



Dear Customer

**Local public consultation – Decision**

**Five Ways Post Office  
18 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2AD**

I'm writing to confirm that following a period of local public consultation and review, we have made the decision to proceed with the move of the above Post Office into 37 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2AN, where it will be operated by a retail partner, as one of our main style branches.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information. All the feedback we received helped us to better understand the views of customers and their representatives and this was taken into account, along with all other relevant factors, in making our decision. A summary of the feedback is enclosed along with an information sheet providing further details about the new branch.

After careful consideration of the feedback received, we remain confident that the layout and location of the new branch will continue to meet customer needs and deliver an excellent service, whilst securing the long-term viability of Post Office services in the local community.

The current branch will close at 13:00 on Saturday 16 September 2023, with the new branch opening, at 37 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, on Monday 18 September 2023 at 09:00. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

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 below for your convenience:

- Rusthall Post Office, 20-22 High Street, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8RW
- High Street Tunbridge Wells Post Office, 83 High Street, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1YG

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at: [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

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

Yours faithfully

*Jason Collins*

**Jason Collins  
Network Provision Manager  
Post Office Limited**

[comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)  
[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://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.**

## **Appendix A**

### **Response to Local Public Consultation**

**Consultation started** 2 June 2023

**Consultation ended** 14 July 2023

#### **Consultation responses**

- 13 responses from customers and local representative

#### **Key issues raised**

- Distance and Route
- Parking and access to Transport
- Counters, Products and Services

#### **Response to issues raised**

##### **Distance and Route**

The new premises are located approximately on the same road, 110 metres from the current branch site, along varied terrain. With any relocation it is inevitable that whilst some customers will have an easier journey to the new location, regrettably others will have further to travel. In terms of pedestrian access to the new location, there are well maintained pavements, with dropped kerbs along the route from the current site.

##### **Parking, Transport and Access**

Parking and the availability of parking spaces are problems faced generally in many locations nationwide. Whilst the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited. A further review of parking has been carried out and has confirmed that parking is available at the multi storey car park located on Meadow Road, approximately 200 metres away from the new premises. We are therefore satisfied that there is adequate car parking in the area surrounding the new branch to meet the needs of customers using the new Post Office.

I acknowledge that for some customers the move may mean a slightly longer journey than currently, however the new premises are located closer to the town centre, 110 metres on the same road, with a walking distance from the current site. In situations such as this there will always be some customers who are more inconvenienced than others and we can only apologise for this. We can confirm bus stops are centrally located between the current branch and the new premises on the same side of the road as the new site. Equally, there may be some customers for whom the new premises is slightly closer for them than at present. However, we remain confident the move will not significantly impede customer access to Post Office services.

We recognise 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 possible. We are pleased to confirm that before the new Post Office opens, the new operator will complete a full refurbishment, and the raised threshold will be removed to make the access level to provide improved access for customers. Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.

### **Counters, Products and Services**

Internally, the new main style branch will be built in line with Post Office specifications with a dedicated Post Office area, incorporating two screened serving positions, with low level facilities and separate queuing area for Post Office customers. We will work closely with the new operator to plan the interior layout, to ensure optimum use of the space within the store and that access into and inside is kept clear and free of obstacles. Aisles and the queuing area will be kept free from obstructions and adequate room will be provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

Additionally, there will be a Post Office serving point located at the retail counter where customers can access the majority of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions. This serving point will be open six days a week and will offer slightly longer opening times than the main Post Office counter, allowing customers to transact the majority of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions across six days a week and at times that are more convenient for them.

The opening hours at the new branch have been revised. The main fortress counters will be open for longer on Saturday, operating from 09:00 – 17:30. Although the opening hours at the retail counter are less than originally proposed, customers will still benefit from longer opening hours overall, with Post Office services being available at the retail counter from Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:00 and Saturday from 09:00 to 18:00. Customers will be able to transact the same range of products and services as currently.

With regards to the post box, our normal procedure is to inform Royal Mail of our proposal as they are responsible for all matters relating to the delivery and acceptance of mail including the siting of post boxes. The decision on whether to relocate or install a new Post Box is therefore for them to make and as a separate business to Post Office Ltd they will have their own procedures to follow, which may include submission of planning applications and consideration of other utilities in the area. Items of mail can be handed across the counter during the Post Office opening hours at the new branch.

## Appendix B

### Five Ways Post Office Information Sheet

37 Grosvenor Road  
Tunbridge Wells  
TN1 2AN

#### New opening hours

Monday - Saturday	09:00 – 17:30
Sunday	Closed

#### Opening times of Post Office service at retail counter offering selected services

Monday - Friday	08:30 - 18:00
Saturday	09:00 – 18:00
Sunday	Closed

**Some branches may need to make changes to their opening hours.  
The latest available branch information can be found on our website  
[www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)**

#### Products & Services

The same range of Post Office products and services will still be available.

#### Serving positions

There will be three serving positions: two screened and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

#### Access

Currently, there is a raised threshold at the entrance to the new premises with wide doors.

As part of a full refurbishment, the raised threshold will be removed to make the access level to provide improved access for customers.

Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.

#### Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 110 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.

Parking is available at the Multi storey car park located on Meadow Road, approximately 200 metres away from the new premises.

#### Retail

Convenience store & Stationery

#### Date of move

Monday 18 September 2023 at 09:00

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## **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](https://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 **Consult** where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch<sup>1</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>2</sup> local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives<sup>3</sup>, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>4</sup> 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, Consumer 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, Consumer 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**  
**Call: 03452 66 01 15**

**Comments@postoffice.co.uk**  
**Textphone: 03457 22 33 55**

**FREEPOST Your Comments**

<sup>1</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>2</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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</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 <sup>3</sup> and <sup>4</sup> 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.