



Dear Customer

Branch Temporary Closure

**Branksome Post Office
McColl's Retail Group, 118 Whitby Way, Darlington, DL3 9UH**

As you may be aware our retail partner, Morrisons, has recently taken the difficult decision to close several of their McColl's branded stores, some of which incorporate a Post Office service. We are now writing to inform you that, regrettably, following the withdrawal of the premises for Post Office use Branksome branch will be closing on Thursday 05 January 2023 at 17:30.

Post Office is facing a particularly challenging period, as are other high street retailers. The impact of rising costs, inflation and restrictions on our funding from Government mean that while we will always look to reopen branches when they close, we cannot commit to doing so in every instance. We will be evaluating Post Office service provision in the area and every effort will be made to mitigate the impact this closure will have on the local community. We want to ensure customers can access our quality services and products across the Post Office network and it is important that any future service is sustainable for the operator and for Post Office Limited. We are committed to maintaining our access criteria so that 99% of the UK's population are within 3 miles of a Post Office and 90% are within 1 mile and will continue to review this position and prioritise those areas with the highest need.

If you have any questions you would like to raise about this matter, please write to me via the National Consultation Team at the address shown at the end of the letter. Please note that your comments will not be kept confidential unless you expressly ask us to do so by clearly marking them "In Confidence".

Any future changes to service provision would be handled in line with our Principles of Community Engagement. An extract relating to Notification is available at the end of this letter.

We will display posters in the branch to inform customers.

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 what is happening to the Post Office in the local community. If you would like a supply of posters, please let us know.

We would like to apologise for the inconvenience the closure may cause. We hope that our customers will continue to use Post Office services and details of possible alternative Post Office branches are provided at the end of this letter for your convenience.

Due to the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic some opening hours may vary. The latest available branch information can be found on our website, www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder

If you are a local representative, we will write to you again once we have any news about our plans for future service provision.

Yours faithfully

Callum Bonfield

Callum Bonfield
Partner Account Manager

How to contact us:
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.**

Alternative branches

During the Coronavirus pandemic some branches may need to make changes to their opening hours. The latest available branch information can be found on our website

www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder

Cockerton Post Office

21 West Auckland Road, Darlington,
DL3 9EL

Opening times

Monday – Friday	08:30 – 16:00
Saturday	09:00 – 12:30
Sunday	Closed

Services

Similar services will continue to be available, with the addition of a comprehensive range of Travel Money, Passport Check & Send, Vehicle Tax and On Demand Travel Insurance, however excluding National Lottery.

Access

This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance.

Getting there

This Post Office service is located approximately 1.1 miles away from Branksome branch, along varied terrain. Parking is available nearby. There are local buses serving the surrounding area.

Albert Road Post Office

66-70 North Road, Darlington,
DL1 2EQ

Opening times

Monday – Saturday	09:30 – 18:00
Sunday	Closed

Services

Similar services will continue to be available.

Access

This branch has a wide door and a ramp with handrails at the entrance.

Getting there

This Post Office service is located approximately 2.1 miles away from Branksome branch, along varied terrain. Parking is available nearby. There are local buses serving the surrounding area.

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 **Notify** - where we are informing customers of changes around:

- Opening hours
- Temporary closure¹ / temporary service interruption
- Re-opening of a temporarily closed branch in the same site
- Opening a new branch unrelated to a previous closure
- Location used by a Mobile Post Office within a community

We will display a poster in branch (or nearby if appropriate) to notify customers of the above changes, providing four weeks' notice. Where four weeks' notice is not possible, we will provide notice as soon as we are able to. For temporary closures we will include details of the nearest alternative Post Offices and our customer helpline/textphone.

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

Comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

¹ We will provide an update to locally elected representatives if the status of the temporarily closed branch has not changed after 12 months.

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.

We notify locally elected representatives including 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, selected charities, local Citizens Advice, Age UK, Northern Ireland's Disability Action and Northern Ireland's Rural Community Network. They are also encouraged to share all information additionally with local groups and organisations who they believe have an active interest in changes to their local Post Office.