



Dear Customer

Huddersfield Post Office®
Northumberland Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1AA

New Street Post Office®
102-104 New Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2UD

Local Public Consultation Decision

I am writing to confirm that, after careful consideration of the feedback received and all other relevant factors, we have decided to proceed with our proposal to merge Huddersfield Post Office and New Street Post Office into one modern new branch. This will be located at the nearby vacant retail unit previously known as Big Outlet Store at 65-67 New Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2BQ, where it will be run by an experienced retail partner.

Public consultation feedback:

During the local consultation period we received 12 individual representations from customers. We also held a customer forum to talk about our plans, which was attended by Councillors from Kirklees Council, and met with local MP Barry Sheerman. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information.

The main areas of feedback were around the distance between the new branch and parking facilities, the size of the new premises, and the loss of the current building at Northumberland Street. There were also comments that the new location is more central and would provide better access. 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, when making our decision.

Our plan to replace the branches with one that is operated by a franchise partner is part of our continuing modernisation of the network. Our priority is to ensure that we provide services that will meet customer needs, both now and into the future. We are confident that the most effective way to achieve this is by operating these branches through a retail partner. The vast majority of our branches are already successfully operated in this way, and we believe this is the best approach to retaining Post Office services that can continue to serve our customers in Huddersfield for the long term.

Getting to the new location:

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. We carefully considered factors such as the local terrain, parking and transport links when developing our proposal. We also took account of whether there were any particular local road traffic issues that may negatively impact accessibility.

The new branch is located approximately 515 metres from Huddersfield branch and approximately 162 metres away from New Street branch, along varied terrain. There is a fee paying car park at the Market Hall with 394 spaces, approximately 275 metres from the new branch. Further to this, there are 9 designated disabled bays on Corporation Street, approximately 80 metres away.

Buses are available to and from the surrounding area and the nearest bus stop is approximately 80 metres away.

In conclusion, I remain satisfied that customers in Huddersfield will continue to have good access to Post Office services.

What the new branch will look like:

We know that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, including our older and disabled customers. Our new retail partner regards the Post Office network as a vital part of community services and will refurbish the vacant premises and install a new modern Post Office alongside their retail offer of cards, stationery, coffee shop and delicatessen. We'll be working together to ensure there is sufficient room for both Post Office and shop customers. The branch will have its own designated raised area at the rear of the store and customer access both into and within the store will meet Post Office Ltd's own accessibility standards and all applicable legislation.

Externally, the store front will include Post Office signage and an opening hours board. There will also be full posting facilities within the new branch. Access into the branch will be level with automatic doors at the entrance and directional signage from the entrance through to the new Post Office area. Internally, there will be three steps and a ramp with a handrail leading to the Post Office area. To make sure there is sufficient space for Post Office customers, including wheelchair users, to move around the store and reach the Post Office area without hindrance, the entrance area and shopping aisles will be kept free of obstructions.

The Post Office counters will be built to Post Office specifications and will include lighting to industry standards, low level counters, PIN pads, hearing loops and customer seating. The new branch will have seven serving positions in total, which is based on current and future predicted business levels. It will be made up of five open plan serving positions and two floor-to-ceiling screened serving positions. Open plan serving positions are successfully used across the Post Office network as an alternative to the more traditional positions. There is still a partitioned screen but this is lower, helping to provide a more personal service and discreet conversations when needed. Additionally, there will be two self-service kiosks for mails transactions including home shopping returns, E Top-Ups, and a range of bill payments.

Following the merger, the main Post Office counters will be open from 09:00 to 17:30 Monday to Saturday. Tickets for queuing will not be used at the new branch, however a linear queuing system will be in place to help with queuing, and we successfully operate the majority of our network in this way.

A war memorial is located in Northumberland Street, Huddersfield Post Office branch dedicated to those of our colleagues who worked for the organisation when it was known as the General Post Office (GPO), which included what is now Royal Mail. We are working with Royal Mail to identify the most appropriate place to relocate the memorial so that members of the public can continue to pay their respects to those of our colleagues who sacrificed their lives. Please be reassured that we fully recognise the importance and significance of war memorials and, once agreed, the relocation will be handled with due and proper care and sensitivity, including a re-dedication ceremony.

I'm therefore satisfied that customer needs will continue to be met. Alongside this, we'll continue to monitor customer usage at the branch following the move and will work with our retail partner to make sure service standards are maintained.

Access to Post Office services and products:

The same wide range of Post Office services will still be available at the new branch, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office, which is currently available at New Street Post Office, but DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services would still be available. In any case, from early 2019 the Home Office will transfer the Biometric Enrolment Service to a new national provider and this service will no longer be available at any Post Office branches. In the interim period, the Biometric Enrolment service will continue to be available at St Johns Post Office, 116 Albion Street, Leeds LS2 8LP approximately 20.7 miles away. For reasons outside Post Office Limited's control, we cannot yet confirm whether a cash machine will be available at the new branch. The provision of a cash machine is subject to a survey by our cash machine provider, operational considerations, relevant consent and planning permission. Personal banking and Post Office Card Account customers can continue to make cash withdrawals free of charge at the main counter. Alternatively, Marsh Post Office has an external Post Office cash machine and is located approximately 1.2 miles away at 104 Westbourne Road, Huddersfield, HD1 4LF.

We've considered the feedback received during consultation from customers and local representatives very carefully, particularly the concerns raised around future accessibility of our services. With any change it's inevitable, but regrettable, that some customers will be inconvenienced. However, with Marsh Post Office and Fartown Post Office within a two mile radius of the new branch, there are a number of alternative Post Office branches in the surrounding area, along with good public transport provision.

We are confident that our new branch will have the capacity to meet customer demand and cater for additional customers, offering a wide range of Post Office products and services and providing continued good access to our services.

Staff, who will work exclusively in the Post Office, will be trained to provide information on financial products, including savings and insurances. Product information will also be available for customers to take away with them and our website and specialist customer helplines also provide information on what's available and how to make a purchase.

Further details of the new branch, including opening hours and alternative branches in the area, are provided in the enclosed information sheet.

Customer service training and existing staff:

Our new operator has satisfied us that they are equally as committed to delivering excellent customer service as we are. Any person employed to work in Huddersfield Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards. Just as with branches we run ourselves, the branch will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service related matters. Post Office will work with our retail partner to provide support, in the same way they already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners.

In respect of our people working at the existing branches, we have a strong track record of supporting our people through change. Staff will be fully supported through the change with a dedicated Human Resources Manager. We will do all that we can to find a solution that works for each individual within the options available.

Conclusion:

We believe that merging Huddersfield and New Street Post Offices will allow us to better secure Post Office services in this community for the longer term and help strengthen and secure the Post Office network as a whole. We already run the vast majority of our network on a franchise or agency basis, and delivering services through these branches is proven to be successful.

After careful consideration of the feedback received, I am confident that the new branch will be suitably located and that it will continue to meet customer needs and deliver an excellent service, whilst helping to provide future sustainability for the branch and maintaining a Post Office presence in Huddersfield.

We are currently finalising our plans for the new branch. We expect the new branch to open during early 2019. Posters will be provided in branch soon to let customers know the date the new branch will open.

You can also find a copy of this letter on our website at postofficeviews.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Gale', written over a faint horizontal line.

Roger Gale
Network & Sales Director
Post Office Limited

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Huddersfield Post Office information sheet

Address	ZCO Ltd 65-67 New Street Huddersfield HD1 2BQ														
Opening hours	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr><td>Mon</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Tue</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Wed</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Thu</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Fri</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sat</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon	09:00 – 17:30	Tue	09:00 – 17:30	Wed	09:00 – 17:30	Thu	09:00 – 17:30	Fri	09:00 – 17:30	Sat	09:00 – 17:30	Sun	Closed
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Sun	Closed														
Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will still be available, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office, which is currently available at New Street Post Office, but DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services will still be available. For reasons outside Post Office Limited's control, we cannot yet confirm whether a cash machine will be available at the new branch. The provision of a cash machine is subject to a survey by our cash machine provider, operational considerations, relevant consent and planning permission.														
Serving positions	There will be seven serving positions in total; two screened and five open plan. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.														
Additional Facilities	Two self-service kiosks for mails transactions including home shopping returns, E Top-Ups, and a range of bill payments.														
Access & facilities	Access will be level with automatic doors at the entrance to the new premises. Internally, there will be three steps and a ramp with a handrail to the Post Office area. Low level serving counters, a low level writing desk and hearing loops will be available.														
How far away is it?	Approximately 515 metres away from Huddersfield branch and approximately 162 metres away from New Street branch, along varied terrain.														
Transport & parking	There is a fee paying multi-storey car park at the Market Hall, with 394 spaces approximately 275 metres away. There are 9 designated disabled bays on Corporation St approximately 80 metres away. Public transport available to and from the surrounding areas. The nearest bus stop is approximately 80 metres away from the new premises														
Retail	Cards, stationery, coffee shop and delicatessen														
New Huddersfield Post Office branch opens	To be confirmed early 2019.														
Current Huddersfield Post Office last day of service	To be confirmed early 2019.														
New Street Post Office last day of service	To be confirmed early 2019.														

Other branches in the area

Marsh Post Office

104 Westbourne Road
Huddersfield
HD1 4LF

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

Services

This branch offers a wide range of services including a comprehensive range of Travel Money, Car tax, Passport Check & Send, National Lottery and On Demand travel insurance.

Route

Approximately 1.2 miles from Huddersfield branch and 1.4 miles from New Street branch.

Transport

Public transport available to and from the surrounding areas.

Fartown Post Office

316 Bradford Road
Huddersfield
HD1 6LQ

Mon	08:30 – 17:30
Tue	08:30 – 17:30
Wed	08:30 – 17:30
Thu	08:30 – 17:30
Fri	08:30 – 17:30
Sat	08:30 – 13:00
Sun	Closed

Services

This branch offers a wide range of services including a comprehensive range of Travel Money, Car tax and On Demand travel insurance.

Route

Approximately 1.1 miles from Huddersfield branch and 1.6 miles from New Street branch.

Transport

Public transport available to and from the surrounding areas.

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

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 closure¹/ 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 representatives², the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities³, 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 branch⁴
- 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-week⁵ 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
Call: 03452 66 01 15
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

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

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.