



Dear Customer,

Local public consultation - Have your say

Biddick Hall Post Office
39 Gaskell Avenue, South Shields, NE34 9TQ

We are proposing to move the above Post Office branch to a new location: Premier, 18-20 Dickens Avenue, South Shields, NE34 9SY, where it would continue to operate as one of our local style branches, subject to consultation.

Why are we proposing this move?

As you may be aware, our postmaster’s operate Post Office branches alongside their private retail business, and it is important that they make the very best use of their resources to ensure future sustainability of both their business and the Post Office service. In this case, the postmaster has identified an opportunity to move this branch into an alternative new location to continue to offer Post Office services to the local community.

The proposed premises would undergo a refurbishment to incorporate a convenience store with Biddick Hall Post Office. The postmaster firmly believes that the move would help to secure continued access to Post Office services locally, as well as supporting the viability of their business. Our priority is to safeguard our services in the locality in the longer term and the relocation of Biddick Hall Post Office would enable us to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in the local community.

We’d like your help

We’re now starting a period of local public consultation and your feedback is important to us as it will help to inform our decision. For more details of the proposed services and accessibility, please see the branch information summary later in this consultation document.

What exactly are we consulting on?

We’d welcome your comments on the following areas:

- **How easy is it to get to the proposed new location?**
- **Are the new premises easy for you to get into and are they easily accessible once inside?**
- **Are there any other local community issues which you believe could be affected by or affect the proposed change?**
- **If the move were to proceed, is there anything we could do to make it easier for customers?**

Local Public Consultation starts	Wednesday 07 May 2025
Local Public Consultation ends	Wednesday 18 June 2025
Proposed month of change	July 2025

You can share your views on the proposed change through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via postofficeviews.co.uk. When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **548329**

How to share your views:

Consultation Hub (postofficeviews.co.uk)

comments@postoffice.co.uk

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST 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.



Good to know

- Customers would access Post Office services at a low-screened, open-plan, modern serving point that's part of the retail counter.
- Working with the postmaster, we'd adapt the current store layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office till if needed.
- The branch would offer the same range of Post Office products and services over longer opening hours, so customers can access their Post Office when it's convenient. Customer satisfaction with local style branches is high, and many customers visit outside traditional opening hours.
- All staff employed to work in the new branch would be trained to the highest standards with on-going training on products and services, as well as operational and service related matters.
- Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about the proposal and to ask their views.
- Any information we receive will be carefully considered as we finalise our plans.
- If you are a local representative, we will write to you again at the end of the consultation to respond to the main issues raised and to explain our final plans for the branch.
- This consultation is being carried out in line with our Principles of Community Engagement which have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland - the independent statutory consumer advocacy bodies. An extract relating to consultation is available at the end of this letter.

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 the changes we are proposing to Biddick Hall Post Office. If you would like a supply of posters, please let us know. Our contact details can be found at the bottom of the first page.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Your faithfully

Kenny Lamont

Kenny Lamont
Regional Change Manager
Post Office Limited

Biddick Hall Post Office Information Summary

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

Current Location	Proposed New Location																																
39 Gaskell Avenue, South Shields, NE34 9TQ	Premier, 18-20 Dickens Avenue, South Shields, NE34 9SY																																
<table border="1"><thead><tr><th colspan="2">Current opening times</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Monday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Thursday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Friday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Saturday</td><td>08:00 – 20:00</td></tr><tr><td>Sunday</td><td>10:00 – 20:00</td></tr></tbody></table>	Current opening times		Monday	08:00 – 20:00	Tuesday	08:00 – 20:00	Wednesday	08:00 – 20:00	Thursday	08:00 – 20:00	Friday	08:00 – 20:00	Saturday	08:00 – 20:00	Sunday	10:00 – 20:00	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th colspan="2">Proposed opening times</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Monday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Thursday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Friday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Saturday</td><td>08:00 – 21:00</td></tr><tr><td>Sunday</td><td>09:00 – 21:00</td></tr></tbody></table>	Proposed opening times		Monday	07:00 – 21:00	Tuesday	07:00 – 21:00	Wednesday	07:00 – 21:00	Thursday	07:00 – 21:00	Friday	07:00 – 21:00	Saturday	08:00 – 21:00	Sunday	09:00 – 21:00
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Services available																																	
The same range of products and services would still be available.																																	
Serving positions																																	
There would be a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.																																	
Access																																	
The proposed premises would have a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there would be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.																																	
Getting there																																	
The proposed premises would be located approximately 140 metres away from the current branch. Roadside parking is available nearby.																																	
Store retail available	Convenience store.																																

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.

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 branch⁵
- 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-week⁶ local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives, Consumer Advocacy Bodies, and selected charities 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, 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
Comments@postoffice.co.uk
FREEPOST Your Comments

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⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.