



Dear Customer

Local public consultation - Have your say

Headcorn Post Office
28 High Street, Headcorn, Ashford, TN27 9NE

We are proposing to move the above Post Office branch to a new location - 10 Foremans Walk, Headcorn, Ashford, TN27 9NE

Why are we proposing this move?

The lease on the current premises has expired and the postmaster has identified an opportunity to move this branch into alternative new premises to continue to offer Post Office services to the local community.

The new premises, which is currently empty, will undergo a full refurbishment to incorporate Headcorn Post Office. Our priority is to safeguard Post Office services to the local community in the longer term and the postmaster firmly believes that the move will help secure continued access to Post Office services locally, as well as supporting the viability of their business.

The current Post Office is scheduled to close on Thursday 21 October 2021 at 15:00 and your new-look Post Office is scheduled to open at the new premises on Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 09:00. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed 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:

- Sutton Valence Post Office, Haven Farm Shop, North Street, Sutton Valence, Maidstone, ME17 3HS
- Smarden Post Office, Chessenden Lane, Smarden, Ashford, TN27 8NF

We'd like your help

We're now starting a period of local public consultation and your feedback is important to us as it will help to inform our decision. For more details of the proposed services and accessibility, please see the branch information sheet at the end of this letter.

What exactly are we consulting on?

We'd welcome your comments on the following areas:

- **How easy is it to get to the proposed new location?**
- **Are the new premises easy for you to get into and are they easily accessible once inside?**
- **Are there any other local community issues which you believe could be affected by or affect the proposed Post Office move?**
- **If the move were to proceed is there anything, we could do to make it easier for customers?**

Local Public Consultation starts	24 September 2021
Local Public Consultation ends	5 November 2021
Proposed date of change	2 November 2021

In order to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in Headcorn, the new service will open on Tuesday 2 November 2021. However, this does not affect the period of public consultation which is ongoing until Friday 5 November 2021.

You can share your views on the proposed change through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via postofficeviews.co.uk. When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **135925**

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.



Good to know

- Customers would access Post Office services in a modern, open-plan environment alongside the operator's retail.
- Working with the postmaster, we'd adapt the new premises layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office. It would be in a dedicated area of the store with two screened positions and Post Office till at the retail counter offering same Post Office products and services.
- Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about the proposal and to ask their views.
- Any information we receive will be carefully considered as we finalise our plans.
- We will write to you again at the end of the consultation to respond to the main issues raised and to explain our final plans for the branch.
- This consultation 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. An extract relating to Consultation is available at the end of this letter.

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 your Post Office. If you would like a supply of posters, please let us know. Our contact details can be found at the bottom of the first page.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Yours faithfully

Jason Collins

Jason Collins
Partner Account Manager
Post Office Limited

Headcorn Post Office Information Sheet

Current Location	Proposed New Location
28 High Street, Headcorn Ashford TN27 9NE	10 Foremans Walk Headcorn Ashford TN27 9NE

Current opening hours

Mon, Tue & Fri	09:00 – 17:30
Wed, Thu & Sat	09:00 – 15:00
Sun	Closed

Proposed opening hours

Mon, Tue & Fri	09:00 – 17:30
Wed, Thu & Sat	09:00 – 15:00
Sun	Closed

During the Coronavirus pandemic the branch 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

Products & Services

The same wide range of products and services would still be available.

Serving positions

There would be three serving positions in total; two screened and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

Access

Access would be level at the entrance to the proposed premises. Internally, there would be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

Getting there

The proposed new branch would be located approximately 25 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain. Time restricted roadside parking is available nearby.

Retail

Cards & Stationery

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.

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 **Consult** where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch¹
- 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-week² local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives³, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities⁴ 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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¹ 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.

² 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.

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.