



Dear Sir/Madam

**Bishops Stortford Post Office®  
102 South Street, Bishops Stortford, CM23 3AA**

**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 into new premises at 75a South Street, Bishops Stortford, CM23 3AL. The branch will be operated by Bishops Stortford Ltd.

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 Bishops Stortford, now and for the long-term.

**Public consultation feedback:**

We received 5 individual representations from customers during the local consultation period and held a customer forum to talk about our plans and answer questions. 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 this was taken into account along with all other relevant factors, when making our decision.

The main feedback commented on staffing at the new branch, the products and services that would be available, having to navigate the retail store to reach the Post Office and space inside the store.

**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 slightly 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.

When considering the consultation feedback, we reviewed public transport and the availability of parking. As the new site is approximately 50 metres away 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 Bishops Stortford 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. Bishops Stortford Ltd regard the Post Office network as a vital part of community services and we'll be working together to provide a new, modern Post Office with sufficient room for both Post Office and shop customers.

The new premises will be completely refurbished to incorporate stationery, greetings cards and gifts to run alongside the Post Office. The branch will operate from a newly built dedicated open plan Post Office area at the rear of 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 into the store will be level with an automated door installed at the entrance to the premises.

Externally the store front will include Post Office signage and an opening hours board. The existing street post box on South Street will remain and full posting facilities will be available in branch.

There will be directional signage from the entrance door through to the new Post Office area 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.

There will be five counter serving positions which has been based on current and forecast future business levels; three open plan positions, one traditional floor to ceiling screened position which will also provide travel money services, and an open plan service 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 be open for longer on Saturday afternoons, providing customers with more flexibility around their visits.

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

#### **Access to Post Office services and products:**

The same wide range of Post Office services will continue to be available. Some customers asked us whether they would be able to continue to collect packages from the existing Royal Mail delivery office. Although we are a separate business and not privy to any Royal Mail plans, we are not aware of any plans to move or close the delivery office.

It is our intention to install an external cash machine but this currently remains subject to survey by our cash machine provider, operational considerations, relevant consent and planning permission. If this is not possible or it won't happen before the move, personal banking and Post Office Card Account customers can continue to make cash withdrawals free of charge at the main counter. Alternatively, Bush Fair Post Office, 1-2 Corner House, Bush Fair, Harlow, CM18 6NZ (approx. 8.7 miles) and Ware Post Office, 11 High Street, Ware, SG12 9BP (approx. 13.5 miles) both have external Post Office cash machines. Additionally, customers can access their Post Office Card Account at Havers Lane Post Office, 3 Dean House, Havers Lane, Bishops Stortford CM23 3PQ (0.7 miles away) which offers extended opening hours of 07:00 – 21:00 seven days a week.

All staff, who work 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:**

Staff 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 the Bishops Stortford Ltd team to provide support, in the same way we 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:**

We believe that franchising this branch will allow us to better secure Post Office services in this community for the longer term and help strengthen and secure the Post Office network as a whole. We already run the vast majority of our network on a franchise or agency basis and delivering services through these branches is proven to be successful.

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 Bishops Stortford. The current branch will close at 17:30 on Wednesday 27 September 2017, with the new branch opening at 09:00 on Thursday 28 September 2017.




You can also find a copy of this letter on our website at [postofficeviews.co.uk](http://postofficeviews.co.uk). When entering the website you will be asked to enter the code for this branch: **00712499**.

Yours faithfully



**Roger Gale**  
**Sales & Trade Marketing Director**  
**Post Office Limited**

## How to contact us:

-  [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)
  -  [comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)
  -  Customer Helpline: 03452 66 01 15  
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55
  -  FREEPOST Your Comments
- Please note this is the full address to use and no further address details are**

We've published our final plan on-line, to see it, 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](https://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.**

<b>Bishops Stortford Post Office information sheet</b>															
<b>Address</b>	Bishops Stortford Ltd 75a South Street Bishops Stortford CM23 3AL														
<b>Opening hours</b>	<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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<b>Opening times of Post Office service at retail counter</b>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon - Sat</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon - Sat	09:00 – 17:30	Sun	Closed										
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Sun	Closed														
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>	The same wide range of products and services will still be available, with the exception of a cash machine. The provision of a cash machine is subject to a survey by our cash machine provider, operational considerations, relevant consent and planning permission.														
<b>Serving positions</b>	There will be five serving positions in total; one screened, three open plan and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. The total number of serving positions is based on current and future predicted business levels.														
<b>Access &amp; facilities</b>	Access into the store will be level with an automated door installed at the entrance to the premises. Low level serving counters, a low level writing desk and hearing loops will be available.														
<b>How far away is it?</b>	Approximately 50 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.														
<b>Transport &amp; parking</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parking/Buses</b></p> As the proposed premises are located close by the current branch, customers would be able to use the same local transport and parking facilities.														
<b>Retail</b>	Stationery, greetings cards and gifts														
<b>Date of move</b>	28 September 2017														