



Dear Customer

Dolton Hosted Outreach services

We regret to inform you that Atherington branch will be closing on Saturday 10 April 2021, following the retirement of the Postmaster and the withdrawal of the premises for Post Office use.

We have continued to work to identify a solution to restore services to the customers in Atherington and we are pleased to be able to reinstate a temporary Hosted Outreach Post Office service, whilst we continue to seek a permanent solution.

We are delighted to let you know that the Postmaster from Dolton Post Office has been identified and will offer Post Office services from within the Atherington Pavillion Community Hall, Atherington, Umberleigh, EX37 9HY, and this service is scheduled to commence from Thursday 15 April 2021.

To accommodate this new Post Office service in Atherington, we have made some minor changes to the current opening hours of the Post Office service at Beaford. These changes will take effect from Thursday 1 April 2021. If there are any unforeseen changes to the date, posters will be displayed locally to let customers know.

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

We will continue to monitor the number of customers using Post Office services and we are confident that our changes will be welcomed by our customers in the local communities.

If there are any unforeseen changes to the dates, posters will be displayed locally to let customers know.

I know that the local community will join me in welcoming this good news and hope that you and our customers will continue to use this service. Please feel free to share this information with those in your organisation who you feel would have an active interest in this particular matter.

If you have any questions about the new service, please contact the National Consultation Team, as detailed below. Please note that your comments will not be kept confidential unless you expressly ask us to do so by clearly marking them "In Confidence".

We're carrying out this notification in line with our Principles of Community Engagement. A copy is available at the end of this letter.

Thank you for your support in restoring a Post Office service.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Walls

Matthew Walls
Network Provision Lead

How to contact us:

comments@postoffice.co.uk

postofficeviews.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

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.

Details of the new Hosted Outreach service at Atherington:**Atherington Post Office**

Atherington Pavilion
Atherington
Umberleigh
EX37 9HY

Opening times

Thursday	09:00 – 12:00
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Services

A wide range of services will continue to be available. Customers can still collect benefits in cash using our everyday banking services or Post Office card account.

Access and facilities

Access is level with a wide door at the Atherington Pavilion. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

Transport/parking

Parking is available outside the Atherington Pavilion.

Route

This new Hosted Outreach Post Office service is located within 100 metres from current branch at the Village Shop at The Square in Atherington.

Details of the changes to Hosted Outreach service at Beaford:**Beaford Post Office®**

The Village Hall, Beaford, Winkleigh, EX19 8LU

Current opening times

Tuesday	13:00 – 14:30
Friday	13:00 – 14:30

New opening times

Thursday	13:00 – 15:00
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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
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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.