

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Street naming and numbering policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.01 This Policy outlines how the Council delivers the statutory Street Naming and numbering function for Tunbridge Wells Borough. Anyone seeking to create new addresses or amend existing addresses should apply in writing to the Council.
- 1.02 The Council under the Public Health Act 1925 (sections 17, 18 and 19) has the statutory power to control the naming of streets, and naming and numbering of properties in Tunbridge Wells Borough. The purpose of this control is to make sure that any new street names and property names and numbers are allocated logically with a view to ensuring, amongst other things, that emergency service vehicles can speedily locate any address to which they may be summoned; and, the effective delivery of services and products.
- 1.03 If the Council deems that an application is invalid, the applicant will receive a dated objection notice in writing covering the grounds for objection.
- 1.04 The applicant must be the legal owner of the site or a legal representative acting on the owner's behalf.
- 1.05 Applications must be made to the Council in writing as soon as possible after the necessary planning and building regulation approvals are obtained, as stated in the relevant informative. Applications for new property can only be accepted which have valid planning approval from the Council or Planning Inspectorate. The planning application number must be provided as part of the street naming and numbering application.
- 1.06 Applications are subject to consultation with Royal Mail. The duty lies with Royal Mail to assign postcodes and post towns to addresses. The Council does not assign postcodes but may use more detailed geographic identifiers than Royal Mail's postal identifiers in assigning addresses.
- 1.07 All officially registered addresses will be BS7666:2006 compliant and will be stored in the Council's Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) with a Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN). The Council is not responsible for how other organisations store and publish addresses.
- 1.08 This Policy will be utilised alongside the national Data Entry Conventions (DEC) created by GeoPlace LLP to conduct.

2.0 Procedure for naming streets

- 2.0.1 The procedure for naming streets is conducted under Section 17 of the Public Health Act 1925. The procedure is detailed below and is shown in diagrammatic form in Appendix A of this Policy.
- 2.0.2 Before any street is given a name, notice of the proposed name shall be sent to the Council by the applicant proposing to name the street. The Council, within one month of receiving a request to name a street, may, by notice in writing served on the applicant by whom notice of the proposed street name was sent, object to the proposed name. This objection renders the application invalid.
- 2.0.3 It shall not be lawful to setup in any street an inscription of the name:
- a) until the expiration of one month after notice of the proposed name has been sent to the Council and,
 - b) where the Council has objected to the proposed name, unless and until such objection has been withdrawn by the Council or if the applicant who proposed the new name has appealed to the Magistrates Court against the Council's objection and the Magistrates has overruled the Council's objection.
- Any person acting in contravention of this provision shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding level 1 on the standard scale (£200) and to a daily penalty not exceeding £1.
- 2.0.4 The applicant will be requested to supply up to three preferred street name suggestions for each new street being proposed. The suggested street name should be accompanied by reasons why the name has been proposed. These suggestions must conform to Section 2.1 of this Policy. If the suggestions do not conform, the Council will serve an objection via a written notice, which will render the application invalid. The Council will request new suggestions from the applicant.
- 2.0.5 The applicant can waive their right to propose new street names or ask for suggestions from the Council. The applicant's choice must be indicated on the application form. The Council will then request that the appropriate Parish/Town Councils and Ward Councillors submit street name proposals and keep the applicant informed.

2.0.6 The applicant must supply the following:

- a) current site plans showing the location of each new street in relation to existing streets
- b) plans showing the extent of each proposed street.
- c) plans showing where each new property will be accessed from so that the property can be addressed to the correct street.
- d) plans to include up-to-date plot numbers.
- e) plans to show the floor levels for any plots for blocks of flats or internal units.

If the applicant does not provide plans covering points a) to e) within the given timescale, the Council will serve an objection via a written notice, which will render the application invalid. If plans are amended during the application process, the Council must be informed immediately, and new plans must be submitted within the given timescale.

2.0.7 When street name proposals conform to this Policy, the appropriate Ward Councillors and Parish/Town Council (where applicable) will be consulted. The consultation period will be 14 calendar days.

2.0.8 Following the consultation period, the outcome will be shared with the applicant. The following scenarios are potential outcomes of this process:

- a) If the majority of consultees consider the street name acceptable then the street name will be forwarded to Royal Mail for final consultation. If Royal Mail does not object, Royal Mail will issue post town and postcodes which will then be added to the new addresses and distributed via a Street Naming and Numbering notice. If Royal Mail objects, all parties will be informed of the reasons. The Council will serve an objection via a written notice.
- b) If there is no response from the consultees the applicant's preferred street name that conforms to this Policy will be forwarded to Royal Mail for consultation.
- c) If the consultees object they must provide an explanation and propose an alternative street name. If the consultees propose an alternative street name with supporting evidence, the Council will ensure the proposal conforms to the Policy. If it does not, then the consultees will be informed. If no alternatives are subsequently submitted, the Council will proceed as per 2.0.8(b)

If it does, the Council will serve an objection via a written notice to allow both parties to discuss the proposals. Once discussed the final proposals will need to be resubmitted to the Council. The Council has the responsibility for the final approval of the street name which will then be forwarded to Royal Mail for the final part of the consultation.

2.1. Naming new streets - rules

The following rules must be noted and adhered to when proposing new street names:

- 2.1.1 The Council has sole responsibility for the final approval of a street name. No other organisation has legislative powers to do so.
- 2.1.2 To fall in line with the planning definition of a major application there should be 10 new properties proposed for a new street name to be considered. Each application will be considered individually given the nature of Section 1.02 of this Policy.
- 2.1.3 Street name proposals are preferred that have a historical/local connection to the area. As per Section 2.0.4 the applicant may submit up to three street name suggestions for each new street being proposed. Please consult with local historic societies and provide evidence to the Council in writing. Proposed names that link to national figures or events will be considered in a local context.
- 2.1.4 Street name proposals must not duplicate any street name that already exists in the surrounding area, should not contravene any aspect of the Council's equality policy statement and objectives; should not be capable of deliberate misinterpretation, should not be rude, obscene or racist, should not be phonetically similar to existing street names, and should not cause spelling or pronunciation problems.
- 2.1.5 Street name proposals will be checked against existing street names within the Council's administrative area for duplication or any possible conflict as outlined in Section 2.1.4. Consultation with Royal Mail will check for duplication on a post town level.
- 2.1.6 A variation in the terminal word/suffix, (example, "street", "road", "avenue"), is not sufficient reason to duplicate a street name. If such names are proposed they will only be considered where there is a detailed explanation on grounds of health and safety/improving the ease of locating the properties as per Section 1.02 of this Policy.
- 2.1.7 Street name proposals will be considered with potential vandalism of street nameplates in mind
- 2.1.8 Street names must not include numbers that can cause confusion (example: "20 Seven Swans Lane")
- 2.1.9 The use of a name of a living person in a street name proposal is not recommended by national guidance and will not be accepted by the Council.

- 2.1.10 The use of a name of a deceased person in a street name proposal should be avoided if possible but is acceptable in the following circumstances:
- a) The person put forward lived in the town, village, parish, or ward in question and;
 - b) The person put forward served that community. Examples, but not an exhaustive list, include charity work and serving in a civic function. Proposed street names in this category must be checked first with local historical societies and the relevant Parish/Town and Ward Councillors and evidence provided as part of the application.
- 2.1.11 The applicant must gain written consent from the deceased person's family before proposing such street names and present this consent to the Council in writing. If this is not possible then a local historical society must be consulted and provide written agreement.
- 2.1.12 Street name proposals using the name of the deceased must only reference the surname/family name. Forenames are not accepted by the Council.
- 2.1.13 Naming streets after members of the applicant's family will not be accepted by the Council, unless they meet the criteria above.
- 2.1.14 Street name proposals that can be construed to be used for advertising or commercial gain will not be accepted. The Council will not always adopt unofficial 'marketing' titles used by the applicant. All street name proposals must go through the procedure outlined above and meet the rules of this Section. Applicants must make prospective purchasers aware of this.
- 2.1.15 Applicants must not directly or indirectly provide provisional marketing addresses or potential postcodes to prospective purchasers before an official Street Naming and Numbering notice has been issued by the Council. The Council will not cover any costs of applicants doing so.
- 2.1.16 Where street name proposals include the word 'Royal' (or a proposal with Royal connotations), the applicant must gain the consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office before applying. [Please visit The Lord Chamberlain's Website for further information](#)
- 2.1.17 The use of the word 'The' as a prefix to a street name proposal will be accepted by the Council.
- 2.1.18 Proposed new street names must not include punctuation, based on national guidance. The [Geoplace data entry convention](#) (DEC) clearly states that ampersands (&), commas (,), full stops (.) and quotation marks (") must not be used in new street names.

2.1.19 All street name proposals should end with one of the following preferred suffixes. Alternatives will be considered including single or dual names without suffixes (such as “Broadway”) based on the history of the location in question:

- Approach (for any thoroughfare)
- Avenue (for residential streets)
- Bank (for any thoroughfare)
- Boulevard (for a pedestrian way only)
- Circus (for a large roundabout)
- Close (for a cul-de-sac only)
- Court (only in conjunction with another suffix in this list)
- Crescent (for crescent shaped streets)
- Croft (for residential streets)
- Dene (for residential streets)
- Drive (for residential streets)
- Field(s) (for residential streets subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Garden(s) (for residential streets subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Grange (for residential streets)
- Grove (for residential streets)
- Heath (for residential streets)
- Hill (for hillside streets only)
- Lane (for residential streets)
- Mead (for residential streets)
- Meadow(s) (for residential streets subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Mews (for residential streets)
- Orchard(s) (for residential streets subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Parade (for any thoroughfare)
- Park (for residential streets subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)

- Path (for a pedestrian way only)
- Place (for residential streets)
- Plaza (for a pedestrian way only subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
- Ridge (for residential streets on a ridge only)
- Rise (for residential streets)
- Road (for any major thoroughfare)
- Square (for a square only)
- Street (for any major thoroughfare)
- Vale (for residential streets)
- View (for residential streets)
- Walk (for residential streets, preference for a pedestrian way only)
- Way (for any major thoroughfare, preference for a pedestrian way)
- Yard (for residential streets on former commercial sites)

2.1.20 The use of the suffix North, East, South or West (such as Beech Street North) is only acceptable where the street is continuous and passes over a major junction. It is not acceptable when the street is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two.

2.2 Renaming a street

2.2.1 The Council may alter an existing street name, or assign a name to any street or part of a street that has not been given a name under [Section 18 of the Public Health Act 1925](#).

2.2.2 The Council will consider applications to rename streets if:

- a) There is confusion being caused for the emergency and postal services by the street name in question. Evidence must be provided by the service(s) raising the issue and;
- b) The street name currently conflicts with Section 2.1 of this Policy.

2.2.3 The consultation process in Section 2.0 of this Policy will be implemented before any agreement is given by the Council for the applicant to proceed to the next stage of the application. If the proposed street name conforms to this Policy it becomes the responsibility of the applicant to canvass the owners of the properties addressed to the street in question and conduct a ballot. Property owners must communicate the issues to any tenants to ensure that their views are considered.

- 2.2.4 The results of the ballot must be submitted to the Council in writing alongside a list of owner's names, their signatures, and the address to be considered for change.
- 2.2.5 To change the street name there must be 100% support from all the property owners as any subsequent change can be very disruptive as personal details must be amended with various organisations.
- 2.2.6 The Council will then consult with Royal Mail for their views based on the PAF Code of Practice Changing Postal Addresses and Postcodes documentation.
- 2.2.7 If there is no objection from Royal Mail the Council will proceed with [Section 18 of the Public Health Act 1925](#).

2.3 Street nameplates

The Council enforces the indication of street names under [Section 19 of the Public Health Act 1925](#).

- 2.3.1 It is the responsibility of the developer to provide and erect the initial street nameplates. [Nameplate specifications can be found here](#)
- 2.3.2 Street nameplates must be erected to be clearly visible to vehicles travelling from both directions. Positioning guidance will be provided by Kent County Council.
- 2.3.3 Once the initial street nameplates are erected by the applicant, the Council will from time to time renew the street nameplate if, and when the street nameplate becomes illegible or goes missing.
- 2.3.4 Any person in contravention of [Section 19 \(2\) of the Public Health Act 1925](#) will be liable to a penalty not exceeding level 1 (£200) on the standard scale and to a daily penalty not exceeding £1.

3.0 Rules for numbering properties

This section covers general rules for numbering properties in new streets and in existing streets. The sub sections cover rules for the numbering of flats and infill properties.

3.1 General rules for numbering properties

- 3.1.1 If the application requires a new street, then all properties will be numbered.
- 3.1.2 If an existing street includes only numbered properties, new properties will be numbered into the existing sequence. This includes infills covered in Section 3.3.

- 3.1.3 If an existing street contains a mix of named and numbered properties, the Council has the final decision on whether new developments are named or numbered. Applications for multiple properties must include current site plans showing plot numbers, plans showing the floor levels for any plots for blocks of flats, and where each new property will be accessed from so that it can be addressed to the correct street.
- 3.1.4 If the plans do not provide all the above detail, the Council will serve an objection via a written notice which will render the application invalid. If plans are amended during the process, new plans must be submitted to the Council immediately.
- 3.1.5 Properties in a new street will be numbered with even numbers on the right-hand side and odd numbers on the left-hand side. Properties will be numbered in an ascending order from the most important street from which they lead or in a direction travelling away from the centre of a settlement.
- 3.1.6 Properties in a new street that is a cul-de-sac will be numbered in a consecutive manner in a clockwise direction.
- 3.1.7 When considering the numbering of properties in a new street, the Council will consider potential future developments including street extensions. The Council should be made aware of the potential to extend a street in the future as early as possible in the process.
- 3.1.8 In circumstances where an existing street is to be extended and a new street name has been requested, it may be appropriate to continue to use the existing street name. The subsequent numbering would follow the numbering of the existing street.
- 3.1.9 When numbering properties, a sequential order must be maintained. All numbers will be included unless specifically requested to be removed by the applicant. Reasons for removal of certain numbers must be provided in writing to the Council in the initial application and these will be considered by the Council before proceeding with the application.
- 3.1.10 Properties (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance/direct access is to be found by the postal and emergency services.
- 3.1.11 Applications that attempt to manipulate property numbering in order to secure a "prestige" address or to avoid a particular address, which is perceived to have undesired associations, will not be authorised.
- 3.1.12 Where a property has a number, it must always be used.
- 3.1.13 The property number must always be clearly signed. The sign must be clearly visible from the street to which the property is addressed to.
- 3.1.14 If the numbered property also has a name, the number must always be included in the address. The property name cannot be regarded as an alternative.

- 3.1.15 If a property is already named and numbered and an application is made to remove the number, this will be refused by the Council. This is clearly stated in Section 4.2.2.3 of the [DEC](#).
- 3.1.16 Private garages and similar buildings will not be numbered.

3.2 Rules for Numbering Flats

- 3.2.1 Applications that include new blocks of flats on a new street will be numbered in one of the following ways:
- a) Each flat will be assigned its own number and will be incorporated into the numbering sequence of the street from which it is accessed. The actual block will not be numbered to the street in this case. This approach is normally reserved for small developments.
 - b)
 - i) The block of flats will be numbered as part of the numbering sequence of the street from which it is accessed. Each internal flat will be numbered sequentially in a clockwise manner from the lowest floor level upwards with a prefix of 'Apartment' or 'Flat'. This approach is normally reserved for large developments.
 - ii) In the above case, the numbered block can also be assigned a block name. If a block name is chosen, the internal flats will be sequentially numbered in a clockwise manner from the lowest floor level upwards without the need for a prefix. Block names must meet the rules of Section 4.1.
- 3.2.2 New flats will be numbered rather than described or lettered. Therefore, the Council will not assign new flat descriptions such as 'Flat A' or '1A', 'Ground Floor Flat' or 'Penthouse'. Any new flat addresses will take the format Flat 1 or Apartment 1. If a name has been given to the block of flats no prefixes are required.
- 3.2.3 Conversion of existing properties into flats will follow 3.2.2 except where the property already includes flat descriptions or letters. The Council will strive to be consistent with existing addressing.

3.3 Rules for numbering infill properties

- 3.3.1 Properties built on infill land, in existing gardens, or on the site of previously demolished properties, will be numbered within the existing numbering sequence.
- 3.3.2 Such infill development on an existing numbered street will include any required letter suffixes deemed appropriate by the Council:
- a) National best practice documentation permits the use of numbers followed by letters for new property (1A, 1B, 1C). This type of sequence is preferred however;

- b) The new property numbering can include any required suffix if no consecutive number is available in the current sequence (i.e. this can follow or precede existing numbering for example 1A, 1B, 1, 3, 5, 5A, 5B etc.). This prevents the re-numbering of the existing addresses in the street which is considered unacceptable. This also allows development to be numbered at the beginning of the street preceding the first numbered property as in the example above.
- 3.3.3 If more new numbers are required than numbers available in the existing sequence, the Council will consider creating an additional new street.
- 3.3.4 If infill development is within the grounds of a numbered property, the new property will inherit the number of the existing numbered property and suffixed.
- 3.3.5 If a property is demolished and new property is built in its place, the new development will retain the number of the demolished property and will include suffixes as per Section 3.3.2 if necessary.
- 3.3.6 If multiple properties are merged into one, the new property will preferably include the numbering range. If this is not possible one of the previous numbers will be used in the new address. For example, if 4 and 6 High Street are merged into one address the new address would be 4-6 High Street, 4 High Street or 6 High Street.
- 3.3.7 The Council will take the opportunity to correct any anomalies within the existing numbering sequence if affected by new development.

3.4 Renumbering properties in an existing street

- 3.4.1 Renumbering properties in an existing street is to be avoided, unless the benefits to the emergency services and postal services clearly outweigh the costs/potential dangers.
- 3.4.2 The Council will consider the application if:
 - a) There is confusion being caused for the emergency and postal services by the street numbering, or lack thereof, in question. Evidence must be provided by the service(s) raising the issue and;
 - b) The existing street numbering currently conflicts with Section 3.1 of this Policy.
- 3.4.3 If the Council is happy that the application can proceed, it becomes the responsibility of the applicant to canvass the owners of the properties addressed to the street in question and conduct a ballot. Property owners must communicate the issues to any tenants to ensure that their views are considered.
- 3.4.4 The results of the ballot must be submitted to the Council in writing alongside a list of owner's names, their signatures, and the addresses to be considered for change.

- 3.4.5 To change the street numbering there must be 100% support from all the owners as any subsequent change can be very disruptive as personal details must be amended with various organisations.
- 3.4.6 If agreement is reached by the above, the Council will then consult on the proposal with Royal Mail. If Royal Mail does not object, the changes will be implemented.

4.0 Rules for naming properties

This section covers general rules for naming properties in existing streets including blocks of flats and where a property already has a number assigned.

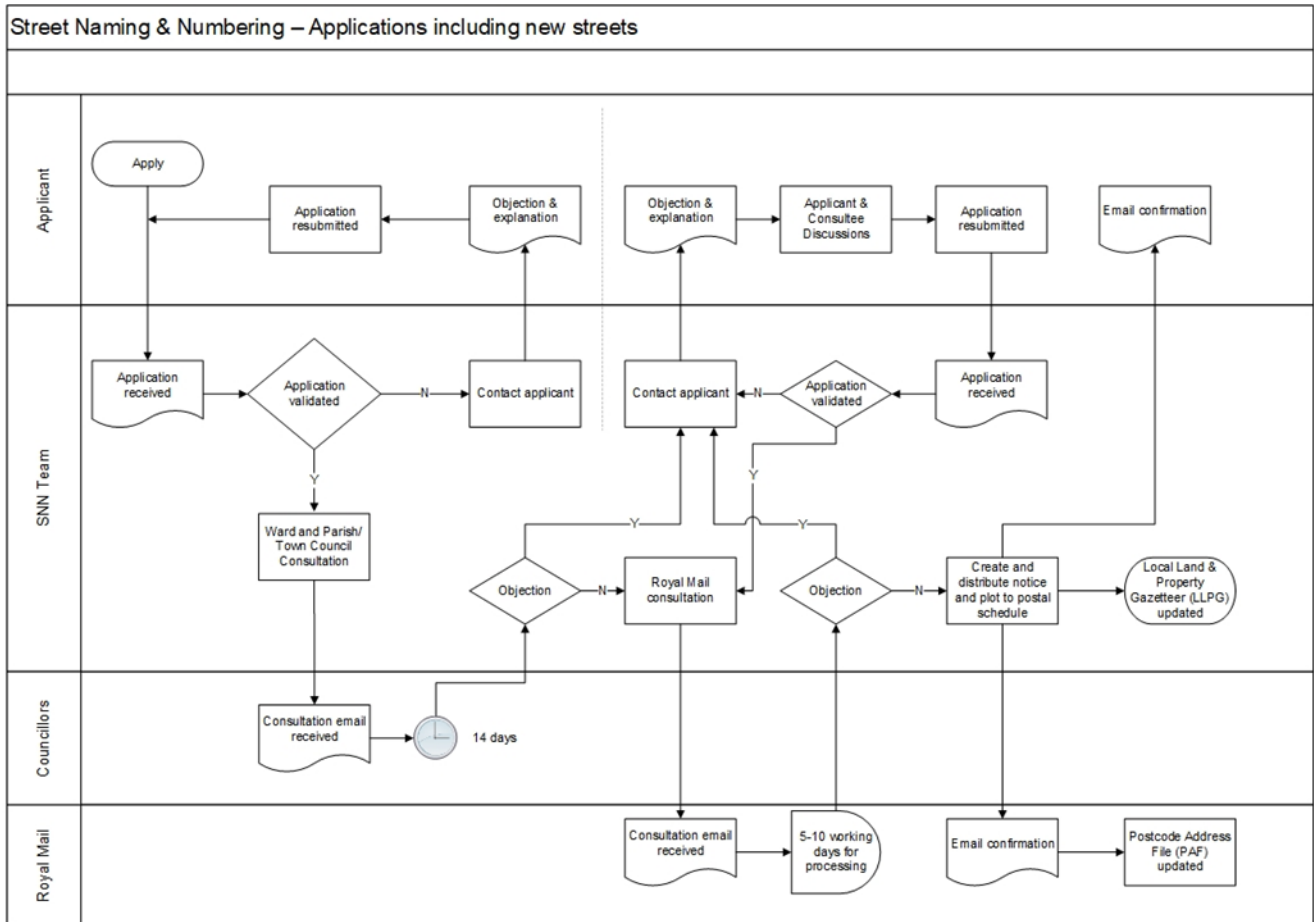
4.1 General rules for naming properties

- 4.1.1 National conventions state “[The Council] must number all new property developments regardless of development type. The exception to this rule is if new properties require names or numbers on an existing street where no numbering exists. The Council should consider creating a numbering scheme if it causes no problems for existing property owners.”
- 4.1.2 If implementing a new numbering scheme is not viable, property developments in existing unnumbered streets must be officially allocated names.
- 4.1.3 The Council has sole responsibility for the final approval of a property name. No other organisation has legislative powers to do so. Applications for multiple properties must include current site plans showing plot numbers, plans showing the floor levels for any plots for blocks of flats, and where each new property will be accessed from so that it can be addressed to the correct street.
- 4.1.4 If the plans do not provide the above detail, the Council will serve an objection via a written notice, which will render the application invalid. If plans are amended during the process, new plans must be submitted to the Council immediately.
- 4.1.5 Property name proposals must not duplicate any part of a property name or street name that already exists in the surrounding area, should not contravene any aspect of the Council’s equality policy statement and objectives; should not be capable of deliberate misinterpretation, should not be rude, obscene or racist, should not be phonetically similar to existing property names, and should not cause spelling or pronunciation problems.
- 4.1.6 Property name proposals will be checked against existing property names within the Council’s administrative area for duplication or any possible conflict as outlined in Section 4.1.4. Consultation with Royal Mail will check for duplication on a post town level.

- 4.1.7 It is advised that the applicant submits two preferred property name suggestions for each new property being proposed. The Council discourages applicants to name property after people although it will be considered for commercial premises only.
- 4.1.8 When proposing a property name for an existing numbered property the property number must always be retained and included in any address correspondence/communication. The property name cannot be regarded as an alternative to the number.
- 4.1.9 When proposing a property name for an existing numbered property, the property name proposal must not include any numbers in text or number form as these can lead to confusion.
- 4.1.10 Where property name proposals include the word 'Royal' (or a proposal with Royal connotations), the applicant must gain the consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office before applying. Please visit <https://www.royal.uk/use-royal-arms> for further information.
- 4.1.11 All proposed names for blocks of flats or mixed-use properties should end with one of the following suffixes although alternatives will be considered.
- Court (flats only)
 - Heights (flats or mixed use)
 - House (flats or mixed use)
 - Place (flats only)
 - Point (flats only)
 - Tower (flats or mixed use)
 - Wharf (flats or mixed use)
 - View (flats only)
- 4.1.12 The proposed property name must not include punctuation as instructed by the [DEC](#).
- 4.1.13 Proposed property names that can be construed to be used for advertising or commercial gain will not be accepted. The Council will not always adopt unofficial 'marketing' titles used by the applicant and all proposals must comply with the rules in this section. Applicants must make prospective purchasers aware of this.
- 4.1.14 Applicants must not directly or indirectly provide provisional addresses or postcodes to prospective purchasers before an official Street Naming and Numbering notice has been issued by the Council. The Council will not cover any costs of applicants doing so.
- 4.1.15 The property name must always be clearly signed. The sign must be clearly visible from the street to which the property is addressed to.

Appendices

Appendix A – Street naming and numbering process for applications including new streets



Appendix B – Definitions, frequently used terms and acronyms

a. Definitions

Verb	Implication
Must	An absolute requirement
Shall	An absolute requirement
Should	A recommendation
May	Permission
Can	Possibility or capability
Is	Description

b. Frequently used terms

Address – refers to one or multiple addresses.

Applicant – refers to the person applying for street naming and numbering. The applicant must be the legal owner of the site in question or a legal representative acting on the owner's behalf.

Council – refers to various departments within Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The application process is managed by the Street Naming and Numbering team (SNN Team) which is part of the GIS team, within the Digital & Communications service.

In writing - includes by letter, email, web form/online application form.

Property – refers to one or multiple properties.

Street – refers to one or multiple streets.

c. Acronymns

LLPG – Local Land & Property Gazetteer – the Council's definitive address database.

DEC – Data Entry Conventions – National guidance provided by GeoPlace that manages the National Address Gazetteer.

UPRN - Unique Property Reference Number.