



Dear Customer,

Branch Unplanned Closure

**Cockton Hill Post Office
59 Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6HS**

We are writing to inform you that, regrettably, following the resignation of the postmaster and the withdrawal of the premises for Post Office use, the above branch closed on Thursday 25 September 2025. Please accept my apologies for the late notification on this occasion.

I would like to assure you that we are currently investigating the options available which may enable us to reinstate a Post Office service to the local community. In exploring this, it is important that any future service is sustainable for the person operating the service, and for Post Office Limited.

Future provision will reflect customer numbers and usage and we may take the opportunity to establish an alternative type of service. This may be a local style branch which runs alongside an established retail shop in newly refurbished premises and creates a more modern and convenient experience for customers.

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 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 in the area are shown at the end of this letter. 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,

Ian Murphy

**Ian Murphy
Area Change Manager**

How to contact us:

comments@postoffice.co.uk

postofficeviews.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Alternative branches

There are times our branches may need to make changes to their opening hours. The latest available branch information, including any additional possible alternative Post Office branches in the area, can be found on our website www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder

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

We sell Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide services.
Postage services from other companies are also available in selected branches.

Bishop Auckland Post Office	Services available				
40 Newgate Street Bishop Auckland DL14 7EG	Offers similar services, however excluding a comprehensive range of Travel Money and Vehicle Tax.				
Opening times	Access				
<table border="1"><tr><td>Mon – Fri</td><td>09:00 – 18:00</td></tr><tr><td>Sat & Sun</td><td>09:00 – 13:00</td></tr></table>	Mon – Fri	09:00 – 18:00	Sat & Sun	09:00 – 13:00	Access is a small step at the entrance to the premises.
Mon – Fri	09:00 – 18:00				
Sat & Sun	09:00 – 13:00				
Getting there					
Approximately 1 mile from Cockton Hill Post Office branch, along varied terrain. Time restricted parking is available nearby and Victoria Avenue Car park is within 180 meters. There is a regular bus service between Cockton Hill and this branch with a bus stop within 75 meters.					
Toronto Mobile Service	Services available				
Toronto Bishop Auckland DL14 7RS	Offers similar services, however excluding On Demand Travel Insurance.				
Opening times	Access				
<table border="1"><tr><td>Mon</td><td>11:00 – 12:30</td></tr><tr><td>Wed</td><td>12:30 – 14:00</td></tr></table>	Mon	11:00 – 12:30	Wed	12:30 – 14:00	There is a step into the Mobile vehicle with an electronic tailgate available to facilitate easy access for wheelchair users and those with disabilities.
Mon	11:00 – 12:30				
Wed	12:30 – 14:00				
Getting there					
Approximately 1.7 miles from Cockton Hill Post Office branch, along varied terrain. Parking is available close to where the Mobile van will be parked.					

Customers requiring other services can also visit:

- Brooklands Drop & Collect, Brooklands, Bishop Auckland, Durham, DL14 6PW located 0.5 miles away

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

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
- Unplanned closure¹/planned service interruption
- Re-opening of a 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
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site where there are no changes to access to the Post Office serving point

We will display a poster in branch (or nearby if appropriate) to notify customers of the above changes, aiming to provide four weeks' notice. Four weeks' notice may not be possible for an unplanned change, and in these instances, we will provide notice as soon as we are able to. For closures we will include details of the nearest alternative Post Offices and our customer helpline/textphone.

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.

These Principles have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland, the independent statutory consumer advocacy bodies.

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 advocacy body (Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland, or the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland) if you're not satisfied with our response. The consumer advocacy body 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

¹Where the closure is unplanned, the service provision in the area will be reviewed based on current usage, modelling and availability of any suitable replacement or alternative service model. A commercial decision will be made if to actively seek to replace the closed service and will not be subject to public consultation.