



Dear Customer

Billingham Post Office®
Crown Buildings, Town Centre, Billingham, TS23 2LR

Local Public Consultation Decision

I'm writing to confirm that following a period of local public consultation and review, the decision has been made to proceed with the proposal to move the above Post Office to the vacant retail premises at 53 Queensway, Billingham, TS23 2ND where it will be run by our new retail partner.

This change is being made as part of the continuing modernisation of our network, to achieve commercial sustainability and will help us to provide services that will meet customer needs and safeguard future service provision in Billingham, now and for the long-term.

Public consultation feedback

During the public consultation period we received 7 individual representations from customers. We also held a customer forum to talk about our plans and answer questions. The main feedback commented on access at the new location, the availability of space inside the premises and staffing. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information. 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, when making our decision.

Getting to the new location

With any relocation it is inevitable that whilst some customers will have an easier journey to the new location, regrettably others will have further to travel. We carefully considered factors such as the local terrain, parking and transport links when developing our proposal. We also took account of whether there were any particular local road traffic issues that may negatively impact accessibility.

The new branch will be located approximately 65 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain. As the new site is just a short distance from the existing site, customers can make use of the same transport and parking facilities as they do now. In conclusion, I remain satisfied that customers in Billingham will continue to have good access to Post Office services.

What the new branch will look like

We know that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, including our elderly and disabled customers. Our new retail partner regards the Post Office network as a vital part of community services and will refurbish the vacant premises and install a new modern Post Office alongside their retail of Confectionery, Tobacco, News and Food to Go. We'll be working together to provide a new, modern Post Office with sufficient room for Post Office and shop customers.

The branch will have its own designated area at the right as you enter the store and customer access both into and within the store will meet Post Office Ltd's own accessibility standards and all applicable legislation. Access will be level with an automatic door being installed at the entrance to the premises. Externally the store front will include Post Office signage and an opening hours board.

There will be directional signage from the entrance door through to the new Post Office on the ground floor. To make sure there is sufficient space for Post Office customers, including wheelchair users, to move around the store and reach the Post Office area without hindrance the entrance area and shopping aisles will be kept free of obstructions. The Post Office counter will be built to Post Office specifications and will include lighting to industry standards, low level counters, PIN pads and hearing loops. There will be space for people to wait for service and customer seating will also be provided.

The number of serving positions is based on current and future predicted business levels and the new branch will have one traditional floor to ceiling screened serving position, three open plan positions and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. Open plan serving positions are successfully used across our Post Office network, as an alternative to the more traditional positions. There is still a partitioned screen but this is lower, helping to provide a more personal service and discreet conversations when needed.

Following the move, the Post Office will also be open for longer including Saturday afternoons, providing customers with more flexibility around their visits. Additionally, the serving position located at the retail till will offer customers a selected range of Post Office products and services, without having to join the main queue.

I'm satisfied that customer needs will continue to be met. Alongside this, we'll monitor customer usage at the branch following the move and will work with our retail partners to make sure service standards are maintained.

Access to Post Office services and products

The same wide range of products and services will still be available with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office. DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services will still be available. The nearest alternative office providing the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office, is Darlington Post Office, Crown Street, Darlington, DL1 1AB approximately 17.9 miles away.

Staff, who will work exclusively in the Post Office, will be trained to provide information on financial products, including savings and insurances. Product information will also be available for customers to take away with them and our website and specialist customer helplines also provide information on what's available and how to make a purchase.

Further details of the new branch, including opening hours, are provided in the enclosed information sheet.

Customer service training and existing staff

Our new retail partner has satisfied us that they are equally as committed to delivering excellent customer service as we are. Any person employed to work in Billingham Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards. Just as with branches we run ourselves, the branch will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service related matters. Post Office will work with our new partner to provide support, in the same way they already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners.

In respect of our people working at the existing branch, we have a strong track record of supporting our people through change. We will do all that we can to find a solution that works for each individual within the options available.

Conclusion:

After careful consideration of the feedback received, I am confident that the new branch will be suitably located and that it will continue to meet customer needs and deliver an excellent service, whilst helping to provide future sustainability for the branch and maintaining a Post Office presence in Billingham. We are currently making the final arrangements for the move and further posters will be provided in branch soon to let customers know the actual date the move will take place.

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

Yours faithfully



Roger Gale
Network and Sales Director
Post Office Limited

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

Customer Helpline: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments

This is all you need to add to your envelope for your letter to reach us

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.



This communication process has been agreed with the independent statutory consumer watchdog, which in Great Britain is Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, and in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council, and is being carried out in line with our Code of Practice for changes to the Post Office network, which we have agreed with them. If you'd like copies of the Code they are available in branch, by contacting us or on our website – postofficeviews.co.uk. If you think that the process has not been properly followed and wish to make a complaint, then please write to us or email us via the contact details included in our posters and letters and let us know why. We'll examine your complaint and respond to you as soon as we can. We will provide you with the relevant contact points for the consumer watchdog, so if you are still not satisfied when you have received our response, you can ask them for their assistance.

To get this information in larger print, audio or braille, please contact the customer helpline on 03452 66 01 15 or textphone 03457 22 33 55.

Billingham Post Office information sheet															
Address	53 Queensway Billingham TS23 2ND														
Opening hours	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Tue</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Wed</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Thu</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Fri</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sat</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon	09:00 – 17:30	Tue	09:00 – 17:30	Wed	09:00 – 17:30	Thu	09:00 – 17:30	Fri	09:00 – 17:30	Sat	09:00 – 17:30	Sun	Closed
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Sun	Closed														
Opening times of Post Office service at retail counter	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon & Tue</td><td>08:30 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Wed - Sat</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon & Tue	08:30 – 17:30	Wed - Sat	09:00 – 17:30	Sun	Closed								
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Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will still be available, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office. DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services will still be available.														
Serving positions	There will be five serving positions in total; one screened and three open plan and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.														
Access & facilities	Access will be level with an automatic door being installed at the entrance to the proposed premises. Low level serving counters, a low level writing desk and hearing loops will be available.														
How far away is it?	Approximately 65 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.														
Transport & parking	<p style="text-align: center;">Parking</p> <p>Kingsway West is a free multi-storey car park with 276 spaces and 3 designated disabled bays available approximately 100 metres away from the new premises.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Buses</p> <p>Public transport available to and from the surrounding areas.</p>														
Retail	Confectionery, Tobacco, News Retailer														
Date of move	To be confirmed.														