



Dear Customer

**Charing Post Office**  
**48 High Street, Charing, Ashford, TN27 0HX**

As you may be aware, the above Post Office closed last year for reasons beyond our control.

Since then, we have been exploring our options for restoring a Post Office service to our customers in the area and we have engaged with local businesses and stakeholders. Unfortunately, we currently do not have any confirmed interest or Post Office applications, and I'm writing to you and other local representatives to advise you that as there have been no suitable opportunities to re-establish a service, this branch will remain closed.

Post Office has undertaken a comprehensive review of the branch network to ensure that it continues to meet evolving customer needs in a very challenging economic climate. We must ensure that our funding and resources are allocated to deliver maximum benefit and sustainable services for all customers. This review examined the network at a very detailed, local level, analysing customer demand and accessibility of Post Office products and services.

Due to the length of time the branch has been closed, we would need to satisfy ourselves that any new opportunity would be sustainable for both Post Office Ltd and the operator. If you have any suggestions, please contact the National Consultation Team as detailed overleaf.

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 or in your organisation.

We're carrying out this notification in line with our Principles of Community Engagement. An extract relating to Notification is available at the end of this letter.

We regret that we have been unable to restore a service locally and have provided details at the end of this letter of possible alternative branches in the area, which we hope our customers will continue to use. The latest available branch information can be found on our website [www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)

Yours faithfully

*Emily Clive*

**Emily Clive**  
**Network Provision Lead/Partner Account Manager**

How to contact us:  
[comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)  
FREEPOST Your Comments  
[postofficeviews.co.uk](http://postofficeviews.co.uk)

**Alternative access to Post Office services:**

- **Hothfield Post Office**, 32 The Street, Hothfield, Ashford, TN26 1ES
- **Lenham Post Office**, The Square, Lenham, Maidstone, ME17 2PH

**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.**

## **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](https://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 closure<sup>1</sup> / 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, Consumer 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, Consumer 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**

<sup>1</sup> 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.