



Dear Customer

Newport Post Office®
19 Sovereign Arcade, Kingsway Centre, Newport, NP20 1EB

Local Public Consultation Decision

I'm writing to confirm that following a period of local public consultation and review, the decision has been made to proceed with the proposal to move the above Post Office to the vacant retail premises at 174-176 Upper Dock Street, Newport, NP20 1DY where it will be run by our new retail partner.

This change is being made as part of the continuing modernisation of our network, to achieve commercial sustainability and will help us to provide services that will meet customer needs and safeguard future service provision in Newport, now and for the long-term.

Public consultation feedback:

During the public consultation period we received 32 individual representations from customers. We also held a customer forum to talk about our plans and answer questions. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information.

The main feedback commented on the location of the new premises and questioned the provision of privacy and general security at the branch and within the surrounding area. We also received feedback that said the new branch would provide better access, more space and is closer to main transport links. 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.

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 305 metres from the current branch, along varied terrain. For those choosing to drive, there is a fee paying car park at Friars Walk Shopping Centre with 350 spaces and 16 designated disabled bays available – the distance between the car park and new branch is approximately 165 metres. A further four designated disabled parking bays are available on Upper Dock Street, opposite the new premises.

Buses are available to and from the surrounding area and the nearest bus stop is approximately 100 metres away.

Shopmobility Newport also offers a service for helping people with limited mobility get around the town centre, including the daily hire of manual and motorised wheelchairs and motor scooters. This service must be booked in advance. They are located at 193 Upper Dock Street, Newport, NP20 1DB. For more information, including hire charges and how to register, call 01633 673845.

In conclusion, I remain satisfied that customers in Newport 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 a convenience store. We'll be working together to provide a new, modern Post Office with sufficient room for Post Office and shop customers.

The branch will have its own designated area towards the rear of the store, along the left hand side and customer access both into and within the store will meet Post Office Ltd's own accessibility standards and all applicable legislation. Access will be level with automatic doors being installed at the entrance to the premises. Externally the store front will include Post Office signage and an opening hours board.

There will be directional signage from the entrance door through to the new Post Office on the ground floor. 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 counter will be built to Post Office specifications and will include lighting to industry standards, low level counters, PIN pads and hearing loops. There will be space for people to wait for service and customer seating will also be provided.

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 four open plan, two floor to ceiling screened serving positions and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. 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.

The security of any new branch is one of the many aspects we consider before progressing to consultation. We take the safety of both our customers and staff very seriously and in this respect, we take every physical precaution, within our branches, to provide a safe and secure environment.

Following the move, the main Post Office counters will be open from 09:00 to 17:30 Monday to Saturday. Additionally, the serving position located at the retail till will offer customers a selected range of Post Office products and services over extended opening hours, without having to join the main queue. A linear queuing system will be in place to help with queuing along with a call forward system which will alert customers to the next available counter in both English and Welsh.

A war memorial is located in Newport 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 including the purchasing of commemorative stamps will still be available at the new branch. However 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, Commercial Road Post Office has an external cash machine and is located approximately 0.5 miles away at 44-45 Commercial Road, Newport, Gwent, NP20 2PE.

Customer service training and existing staff:

Our new retail partner has satisfied us that they are equally as committed to delivering excellent customer service as we are. Any person employed to work in Newport 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 new partner to provide support, in the same way we already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners.

In respect of our people working at the existing branch, we have a strong track record of supporting our people through change. We will do all that we can to find a solution that works for each individual within the options available.

Conclusion:

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 Newport. The current branch will close at 17:30 on 7 November 2018, with the new branch opening at 09:00 on 8 November 2018.

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

Yours faithfully



Roger Gale
Network & Sales Director
Post Office Limited

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Newport Post Office information sheet															
Address	174-176 Upper Dock Street Newport NP20 1DY														
Opening hours	<table border="1"> <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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Opening times of Post Office service at retail counter	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon - Sat</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>10:00 – 16:00</td></tr> </table>	Mon - Sat	06:00 – 21:00	Sun	10:00 – 16:00										
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Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will still be available. For reasons outside Post Office Limited's control, we cannot yet confirm whether or not 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 and relevant planning permission.														
Serving positions	There will be seven serving positions in total; two screened and four open plan and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.														
Access & facilities	Access will be level with automatic doors at the entrance to the proposed premises. Low level serving counters, a low level writing desk, hearing loops and customer seating will be available.														
How far away is it?	Approximately 305 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.														
Transport & parking	<p>There is a fee paying multi-storey car park at Friars Walk Shopping Centre with 350 spaces and 16 designated disabled bays available. The distance between the car park and proposed premises is approximately 165 metres.</p> <p>A further four designated disabled parking bays are available on Upper Dock Street, opposite the proposed premises.</p> <p>Buses</p> <p>Public transport available to and from the surrounding areas. There is a bus stop approximately 100 metres away from the proposed premises.</p>														
Retail	Convenience														
Date of move	8 November 2018 at 09:00														

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
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.