



Dear Customer

## **Engaging with our customers - Share your views**

### **Ashford Road Post Office**

**Previously located at: 126-128 Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME14 4LX**

We are delighted to let you know that following the closure of Ashford Road Post Office we will be re-opening the branch on Thursday 5 September 2024 at 13:00. This will be in a new location - Bearsted News, 1 Yeoman Court, 141 Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME14 4ND, where it will operate as one of our local style branches.

### **We would like to hear from you**

We are keen to restore services to this community as soon as possible, so we have decided to go ahead with our plans. The re-opening of the branch in a new location is a commercial decision for Post Office Ltd and we are not seeking feedback on this aspect of the change. However, we would welcome suggestions about specific aspects of the change that might benefit customers, particularly on the following areas:

- Do you have any comments about access into the new premises?
- Do you have any comments about access inside the new premises?

Details about your new branch are provided at the end of this letter and our Consultation Hub. We will be accepting comments until Friday 16 August 2024. We won't be responding to you individually, but any comments received will be taken into consideration as we finalise our plans.

**Month of re-opening**

**Thursday 5 September 2024**

You can share your views on this branch reopening through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk). When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the engagement for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **105941**

### **How to share your views:**

#### **Consultation Hub ([postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk))**

[comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREPOST Your Comments – N.B. This is the full postal address. Items sent by Freepost take 2 working days, please allow enough time for responses to be received.

**Want to tell us what you think right here and now? Scan here.**

If you don't have a QR code scanner on your phone, you can find one in your app store.



We will display posters in the new location to tell customers the good news. If you are a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information through your social media channels and with any local groups or organisations that you know within the community, for example on noticeboards, local charities and in GP surgeries, to help our customers and your constituents understand what is happening to the Post Office in the local community. If you would like a supply of these posters, please let us know.

Once the plans have been finalised, we'll display a poster in branch and information will be provided on our Consultation Hub outlining the main comments received and our response. If there are any unforeseen changes to the opening date, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

We're carrying out this engagement in line with our Principles of Community Engagement. An extract relating to Engagement is available at the end of this letter.

We do hope that you will support this new service.

Yours faithfully

*Noah Rai*

**Noah Rai**  
**Network Provision Lead**

## Ashford Road Post Office Information Sheet

**Bearsted News  
1 Yeoman Court  
141 Ashford Road  
Bearsted  
Maidstone  
ME14 4ND**

### **Post Office opening hours**

Mon - Sat	09:00 – 17:30
Sun	Closed

**There are times our branches may need to make changes to its opening hours.**

**The latest available branch information can be found on our website**

**[www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)**

### **Access**

Currently there is a step at the entrance to the premises, however a bell would be provided at the entrance to the new premises and a temporary portable ramp would be available upon request. Internally, there would be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

### **Products and services**

Similar products and services will continue to be available, however excluding a comprehensive range of Travel Money except for Euros & Dollars, Passport Check & Send and On Demand Travel Insurance.

### **Getting there**

The new branch will be located approximately 170 metres away from the previous branch, along mostly level terrain.

Time restricted roadside parking is available directly outside the new premises.

### **Retail**

Convenience store.

### **Date of opening**

Thursday 5 September 2024 at 13:00.

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**To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille call  
03452 66 01 15 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.**

The latest available branch information, including possible alternatives  
Post Office branches in the area, can be found on our website

[www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)

For additional information about product availability call 03457 223344.

For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the branch postmaster.

Information on public transport routes and timetables can be accessed at [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

Products and Services	New Branch
Cash Withdrawals	✓
Cash Deposits	✓
Cheque Deposits	✓
<b>Mails</b>	
Drop & Go	✓
Parcelforce Express Services	✓
DPD - Buy in branch	✗
DPD - Drop off & Collections	✗
Post & Go	✓
<b>Pay Bills &amp; Top Up</b>	
Pay Bills & Top-up	✓
<b>Licence Applications</b>	
SIA (Security Industry Authority)	✗
<b>Identity Services</b>	
Document Certification	✗
In Branch Verification	✗
<b>Driving</b>	
DVLA Photocard Renewal	✗
Vehicle Tax	✓
<b>Travel</b>	
Foreign Currency	Euros / Dollars
Travel Insurance	✗
Travel Money Card	✓
<b>Your Finances</b>	
MoneyGram®	✓
Western Union	✓
Savings Application Forms	✗
Savings Account ID Verification (free)	✗
Bank of England Banknote Exchange	✓

✗ Services not available at the new branch are  
available at

Mangravet Post Office: 8 Mangravet Ave,  
Maidstone, ME15 9BQ

Open hours: Mon - Fri 09:00 – 17:30

Sat: 09:00 – 13:00

Sun: Closed

## **Principles of Community Engagement on changes to the Post Office network (extract)**

A full version of this document is available on our Consultation Hub - [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

**We are committed to engaging and supporting our customers and their representatives as we make changes to the Post Office network. The following Principles will be adopted when communicating about changes to your local Post Office branch.**

We will **Engage** - where we are seeking feedback on a decision that has been made on:

- Re-opening of a closed branch in a new location
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site where there will be changes to the Post Office service point location
- Relocating a branch where there is a risk that the service could be lost (e.g., an issue with the premises). This is to minimise or avoid a loss of service to a community where a replacement branch location has been Identified<sup>2</sup> and where there is no degradation of access to Post Office services (into and inside the premises).

While the decision to proceed will have already been made, we will welcome suggestions about specific aspects of the change such as access arrangements and the internal layout. We will provide four weeks' notice or, where extenuating circumstances prevent this, we will provide as much notice as possible.

During this period, we will display a poster in branch and provide information online. We will contact locally elected representatives<sup>3</sup>, the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>4</sup>, providing clear information on any changes to services or access arrangements at the branch. We will ask locally elected representatives to share information with other key community outlets (such as notice boards, local charities, magazines, GP surgeries etc.). We will publish the outcome of the engagement online and in branch, providing a summary of key issues raised with a clear response to each and any changes made to our original plans.

**These Principles have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland, the independent statutory consumer advocacy bodies.**

### What to do if you feel these Principles haven't been followed:

Please get in touch so we can investigate your complaint. We'll explain in our reply whether we believe we have followed our Principles of Community Engagement and will provide you with the contact details for the relevant consumer advocacy body (Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland, or the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland) if you're not satisfied with our response. The consumer advocacy body will independently assess whether we have followed the Principles of Community Engagement process (rather than the decision itself) and recommend any actions with respect to the complaint.

**Postofficeviews.co.uk**

**Call: 03452 66 01 15**

**[Comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:Comments@postoffice.co.uk)**

**Textphone: 03457 22 33 55**

### **FREEPOST Your Comments**

<sup>2</sup> Where there is a service risk situation that would result in the loss of service, to avoid or minimise a loss of service to a community we may need to make a commercial decision to proceed with a relocation of a Post Office branch. In these cases, we will not consult on a relocation, however we will follow the engagement process and seek feedback on access arrangements and the internal layout.

<sup>3</sup> Locally elected representatives include but are not restricted to the Member of Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Parliament, or Northern Ireland Assembly, Local Authority Chief Executive, Ward Councillors, Parish or Community Council.

<sup>4</sup> Selected charities are local Citizens Advice, Age UK, Northern Ireland's Disability Action and Northern Ireland's Rural Community Network. All parties referred to in 3 and 4 above are encouraged to share all information with local groups and organisations who they believe have an active interest in changes to their local Post Office.