



Dear Customer

Melrose Post Office®
10 Buccleuch Street, Melrose, TD6 9LE

Local public consultation decision

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 Masons of Melrose at 9 Market Square, Melrose, TD6 9PQ, where it will be operated by a retail partner.

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. By way of background, the current postmaster wishes to retire due to ill health therefore the move will secure the long-term viability of Post Office services in the local community.

The current premises will no longer be available for Post Office use from 30 October 2018 and to avoid a loss of service the branch will close at 1pm on Tuesday 23 October 2018. Your new branch will open, at Masons of Melrose, at 1pm on Tuesday 23 October 2018. If there are any unforeseen schedule changes which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

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. A copy is available at the end of this letter.

Yours faithfully

Clive Serplus

Clive Serplus
Area Network Change Manager

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Appendix A

Response to Local Public Consultation

Consultation started 23 August 2018

Consultation ended 4 October 2018

Consultation responses

- 25 responses from customers

Many responses were positive about new premises, especially central location, helpful staff and longer opening hours.

Key issues raised

- **Privacy**
- **Sufficient staffing**
- **Access**
- **Parking**

Privacy

We will also be working closely with the new operator to make sure an appropriate level of privacy is provided for Post Office customers and that staff are fully aware of the need to respect customer confidentiality.

Sufficient staffing

Staff will be fully trained in Post Office transactions and staffing levels will be aligned to meet customer demand. Staff will be fully trained in Post Office transactions and staffing levels will be aligned to meet customer demand.

Access

It's clear that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers and we want to make our services as accessible as possible. As new location has steps at the entrance the new Postmaster will explore the option to install a permanent access ramp which may be subject to planning permission. If this is not granted a portable ramp will be available for any customer who is unable to manage the steps. To let customers know that a ramp is available, there will be a clearly visible sign at the entrance explaining how to request it. There will also be bell for people to ring for assistance and both this and the sign, will be accessible to wheelchair users. A grab rail will also be installed at the entrance.

Inside, the new branch is in line with Post Office specifications, with sufficient space for the new style local Post Office to operate alongside the retail offer. We have worked closely with the new Postmaster on the internal layout and some fixtures, fittings and retail stock have been re-aligned to ensure clear access into the premises. The entrance, aisles and queuing area will be kept free from obstructions ensuring adequate space is available for customers to move around the store and access Post Office services with ease. The new Postmaster will engage with local disability groups to ensure that disabled customers have no issues when accessing the new premises and ensure pin-pad being available at a low level.

Parking

While we have considered the concerns raised about parking in the area surrounding the new location, it is fair to say that this is a problem faced generally in many locations nationwide. As we are sure you will understand the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited, however I can confirm that there are off-road parking spaces available directly outside the new location including one disabled bay. To further improve access for customers, the new Postmaster will engage with the relevant authority to suggest the provision of additional disabled parking bay outside the shop. I am therefore satisfied that there is adequate car parking in the vicinity of the proposed new branch to meet the needs of customers using the Post Office.

Appendix B

Melrose Post Office information sheet				
	New Post Office branch location			
Address	Masons of Melrose 9 Market Square Melrose TD6 9PQ			
Post Office opening hours		Mon	09:30 – 17:00	
		Tue	09:30 – 17:00	
		Wed	09:30 – 17:00	
		Thu	09:30 – 17:00	
		Fri	09:30 – 17:00	
		Sat	09:30 – 17:00	
		Sun	Closed	
Distance	180 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities Currently there are steps at the entrance to the proposed premises and a portable ramp available on request. However subject to planning permission a permanent ramp would be installed. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.			
	Parking There are dedicated off road parking at the front of the branch.			
Retail	Cards and stationery			
Date of opening	Tuesday 23 October 2018 at 1pm			

To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille please call 03452 66 01 15 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.

Melrose Post Office® services available	
For information about product availability call 03457 223344 or to provide you with details of maximum value of transactions please speak to the operator. Customers can also shop online at www.postoffice.co.uk	
	New branch
Mail	
First & Second Class mail	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 st class 6 & 12 only, 2 nd class 12 only)	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓
Signed For	✓
Special Delivery	✓
Home shopping returns	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓
Express & contract parcels	✓
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. signed for & Airsure)	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	✓
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓
Local Collect	✓
Drop & Go	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments	
Post Office Card Account	✓
All personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual).	✓
Postal orders	✓
Moneygram	✓
Change giving	✓
Bill payments	
Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)	✓
Key recharging	✓
Driving	
Car tax	✓
Licences	
Rod fishing licences	✓
Travel	
Pre-order travel money	✓
On demand travel money	Euros
Travel insurance referral	✓
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
Payment by cheque	
Other Products are available at Galashiels Post Office, 29-33 Channel Street, Galashiels, TD1 1BJ	
Opening times: Mon – Sat - 09:00 – 17:30 Sun - 11.00 – 15:00	

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
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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.