



Dear Customer

Local public consultation – Decision

**Blackburn, Post Office
29-33 Ainsworth Street, Blackburn, BB1 6AT**

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 4-6 Railway Road, Blackburn, BB1 5AX, where it will be operated by the existing postmaster.

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, 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.

We're currently making the final arrangements for the move and further information will be provided in branch once the dates have been agreed.

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

Kenny Lamont

**Kenny Lamont
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 Wednesday 19 October 2022

Consultation ended Wednesday 30 November 2022

Consultation responses

- 25 responses from customers

Key issues raised

- Distance
- Parking
- Access and Internal Space
- Antisocial behaviour
- Royal Mail Post Box

Response to issues raised

Distance

The new premises will be located approximately 190 metres from the current Post Office. 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. In terms of pedestrian access to the new location, there are well maintained pavements, with dropped kerbs along the route from the current site.

Parking

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 we can confirm that pay and display parking is available on Church Street with designated disabled parking, located approximately 65 metres away from the new premises. Further parking is also available at Salford pay and display car park on Starkie Street, located approximately 280 metres away from the new premises.

Access and Internal Space

We recognise that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, particularly to older and disabled customers and we want to make our services as accessible as possible. We are pleased to confirm when the new branch opens, access will be level at the entrance from the footpath. The postmaster will also carry out works to install a new shop front with a wide automatic door, to further improve access into the store. Additionally, although the internal ramp will remain adjustments will be made to the ramp to reduce the gradient, this will provide easier access into the new branch particularly for customers with mobility issues.

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. The premises are currently empty and we will be working closely with the postmaster on the internal layout to make sure there is clear access into the premises, ensuring the entrance, aisles and the waiting area are kept free from obstructions with adequate room provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

Antisocial behaviour

We acknowledge the concerns made about anti-social behaviour in the area. Although such matters are outside our direct control and are for the relevant authorities and local police to resolve, Post Office takes security very seriously. Whilst we cannot go into specific details around our security arrangements, strict guidelines will be put in place and we take every physical precaution within our branches, to provide a safe and secure environment for both our customers and staff. We can assure you the postmaster will take safety measures by implementing CCTV in the new branch for additional customer security. The postmaster will engage with the community police in the event of any anti-social behaviour outside and around the new branch.

Royal Mail Post Box

With regards to the post box, the provision of posting facilities remains the responsibility of Royal Mail, however they will be made aware of our plans so that they can review post box provision in the area.

Appendix B

Blackburn Post Office Summary Sheet

4-6 Railway Road
Blackburn
BB1 5AX

New opening hours

Mon - Fri	09:00 - 17:00
Sat	09:00 - 14:00
Sun	Closed

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

The same range of products and services will still be available.

Serving positions

There will be four serving positions in total: two screened and one open plan and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

Access

The new branch will have a wide automatic door with level access at the entrance. Works will be carried out to install a new shop front. Additionally, adjustments will be made to the internal ramp to reduce the gradient for easier access into the store.

Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.

Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 190 metres away from the current branch, along mostly level terrain.

Pay and display parking is available on Church Street with designated disabled parking, located approximately 65 metres away from the new premises.

Salford pay and display car park is available on Starkie Street, located approximately 280 metres away from the new premises.

Retail

Cards, Stationery, and Confectionery.

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.

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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.