



Dear Customer,

We are pleased to let you know that in collaboration with Payzone, we will be opening a new Post Office service in your area at Best-One, 7 Kitchener Terrace, New Herrington, Houghton Le Spring, DH4 4LP commencing on Friday 6 December 2024 at 13:00.

The service will be one of our Drop & Collect branches, which is one of our lighter, flexible branch formats developed to take advantage of the opportunities a vibrant, and increasingly competitive, parcels market offers.

The new Drop & Collect at Best-One, will offer Post Office services from a handheld device, providing convenient access for customers to bill payments and prepaid parcel collections and returns. To maximise accessibility to these services that our customers are increasingly seeking, more complex services like personal and business banking will not be available at this branch.

Details of the opening hours and the products and services available are provided overleaf. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean the opening date changes, posters will be displayed in store to let customers know.

A wider range of Post Office services are available from the nearby branches at Newbottle Post Office, 49 Front Street, Newbottle, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 4EP and Shiney Row Post Office, 1 Westbourne Terrace, Shiney Row, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 4QT. The latest available branch information can be found on our website, [www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)

Please feel free to share this information via your social media channels and with others who may be interested to hear about the new branch and the services it offers.

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

We hope that you and the local community will support the Post Office network in your area.

Yours faithfully,

*Natalie Liff*

**Natalie Liff**

**Propositions Manager**

**Network Propositions**

How to contact us:

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

[postofficeviews.co.uk](http://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.**

Opening times		Post Office services available					
<table><tr><td>Mon - Fri</td><td>06:00 – 22:00</td></tr><tr><td>Sat - Sun</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr></table>		Mon - Fri	06:00 – 22:00	Sat - Sun	07:00 – 21:00	Mails	
		Mon - Fri	06:00 – 22:00				
		Sat - Sun	07:00 – 21:00				
		Parcel collect and return – prepaid only					
		Other					
		Bill payments					
		Mobile top-up service					
For information about product availability call 03457 22 33 44							

## **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 **Notify** - where we are informing customers of changes around:

- Opening hours
- Unplanned closure<sup>1</sup>/ planned service interruption
- Re-opening of a 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
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site where there are no changes to access to the Post Office serving point

We will display a poster in branch (or nearby if appropriate) to notify customers of the above changes, aiming to provide four weeks' notice. Four weeks' notice may not be possible for an unplanned change, and in these instances, we will provide notice as soon as we are able to. For closures we will include details of the nearest alternative Post Offices and our customer helpline/textphone.

We notify locally elected representatives including 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, selected charities, local Citizens Advice, Age UK, Northern Ireland's Disability Action and Northern Ireland's Rural Community Network. They are also encouraged to share all information additionally with local groups and organisations who they believe have an active interest in changes to their local Post Office.

**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**

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

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<sup>1</sup>Where the closure is unplanned, the service provision in the area will be reviewed based on current usage, modelling and availability of any suitable replacement or alternative service model. A commercial decision will be made if to actively seek to replace the closed service and will not be subject to public consultation.