

Dear Customer

Local public consultation – Decision

**Knaresborough Post Office
49 High Street, Knaresborough, Harrogate, HG5 0HB**

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 34 High Street, Knaresborough, Harrogate, HG5 0EQ, where it would continue to operate as one of our main style branches.

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 their representatives 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 sheet 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. We are also confident that the existing postmaster has a business plan to support both a successful and sustainable Post Office branch.

We're currently making the final arrangements for the opening and further information will be provided once the date has been agreed.

During the closure period of the branch customers requiring Post Office facilities may continue to use any convenient Post Office service. Details of two alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- Starbeck Post Office, 51 High Street, Starbeck, Harrogate, HG2 7LQ
- Harrogate Post Office, Victoria Shopping Centre, Cambridge Street, Harrogate, HG1 1TU

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at: 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.

Yours faithfully

Kenny Lamont

**Kenny Lamont
Network Provision Manager
Post Office Limited**

comments@postoffice.co.uk

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 Monday 10 June 2024

Consultation ended Monday 29 July 2024

Consultation responses

- 157 responses from customers and local representatives

Key issues raised

- Getting to New Location
- Parking
- Privacy
- Internal Space
- Staff training

Response to issues raised

Getting to New Location

The new branch will be located approximately 140 metres away from the previous branch, along mostly level terrain. We acknowledge that for some customers the move may mean a slightly longer journey than to the previous branch. In situations such as this there will always be some customers who are more inconvenienced than others and we can only apologise for this. However, we remain confident the move will not significantly impede customer access to Post Office services. We believe this relocation is the most effective way to secure the long-term viability of Post Office services in Knaresborough. We can confirm that for pedestrian access to the new location, there are well maintained pavements, with dropped kerbs along the route from the previous site.

Parking

While we have considered some comments raised about parking in the area surrounding the new premises, it is fair to say that this is a problem 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. We can confirm that for customers using their own transport, time restricted roadside parking is available nearby. We are therefore satisfied that there is adequate car parking in the area surrounding the new branch to meet the needs of customers using the new Post Office.

Privacy

The new Post Office will be housed within a dedicated area of the store with one screened counter position, as well as an additional open plan Post Office service counter. We will also be working closely with the postmaster 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.

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 postmaster 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.

Staff Training

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. Additionally, 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

Knaresborough Post Office Summary Sheet

34 High Street, Knaresborough, Harrogate, HG5 0EQ

New opening hours

Mon - Fri	09:00 - 17:30
Sat	09:00 - 13:00
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

Products & Services

The same range of products and services will still be available.

Serving positions

There will be three serving positions in total; one screened and two open plan serving positions.

Access

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

Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.

Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 140 metres away from the previous branch, along mostly level terrain.

Time restricted roadside parking is available nearby to the new premises.

Retail

Pharmacy.

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 branch⁵
- 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-week⁶ 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

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Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.