



Dear Customer

Local public consultation - Have your say

**Horsley Hill Post Office
19 Horsley Hill Square, South Shields, NE34 7HQ**

We are moving the above Post Office branch to a new location: Premier - Horsley Hill Convenience Store, 22 Horsley Hill Square, South Shields, NE34 7HQ, where it will continue to operate as one of our main style branches.

Why are we moving?

Unfortunately, the Postmaster's lease for the current premises is due to expire in the near future. Subsequently, in order to secure a more sustainable service to our customers in Horsley Hill, the Postmaster has identified an opportunity to relocate the Post Office to a new premises nearby.

Customers would continue to access Post Office services from a larger, spacious, brighter and modern premises. Our 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 Monday 22 November 2021 at 17:00. To restore Post Office services to the local community, your new modern Post Office is scheduled to open at the new premises on Saturday 27 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:

- Cleadon Park Post Office, 254B Sunderland Road, South Shields, NE34 6QY
- Green Street Post Office, 3 Fredrick Street, South Shields, NE33 5DY

We'd like your help

Whilst the decision has already been made to move the branch, we would still like your views on access and the service offered at the new location. Therefore, we're now commencing a local public consultation and before we finalise our plans would like to hear your views.

What exactly are we consulting on?

We'd welcome your comments on the following areas:

- Are the new premises easy for you to get into and is the inside easily accessible?
- Are there any other local community issues which you believe could be affected by or affect the change?
- Is there anything we could do to make it easier for customers?

Local Public Consultation starts	Tuesday 09 November 2021
Local Public Consultation ends	Tuesday 21 December 2021

In order to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in Horsley Hill, the new Post Office branch will open on Saturday 27 November 2021. However, this does not affect the period of public consultation which is ongoing until Tuesday 21 December 2021.

You can share your views on the 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 **420329**

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 will access Post Office services in a modern, open-plan environment alongside the operator's retail.
- Working with the postmaster, we'd adapt the current store layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office. It would be in a dedicated area of the store with two screened and a Post Office till at the retail counter offering most Post Office products and services.
- Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about the changes and to ask their views.
- Any information we receive will be carefully considered as we finalise our plans.
- If you are a local representative, 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.

If you are a local representative, 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 Horsley Hill 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.

Yours faithfully

Kenny Lamont

Kenny Lamont
Network Provision Manager
Post Office Limited

Horsley Hill Post Office Information Sheet

Current Location	New Location
19 Horsley Hill Square South Shields NE34 7HQ	Premier - Horsley Hill Convenience Store 22 Horsley Hill Square South Shields NE34 7HQ

Current opening hours

Mon- Fri	09:00 – 17:30
Sat	09:00 – 12:30
Sun	Closed

New opening hours

Mon - Fri	09:00 - 17:30
Sat	09:00 - 17:30
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 range of products and services will still be available.

Serving positions

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

Access

The new premises will have a wide automatic door and level access at the entrance.

Low level serving counters, a low-level writing desk and hearing loops would be available.

Getting there

Within 10 metres of the current branch, along level terrain.

A carpark is available outside the new premises with designated disabled parking bays.

Retail

Convenience store.

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
03452 66 01 15

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

FREEPOST Your Comments Call:

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.