



Dear Customer

**Earls Colne Post Office®**  
**Fork Andles, 15 High Street, Earls Colne, Colchester, CO6 2PA**

**Local public consultation**

We are proposing to move the above Post Office branch to a new location – Fork Andles, 52 High Street, Earls Colne, Colchester, CO6 2PB.

**Why are we moving?**

The lease for the current premises is due to expire in the near future. We have therefore had to identify an alternative location to continue to offer Post Office services to the local community.

The new premises, which is currently empty, will undergo a refurbishment to incorporate a Hardware store and Earls Colne Post Office. We are pleased to let you know that, the current Postmaster will continue to operate this service from these new premises and it will continue to provide the same wide range of products and services and the hours will remain unchanged.

The current Post Office will close on Monday 11 February 2019 at 18:30, with the new branch opening on Wednesday 20 February 2019 at 08:00.

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 at the end of letter.

**Your new Post Office branch**

Customers would access Post Office services at two low-screened, open-plan, modern serving points that's part of the retail counter. Working with the postmaster, we'd adapt the current store layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office tills if needed. The branch will offer a wide range of Post Office products and the opening hours would remain the same. Customer satisfaction with local style branches stands at 96 per cent, and nearly 20 per cent of local branch customers visit outside traditional opening hours.

**Consulting on the proposed new location**

We're carrying out a local public consultation and we'd welcome your views on the proposal. We welcome feedback and comments that can help inform our plans, particularly on the following areas:

- How easy is it to get to the new location?
- Are the new premises easy for you to get into and is the inside easily accessible?
- Are there any other local community issues affected by the move?
- Is there anything we could do to make it easier for customers?

An information sheet is enclosed that provides more details about your proposed new branch. For further information or to share your views, please visit our Consultation Hub via the link below, then use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code 191116

[postofficeviews.co.uk](http://postofficeviews.co.uk)

If you're a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information 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 Earls Colne. If you would like a supply of these posters please let us know.

**Dates for local public consultation:**

|                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Local Public Consultation starts | 9 January 2019   |
| Local Public Consultation ends   | 20 February 2019 |
| Proposed date of change          | 20 February 2019 |

In order to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in Earls Colne as soon as possible, the new service will open during public consultation. However this does not affect the period of public consultation which is ongoing until 20 February 2019.

We are committed to engaging with and supporting our customers and their representatives as we make changes to the Post Office network. This consultation process is being carried out in line with our Principles of Community Engagement which have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland - the independent statutory consumer watchdogs. A copy is available at the end of this letter.

Thank you for considering our proposal. Any information we receive will be considered as we finalise our plans. At the end of the consultation we'll let you know our final plans by displaying a poster in the branch or if you are a local representative I'll be in touch again.

Yours faithfully

*John Rollason*

**John Rollason**  
**Area Network Change Manager**

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments

**Please note this is the full address to use  
and no further address details are required.**

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.



Items sent by Freepost take two working days to arrive, so responses by Freepost should be sent in sufficient time to arrive before the end of the consultation period. Working days do not include Saturdays or Sundays. Responses received after the deadline will not be considered.

**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.**

### Earls Colne Post Office information sheet

|                                  | Current Post Office location  |     |               |  | Proposed new Post Office location                                     |     |               |  |
|----------------------------------|---|-----|---------------|--|---|-----|---------------|--|
| Address                          | Fork Andles<br>15 High Street<br>Earls Colne<br>Colchester<br>CO6 2PA   |     |               |  | Fork Andles<br>52 High Street<br>Earls Colne<br>Colchester<br>CO6 2PB |     |               |  |
| Post Office Opening hours        |   | Mon | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |   | Mon | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Tue | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |   | Tue | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Wed | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |   | Wed | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Thu | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |   | Thu | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Fri | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |   | Fri | 08:00 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Sat | 08:30 – 18:30 |  |   | Sat | 08:30 – 18:30 |  |
|                                  |   | Sun | 10:00 – 16:00 |  |   | Sun | 10:00 – 16:00 |  |
| Distance                         | 110 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.   |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Products & Services              | The same wide range of products and services will still be available.   |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Serving positions                | There will be two Post Office serving points provided at the retail counter and available during shop opening hours.  |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Accessibility                    | <b>Access and facilities</b><br>Currently there are steps at the entrance to the new premises, however a permanent ramp would be installed subject to planning permission. Internally, there would be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.<br><br><b>Parking</b><br>Time restricted parking bays are available within 110 metres of the new premises with dedicated marked disabled parking bays. |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Retail                           | Hardware  |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Local Public Consultation starts | 9 January 2019  |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Local Public Consultation ends   | 20 February 2019  |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |
| Proposed month of change         | 20 February 2019  |     |               |  |   |     |               |  |

| Earls Colne Post Office® services available  |                |              |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| For information about product availability call 03457 223344 or to provide you with details of maximum value of transactions please speak to the operator. Customers can also shop online at <a href="http://www.postoffice.co.uk">www.postoffice.co.uk</a>  |                |              |
|  | Current branch | New branch   |
| <b>Mail</b>  |                |              |
| First & Second Class mail  | ✓              | ✓            |
| Stamps, stamp books (1 <sup>st</sup> class 6 & 12 only, 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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. signed for & Airsure)  | ✓              | ✓            |
| 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  | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Withdrawals, deposits and payments</b>  |                |              |
| Post Office Card Account   | ✓              | ✓            |
| All personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual).  | ✓              | ✓            |
| Postal orders  | ✓              | ✓            |
| Moneygram  | ✓              | ✓            |
| Change giving  | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Bill payments</b>   |                |              |
| Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)   | ✓              | ✓            |
| Key recharging   | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Driving</b>   |                |              |
| Car tax  | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Licences</b>  |                |              |
| Rod fishing licences   | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Travel</b>  |                |              |
| Pre-order travel money   | ✓              | ✓            |
| On demand travel money   | <b>Euros</b>   | <b>Euros</b> |
| Travel insurance referral  | ✓              | ✓            |
|  |                |              |
| Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers  | ✓              | ✓            |
| <b>Payment by cheque</b>   | ✓              | ✓            |
| <p>Other Products are available at <b>Halstead</b> Post Office, WHSmith, 76-80 High Street, Halstead, CO9 2JG</p> <p><b>Greenstead Green</b> Post Office, Chris Butler Farms, Greenstead Green Farm Shop, Crocklands Greenstead Green, Halstead, CO9 1QY</p> |                |              |
| <p>Opening times:<br/> Mon, Wed, Thu &amp; Fri 08:30 – 17:30<br/> Tue &amp; Sat 09:00 – 17:30</p> <p>Opening times:<br/> Mon to Fri 09:00 – 17:00<br/> Sat 09:30 – 12:30</p>   |                |              |

## **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 closure<sup>1</sup>/ 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 representatives<sup>2</sup>, the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>3</sup>, 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 branch<sup>4</sup>
- 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-week<sup>5</sup> 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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**Textphone: 03457 22 33 55**

<sup>1</sup>We will provide an update to locally elected representatives if the status of the temporarily closed branch has not changed after 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.