



Development and  
Infrastructure Services

# STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

## SERVICE INFORMATION AND SERVICE STANDARDS



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## **1 - STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING SERVICE**

**1.1** Argyll and Bute Council is responsible for the naming of streets and numbering of properties in new developments in its area. This includes properties built on streets which are already numbered. It is also responsible for the renaming and renumbering of existing streets when required. This is governed by statutory legislation under Section 97 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

**1.2** The address of a property is becoming an increasingly important issue and maintaining a high standard of addressing assists:

- Emergency services to find a property quickly as delays can cost lives and money
- Postal delivery by Royal Mail
- Reliable delivery of other goods and services
- Residents past, present and future to ensure personal records are linked to the correct property
- Record keeping for legal and financial services – e.g. land register, insurance
- Linking of individuals to properties for services – e.g. health, taxation, benefits
- Council departments to work from one official address for all properties
- Visitors in finding their destination
- National services, including police, fire and ambulance, to work from one official address base – the OneScotland Gazetteer (OSG).

**1.3** In undertaking this function the council's primary concern is public safety and security, ensuring that street names are not duplicated and that new streets and properties are named and numbered in a logical manner to facilitate easy identification in the event of an emergency or usage for any of the other purposes above.

**1.4** These service standards outline the procedures that Argyll and Bute Council will adhere to in the undertaking of these statutory duties. Some of the procedures are complex and may take several months. The council is aware of the requirement for a statutory address to access a number of services and products, particularly for a new development so the council will endeavour to complete the required processes as efficiently as is possible and encourages all other persons involved to use the standards in this document and involve the council at an early stage in any new street naming or numbering.

**1.5** Developers and owners must be aware that only the names and numbers approved by the council will form the official address. Names used for marketing purposes or assigned by commercial owners may be changed if deemed not to conform to these standards. Similarly the council cannot accept any responsibility for late submissions for naming and numbering which cause problems for owners who may have already purchased properties under a marketing name or any other unapproved name.

## **2 - STATUTORY BACKGROUND**

**2.1** Section 97 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 empowers the Council to allocate statutory addresses:

A local authority may, in relation to any road in their area:

- (a) give such name to it as they think fit;
- (b) after advertising in a newspaper circulating in their area any proposal to alter its name and taking into account any representations thereupon made to them within 28 days after the date of the first publication of the advertisement, alter any such name;
- (c) affix, paint or mark its name on any premises, fence, lamp post, pole or other structure in it so as to be readily legible to members of the public there, and erect poles or other structures there for that purpose;
- (d) give each of the premises in it such distinguishing number as they see fit; alter that number when necessary; and require the owner of each of the premises, by notice served on him, to affix or paint that number on his premises so that it is readily legible from the nearest part of the public place giving access to the premises.

**2.2** Section 112 of the New Roads and Streets Works Act 1991 also requires a street gazetteer to be “kept in such form and manner, as may be prescribed”.

### 3 - STANDARDS AND ADDRESS DATABASES

- 3.1** The council is obliged to maintain a central database of street names and property addresses, the Local Street Gazetteer (LSG) and Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG), using the British Standard for addressing, known as BS7666. All addresses in both of the above gazetteers must adhere to this standard.
- 3.2** All local authorities in Scotland are required to maintain a CAG under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Improvement Service. The CAGs from the 32 councils are joined together to form the OneScotland Gazetteer – an address database for the whole of Scotland.
- 3.3** As local authorities are at the forefront of address creation through the planning and local taxation functions and have access to considerable local knowledge the CAG has a high level of accuracy, currency and completeness.
- 3.4** A similar set up exists in England and Wales and a joint venture between local government in England, Wales and Scotland and the national mapping agency, Ordnance Survey, has led to the “GeoPlace” initiative which has delivered a National Address Gazetteer (NAG) containing addresses created by local authorities and Ordnance Survey and linked to Royal Mail addresses from their Postcode Address File (PAF). The NAG is available from Ordnance Survey in the AddressBase product.

## 4 - COMPONENTS OF AN ADDRESS

4.1 There are several elements which make up an address and the responsibility for parts of the address is split between the local authority and Royal Mail. The owner may also add a property name or business name in consultation with the local authority. The address components and the responsibility for each part of the address is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Components of an address**

<b>Part of address</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Note</b>
Business Name	Wee Shop	Owner	Not required if a building name or number is present.
Flat Number	Flat 1	Local Authority	
Property Name	Dunroamin	Owner, in consultation with the Local Authority and Royal Mail	Held by Royal Mail as an alias if a property number also exists
Property Number	1	Local Authority	May not exist for rural properties and some urban properties
Street	High Street	Local Authority	May not exist for rural properties
Additional Town or Locality Information	Connel	Local Authority	See section 12 for more information on Post Town, Towns and Localities.
Town	Oban	Local Authority	
Post Town	Oban	Royal Mail	
Postcode	PA99 0XX	Royal Mail	Required for all properties able to receive mail delivery
County	Argyll	Not required	The county is no longer required as part of the postal address
Administrative Area	Argyll and Bute	Local Authority	Required for the OSG but not part of the postal address

## 5 - NAMING A STREET

- 5.1** Where a new street name is to be created by development, a process is undertaken to decide a street name. The principal consideration is public safety.
- 5.2** Developers are invited to contact the Corporate Address Gazetteer Team in Development and Infrastructure Services at an early stage in the development process - at least three months before the first occupation of a property on the street to be named. Developers may suggest street names or consult with local schools or community group but must allow sufficient time for consultation prior to the properties being occupied.
- 5.3** Street names should, where possible, retain a connection with the local area through the use of names with a historical or geographical association with Argyll and Bute. The name should meet one of the following criteria:
- link to a local landmark or topographical feature – e.g. a hill or woodland.
  - commemorate a local historical event or connection with the site – e.g. a former business on the site
  - honour or commemorate noteworthy people associated with the local area – e.g. a former provost
  - honour or commemorate people who are noteworthy nationally or internationally, particularly at the time of the development
  - honour or commemorate national or international events, particularly at the time of the development
  - recognise the local biodiversity of wildlife, flora, fauna or other natural features.
- 5.4** New street names should be unique within geographic location, usually the postcode district (e.g. PA31), and preferably within the council area. The practice of using the same name for a number of streets in a development, differentiated only by suffixes such as “street”, “road”, “place” or “drive” is not recommended. Streets which are spelt differently but sound the same or similar should also be avoided – e.g. Cnoc Mor Place, Knockmore Place and Stockmore Place.
- 5.5** The naming of streets is delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure Services. Members for the ward in which the street lies will be advised of the proposed name and given 21 days to respond if they have any issues with the proposal. If issues are raised by Members, or the Director has any reason to question the validity of the proposed street name, consideration will be referred to the relevant committee for a decision. Referral to committee will generally be considered where street naming conventions have not been adopted or ward Members do not agree with the proposed street name.



**5.6** It is recognised that the street naming process is time sensitive. Developers require addresses, often including a postcode, before utilities will provide service connections. Royal Mail cannot allocate postcodes until the streets are named and numbered and Royal Mail have their own timescales. Developers often select a development name for marketing purposes and this can cause confusion when the street is statutorily named. The longer it takes to name a street the greater the likelihood that there will be confusion for developers and the future owners of the properties. It is in the interest of everyone involved to complete the process at the earliest possible stage in the development process.

**5.7** The Corporate Address Gazetteer Team will initiate the street naming process on approval of the first Building Warrant for the development. If the developer wishes to commence the process earlier they should contact the Corporate Address Gazetteer Team but only developments which are subject to a planning application and/or building warrant application will be considered for naming and numbering.

## **STREET NAMING SERVICE STANDARDS**

### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Contact the applicant at approval of the first Building Warrant for the development.
2. Allow the applicant to consult with the community if requested.
3. Assist the applicant by suggesting street names which may be suitable.
4. Notify the ward councillors of the suggested street name(s).
5. Consult with Royal Mail on the suggested street name(s).
6. Allow the councillors 21 days to respond.
7. If requested, permit the councillors to extend this period for further consultation with the community.
8. Restart the consultation on any alternative name(s) proposed.
9. Refer the naming to the relevant committee if there is no consensus.
10. Advise Royal Mail of the agreed name for the new street.
11. Keep the applicant informed of progress towards the final street naming.

## ***Gaelic Street Names***

**5.8** Some new street name proposals will be in Gaelic and this is desirable in traditionally Gaelic speaking areas, such as most of the Argyll islands. Many geographical features which may be used to retain a local connection in a street name will also be in the Gaelic language.

**5.9** It is important that a street name can be understood quickly over the telephone in the event of an emergency. In selecting a Gaelic name for a street it is important that this is considered as many operators at the other end of the telephone will not be familiar with the Gaelic language and time taken to spell out a long complicated Gaelic street name could be critical in a life or death situation.

## 6 - NUMBERING PROPERTIES

- 6.1** A numbering scheme has to be drawn up for all new streets in a development. The numbering of properties is delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure Services and does not require any consultation.
- 6.2** New streets will be numbered in a logical manner to facilitate the identification of properties. Future phases of development must be considered as well as gap sites and other access points which may determine the numbering requirements. Cul-de-sacs will be numbered consecutively and other streets will have odd numbers on one side of the street (usually the left) and even numbers on the other.
- 6.3** The developer must provide a plan of the latest proposed layout or confirm that a plan taken from a planning application or building warrant is the most up to date for the development.
- 6.4** Where a new development is on an existing street and no new street is to be named it may be necessary to use an alphabetical suffix if there are insufficient whole numbers available (for example 5A, 5B, 5C). Where possible existing properties will retain the whole number and new development will use an alphabetical suffix. A property between two existing properties will usually take the lowest number of the two – e.g. a property between 5 and 7 would be numbered 5A. Properties added at the start of the street, i.e. before number 1 or number 2 on the even side – may use 1A or 2A if they don't already exist.
- 6.5** Flats on new or existing streets will be allocated a unique number (which may have an alphabetical suffix) for each main door giving entry to the flats. Flats on a corner site may have entrances on two separate streets and these will be numbered on the two streets with flat numbers as appropriate for the internal layout.
- 6.6** If it preferable to use alphabetical suffixes rather than renumber a street as this does not impact on existing properties.
- 6.7** Where a road is being extended the numbering will continue rather than creating a new street.
- 6.8** Once a numbering scheme is agreed the fixing of a number to the individual premises is the responsibility of the property owner.

- 6.9** The council does not omit the number 13 from any numbering scheme but will consider any request to remove the number 13 from a new street numbering scheme before it is statutorily named and notified to Royal Mail.
- 6.10** The council will not accept the substitution of a property number with a property name but a property name may be used alongside a property number. If the name is displayed outside the property the number should also be displayed.

## STREET NUMBERING SERVICE STANDARDS

### ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:

1. Devise a numbering scheme when a street naming application is submitted.
2. Use all information available at the time to ensure the numbering takes account of future needs.
3. Number cul-de-sacs consecutively.
4. Number other streets with odd numbers on one side of the street and evens on the other.
5. Start the numbering with number 1 on the left side of the main entry to the street.
6. Not omit number 13 from any numbering scheme as a matter of course.
7. Omit number 13 if requested by the applicant prior to the numbering being finalised.
8. Use alphabetical suffixes where insufficient whole numbers are available.
9. Where possible, number each main door access in a flatted development.
10. Keep the applicant informed of progress towards the final street numbering

## **7 - ROYAL MAIL, POSTCODES AND THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE (PAF)**

- 7.1** It is a common misconception that Royal Mail allocates addresses. As shown in Table 1 in section 4 the majority of the official address is assigned by the council and the postcode is then added by Royal Mail. Royal Mail will only accept postcode requests from the street naming and numbering authority – i.e. the council. As well as the postcode Royal Mail will allocate a post town to the address. Historically this was the town where the sorting office, from which the mail is delivered, was located but some post towns no longer fulfil this purpose.
- 7.2** Royal Mail also maintains a national database of addresses – the Postcode Address File (PAF). Once registered by the council a property will be added to PAF. PAF is used by many companies in the banking, insurance, health, distribution and other industries to determine an official address.
- 7.3** In urban areas postcodes are allocated to one named street only or part of a named street so it is not possible to change a street name or a postal address without changing the postcode. There are, however, many urban street names in common use which are not included in PAF. Changes to these may be possible but are likely to affect several properties.
- 7.4** Many properties in Argyll and Bute do not appear on PAF as they were not registered when they were built or when PAF was first created in the late 1960s so it is not uncommon for properties over 100 years old to be missing from PAF. The mapping and other search tools which are available today to locate properties were not so prevalent when postcodes were first issued so there are also some properties which have been allocated to a postcode which does not appear to be consistent with neighbouring properties.
- 7.5** If an address is not on PAF or the postcode is wrong a resident can often be refused a utility connection, insurance, a bank account or health care which can cause distress. The council will deal sympathetically with any resident in this situation and, on receipt of payment, will immediately place a request with Royal Mail for the property to be added to PAF. Where any other postcode issues are brought to the council's attention we will liaise with Royal Mail to ensure the postcode in use is correct and will not cause any delivery or other issues for the owner/occupier.

- 7.6** Residents can check if their property is live in the PAF database on the Royal Mail website at <http://www.royalmail.com/find-a-postcode>
- 7.7** Royal Mail does not publish addresses which are not completed and/or occupied and able to receive mail but addresses which have been agreed with the local authority will be held by Royal Mail as “not yet built” until they are notified by the council that the property is able to receive mail.

## **ROYAL MAIL LIAISON SERVICE STANDARDS**

### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Liaise with Royal Mail on all street naming and numbering enquiries.
2. Submit a request for an address to be added to PAF within 2 working days of receipt.
3. Add an address to Royal Mail’s “Not Yet Built” file to reserve the property name.
4. Investigate any notified discrepancies between PAF and the CAG.
5. Consult with all parties affected by any discrepancy.
6. Suggest a solution to resolve a notified discrepancy.
7. Keep the applicant informed of progress towards a final resolution of their request.

## **8 - PROPERTY NAMES**

- 8.1** New properties built in rural areas are usually identified by name only as there is no named street and no property numbers. The council has no statutory involvement in the naming of properties but as the property name will form part of the official address in the absence of a property number it is in the interest of all parties to agree on a property name which will not be confused with other properties in the area. As this is the main identifier for the property it should also be easily understood by telephone in case of an emergency. Long names which require to be spelt are not recommended.
- 8.2** The Corporate Address Gazetteer Team in Development and Infrastructure Services will contact the applicant on approval of a building warrant to request a preferred name for the property. The only grounds on which the council is likely to object to a name is if it may cause offence on grounds of race or ethnic origin, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, or belief (religious or political) or would cause confusion with a property or business of the same or similar name in the same area.
- 8.3** Once agreed, and payment is received, the council will enter the address in the Corporate Address Gazetteer, register the address with Royal Mail and confirm the postcode with the applicant or new property owner.

### **PROPERTY NAMING SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Investigate if a proposed property name is suitable.
2. Not accept a proposed name which may cause offence.
3. Not accept a proposed name which may cause confusion with an existing property.
4. Consult with Royal Mail on the proposed name within 2 working days of agreement of the name.
5. Keep the applicant informed of progress towards a final resolution of their request.



## 9 - STREET RENAMING AND RENUMBERING

**9.1** The council is aware that renaming or renumbering an existing street is a highly disruptive process for property owners. Renaming or renumbering will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where, for example, there are significant public safety issues or there are problems for emergency services, utilities or delivery and collection services in locating properties on the ground.

**9.2** Other reasons for renaming or renumbering include:

- The existing name is unpopular perhaps through connection to an event, a named individual, organisation or other incident
- The name is causing confusion with another street name or one or more property names
- The street is part of the major redevelopment of an area

**9.3** Where renaming or renumbering is necessary the council will consult widely and ensure that it is carried out with the minimum disruption to existing properties.

**9.4** All requests for renaming or renumbering will be referred to the relevant committee. Owners, tenants and any other parties likely to be affected will be consulted and given details of the reasons for the proposed change and the proposed name and/or numbers.

**9.5** The Corporate Address Gazetteer team will consider the results of the consultation exercise and report to the committee. If a revised name is agreed it is then publicly advertised for 28 days in a local newspaper. Thereafter the council will issue a statutory notice to all those affected, giving them 3 months' notice of the change unless a shorter period is agreed due to the timing of a new development.

**9.6** The council will initially oppose a request for the changing of street names or renumbering for any purpose other than public safety. It may carry out a survey of all those directly affected if it is considered that there are sound reasons for the request. In such a case if 50% of those surveyed agree to a change the renaming or renumbering process will commence.

**9.7** The council will not reimburse owners or occupiers for any costs associated with the change of address but Royal Mail may provide complimentary address labels.

## RENAMING/RENUMBERING SERVICE STANDARDS

### ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:

1. Instigate a street renaming or renumbering where there are public safety concerns.
2. Not instigate a street renaming or renumbering for any other reason without a survey of those directly affected.
3. Consult with the councillors for the ward in which the street lies.
4. Consult with the local community council in which the street lies.
5. Notify all affected properties in writing, preferably by email.
6. Give all affected property owners/occupiers a minimum of 21 days to respond to the renaming/renumbering proposal.
7. Present the results of the consultation to the appropriate committee with recommendations.
8. Advertise a revised renaming in a local newspaper.
9. Allow 28 days for responses to be received to the advert in the local paper.
10. Report to the relevant committee again if further representations are received.
11. Notify all affected owners/occupiers in writing of the final renaming or renumbering.
12. Keep all affected owners informed of progress on the renaming/renumbering.

## **10 - EXISTING UN-NUMBERED STREETS**

- 10.1** There are many streets in towns and villages in Argyll and Bute, some very lengthy, which do not have street numbers allocated and properties are identified by name only.
- 10.2** It can be difficult for delivery drivers, utilities, visitors and, most importantly, emergency services to find properties on a street where no numbering is in place. Where the council becomes aware of public safety issues in locating properties on these streets a numbering scheme will be developed in consultation with the owners/occupiers and the local councillors. Other affected parties may also be consulted.
- 10.3** Where there has been no public safety issue identified but an owner requests a property number on a street where numbering does not exist the council will develop a numbering scheme but only notify residents of the proposed numbering scheme on request. In this case the use of the property number will be optional.

### **UN-NUMBERED STREET SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Investigate if there is a public safety issue on an un-numbered street.
2. Where required, devise a numbering scheme for an un-numbered street.
3. Notify all residents of the proposed numbering scheme.
4. Advise residents if the number is mandatory or optional.
5. Allow the residents a minimum of 21 days to respond to the proposed scheme.
6. Report to the relevant committee.
7. Keep all affected owners informed of progress on the numbering scheme.

## **11 - EXISTING UN-NAMED STREETS**

**11.1** There are many rural streets across Argyll and Bute which are not named and addresses use a town or village name as the main location identifier. Many of these streets also have local names which have never been officially named, e.g. Shore Road, West Road, Main Road, Glasgow Road.

**11.2** The council will consider naming these roads if a request is received and will consult with all residents on the affected street. If an opportunity exists to introduce a street name which reflects the local geography and will help promote the area this will also be considered.

**11.3** The council will also consult with Royal Mail on naming these roads as it is very likely that some properties would also need to change their postcode.

### **UN-NAMED STREET SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Identify all the properties affected.
2. Identify any related issues such as postcodes and locality names.
3. Notify all residents of the proposed street naming.
4. Allow the residents a minimum of 21 days to respond to the proposed scheme.
5. Report to the relevant committee.
6. Keep all affected owners informed of progress on the street naming.

## **12 - ADDITIONAL TOWN OR LOCALITY INFORMATION**

- 12.1** A Royal Mail postal address includes a Post Town which is required for sorting and routing mail and may not always be a geographically accurate description of where a property is located. The Corporate Address Gazetteer holds the Post Town but also an additional Town field (which may or may not be the same as the Post Town) and a Locality field which is geographic.
- 12.2** A Post Town and additional Locality information is allocated to a whole postcode by Royal Mail so it is not possible to change the town or locality information for one property but if there are a number of properties which appear to have the wrong town or locality information an investigation will be carried out.
- 12.3** This may result in one or several properties requiring a change of postcode to facilitate the town or locality change.

### **ADDITIONAL TOWN OR LOCALITY SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Investigate the town and locality information in the immediate area of the enquiry.
2. Report on the town and locality information in use in PAF and the CAG.
3. Recommend changes required in PAF, if any.
4. Consult with owners/occupiers of affected properties.
5. Consult with other local organisations as required.
6. Keep the applicant informed of progress towards a final resolution of their request.

## **13 - NOTIFICATION OF NEW/REVISED STREET NAMES AND PROPERTY NUMBERS/NAMES**

**13.1** There is no statutory requirement for the council to publish new addresses or changes to addresses or directly notify any organisations. The council acknowledges, however, that the provision of this information improves service delivery to the citizen and businesses and the Corporate Address Gazetteer Team produces a monthly list of all naming and numbering confirmed during the previous month. This is made available by email to anyone requesting notification. Location plans of all new developments are included with the list. Appendix 1 lists the organisations currently receiving monthly notifications.

### **NOTIFICATION SERVICE STANDARDS**

#### **ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL WILL:**

1. Compile a list of address changes into a monthly bulletin for circulation.
2. Circulate by email to any organisation requesting address change information.
3. Issue the monthly update before the middle of the following month.

## 14 - DECISION, COMPENSATION AND COMPLAINTS

**14.1** The Council's decision is final for street naming, numbering, renaming or renumbering but anyone who is unhappy with the decision may use the council's complaints procedure.

**14.2** The council is not liable for any claims for compensation arising directly or indirectly from the naming or renaming of streets or the numbering or renumbering of properties.

**14.3** The above also applies to names or numbers changed as a result of developers providing occupiers with address information not formally approved by the council.

## 15 - CHARGES

**15.1** Charges for the Street Naming and Numbering service were introduced by Argyll and Bute in April 2016. The current charges are displayed on the council website at <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/street-naming-and-numbering>

## 16 - EXEMPTIONS

**16.1** The council is not responsible for:

- Postcodes or post towns allocated by Royal Mail;
- Addresses being removed by Royal Mail from their PAF database;
- Addresses not being available in third party systems such as financial, utility and retail companies, including Internet based companies;
- Addresses not being available in satellite navigation or internet mapping systems;
- Complaints regarding deliveries not being received due to address problems or the quality of service due to address issues;
- Notifying anyone other than those organisations listed at Appendix 1.

**16.2** The council will, however, provide advice where possible to assist the resident in any of the above instances.

## 17 - CONTACTS

**17.1** For further information please contact:

Corporate Address Gazetteer Team  
Development and Infrastructure Services  
Argyll and Bute Council  
1A Manse Brae  
Lochgilphead  
PA31 8RD

Telephone: 01546 604174

Email: [cag@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:cag@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## 18 - REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

**18.1**

Royal Mail website - <http://www.royalmail.com/>

OneScotland Gazetteer Portal - <http://www.onescotlandgazetteer.org.uk/>

Council website - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/street-naming-and-numbering>

Ordnance Survey AddressBase - <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-and-government/products/addressbase-products.html>



## **APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF NOTIFIED ORGANISATIONS**

1. Police Scotland
2. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
3. Scottish Ambulance Service
4. Ordnance Survey
5. General Register Office for Scotland
6. NHS
7. BT
8. Centrica / British Gas