering premises on a new street

For all premises on new streets the council will apply a numbering process in accordance with national guidelines. Premises will be numbered from the street on which the premises' primary access and delivery points are located.

The following criteria must be met:

- A.3.1 All premises will be allocated a number – the council will not consider name-only premises on new streets.
- A.3.2 Proper numbering sequence shall be maintained and numbers with superstitious, religious, or cultural connotations will not be omitted.
- A.3.3 When an existing street is extended, where appropriate, the existing numbering sequence will continue.
- A.3.4 All flat / apartment accommodation must be given individual numbers. The sequence will depend on the front door locations of individual properties.
- A.3.5 If a multiple occupancy building has entrances in more than one street, then each entrance should be signed from the appropriate street detailing the property numbering.
- A.3.6 A business name shall not take the place of a property number or building name – for example, for a business called Meadow Builders Limited based at 98 Meadow House in the High Street, the address would have to be Meadow Builders Limited, 98 Meadow House, High Street.
- A.3.7 Numbering will be allocated with even numbers on one side of the road and odd numbers on the other. Traditionally, odd numbers are on the left side and even numbers on the right side commencing from a main road junction.
- A.3.8 Where a cul-de-sac is proposed, the numbering shall be consecutive and in a clockwise direction, if possible.
- A.3.9 All property numbers should be visible from the highway to aid easy identification of the property, particularly in the event of an emergency. This may mean numbers being displayed on posts, gates, or fences – not necessarily the door of the property.

A.4. Numbering or renumbering premises on an existing street

For all new development sites and for infill plots on existing numbered streets, the council will apply the following criteria.

- A.4.1 Premises will be numbered from the street on which the premises' primary access and delivery point are located.
- A.4.2 For new premises on streets with no existing numbering system, the council will allocate a property name in conjunction with the applicant

- A.4.3 When new premises are built on an existing numbered street and there are no available numbers a letter shall be used as a suffix – for example, 17A, 17B
- A.4.4 Proper sequence shall be maintained and numbers with superstitious, religious, or cultural connotations will not be omitted.
- A.4.5 The council will not remove numbers from existing premises unless it is necessary to resolve existing duplication / identification problems.
- A.4.6 When a property is converted into flats or subdivided, the new premises must be numbered as flats or apartments – for example, Flats 1 to 5, 98 High Street.

A.5. Naming or renaming premises on a new or existing street

If a property owner wishes to rename their property, they may suggest names for consideration in their street naming and numbering application submission. Once agreed upon, a consultation process will commence with Royal Mail.

Name changes will only be accepted by Royal Mail via Thurrock Council.

We will not formally change a property name where the premises is in the process of being purchased, that is, until exchange of contracts, although we can still give guidance on the acceptability of a chosen name.

If a property has a number, it is not possible to replace the number with a name. Names are held in addition to the property number within Royal Mail's database.

A.6. Naming a street or building after a living person

Naming a street or building after living people can generate controversy or have potential consequences at a later stage and therefore should not be sanctioned lightly.

The presumption will be therefore that a street or premises will not be named after a living person unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Generally, the individual must have been born or lived in the locality or must have made a demonstrable contribution to the local community; or they will be an individual of significant national importance.

A.7. Naming a street or building after a deceased person

Naming a street or building after deceased people can generate controversy or have potential consequences at a later stage and should not therefore be sanctioned lightly.

Any proposal to consider naming either a street or building after a deceased person should consider the following guidelines.

Generally, the individual must have been born or lived in the locality or must have made a demonstrable contribution to the local community; or they will be an individual of significant national importance.

Consent should also be sought from the deceased person's living direct relatives or descendants where possible. Any submission made will be considered on a case-by-case basis and approval obtained by the Cabinet following approval by the Cabinet Member.

Appendix B

B.1 The following suffixes should be used as indicated:

- Avenue – residential road
- Circus – large roundabout only
- Close – cul-de-sac only
- Court – residential blocks
- Crescent – crescent-shaped roads only
- Drive – residential road
- Gardens – subject to there being no confusion with any local open space
- Grove – residential road
- Hill – hillside only
- Lane – residential road
- Mews – officially a term for converted stables but may be considered for other small developments
- Parade – row of shops / businesses
- Rise – hillside only
- Road – any thoroughfare
- Row – a terrace of properties
- Square – square only
- Street – any thoroughfare
- Terrace – a terrace of houses
- Way – major road

Pedestrian only routes should be named as follows:

- Path
- Walk
- Way

B.2 Proposed street names should, where possible have some connection to the development site or in keeping with the area, whether historical or geographical. For example, if near to a wooded area where trees or plant names could be considered, or river frontage where foreshore plants or bird names may be suggested.

B.3 Do not duplicate an existing street or building name in the relevant postal sector.

B.4 Street names must not cause offence.

B.5 A street name is easy and straightforward to spell and pronounce, spell and not phonetically similar to an existing street within the postal sector.

B.6 Avoid street names that include numbers or punctuations, including apostrophes.

B.7 A street name must not promote a business, product, or service. An exemption may be considered if a company no longer exists and has historical context.

B.8 The use of North, West, and Upper, and so on, is only acceptable where the street is continuous, passes over a major junction and is an accurate description of the street's location.

B.9 Naming of structures and other highway assets.

In addition to the naming of roads this policy also allows for the consideration of the naming of new structures and other highway assets upon the strategic highway network, be they – for example – a bridge, roundabout, or park area. In considering names the geographical and historical features of the area should be taken into account. As an example, a new road bridge leading to an old historic farm or building could be named after the property.

Upon receipt of a request to name or rename a highway asset or street, consultation will be undertaken with the relevant community forum and other interested parties – for example, local ward members, cabinet member, community forum, and so on. Following this, a report will be presented to the council's Cabinet at the soonest possible meeting for a final decision.

In cases where time is of the essence and the presentation of a report would ensure adverse implications for any party, a decision may instead be taken by the relevant cabinet member or the Leader of the Council following receipt of a delegated decision report.

Appendix C

Consultees and notifications

Internal bodies to be informed of official SN&N notifications include:

- Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates
- Electoral Registration
- Land Charges
- Planning and Growth – Development Control
- Waste and Recycling
- Education Schools Admissions
- Transport Development
- Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) custodian
- Building Control

External bodies informed of official SN&N notifications include:

- BT Openreach
- Land Registry
- Anglian Water
- Royal Mail
- EDF Energy
- Essex and Suffolk Water
- Gas – Centrica and Cadent
- Essex Ambulance Service
- Essex Fire and Rescue
- Essex Police
- Valuation Office

Appendix D

1. Guidelines for naming council assets

The council shall in determining an application to name a facility, park, building street or highway infrastructure, give due consideration to any submission received.

The council will consider requests for both local geographic names and in some instances national names – for example, our Royalty.

2. Criteria for assigning names to a council asset

Criteria are:

- the council will consider proposals to name a council asset or facility, be it a building, street or highway structure on a case-by-case basis, and each proposal will be assessed and determined on its merit
- all proposals to name a council highway asset or facility, street, park, or building must be based on strong community recognition and support of the proposed name
- all naming recommendations must be consistent with the council's street naming and numbering policy for final approval, where applicable
- where an applicant wishes to name a council facility, street, park, building, or highway asset using a personal name, it should be applied posthumously or to a living person, unless the council deems there are special or other exceptional circumstances as to why not – it must be demonstrated that the person has made a significant contribution to the local community

3. Applications from the community

Any application from the community for the naming of a council facility, street, highway asset, park, building or significant infrastructure shall be submitted in writing to the council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer via prow@thurrock.gov.uk. It shall include a brief history or submission in support of the naming application, which must either:

- demonstrate a strong relevance and / or connection to the area or long-standing links within Thurrock's local community
- in the case of a person, include detailed information and supporting documentation – for example, letters, newspaper articles, oral histories, photographs, and so on – to demonstrate their contribution and relevance to the local community
- in the case of a place or historical name proposal, include detailed information and supporting documentation – for example, letters, newspaper articles, photographs, and so on – to demonstrate the relevance, connection or link of the name proposed

In certain circumstances Thurrock Council's Local History Librarian may be asked to conduct further research of the submitted information. Once a name has been deemed suitable a report will be submitted to relevant council members detailing the submission asking for their consideration decision. Should the naming application be approved by the council, the applicant will subsequently be advised of the outcome.

Appendix E

Process for naming a structure

Application email received in pro@thurrock.gov.uk inbox	
Acknowledge email – send response to applicant	
Review against Highway Adoption Plan	
Review against policy	
Review by strategic lead or assistant director	
Cabinet member and relevant ward members invited to comment	
Submission to Cabinet	
Check application fee has been paid	
Approve or refuse	