



Dear Customer

Local public consultation – Decision

**Chester Road Post Office
317 Chester Road, Aldridge, Walsall, WS9 0PH**

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 Red & White, 126 Hardwick Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 3DP.

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, 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.

The current branch will close at 17:30 on Thursday 5 October 2023, with the new branch opening, at Red & White, 126 Hardwick Road, at 09:00 on Saturday 14 October 2023. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

During transfer of the branch customers requiring Post Office facilities may use any convenient Post Office service. Details of two alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- Bridle Lane Post Office, 75 Blackwood Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 3PW
- Four Oaks Common Post Office, 80 Walsall Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B74 4QY

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

Sarah Cottrell

**Sarah Cottrell
Network Provision Lead
Post Office Limited**

comments@postoffice.co.uk

postofficeviews.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

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 15 August 2023

Consultation ended 26 September 2023

Consultation responses

- 8 responses from customers

Key issues raised

- Reduction in opening hours
- Suitability of Current Retail Offering

Response to issues raised

Reduction in opening

We do regret that a reduction in opening hours is unavoidable due to staff costs and the long term viability of the branch. Our priority is to safeguard our services in the locality and have a sustainable branch for the future to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in the local community.

Suitability of Current Retail Offering

We recognise that some customers may be concerned about carrying out their Post Office business in a new environment. The new operator is keen to make sure that customers feel comfortable when using the branch and will do all that they can to help meet customer needs. The store which is currently operated as an Off License will be refurbished and reopen as a convenience store. We will also be working closely with them to make sure an appropriate level of privacy is provided at the Post Office serving point.

Appendix B

Chester Road Post Office Information Summary

Red & White, 126 Hardwick Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 3DP.

New opening hours

Mon - Sat	07:30 – 18:00
Sun	08:00 -16:00

There are times our branches 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 be available. .

Serving positions

There will be one open plan serving positions at the retail counter. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.

Access

Currently there is a step at the entrance to the proposed premises, however a ramp with handrails would be installed to assist customers. Internally, there would be space for a wheelchair.

Getting there

The new branch is be located approximately 17 metres away from the current branch, along mostly level terrain. Parking is available outside the new premises.

Retail

Convenience store

Chester Road Post Office services available

For information about product availability call 03457 223344. For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the operator.

	New branch
Mail	
First & Second Class mail	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 st class 6 & 12 only, 2 nd class 12 only)	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓
Signed For	✓
Special Delivery	✓
Home shopping returns	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓
Express & contract parcels	✓
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. Tracked & Signed)	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	✓
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓
Local Collect	✓
Drop & Go	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments	
All personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual).	✓
Postal orders	✓
Moneygram	✓
Change giving	✓
Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)	✓
Key recharging	✓
Travel	
Pre-order travel money	✓
On demand travel money	Euros
Travel insurance referral	✓
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
National Lottery Terminal	✓
Payment by cheque	✓
Other Products are available at Aldridge Post Office , Northgate, Walsall, WS9 8PL	Opening times: Mon – Fri 08:30 – 17:30 Sat 09:00 – 13:00

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, 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

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Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

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.