

Dear Customer,

## **Local public consultation – Decision**

**Ford Post Office  
460 Hylton Road, Sunderland, SR4 8AB**

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 Premier, 489 Hylton Road, Sunderland, SR4 8DR.

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 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 summary 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 on Wednesday 04 September 2024 at 17:30, with the new branch opening, at Premier, 489 Hylton Road, on Thursday 05 September 2024 at 13:00. 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:

- Pallion Post Office, 40-44 Midmoor Road, Pallion, Sunderland, SR4 6NT
- Hylton Post Office, 21-23 Railway Terrace, Sunderland, SR4 0PY

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.

Your faithfully

*Kenny Lamont*

**Kenny Lamont  
Regional Change 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** Thursday 29 May 2024

**Consultation ended** Thursday 25 July 2024

#### **Consultation responses**

- 44 responses from customers

#### **Key issues raised**

- Distance
- Parking
- Cash Machine
- Internal Space
- Privacy
- Staff Training

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

##### **Distance**

The new premises are located approximately 350 metres away from the previous 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. With any relocation it is inevitable that whilst some customers will have an easier journey to the new location, it will regrettably mean a longer or less convenient journey for some customers.

##### **Parking**

Parking and peak time traffic congestion 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 a customer carpark will be available for up to 6 cars to the side of the new premises and roadside parking is available nearby.

##### **Cash Machine**

The previous branch has a cash machine, however the Post Office external cash machine will not be transferring to the new branch. The nearest alternative free to use cash machine can be found approximately 550 metres away at Costcutter, 129-131 Front Rd, Sunderland SR4 0BX. All Post Office branches offer free access to cash for the major high street banks and customers will be able to use their debit card to withdraw cash at the counter of the new branch.

##### **Internal Space**

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, ensuring the entrance, aisles and the waiting area are kept free from obstructions and adequate room is provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

**Privacy**

Although the local style format is a different way of offering Post Office services, it does not compromise the professional service standards that we provide at all of our branches. We will also be working closely with the operator to make sure an appropriate level of privacy is provided for Post Office customers. For example, we discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service or handing a receipt that contains any financial information face down. Open plan working also lends itself to more discreet conversations as customers don't have to raise their voice to be heard.

**Staff Training**

Our new operator is keen to provide a high standard of service to customers. 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. 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.

## Appendix B

### Ford Post Office Information Summary

Premier  
489 Hylton Road  
Sunderland  
SR4 8DR

#### New opening hours

Mon - Sat	09:00 - 17:30
Sun	Closed

There are times our branches may need to make changes to its 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

A similar range of products and services will still be available.

#### Serving positions

There will be a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

#### Access

Currently, there is a small step at the entrance to the new premises, however works will be carried out at the new premises to install a ramp with grabrails at the entrance. There will be a clearly visible sign at the front of the premises and a bell will be installed for customers to ring for assistance. Both the bell and the sign will be accessible to wheelchair users.

Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

#### Getting there

The new premises would be located approximately 350 metres away from the previous branch, along mostly level terrain.

A customer carpark will be available for up to 6 cars to the side of the premises and roadside parking is available nearby.

There are local buses serving the surrounding area.

#### Retail

Convenience store.

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Ford Post Office services available	
For information about product availability call 03457 223344. For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the operator.	
	New branch
<b>Mail</b>	
First & Second Class mail	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 <sup>st</sup> class and 2 <sup>nd</sup> class)	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓
Signed For	✓
Special Delivery	✓
Home shopping returns	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓
Parcelforce Express Service	Express 24 & 48
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (Inc. Tracked & Signed)	✓
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>	
Personal & Business Banking cash withdrawals, deposits & balance enquiries using a card. Also enveloped cheque deposits and barcoded deposit slips.	✓
Postal orders	✓
MoneyGram	✓
Change giving	✓
Automated bill payments (card or barcoded)	✓
Key recharging	✓
<b>Travel</b>	
Pre-order travel money	✓
On demand travel money	Euros
Travel insurance referral	✓
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
<b>Payment by cheque</b>	✕
Products marked ✕ are available at <b>Pallion</b> Post Office, 40-44 Midmoor Road, Pallion, Sunderland, SR4 6NT	

## **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>5</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>6</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, 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](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

[Comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:Comments@postoffice.co.uk)

**FREEPOST Your Comments**

**Call: 03452 66 01 15**

**Textphone: 03457 22 33 55**

<sup>5</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>6</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.