



Dear Customer

Helsby Post Office®
215 Chester Road, Helsby, Frodsham, WA6 0AB

Local Public Consultation Decision

I'm writing to confirm that we will be proceeding with our proposal to move the above Post Office branch to Cheshire Retail NW Ltd, 205 Chester Road, Helsby, Frodsham, WA6 0DA, where it will operate as one of our new local style Post Office branches.

Regrettably for operational reasons, Helsby Post Office closed temporarily at its current location on Thursday 24 May 2018. We are currently looking at the possibility of providing a temporary operator at the current premises. I can assure you that we are working to restore Post Office services locally, although this may not be until the branch relocates and we will work with the new operator to do this as soon as possible. I would like to apologise for any inconvenience this temporary closure may cause.

During the local public consultation period we received 50 individual responses from customers and local representatives. Some feedback welcomed the move which it was said would provide a better location, more space and longer opening times. Other feedback centred on the distance to the new location, parking, access into the premises, privacy and queuing. All the feedback helped me to understand customers' views and concerns and was taken into account before finalising our plans.

By way of background, the move of this branch is part of our modernisation and investment plans to provide a Post Office network that is sustainable and will better meet customer needs for the future. Our proposal to relocate Helsby Post Office aims to help safeguard Post Office services in the local community for the longer term. We take a number of factors into account when considering an appointment including access, the size of the premises, suitability of the operator and their business plan for a viable and sustainable service. The processes we follow are established and robust and the new operator was successfully appointed following the completion of our application process.

While I have considered the concerns raised about parking in the area surrounding the new location, it is fair to say that this is a problem faced generally in many locations nationwide. As I am sure you will understand the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited. However I can confirm there is time restricted roadside parking near the new branch. Given the short distance of the move, I am satisfied that there is adequate car parking in the vicinity of the proposed new branch to meet the needs of customers using the Post Office. However with the aim of assisting our customers, the new operator will engage with the local authorities to explore the possibility of a designated disabled bay in close proximity to the new branch.

It's clear that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, particularly to older and disabled customers and we want to make our services as accessible as we possibly can. I am pleased to confirm that before the new Post Office opens, the new premises will have a wide door installed and access at the entrance will be level. Internally the new branch will be in line with Post Office specifications, making sure there is sufficient space for the Post Office service to operate alongside the retail offer. We will be working closely with the new operator on the internal layout and some fixtures and fittings will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises. Aisles and the queuing area will be kept free from obstructions and adequate room is provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around the shop and access Post Office services.

Although the local style format is a more modern way of offering Post Office services, it in no way compromises the professional service standards that we aim to provide at all of our branches. Staffing levels will be carefully aligned to customer demand and the staff training approaches used are of the same high standard as those undertaken in all our branches. This includes respecting customer confidentiality and adhering to the stringent security procedures which will be put in place to protect staff and customers. Additionally, any staff that will handle Post Office transactions will also have completed compliance training for a number of areas, including Data Protection and Mail Handling.

The new local style Post Office will operate from two open plan tills, located at the shop counter, enabling customers to carry out a wide range of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions. Customers will also benefit from the extended opening hours provided by our operator including Saturday afternoon and Sunday opening. Full details of the new branch are provided at the end of this letter together with a list of the products and services which will be available.

I have carefully considered our original proposal, the feedback received during the public consultation period and the impact on local residents and the wider community. Having also reviewed pedestrian and vehicular access to the new site, I am satisfied that following the change customers will continue to have reasonable access to Post Office services in the area and that this new way of offering Post Office services will continue to meet customer needs, whilst helping to provide long term viability and future sustainability for Post Office service provision in Helsby.

The current branch closed at 12:30 on Saturday 24 November 2018, with the new branch opening, at Cheshire Retail NW Ltd, 205 Chester Road, on Tuesday 4 December 2018. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused during the temporary closure.

If there are any unforeseen schedule changes which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in Cheshire Retail NW Ltd to let customers know. Customers requiring Post Office facilities during the temporary closure, may use any convenient Post Office service. Details of an alternative Post Office branch is provided below for your convenience:

- Frodsham Post Office, 80 Main Street, Frodsham, WA6 7AR

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




Thank you for considering our proposal.

Yours sincerely

Mike Cottrell

Mike Cottrell
Area Network Change Manager

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 www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy

To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille please contact the Customer Helpline on 03452 66 01 15 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.

Helsby Post Office information sheet

Address	Cheshire Retail NW Ltd 205 Chester Road Helsby Frodsham WA6 0DA														
Opening hours	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Monday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Friday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Saturday</td><td>07:00 – 22:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sunday</td><td>09:00 – 22:00</td></tr> </table>	Monday	07:00 – 22:00	Tuesday	07:00 – 22:00	Wednesday	07:00 – 22:00	Thursday	07:00 – 22:00	Friday	07:00 – 22:00	Saturday	07:00 – 22:00	Sunday	09:00 – 22:00
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Saturday	07:00 – 22:00														
Sunday	09:00 – 22:00														
Distance	40 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.														
Products & Services	The majority of Post Office products and services will still be available.														
Accessibility & accessibility works	<p>Access and facilities The proposed premises will have a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.</p> <p>Parking Time restricted roadside parking nearby.</p>														
Retail	Convenience store														
Date of Relocation	Tuesday 4 December 2018														

Helsby Post Office® services available

Your Postmaster or our Customer Helpline on 03452 66 01 15 will be happy to help you with any queries about product availability or provide you with details of maximum value of transactions. Customers can also shop online at www.postoffice.co.uk

	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	Express 24 & 48
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. signed for & Airsure)	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	x
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓
Local Collect	✓
Drop & Go	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments	
Post Office Card Account	✓
Personal & Business Banking cash withdrawals, deposits & balance enquiries using a card. Also enveloped cheque deposits and barcoded deposit slips.	✓
Postal orders	✓
Moneygram	✓
Change giving	✓
Bill payments	
Automated bill payments (card or barcoded)	✓
Key recharging	✓
Driving	
Car tax	✓
Licences	
Rod fishing licences	✓
Travel	
Pre-order travel money	✓
On demand travel money	Euros/Dollars
Travel insurance referral	✓
	✓
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
National Lottery Terminal	✓
Payment by cheque	Car tax only
Products marked ✖ are available at Frodsham Post Office, 80 Main Street, Frodsham, WA6 7AR	Opening times: Mon – Fri 09:00 – 17:30 Sat 09:00 – 12:30

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
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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.