



Dear Customer

Camden High Street Post Office®
114-120 Camden High Street, Camden Town, London, NW1 0RR

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 Camden High Street Post Office to the nearby vacant retail store at 124 Camden High Street, Camden Town, London, NW1 0LU. It will be run by an experienced retail partner and will be known as Camden Post Office. 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 Camden, now and for the long-term.

Local Public consultation

We held a local public consultation which began on 4 July 2018 and ran until 15 August 2018 during which we welcomed feedback and comments on access arrangements in relation to the new location. We apologise for the delay in announcing our decision, however it has taken longer than expected to finalise our plans.

During the public consultation period we received 113 individual representations from customers and local representatives. We also held a customer forum to talk about our plans and answer questions. Some feedback expressed concern about the change of the branch to one run by a retail partner, with comments focusing on the size of the proposed new premises, the level of service that would be provided, potential congestion at the new branch and the busy nature of the current branch. Other responses focused on the consultation process itself, as well as the impact of the move on the local community.

When we propose a change to our network, we work hard to make sure as many people as possible know about it and provide them with the opportunity to let us have their views. The Principles of Community Engagement we follow when making changes in the Post Office network is agreed between Post Office Limited and Citizens Advice, the independent statutory consumer watchdog. In line with these principles, we contacted local representatives and customer information letters and posters were made available in branch from the first day of consultation. Details were also published on our website postofficeviews.co.uk, where customers could also let us have their views through our E-consultation channel.

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 their representatives and this was taken into account along with all other relevant factors, before making our decision.

Getting to the new location

When considering the consultation feedback, we reviewed public transport and the availability of parking. However, as the new site is approximately 20 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 Camden will continue to have good access to Post Office services.

The new Camden Post Office

We know that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, including our older and disabled customers. Universal Office Equipment (UK) Ltd have been trading since 1998 and operate six Post Offices, the first since 2015 offering a complete range of stationery and office services. They 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 undergo a complete internal refurbishment to provide a bright, modern open-plan branch with the introduction of a range of stationery and office services alongside the Post Office service. 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.

There will be directional signage from the entrance door through to the new Post Office area. 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 eight counter serving positions which has been based on current and forecast future business levels; six open plan positions, two 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 on Sundays, providing customers with more flexibility around their visits.

I'm satisfied that customer needs will be met. We will continue to monitor service demand in the Camden area, along with customer usage at the new branch following the move and will work with our new retail partner to make sure service standards are maintained.

Access to Post Office services and products

A wide range of services will be available at the new Camden branch including the fast track Drop and Go counter service for dropping off your mail. The Biometric Enrolment for the Home Office will not be available; however, the nearest branch providing the service is Upper Holloway Post Office, 14 Junction Road, London, N19 5TA, approximately 1.9 miles away. This branch can be reached from the current location by public transport, including bus number 134 approximately every 7 minutes. DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services will still be available at Camden Post 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, Queens Crescent Post Office, 139 Queens Crescent, Kentish Town, London, NW5 4ED (approx. 1.1 miles) has an external Post Office cash machine and can be reached by frequent public transport, including bus number 24.

I'm also pleased to advise you that a new Post Office branch, Camden High Street (146), Camden, NW1 0NE, opened on 27 April 2018 offering a wide range of Post Office services over extensive opening hours, meeting our customers' needs for greater convenience.

Customer service training and existing staff

Post Office runs a robust recruitment process and appointments are only made when we are entirely satisfied that the applicant has met all of our criteria. We are satisfied they have demonstrated to us that they are an appropriate franchise partner to operate the service in Camden and are committed to delivering excellent customer service.

Any person employed to work in Camden Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards and, just as with branches we run ourselves, the branch staff will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service related matters. Post Office Area Managers will work with our new partner and the branch team to provide support, in the same way they already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners.

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.

It's pleasing to hear of the high regard for our existing staff and we understand that this is a difficult time for our colleagues. In respect of the team working at the current 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 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 Camden. We're currently making the final arrangements for the relocation of Camden Post Office and the branch will be temporarily transferred to an experienced agent. To enable this to happen, Camden Post Office will need to temporarily close from 17:30 on Wednesday 16 January 2019 and re-opening at 09:00 on Friday 18 January 2019. Details of alternative services during this short temporary closure period are at the end of this letter and will also be displayed in the branch window. Further information will be provided in branch once the date of the move has been finalised.

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

Yours faithfully



Roger Gale
Sales & Trade Marketing Director
Post Office Limited

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy. Information about how we do this can be found on our website at postoffice.co.uk/privacy

Camden Post Office information sheet				
Address	Universal Office Equipment (UK) Ltd 124 Camden High Street Camden Town London NW1 0LU			
Post Office Opening Hours		Mon	09:00 – 18:00	
		Tue	09:00 – 18:00	
		Wed	09:00 – 18:00	
		Thu	09:00 – 18:00	
		Fri	09:00 – 18:00	
		Sat	09:00 – 17:30	
		Sun	12:00 – 16:00	
Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will be available, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office, but DVLA services will still be available. For reasons outside Post Office Limited's control, we cannot yet confirm whether a cash machine will be available at the new branch. The provision of a cash machine is subject to a survey by our cash machine provider, operational considerations, relevant consent and planning permission.			
Serving positions	There will be eight serving positions in total; two screened and six open plan. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.			
Accessibility	Access and Facilities Access will be level with an automatic door at the entrance to the new premises. Low level serving counters, a low level writing desk and hearing loops will be available.			
	Parking/Public Transport As the new premises are located close by the current branch, customers can use the same local transport and parking facilities.			
How far away is it?	Approximately 20 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.			
Retail	Cards, Stationery & Office Services			
Date of temporary closure	Closed from 17:30 on Wednesday 16 January 2019, re-opening at 09:00 on Friday 18 January 2019.			

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 in the area

Camden High Street (146) Post Office				
Address	146 Camden High Street Camden London NW1 0NE			
Post Office Opening hours		Mon	07:00 – 02:00	
		Tue	07:00 – 02:00	
		Wed	07:00 – 02:00	
		Thu	07:00 – 02:00	
		Fri	07:00 – 02:00	
		Sat	07:00 – 04:00	
		Sun	07:00 – 04:00	
Distance	This Post Office service is located approximately 100 metres away from Camden branch, along varied terrain.			
Products & Services	A wide range of Post Office services will be available.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there is a hearing loop.			
	Transport Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk .			

Crowndale Post Office				
Address	18 -22 Crowndale Road London NW1 1TT			
Post Office Opening hours		Mon	06:45 – 19:30	
		Tue	06:45 – 19:30	
		Wed	06:45 – 19:30	
		Thu	06:45 – 19:30	
		Fri	06:45 – 19:30	
		Sat	06:45 – 19:30	
		Sun	06:45 – 16:00	
Distance	This Post Office service is located approximately 0.7 miles away from Camden branch, along varied terrain.			
Products & Services	A wide range of Post Office services will be available.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there is a hearing loop.			
	Transport Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk .			

Kentish Town Post Office				
Address	251 Kentish Town Road London NW5 2JT			
Post Office Opening hours	Mon	08:30 – 17:30		
	Tue	08:30 – 17:30		
	Wed	08:30 – 17:30		
	Thu	08:30 – 17:30		
	Fri	08:30 – 17:30		
	Sat	08:30 – 17:30		
	Sun	Closed		
Distance	This Post Office service is located approximately 0.8 miles away from Camden branch, along varied terrain.			
Products & Services	A wide range of Post Office services will be available.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally there is a low level serving counter and PIN pad, and a hearing loop.			
	Transport Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk .			

Upper Holloway Post Office				
Address	14 Junction Road London N19 5TA			
Post Office Opening hours		Mon	09:00 – 17:30	
		Tue	09:30 – 17:30	
		Wed	09:00 – 17:30	
		Thu	09:00 – 17:30	
		Fri	09:00 – 17:30	
		Sat	09:00 – 17:30	
		Sun	Closed	
Distance	This Post Office service is located approximately 1.9 miles away from Camden branch, along varied terrain.			
Products & Services	The same range of products and services will be available.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities This branch has wide double doors and level access at the entrance. Internally there is a low level serving counter and PIN pad, and a hearing loop.			
	Transport Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk .			

Principles of Community Engagement on changes to the Post Office network

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.

We will **Engage** - where we are seeking feedback on a decision that has been made on:

- Re-opening of a temporarily closed branch in a new location (where the branch has been closed for more than three months)
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site

While the decision to proceed will have already been made, we will welcome suggestions about specific aspects of the change such as access arrangements and the internal layout. We will provide four weeks' notice or, where extenuating circumstances prevent this, we will provide as much notice as possible.

During this period we will display a poster in branch and provide information online. We will contact locally elected representatives², the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities³, providing clear information on any changes to services or access arrangements at the branch. We will ask locally elected representatives to share information with other key community outlets (such as notice boards, local charities, magazines, GP surgeries etc.). We will publish the outcome of the engagement online and in branch, providing a summary of key issues raised with a clear response to each and any changes made to our original plans.

We will **Consult** - where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch⁴
- 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-week⁵ 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, 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

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

² Locally elected representatives include but are not restricted to the Member of Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, or Northern Ireland Assembly, Local Authority Chief Executive, Ward Councillors, Parish or Community Council.

³ 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 2 and 3 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.