



Dear Customer

Engaging with our customers - Share your views

Changes to Amble Outreach Services **Affecting Stamfordham, Swarland, Matfen and Longframlington**

We are writing to inform you that, regrettably, the postmaster from Amble Post Office is no longer able to operate the Outreach services located at Stamfordham and Swarland and therefore these services will cease operating from October 2024.

We've been working hard to identify a solution and a Mobile service, which is a travelling Post Office aboard a specifically designed vehicle that brings Post Office services and retail products to communities without relying on fixed premises, is a tried and tested way of maintaining service to smaller communities.

We are therefore pleased to inform you that the postmasters from Stocksfield Post Office and Alnwick Post Office have agreed to run a Mobile service to these communities, which presents the best possible solution to restore Post Office services to this community.

The current Outreach service operating from Stamfordham Village Hall, North Side, Stamfordham, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE18 0LA will cease from Thursday 3 October 2024 at 13:00 and will relocate onto the mobile van operated by the postmaster from Stocksfield Post Office with new operating hours on Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 15.55 and will operate from the car park at the same location at Stamfordham Village Hall.

Additionally, the current outreach service operating from Swarland Working Men's Club, High View, Swarland, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9JF, will also cease on Monday 7 October at 10:00 and will relocate onto the mobile van operated by the postmaster from Alnwick Post Office with new operating hours on Thursday 10 October 2024 at 08:15 and will operate from the car park at the same location at Swarland Working Men's Club.

To accommodate the new mobile services there will be some changes to the current opening hours to the Mobile services at Matfen and Longframlington.

The change to the opening hours at Matfen operated by the postmaster from Stocksfield Post Office will commence from Wednesday 9 October 2024 and the change to Longframlington opening hours operated by the postmaster from Alnwick Post Office will commence from Thursday 10 October 2024.

Details of changes to these Post Office services are also provided at the end of this letter and posters will be displayed locally so customers are aware of the changes.

We would like to hear from you

We are keen to proceed with the changes to the communities of Stamfordham and Swarland as soon as possible, so we have decided to go ahead with our plans. Restoring the service as a Mobile outreach is a commercial decision for Post Office Ltd and we are not seeking feedback on this aspect of the change. However, we would welcome suggestions about specific aspects of the change that might benefit customers, particularly on the following areas:

- How suitable do you think the new location is and how easy is it to get there?
- Do you have any comments on the days and opening hours?

We will be accepting comments until Wednesday 2 October 2024. We won't be responding to you individually, but any comments received will be taken into consideration as we finalise our plans.

You can share your views on the reopening of these Post Office services through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via postofficeviews.co.uk. When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the engagement for this service either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **264328**

How to share your views:

Consultation Hub (postofficeviews.co.uk)

comments@postoffice.co.uk

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments – N.B. This is the full postal address. Items sent by Freepost take 2 working days, please allow enough time for responses to be received.

Want to tell us what you think right here and now? Scan here.

If you don't have a QR code scanner on your phone, you can find one in your app store.



We will display posters locally to tell customers the good news. 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.

Once the plans have been finalised, we'll display a poster locally and information will be provided on our Consultation Hub outlining the main comments received and our response. If there are any unforeseen changes to the starting date, posters will be displayed locally to let customers know.

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

We do hope that you will support this new service.

Yours faithfully

Lynne Archbold

Lynne Archbold
Area Change Manager

Details of the new Mobile Services:

Stamfordham Mobile Service		Services
Car park outside Stamfordham Village Hall North Side Stamfordham Newcastle upon Tyne NE18 0LA		The same services will continue to be available.
Opening times		Access
Wednesday	15:55 – 16:55	There is a step into the Mobile vehicle, however an electronic tailgate is available to facilitate easy access for wheelchair users and those with disabilities.

Swarland Mobile Service		Services
Car park outside Swarland Working Mens Club High View Swarland Morpeth NE65 9JF		The same services will continue to be available.
Opening times		Access
Thursday	08:15 – 09:00	There is a step into the Mobile vehicle, however an electronic tailgate is available to facilitate easy access for wheelchair users and those with disabilities.

Details of the change to existing Mobile services opening hours:

Matfen Mobile Service

Matfen Village Hall, Southside, Matfen, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE20 0RP

Current opening times

Wednesday 14:45 – 16:45

New opening times

Wednesday 14:45 – 15:45

Details of the change to existing Mobile service opening hours:

Longframlington Mobile Service

Carpark Of King Georges Playing Field, Rothbury Road, Longframlington, Morpeth, NE65 8HU

Current opening times

Thursday 09:00 – 10:00

New opening times

Thursday 09:15 – 10:00

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

- Re-opening of a closed branch in a new location
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site where there will be changes to the Post Office service point location
- Relocating a branch where there is a risk that the service could be lost (e.g., an issue with the premises). This is to minimise or avoid a loss of service to a community where a replacement branch location has been Identified² and where there is no degradation of access to Post Office services (into and inside the premises).

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 representatives³, the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities⁴, 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.

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

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FREEPOST Your Comments

² Where there is a service risk situation that would result in the loss of service, to avoid or minimise a loss of service to a community we may need to make a commercial decision to proceed with a relocation of a Post Office branch. In these cases, we will not consult on a relocation, however we will follow the engagement process and seek feedback on access arrangements and the internal layout.

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.