



Dear Customer

Local public consultation – Decision

Bickershaw Post Office

521 Bickershaw Lane, Bickershaw, Wigan, WN2 5TU

I'm writing to confirm that following a period of local public consultation and review, we have made the decision to proceed with the move of the above Post Office into J's News & Convenience Store, 451 Bickershaw Lane, Bickershaw, Wigan, WN2 5TL, where it will be operated by a retail partner.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information. All the feedback we received helped us to better understand the views of customers and their representatives and this was taken into account, along with all other relevant factors, in making our decision. A summary of the feedback is enclosed along with an information sheet providing further details about the new branch.

After careful consideration of the feedback received, we remain confident that the layout and location of the new branch will continue to meet customer needs and deliver an excellent service, whilst securing the long-term viability of Post Office services in the local community.

The current branch will close at 12:00 on Friday 17 February 2023, with the new branch opening, at J's News & Convenience Store, 451 Bickershaw Lane at 13:00 on Monday 20 February 2023. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

During this period of temporary closure customers may use any convenient Post Office branch. Possible alternatives are provided below. The latest available branch information can be found using our website www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder.

- Plat Bridge Post Office, 1 Bank Buildings, Walthew Lane, Platt Bridge, Wigan, WN2 5DB
- Abram Post Office, 357 Warrington Road, Abram, Wigan, WN2 5RZ

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at: postofficeviews.co.uk

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

Yours faithfully

Sarah Cottrell

Sarah Cottrell
Network Provision Manager
Post Office Limited

comments@postoffice.co.uk

postofficeviews.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

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.

Appendix A

Response to Local Public Consultation

Consultation started 23 November 2022

Consultation ended 4 January 2023

Consultation responses

- 7 responses from customers and local representatives

Key issues raised

- Parking and Pedestrian access
- Customer Service
- Internal Space

Response to issues raised

Parking and Pedestrian Access

Parking and the availability of parking spaces are problems faced generally in many locations nationwide. Whilst the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited, a further review of parking has been carried out and has confirmed that parking is available directly outside the new branch. For customers approaching the new branch on foot, there are pavements with drop kerbs along the route. Any improvements to the local area, such as a pedestrian crossing, would be matters for the local council to explore.

Customer Service

Any person employed to work in the new Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards, the branch staff will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service-related matters. We will also be working closely with the new operator to make sure an appropriate level of privacy is provided for Post Office customers. For example, we discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service or handing a receipt that contains any financial information face down. Open plan working also lends itself to more discreet conversations as customers don't have to raise their voice to be heard.

Internal Space

Internally the new branch will be in line with Post Office specifications, making sure there is sufficient space for the Post Office service to operate alongside the retail offer. We will be working closely with the new operator on the internal layout and some fixtures and fittings will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises, ensuring the entrance, aisles and the waiting area are kept free from obstructions and adequate room is provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

Appendix B

Bickershaw Post Office Information Summary

J's News & Convenience Store, 451 Bickershaw Lane, Bickershaw,
Wigan, WN2 5TL,

New opening hours

Mon - Sun	08:00 - 17:30
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During the Coronavirus pandemic the branch 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

Products & Services

A similar range of products and services will still be available, excluding On Demand Travel Insurance.

Serving positions

There will be one serving position at the retail counter.

Access

The new premises will have a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 200 metres away from the current branch, along mostly level terrain. Parking is available outside the branch. There are local bus routes serving the surrounding area.

Retail

Convenience store

Bickershaw Post Office services available

For information about product availability call 03457 223344. For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the operator.

	New branch
Mail	
First & Second Class mail	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 st class 6 & 12 only, 2 nd class 12 only)	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓
Signed For	✓
Special Delivery	✓
Home shopping returns	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓
Express & contract parcels	Express 24 & 48
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. Tracked & Signed)	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	✗
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓
Local Collect	✓
Drop & Go	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments	
Post Office Card Account	✓
Personal & Business Banking cash withdrawals, deposits & balance enquiries using a card. Also enveloped cheque deposits and barcoded deposit slips.	✓
Postal orders	✓
Moneygram	✓
Automated bill payments (card or barcoded)	✓
Key recharging	✓
Licences	
Rod fishing licences	Now available through the Environmental Agency
Travel	
Pre-order travel money	✓
Travel insurance referral	✓
On demand travel insurance	✗
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
Payment by cheque	
Products marked ✗ are available at Platt Bridge Post Office, 1 Bank Buildings, Walthew Lane, Platt Bridge, Wigan, WN2 5DB	Opening times: Mon – Fri 09:00 – 17:30 Sat 10:00 – 13:00

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

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 **Consult** where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch¹
- Permanent relocation of a Post Office branch (including the franchising of a Directly Managed branch to a new site)

We will carry out a six-week² local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives³, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities⁴ of the proposal. This information will also be made available online and for a Directly Managed branch a press release will be issued to local media. We will ask locally elected representatives to share information with other key community outlets (such as notice boards, local charities, magazines, GP surgeries etc.).

The consultation will ask specific questions on areas where we would like feedback on access to Post Office services and will confirm when the change will happen if the decision is made to proceed. We will provide clear information on any changes to services as well as access to and into the new branch.

We welcome all feedback with the following factors being taken into account in making our decision, which we expect to make within four weeks of the close of consultation:

- Customer access to, into and inside the new or alternative branch/branches with particular regard to vulnerable consumers
- Any local community issues which could be affected by or affect the proposal

At the end of the consultation process we will write to locally elected representatives, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and respondents to the consultation (where practical) to confirm our decision and provide a summary of key issues raised with a clear response to each. This information will be made available online and in branch (where possible).

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

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 watchdog (Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland or the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland) if you're not satisfied with our response. The watchdog 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

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Comments@postoffice.co.uk

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments

¹ There may be a small number of cases where due to circumstances outside our control we have no option other than to permanently close a branch in a particular location. In these cases, the consultation will seek feedback on alternative Post Office service provision in the area.

² If the consultation includes more than four weeks in July in Scotland and Northern Ireland or more than four weeks in August in England and Wales, we will extend the period by one calendar week. We will not start any local public consultation during the two-week period which includes the Christmas and New Year bank holidays.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.