

Street Naming and Numbering Applications – Guidance Notes

Please read these notes carefully before making an application to name and number an existing or new building. The Council reserves the right to vary the specific rules depending on circumstances of individual applications.

1. General Information about Street Naming and Numbering

Tower Hamlets Council has responsibility for assigning names to streets and buildings and numbers to buildings in the Borough, under powers granted by the following Acts of Parliament:

- London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 – Part II
- Local Government Act 1985 Schedule 8 Section 14 (1) (a)

These powers give the Council the sole right to:

- Name new streets and footpaths (names for parks can be chosen by the applicant but must be notified to the Council for an official Order to be issued)
- Name new buildings (names for licenced premises and theatres can be chosen by the applicant but must be notified to the Council for an official Order to be issued)
- Rename existing streets and buildings
- Decide on numbering and renumbering of buildings (licenced premises and theatres are included).

The name or number will be officially assigned when the Council issues an Order. The document becomes part of the legal description of the property. A copy of the Order will be sent to the owners of the properties concerned and this document should be attached to the Title Deeds of the property.

In addition, the Council sends regular updates to various organisations (including the Royal Mail and the Emergency Services, National Address and Street Gazetteers) to keep them informed of any new or amended addresses in Tower Hamlets. This informs these organisations to update their records to include new addresses. It is important to follow this process to ensure that the Royal Mail database includes the new addresses before the new properties are occupied by informing the Street Naming and Numbering Officer of the date when occupation

will begin. The Street Naming and Numbering Officer will then instruct the Royal Mail to activate your new postcode. This will minimize the risk of problems that can occur if the address is not recognized by organisations such as credit rating agencies, utility companies, couriers and others.

Please note that the Council has the responsibility for addressing all addressable units contained within a property. An addressable unit is any unit in a property that will become an official or a postal address. An official address is required by a public or concessionary service to enable them to carry out their transactions or operations or functions without delays. For example, **Flat 1, 88 America Way, London, E1 1xx**. Since **Flat 1** will form part of the official and postal address the Council is responsible for addressing it. Another example is a Hotel, where the record of an individual hotel rooms/entity is needed for local and national statistics. The room number for example, **Room 101, Washington Hotel, 88 America Way, London, E1 1xx** is addressable.

- You must complete an application form every time you need to apply for a new name or number for buildings or streets within Tower Hamlets. Please submit an application form as soon as construction works starts on the new street or building. If you have any questions about the application form or would like additional copies, please contact, **Street Naming and Numbering Officer on 020 7364 5009**.
- You must include a site plan and internal layout plans showing the plot numbers with each application indicating the location of the streets or buildings affected by the naming or numbering application. The plan should show the main external entrance to each property, clearly marked in a different colour to the rest of the plan.
- You must also complete the Developer Information Spreadsheet indicating which flats or addressable units are on what level as well as their plot numbers, tenure, number of bedrooms and if the unit is wheelchair accessible.
- Please note that no application will be considered without the written consent of the freeholders affected by the change of address.
- If all necessary information is provided with the application, an Order for numbering applications will usually be issued within twelve weeks of receipt of the application by the Naming and Numbering Officer. Please note that larger scale developments may take longer to process.

2. The following types of naming can be initiated by the Applicant but must be notified to the Council for official recognition

- Naming for licensed premises, theatres and parks (names for licenced premises, theatres and parks can be chosen by the applicant but must be notified to the Council for an official Order to be issued)

3. Numbering of Buildings

The Council's responsibility extends to all numbering or renumbering cases where external entrances are involved and where additional internal addressable units have been added to a property. For example, when a house is converted into flats with separate external and internal entrance doors, the owner must apply to the Council to have external street numbers and internal door numbers officially assigned.

The Naming and Numbering Officer will consider the location and means of access to each external entrance, using the information on the application form and the plan provided by the applicant. Any numbering scheme suggested by the applicant will be considered, however the principles developed by the Council with the Royal Mail and the Fire Brigade and the National Address and Street Gazetteers will always take preference. In particular, please note the following points:

- Each self-contained property with a separate external door (flats, offices, shops or any other) will be allocated its own distinguishing number.
- The property number may include a letter suffix where properties have been subdivided (e.g. if number 3 is divided into two flats with separate external doors, the new flats would usually be numbered 3 and 3A).
- If several properties share an external door, the Council will assign an official number to this door as well as the internal properties as well.
- New residential buildings will be allocated one sequential number within the road. Flats should be numbered internally from number 1 upwards using all numbers. (e.g., Flat 2, 13 Smith Street, not Flat A, 13 Smith Street and not 13A Smith Street which might already be used by an adjoining infill building.).
- Internal numbering begins with the first property to the left of the main entrance and continues in a clockwise direction. This process continues on subsequent levels from the first property to the left of the main access point for that level.
- There will be no sanction given to the avoidance of any numbers e.g. 13, and a proper sequence shall be maintained.
- In buildings of a sufficient size (three floors or more), a floor series internal numbering system will be used. The ground floor level will start from G01, G02, G03 etc...or 001, 002, 003 etc...numbers will be incremented by 100 per level.
- Floor numbers must follow the European Floor Numbering Convention. The Ground level will be named Ground Floor or Level Zero. Each Floor Level will be incremented by one e.g. First Floor or Level One, Second Floor or Level Two etc. until the highest floor level is reached. Mezzanine Floors must be linked to their parent floor level for proper identification. For example, if the Mezzanine Floor is a sub object of the First Floor or Level One it should

- The use of numbers followed by letters is permitted. These are needed, for instance, when one large old house in a road is demolished and replaced by (say) four smaller houses. To include the new houses in the numbering sequence would involve renumbering all the higher numbering houses on that road. If a considerable number of other houses would be affected, then to avoid this, each new house should be given the number of the old house with either A, B, C or D added.
- No numbers are to be used within the name of a building or street (**for e.g. Number Ten Street or Club 77 House**).
- A named building may not have more than one number in one street.
- The address of a property depends on the location of the external entrance door. This means that some properties in the same building are sometimes addressed into different streets. If, for example, as a result of development work, one or more entrance doors to new sections of an existing building are on a different street, the new entrance will be assigned an address on the street where its entrance is located, regardless of any address used by the existing building.

While we realise that the above conditions can be restrictive, our Policy is intended to create logical addressing that provides clear and swift identification without ambiguity or confusion especially in the event of an emergency situation.

4. Naming of Streets and buildings

Tower Hamlets Council has the sole right to decide on names for new streets and buildings in the Borough provided that all interested parties are given 28 days in which to register an objection (this consultation period is described below) and that any objections are fairly considered. Although it happens rarely, you should be aware that the Council may assign by Order, any name that it thinks fit, to any street or building, whether or not a name already exists for the street or building concerned.

An Order for naming applications will usually be issued around twelve weeks after names that meet the Council guidelines, are submitted to the Naming and Numbering Officer. This timescale assumes that no objections are received during the consultation period. Larger scale developments may take longer to process.

5. Rules for Naming Streets or Buildings in Tower Hamlets

5.1 Avoidance of Duplicate Names

This is one of the most important rules that apply to new street and building names. New street names must not duplicate any similar name already in use in the borough or neighbouring boroughs. A variation in the suffix, e.g., 'street', 'road', 'avenue', etc., should not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name. New building names must not duplicate any similar name already in use in the same postal district or in close proximity in a neighbouring postal district. The main reason

for the rule on duplication is to help prevent confusion for emergency services when responding to 999 calls. The London Fire Brigade will object to any names that breach this rule and Tower Hamlets is unlikely to assign a name if an objection has been received from the Emergency Services.

To avoid delay, you should ask the Naming and Numbering Officer to check whether a name is duplicated **before** submitting your full application.

5.2 Subsidiary Names

Subsidiary names, such as a row of buildings within an already named road being called '.....Terrace/Parade', should only be used in roads of short length.

5.3 Acceptable Second Words ('suffixes')

The London Fire Brigade's policy guidelines set out a number of rules that apply for the second word that can usually be used after the name of a new street or building.

Streets

Suffix:	Reason for use:
Road	for any thoroughfare
Street	for any thoroughfare
Way	for major roads
Avenue	for residential roads
Drive	for residential roads
Grove	for residential roads
Lane	for residential roads
Gardens	subject to there being no confusion with any local open space
Place	subject to there being no confusion with any local open space
Crescent	for a crescent shaped road
Close	for a cul de sac only
Square	for a square only
Hill	for a hillside road only
Circus	for a large roundabout
Mews	provided it does not repeat the name of the road from which access is gained
Vale	for residential roads. Only for exceptional circumstances
Rise/Row	for residential roads. Only for exceptional circumstances
Mead/Wharf	for residential roads. Only for exceptional circumstances

Non acceptable suffixes for Streets:

End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Walk, Park, Meadow, Gate or Common. All of these words can be incorporated in a Street Name provided it is terminated with an appropriate suffix (e.g. Mile End Road).

Pedestrian Ways

All new pedestrian ways to end in the following suffixes: Walk, Path or Way.

Buildings

- All new building names should end in one of the following suffixes: House, Court, Lodge, Apartments, Mansions (residential only), Point (high block residential), Tower/Heights (high blocks offices or residential).

The list above is not exhaustive, so please contact the Naming and Numbering Officer if you would like to use a different word in your street or building name.

5.4 Other Street Naming and Numbering rules

- Names should be kept reasonably short, easy to spell and easy to remember
- Names should not be facetious or derogatory
- No street or building name should start with 'The'
- For private houses, the building name cannot repeat the name of the road or any house or building in the area.
- The full names of living persons shall not be used without that person's written consent. Names of persons recently deceased shall only be considered if accompanied by the written permission of a close relative.
- The use of North, East, South or West (as in Alfred Road South) is only acceptable where the road is continuous and passes over a major junction. It is not acceptable when the road is two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two. In such a case, one half should be completely renamed.
- A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other, except for a Cul-de-sac where consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- 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 re-numbering of properties.
- The property developer should not give any postal addresses, including the postcode, to potential occupiers, either directly or indirectly (for example via solicitors or estate agents) before formal approval has been issued by the

Council. The Council will not be liable for any costs or damages caused by failure to comply with this.

5.5 Historical Connections

If you are experiencing difficulty in deciding upon suitable names, you may wish to consider any historical connections with the area in which the new street or building is located. The connection could be the name of a notable person who was born or lived in the area or could include words connected with how the land was used in the past. The connection should be with Tower Hamlets itself, rather than with neighbouring boroughs, although exceptions may be made near to the Borough boundary.

You may wish to use the Tower Hamlets Local History Library to research potential names. The resources available at the library cover all aspects of history of the Borough.

Tower Hamlets Local History Library
277 Bancroft Road
London
E1 4DQ
Phone: 020 7364 1290
Fax: 020 7364 1292
Email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk

5.6 Consultation Period

The Council has the sole right to decide on a name provided that we give interested parties one calendar month in which to register an objection and that any objections received are fairly considered. We start the consultation process when we have received one, or preferably several proposed street or building names that fit the criteria set out in the guidelines above.

To minimize the risk that names are rejected at this stage, we advise you to contact the Street Naming and Numbering Officer before submitting the application form to check for any obvious reasons why the name might be rejected.

To ensure that local residents and other interested parties have an opportunity to raise objections to any suggested name, at least one calendar month before the order is issued we consult with the emergency services, the Royal Mail and the applicant and where warranted post notices on the street or streets near the site.

6. Signage and Nameplates for Streets and Buildings,

If no objections are upheld within the prescribed period (for naming applications) and the final name and/or numbering has been agreed with the applicant, the Council will then issue an Order officially assigning the names to streets and buildings and the numbers to buildings. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that buildings and streets have appropriate signage describing the new name and/or number.

The Council has a specific standard for street nameplates (see attached Standard Street Name Plates document). In order to make sure your street sign or name plate conforms to this standard, you must contact the Councils **Highways Asset Management** team to get approval for your street nameplate even if the street is not an adopted public highway or footway. **Please note that you are not allowed to put up street signs or nameplates on publicly adopted highway or footway under any circumstance.** If your development has led to the naming or renaming of a publicly adopted highway or footway, you must contact the Councils **Highway Asset Manager** about any street signs or street nameplate changes.

Highways Asset Management
John Onslow House
PO Box 55739
London, E14 1BY
Tel: 020 7364 6652
Email: jeff.aghoghobe@towerhamlets.gov.uk

7. Postcodes

Prior to the formal Order being issued, the Council forwards a copy of the draft Order to the Royal Mail for them to assign postcodes to any new addresses. Once returned the Council includes the postcodes in the formal order which is sent to the applicant and kept as records.

As a matter of policy, the 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 agreed with the Council may not, for a while, be visible to anyone using the website to validate an address for purposes such as providing goods or services related to that address or its owner. You should inform the Street Naming and Numbering Officer of the date when occupation will begin. The Street Naming and Numbering Officer will then instruct the Royal Mail to activate your new postcode. This will minimize the risk of problems that can occur if the address is not recognized by organizations such as credit rating agencies, utility companies, couriers and others.

As stated in the introduction, Royal Mail will not accept a new address or change of address intelligence from anybody other than the Council's Street Naming and Numbering department. **Please do not assume a development will have the same Post Code as the surrounding or existing properties.**

8. Land and Property and Street Gazetteers

All Local Authorities (which have the responsibility of Street Naming and Numbering) maintain a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). Under legislation, each local highway authority in England and Wales is required to create and maintain its own Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) and Associated Street Data (ASD). Thus only Unitary Councils such as all London Boroughs maintain both a LLPG and a LSG. All Councils send regular updates to the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG),

and National Street Gazetteer (NSG). These systems contain address records for all properties irrespective of whether they are postal or not and streets within an Authority. They are maintained locally to ensure all information is up-to-date. All information we ask you to provide will be related to properties and streets, and is to ensure the accuracy of our LLPG and LSG and consequentially the NLPG and NSG. For further information about these initiatives please visit the NLPG and NSG websites at <http://www.nlpg.org.uk> and <http://www.thensg.org.uk>

9. Contact Details

If you have any questions about any of the information in this document or on the application form, please contact:

Street Naming and Numbering
Place Directorate
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG
Tel: 020 7364 5009
Fax: 020 7364 5265
Email: streetnamingandnumbering@towerhamlets.gov.uk