



Dear Customer

**Sheerness Post Office®**  
**33 Broadway, Sheerness, ME12 1AA**

**Local public consultation**

I'm writing to let you know about some changes we're making to Post Office service provision in the area which means that we are today beginning a public consultation on the closure of Sheerness Directly Managed branch.

In January 2016 we announced that we were advertising for a franchise partner for Sheerness branch because we needed to look at providing Post Office services in a different way in the Sheerness area, enabling us to better secure our services in the community for the long term. When it comes to creating a sustainable network, there isn't a one size fits all approach; each branch and community is different, and we need to consider all the options available to us. For example, as well as considering franchising we may also consider other options such as replacing a branch with one or more smaller branches in the area.

**Our Proposal**

In the Sheerness area, we have opened three new local branches in:

- The Clock Tower on 07 March 2018 with opening hours of 07:00 – 20:00 Monday to Thursday, 07:00 – 21:30 Friday and Saturday, 08:00 – 20:00 Sunday;
- Queensway on 20 March 2018 with opening hours of 07:00 – 21:30 Monday to Saturday and 08:00 – 21:30 Sunday and
- High Street (20) on 14 June 2018 with opening hours of 07:00 – 23:00 Monday to Saturday and 08:00 – 23:00 Sunday.

With these new branches in place, we believe there will be sufficient convenience and choice for customers without the need to retain the current Directly Managed branch. In order to improve access at these branches we plan to install an automatic door at The Clock Tower as well as a bell to summon assistance at both Queensway and High Street (20).

We are confident that our new branches have the capacity to meet customer demand and cater for additional customers, offering a wide range of Post Office products and services and, due to the extended opening hours, providing continued good access to our services. The small number of Post Office products and services that will not be available at our new branches, such as the Driving Licence renewals, Security Industry Authority licensing and Passport Check and Send services will be transferring to Minster on Sea Post Office, 4 Chapel Street, Minster on Sea, Sheerness, ME12 3QG.

As with any proposed branch closure we understand that customers are often concerned about the impact of such changes on staff. I can reassure customers that every effort will be made to redeploy our staff where possible and they will be fully supported throughout this process.

## Background

We've come a long way in the last few years – modernising over 7,000 branches across the country to give customers bright modern branches in vibrant local businesses and offering over 200,000 extra opening hours. But there's more we need to do to make sure we can meet changing customer needs. Our aim is to offer convenient access to Post Offices when and where our customers want them in a competitive market place. In line with this, as part of our new retail strategy we are opening more small branches, especially in urban areas, so that we can offer customers convenient access and longer opening hours.

This approach enables us to offer Post Office services in communities in a more sustainable way – partnering with a retailer to offer a Post Office combined with a shop, brings the benefits of shared footfall and overheads, allowing us to keep our presence in key locations against the pressures of rising property costs.

## Consulting on our plans

We're now starting a period of local public consultation and we'd like you to tell us what you think about access to Post Office services in the area following the closure. We welcome any feedback or general comments you may have but would particularly appreciate your views on the following questions:

- How easy is it to get to the alternative branches?
- Are the alternative branches easy for you to get into and are they easily accessible once inside?
- Are there any local community issues you think we should know about that might be affected by the change?
- Do you have any suggestions that could help make the change better?

If you're a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information with any local groups or organisations that you know within the community, for example on noticeboards, local charities and in GP surgeries, to help our customers and your constituents understand what is happening to the Post Office in Sheerness. If you would like a supply of posters please let us know.

You can share your views on the proposed change through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via the link below. When entering the site you can use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **006941**.

[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

If you have a QR scanner on your mobile phone, all you need to do is scan here:



You can also let us have your comments in the following ways:

[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

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

FREEPOST Your Comments

**(This is the full address to use.**

**No further address or name details are required)**

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

**Dates for local public consultation:**

Local Public Consultation starts	<b>25 July 2018</b>
Local Public Consultation ends	<b>12 September 2018</b>
Proposed month of change	<b>October 2018</b>

In this instance we have extended public consultation by one calendar week to allow for the summer holiday period. Therefore, if you do wish to contact me, please note that 12 September 2018 is the closing date for all enquiries.

We are committed to engaging with and supporting our customers and their representatives as we make changes to the Post Office network. This notification is being carried out in line with our Principles of Community Engagement which have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland - the independent statutory consumer watchdogs. A copy is available at the end of this letter.

Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about the proposal and to ask their views.

Thank you for considering our proposal. At the end of the consultation we will write to anyone who has provided feedback to the consultation to respond to the main issues raised and to explain our final plans.

Yours faithfully



**Roger Gale**  
**Network & Sales Director**  
**Post Office Limited**

Please note that items sent by Freepost take 2 working days to arrive not including Saturday or Sunday. Therefore please allow sufficient time for your comments to arrive before the end of the consultation period, as we are unable to consider feedback received after the deadline.

## Information Sheet

<b>The Clock Tower Post Office</b>							
<b>Address</b>	84 High Street Sheerness ME12 1UB						
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Mon – Thu</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">07:00 – 20:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Fri &amp; Sat</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">07:00 – 21:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Sun</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">08:00 – 20:00</td> </tr> </table>	Mon – Thu	07:00 – 20:00	Fri & Sat	07:00 – 21:30	Sun	08:00 – 20:00
Mon – Thu	07:00 – 20:00						
Fri & Sat	07:00 – 21:30						
Sun	08:00 – 20:00						
<b>Distance</b>	Approximately 0.1 miles away from Sheerness Post Office branch, along level terrain.						
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Access and facilities</b></p> <p>Access to the branch is level, an automatic door will be installed at the entrance. A low level serving counter and hearing loops are available.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport/Parking</b></p> <p>Time restricted parking is available on The Broadway with 6 spaces, approximately 30 metres away.</p>						

<b>High Street (20) Post Office</b>					
<b>Address</b>	20 High Street Sheerness ME12 1NL				
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Mon – Sat</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">07:00 – 23:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Sun</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">08:00 – 23:00</td> </tr> </table>	Mon – Sat	07:00 – 23:00	Sun	08:00 – 23:00
Mon – Sat	07:00 – 23:00				
Sun	08:00 – 23:00				
<b>Distance</b>	Approximately 0.2 miles away from Sheerness Post Office branch, along level terrain.				
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Access and facilities</b></p> <p>There is a ramp at the entrance to the branch and a wide door. A bell and signage would be available for assistance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport/Parking</b></p> <p>Time restricted parking is available nearby for up to 8 cars.</p>				

<b>Queensway Post Office</b>					
<b>Address</b>	124 Queensway Sheerness ME12 1LL				
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Mon – Sat</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">07:00 – 21:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Sun</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">08:00 – 21:30</td> </tr> </table>	Mon – Sat	07:00 – 21:30	Sun	08:00 – 21:30
Mon – Sat	07:00 – 21:30				
Sun	08:00 – 21:30				
<b>Distance</b>	Approximately 1.3 miles away from Sheerness Post Office branch, along varied terrain.				
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Access and facilities</b></p> <p>Access to the branch is level. A bell and signage would be available for assistance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport/Parking</b></p> <p>Parking is available for 2 spaces outside the branch. Public transport services are available to and from the surrounding area.</p>				

**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](http://www.postoffice.co.uk)**

	Sheerness	The Clock Tower	High Street	Queensway
<b>Mail</b>				
First & Second Class mail	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 <sup>st</sup> class 6 & 12 only, 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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	✓	<b>Express 24 &amp; 48</b>	<b>Express 24 &amp; 48</b>	✓
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	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Withdrawals, deposits and payments</b>				
Post Office Card Account	✓	✓	✓	✓
All personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual) up to a maximum value.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Postal orders	✓	✓	✓	✓
Moneygram	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key recharging	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Driving</b>				
Car tax	✓	✓	✗	✗
Driving licence renewals	✓	✗	✗	✗
<b>Licences</b>				
Rod fishing licences	✓	✓	✓	✓
Document Certification Service	✓	✗	✗	✗
<b>Travel</b>				
Pre-order travel money	✓	✓	✓	✓
On demand travel money	✓	<b>Euros/ Dollars</b>	<b>Euros/ Dollars</b>	<b>Euros/ Dollars</b>
Travel insurance referral	✓	✓	✓	✓
On demand travel insurance	✓	✗	✗	✗
Passport Check & Send	✓	✗	✗	✗
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Payment by cheque</b>	✓	<b>Car tax only</b>	<b>Car tax only</b>	✓

Products marked ✗ are available at **Minster on Sea Post Office**, full details overleaf.

<b>Minster on Sea Post Office</b>											
<b>Address</b>	4 Chapel Street Minster on Sea Sheerness ME12 3QG										
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Mon &amp; Tue</td> <td>08:00 – 17:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wed</td> <td>08:00 – 18:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thu &amp; Fri</td> <td>08:00 – 17:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sat</td> <td>08:00 – 18:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sun</td> <td>Closed</td> </tr> </table>	Mon & Tue	08:00 – 17:30	Wed	08:00 – 18:00	Thu & Fri	08:00 – 17:30	Sat	08:00 – 18:00	Sun	Closed
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Wed	08:00 – 18:00										
Thu & Fri	08:00 – 17:30										
Sat	08:00 – 18:00										
Sun	Closed										
<b>Distance</b>	Approximately 3.4 miles away from Sheerness Post Office branch, along varied terrain.										
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>	The same wide range of products and services will be available as Sheerness branch including Driving Licence renewals, Security Industry Authority licensing and Passport Check & Send.										
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Access and facilities</b></p> <p>There is a ramp with a handrail at the entrance to the branch. A low level serving counter, low level writing desks and hearing loops are available.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport/Parking</b></p> <p>There is a frequent bus service between Sheerness Post Office and this branch. The nearest bus stop is approximately 120 metres away. Roadside parking is available nearby.</p>										

**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.**

## **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 closure<sup>1</sup>/ 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 representatives<sup>2</sup>, the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>3</sup>, 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 branch<sup>4</sup>
- 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-week<sup>5</sup> 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**

<sup>1</sup>We will provide an update to locally elected representatives if the status of the temporarily closed branch has not changed after 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.