



Dear Customer

Rothbury Post Office®
Bridge Street, Rothbury, Morpeth, NE65 7SE

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 Phillips Newsagents at Townfoot, Morpeth, NE65 7SL, 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, whilst securing the long-term viability of Post Office services in the local community.

The current branch will close at 12:30 on Saturday 25 May 2019, with the new branch opening, at Phillips Newsagents, at 13:00 on Tuesday 28 May 2019. If there are any unforeseen schedule changes which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

During transfer of the branch customers requiring Post Office facilities may use any convenient Post Office service. Details of an Post Office branch are provided below for your convenience:

- Hepple Post Office, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 7LH

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

Ian Murphy

Ian Murphy
Area Network Change Manager

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Appendix A

Response to Local Public Consultation

Consultation started 29 November 2018

Consultation ended 10 January 2019

Consultation responses

- 38 responses from customers and local representatives

Key issues raised

- Disabled access
- Security
- Parking

Response to issues raised

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. The new branch will have better disabled access than current one as customers will be able to use portable ramp provided to manage step at the entrance. Inside, the new branch will be in line with Post Office specifications, making sure there is sufficient space for the new style local Post Office to operate alongside the retail offer. We will be working closely with the operator on the internal layout and some existing fixtures, fittings and retail stock will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises. The entrance, aisles and the queuing area will also be kept clear ensuring sufficient space is available for customers and for a wheelchair to move around and access our services without difficulty.

We recognise that the local style format is a different way of offering Post Office services and that some customers may have concerns about carrying out their Post Office business in a different type of environment from what they are used to. However the new local style model in no way compromises the professional service standards that we provide at all of our branches. This includes excellent customer service and the need to respect customer confidentiality. We will ensure that our strict safety and security measures are in place and that customers have an appropriate level of privacy at the Post Office serving point.

Parking is a problem faced generally in many locations nationwide, the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited, however we are satisfied that the parking in the area surrounding the new premises will adequately meet customer requirements. We will also be discussing with the new operator the possibility of providing a disabled parking bay at the side of the premises.

Rothbury Post Office information sheet				
	New Post Office branch location			
Address	Phillips Newsagents Townfoot Morpeth NE65 7SL			
Post Office opening hours		Mon	06:00 – 18:00	
		Tue	06:00 – 18:00	
		Wed	06:00 – 18:00	
		Thu	06:00 – 18:00	
		Fri	06:00 – 18:00	
		Sat	06:00 – 19:30	
		Sun	06:00 – 13:00	
Distance	95 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.			
Accessibility	Access and facilities Currently there is a step at the entrance to the new premises, however a portable ramp will be made available. Inside there will be Hearing Loop and a space for a wheelchair. Parking Roadside parking is available directly outside the premises.			
Retail	Convenience store			
Date of change	28 May 2019			

Rothbury 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/Dollars
Travel insurance referral	✓
On demand travel insurance	x
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
Payment by cheque	✓
Products marked * are available at Alnwick Post Office, 19 Market Street, Alnwick, NE66 1SS	Opening times: Mon – Sat 08:00 – 18:00 Sun 09:00 – 14:00

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.