

Street Naming and Numbering Policy

Policy summary

Purpose	<p><i>The purpose of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy is to process all requests to name streets and to ensure that all properties in the Dorset Council area are assigned an official address that is clear and unambiguous. In turn, this will ensure that Council services, emergency services and other services are able to locate any property address.</i></p> <p><i>This policy will replace the current documents in place at East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council and Purbeck District Council. West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council did not have an adopted policy.</i></p>
Scope	<p><i>Dorset Council, its customers and external organisations are all affected by the content of this policy; this includes all addresses, domestic and non-domestic.</i></p>

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1. Introduction

Dorset Council is responsible for the naming of streets and numbering of properties within its area. The aim of this policy is to ensure that any new street names, building names and numbers are allocated logically and consistently as this enables:

- emergency services to find a property quickly and effectively
- post to be delivered efficiently
- visitors to locate their destination
- statutory undertakers to connect their services to premises and link them to a postal address for billing
- reliable delivery of services and goods by courier companies
- records of service providers to be kept in an efficient manner
- Companies to accept an address for official purposes. For example, insurance, credit rating and contract acceptance.

Many legal transactions associated with properties can be withheld until they are identified by a street name and number.

This applies to all residential, commercial and industrial properties.

Street Naming and Numbering is an important function of Dorset Council as it allows Dorset Council to maintain a comprehensive, unambiguous and accurate list of addresses covering all properties in the Dorset Council area.

The policy provides a framework for Dorset Council to operate its street naming and numbering function effectively and efficiently for the benefit of Dorset Council residents, businesses and visitors. It will also act as a guide to developers when considering new names for streets and give assistance to parish and town councils when carrying out the engagement process with regard to street names.

Royal Mail does not have any authority to issue or confirm official addresses but it is responsible for setting the post town and postcode for a property. An official address will be based on the geographical position of the property.

Policy details:

2. Background

- 2.1 Dorset Council is a signatory to the Public Sector Geospatial Agreement (PSGA) which is a contractual framework that regulates the use of mapping and address data in local authorities. Through the PSGA authorities are contracted to maintain a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and to ensure the quality of the address information it contains. The authority is contracted under a data licence contained within the Data Co-operation Agreement (DCA) to create, maintain and deliver Authority Address Updates to the National Address Gazetteer (NAG) through the LLPG. This address information is electronically transferred to the NAG in an agreed format for use by Government, the emergency services and Ordnance Survey AddressBase Products. Address information that does not conform to the



agreed format will be rejected by the NAG and will not be eligible for post-coding.

- 2.2 The structure of the address data to form a compliant address is set out in British Standard BS7666.
- 2.3 Dorset Council's LLPG is the single master source of correct address data for the Dorset Council area.
- 2.4 The purpose of the LLPG and NAG is to ensure that all properties can be identified by one correct address and not by multiple addresses which can occur when there are multiple data sources.
- 2.5 This ensures that accurate and consistent geospatial based information is used and shared within and between public bodies throughout England and Wales. Dorset Council's LLPG is the definitive addressing resource for use through all services and for the key revenue raising activities associated with Council Tax and Business Rates (NNDR) income.

3. Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN)

- 3.1 In addition to the traditional method of addressing a property the Government has introduced a British Standard (BS7666) for the precise identification of a property or plot of land. This is a standard format for the structure of an address. Each address has a 12-digit unique property reference number (UPRN). This UPRN permits additional information such as geographical coordinates to be accessed, allowing the property to be precisely located on a map and contains information relating to the full life cycle of a property including its provisional, historic and alternate addresses and whether it is residential or commercial.
- 3.2 Every address contains a twelve-figure grid reference which makes it possible to locate it quickly on the computerised Ordnance Survey maps. This information supports the emergency services and service providers. It is also making possible a whole range of locational services available through emerging technology.

4. Legal Framework

- 4.1 Dorset Council has a variety of powers that it can use for the purposes of delivering the functions and performing the services to which this policy relates.
- 4.2 Dorset Council has adopted:
 - Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 together with the Public Health Act 1875 (together referred to as the 'the First Scheme')
 - s21 Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907
 - s17 and s19 Public Health Act 1925

- 4.3 Please note that if an application for an address is not received the property will not be exempt from paying Council Tax or Business Rates. Conversely, the payment of Council Tax or Business Rates does not make an address official.
 - 4.4 Other forms of an address may exist (such as those on title deeds or held by third party databases) but have no legal standing.
 - 4.5 Permissions required under the Planning Acts and Building Regulations approval, or other statutory permissions may be required, and you are advised to check the position with the appropriate officers before works commence. The official addressing of the property does not mean that these permissions or approvals have been given.
- 5. Street Naming**
- 5.1 If a new street name is required, before applying to Dorset Council, an applicant should seek to engage with the Town or Parish Council in which the street is located to agree street names that are considered appropriate. If no agreement can be reached, Dorset Council will make the final decision.
 - 5.2 Dorset Council will not support or approve any street name that:
 - is the same or similar to one already in use in the same locality/town or is in close proximity to one with the same name but different suffix e.g. Birch Road and Birch Avenue
 - include a number that could cause confusion e.g., 30 Two Foot Lane sounds like 32 Foot Lane
 - could cause offence or be considered discriminatory particularly in regard to age, disability, race and ethnicity, faith and belief, sexual orientation, gender and sex
 - would undermine the cohesiveness of local communities
 - could cause spelling or pronunciation problems
 - contains apostrophes or other punctuation
 - uses a name with Royal connotations without consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office.
 - advertise a product or business.
 - 5.3 Living people will not have streets named after them to avoid causing offence either by inclusion or exclusion.
 - 5.4 Street names referring to deceased people will be acceptable in some circumstances. Consideration would be given to the likelihood that the public perception of a deceased person may change considerably – for better or worse – in the future. Only surnames will be used (not forename and surname combined). Where the name proposed commemorates a person who has direct living descendants, permission must be sought, and evidence must be provided with the application.
 - 5.5 Unofficial marketing titles used by developers will not be acceptable.



- 5.6 Where a street name ends with a suffix the following should be used:
 - Street (for any thoroughfare)
 - Road (for any thoroughfare)
 - Way (for major road or thoroughfare)
 - Avenue (for residential roads)
 - Drive (for residential roads)
 - Grove (for residential roads)
 - Lane (for residential roads)
 - Gardens (for residential roads) subject to there being no confusion with any local open space
 - Place (for a square or an area surrounded by buildings)
 - Crescent (for a crescent shaped road)
 - Court/Close (for a cul-de-sac only)
 - Square (for a square only)
 - Hill (for a hillside road only)
 - Vale (for residential roads)
 - Rise (for residential roads)
 - Row (for residential roads)
 - Mews (for residential roads)
 - Terrace (row of properties)
 - 5.7 Dorset Council is likely to oppose or is unlikely to approve any pedestrian route not named:
 - Walk
 - Alley
 - Path
 - Way
 - 5.8 The street naming and numbering process will not be started until full planning consent, as appropriate, has been obtained - in any event a Street Naming and Numbering application should be made at least 3 months prior to the estimated completion date.
 - 5.9 After approval of an application, Dorset Council will look to confirm details with the applicant. Upon receipt of such confirmation, arrangements should be put in place to ensure that the name of an approved street is clearly displayed in a conspicuous location at or near each end, corner or entrance to a street.
- ## 6. Numbering
- 6.1 All new properties will be given a number unless they are on a street without a numbering scheme, in which case a name will be agreed with the owner. Once a property has been allocated a number, a name cannot be used instead of that number. However, it is permissible to use a name in addition to a number.
 - 6.2 A proper sequence of numbers will be maintained. Once a property has been



numbered Dorset Council will not normally renumber it unless it is shown to cause consistent delivery problems and the renumbering will be in accordance with these criteria.

- 6.3 No numbers will be omitted from a numbering sequence, for example the number 13 will be included.
- 6.4 Convention requires number 1 always to be on the left-hand side of a road. Through roads are numbered odds and evens in the direction they would be accessed from the principal road. Convention is to number odds on the left and evens on the right when entering from the principal road; however, numbering also depends on the layout of the development and roads.
- 6.5 Additional properties in streets that are currently numbered will always be allocated a property number possibly with a suffix.
- 6.6 Private garages and similar buildings will not be numbered.
- 6.7 Buildings will be 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 will not be permitted.
- 6.8 Individual properties in existing unnumbered roads will normally require property names.
- 6.9 If a building is demolished, then the existing numbering sequence is retained and reused in any new development as far as possible. Where this is not the case, for instance, if a new street is created on the site, then new addresses will be created.
- 6.10 Depending on the size of the development, access, and other factors it may be appropriate to assign a new road name to a small development. However, this is at the discretion of the Street Naming and Numbering section.
- 6.11 The Royal Mail has advised that agricultural buildings which are not used for the receiving of postal deliveries will not be allocated a postal address. Dorset Council will only request an official address from Royal Mail where Dorset Council believes the property is being used for permanent residency or business. If the field or barn is not part of a larger site, that is a postal address, then it is not an address and does not qualify for any form of mail delivery. Royal Mail would not allocate a postal address to a piece of land, allotment or uninhabited barn or agricultural premises simply for the delivery of feed, satellite navigation purposes, utilities etc.
- 6.12 In the case of multiple accesses, a building can only have one name and one number. This is to avoid confusion and prevent the address becoming unwieldy.



- 6.13 After approval of an application, Dorset Council will look to confirm details with the applicant. Upon receipt of such confirmation, arrangements should be put in place to ensure the property number and/or name is clearly displayed in a prominent position, visible from the street.

7. **Flats and multi-occupancy buildings**

- 7.1 If a multi-occupancy building has entrances in more than one street, then each entrance may be numbered in the appropriate road.
- 7.2 Numbering sequences for flats are also dependent on whether the property has one shared communal delivery point (letterbox) or if there are individual delivery points for each flat.
- 7.3 A building which consists of flats, but which has only one shared communal delivery point (letterbox) is known by Royal Mail as a 'Multi Occupancy' building and the Royal Mail would not show the individual flats at that property on their Postcode Address File (PAF). The property address details would be held on PAF using the main postal address and all the flats will be listed on the Royal Mail Multi Occupancy database, which is available for purchase by external companies.
- 7.4 When flats are numbered internally or an existing property is converted into flats, the flats will be numbered not lettered e.g. Flat 1, 24 High Street, not Flat A, 24 High Street.
- 7.5 When flats are numbered, numbering will be sequential in a clockwise direction on each floor. In multi storey buildings numbering will start from the ground floor ascending consecutively.
- 7.6 Existing or new buildings that have separate flats or business premises will be allocated a separate street number for each flat or unit. Where this is not possible because of the existing numbering, all flats or units will be given one street number and number suffixes of "1", "2" etc. e.g. Flat 1, 24 High Street, Flat 2, 24 High Street, etc. Commercial premises will be allocated numbers and/or A, B, C etc.
- 7.7 Dorset Council reserves the right to impose its own numbering scheme where proposals are not considered adequate.
- 7.8 Where a flat numbering scheme is implemented and not approved by the Council, enforcement action may be taken.

8. **Allocation of property name/number or change of property name**

- 8.1 This is relevant to a person seeking to:
- add a property name or number for the first time; or
 - add a property name for the first time to an existing numbered property
 - change a property name on an existing numbered/named property.
- 8.2 The naming of a numbered property is something that is additional to, and not a substitution for the property number. Any activity undertaken by Dorset



Council in relation to the naming or renaming of a property is therefore performed on the strict understanding and on the condition that any such name is in addition to an existing property number and not a replacement or substitute.

- 8.3 An application that seeks the services of Dorset Council in relation to the naming and renaming of properties should normally be accompanied by at least three alternative property names, listed in order of preference.
 - 8.4 An application should only be made by the owner of the property, or if more than one, then with the consent of all the owners of the property. Securing such consent is the responsibility of the applicant and should be obtained in advance of submitting an application. Dorset Council reserves the right to proceed on the assumption that the submission of an application is good evidence that all necessary consent has been obtained.
 - 8.5 It is understood that Royal Mail will only hold a name for a property where there is no numbering scheme in place. If a property is named and numbered, the name of the property will only be held as an "alias". Therefore, even if Dorset Council incorporates the name of a property into its records, Royal Mail may not pass this name on to other organisations when they make their address database available to those other organisations.
 - 8.6 Where there is a proposal to name a new property Dorset Council will allocate a property number unless it forms part of an existing street where no numbering exists.
 - 8.7 Proposals to name a block of flats or other properties will be treated in the same way as any other property naming proposal.
- 9. Altering an existing street name or renumbering properties**
- 9.1 From time to time a request may be made to rename or renumber an existing street. Any such request would need to show that the owners of all affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement with the proposal.
 - 9.2 The applicant should engage with the Town or Parish Council in which the street is located to agree any alterations to existing street names that it considers appropriate. If no agreement can be reached, Dorset Council will make the final decision.
 - 9.3 All costs associated with providing and erecting street nameplates, will be met by the applicants. Once sited, Dorset Council will be responsible for maintaining any nameplates.
 - 9.4 Dorset Council may decide that to improve the delivery of mail and the routing of emergency services a street should be re-named or properties in the street re-numbered. Any such request would need to show that the owners or



residents of all affected properties have been consulted and at least two thirds are in agreement with the proposal.

- 9.5 If development takes place, existing properties may find that their primary access has changed onto a new street. Dorset Council will number existing properties onto the new street. Dorset Council will notify the owners/residents of the affected properties and give 30 days' notice in writing.

10. Costs

- 10.1 The full payment of charges is to be completed prior to any address changes or additions being made. Address changes made without contacting Dorset Council will not be officially recognised.
- 10.2 Dorset Council will endeavour to notify developers of new properties for the need of an official address and the process to follow. If an application is not received within 3 months before a completion date, Dorset Council may allocate official addresses for emergency services purposes with no further consultation. In this case internal notifications will be made for Council business purposes only (emergency services will be notified) but no external notifications will be made, and no postcodes will be allocated to the properties. When the developer or owner applies for official addresses later, the standard street naming and numbering processes and the current fees and charges will apply.
- 10.3 Dorset Council can charge for:
- Alterations in either name or numbers to new developments after an initial naming and numbering scheme has been approved
 - Adding a name to or renaming an existing numbered property
 - Naming a new street
 - A request for the renaming of a street
- 10.4 Dorset Council's charges will be set out on its website and reviewed annually.

11. Unauthorised street names and numbers

- 11.1 Where street names and/or numbers are created without reference to Dorset Council, Dorset Council may take enforcement action.

12. Use and Retention of Data

- 12.1 We may share your information with other services of Dorset Council in the interests of transparency or if required by law and/or for fraud prevention and to pursue debtors. We will not share your personal data with any organisations or bodies outside of Dorset Council.
- 12.3 We will only ever retain your personal information for as long as is necessary in accordance with our Records Retention Policy. Any personal data you provide to us will be held securely. In this instance we need to keep the information provided to help us properly manage the function, including to resolve disputes. After this time the information will be deleted from our systems and any hard copies securely shredded.

13. Limit of Responsibility/Compensation

- 13.1 Dorset Council accepts no responsibility or liability in relation to:
- any action or omission of any third party referred to or communicated with as part of the performance of any service identified in this policy;
 - ensuring that Royal Mail allocates a postcode to a street name,
 - the updating of Royal Mail records with any information provided to it by Dorset Council and the future maintenance and the making of any changes to the address records of Royal Mail including the postcode;
 - the updating by any other third party of information provided to it by Dorset Council and the future maintenance and the making of any changes to the address records held by those third parties;
 - correspondence and deliveries not being delivered to a correct address;
 - an address being unavailable or incorrectly recorded on any database maintained other than by Dorset Council;
 - Ordnance Survey maps or plans not featuring any property or street;
 - the use or misuse of any street name, house name or property address by any third party.
 - Please note that it may take at least six months and can be as long as twelve months for name changes or indeed new or amended addresses to appear in the systems of other companies and organisations, over which Dorset Council has no control.
 - Non-delivery and mis-delivery of items and correspondence and the issue of complaints should be directed to the customer services department of the relevant delivery company.
 - Third party maps may not show new properties or roads: again, changes to information can take some time to appear in third party products.

14. Street Nameplates

- 14.1 The developer shall be responsible for providing the nameplates for a new street once the name has been agreed with Dorset Council. New street nameplates must adhere to a specification provided by Dorset Council.
- 14.2 Following installation, Dorset Council will take over responsibility for the future maintenance and replacement of all street nameplates, provided they have been installed to Dorset Council's specification.

15. Royal Mail

- 15.1 When an official address is agreed and issued by Dorset Council, Dorset Council will send it to Royal Mail for them to allocate a postcode.
- 15.2 The maintenance and any future changes to the postcode are the responsibility of Royal Mail.
- 15.3 The application of a postcode is entirely the responsibility of Royal Mail. If a property requiring a postcode does not meet Royal Mail's criteria for a postal address and a postcode is refused, Dorset Council do not have any power to change this decision.



- 15.4 Royal Mail will not allocate postcodes to addresses that will not be receiving mail. This is because a postal address (postcode) is purely a routing instruction for the efficient delivery of mail.
- 15.5 Royal Mail does not publish on its website addresses that are not completed and/or occupied. This means that in certain cases addresses that have been officially allocated and issued by the Local Authority may not be visible to anyone using the Royal Mail website to validate an address. This may also mean that other organisations using the Royal Mail Postcode Address File will also not be able to validate addresses. Enquiries or complaints are to be directed to Royal Mail.