



Dear Customer,

## **Local public consultation - Have your say**

**Smethwick Post Office**  
**Trinity Square, Smethwick, B67 7AA**

We are proposing to move the above Post Office branch to a new location: 3 Trinity Square (formerly SMK Solicitors), Smethwick, B67 7EF, where it would operate as one of our local style branches, subject to consultation.

### **Why are we proposing this move?**

As you may be aware, this branch has been operated on our behalf by a temporary postmaster. Whilst this arrangement has enabled us to maintain access to Post Office services to our customers in the area. We are pleased to inform you that a new operator has been appointed who has identified an alternative location to operate Smethwick Post Office. Our priority is to safeguard our services in the locality in the longer term and the relocation of Smethwick Post Office would enable us to maintain a Post Office service to our customers in the local community.

The proposed new premises, which is currently empty, would undergo a full refurbishment to incorporate a Greeting Cards, Stationery, Gifts and Confectionery Store with Smethwick Post Office. The new operator firmly believes that the move would help to secure continued access to Post Office services locally, as well as supporting the viability of their business.

### **We'd like your help**

We're now starting a period of local public consultation and your feedback is important to us as it will help to inform our decision. For more details of the proposed services and accessibility, please see the branch information summary later in this consultation document.

### **What exactly are we consulting on?**

We'd welcome your comments on the following areas:

- **How easy is it to get to the proposed new location?**
- **Are the new premises easy for you to get into and are they easily accessible once inside?**
- **Are there any other local community issues which you believe could be affected by or affect the proposed change?**
- **If the move were to proceed, is there anything we could do to make it easier for customers?**

Please note the proposed change of management of the branch is a decision for Post Office Ltd and therefore we are not seeking feedback on this aspect of the change.

Local Public Consultation starts	<b>Tuesday 07 November 2023</b>
Local Public Consultation ends	<b>Tuesday 19 December 2023</b>
Proposed month of change	<b>January / February 2024</b>

You can share your views on the proposed change through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk). When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **260246**

## How to share your views:

**Consultation Hub ([postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk))**

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

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments – N.B. This is the full postal address. Items sent by Freepost take 2 working days, please allow enough time for responses to be received.

**Want to tell us what you think right here and now?  
Scan here.**

If you don't have a QR code scanner on your phone, you can find one in your app store.



## Good to know

- Customers would access Post Office services at two low-screened, open-plan, modern serving position that's part of the retail counter.
- Working with the new operator, we'd adapt the current store layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office till if needed.
- The branch would offer a similar range of Post Office products and services with the same opening hours.
- All staff employed to work in the proposed new branch would be trained to the highest standards with on-going training on products and services, as well as operational and service related matters.
- Currently there is a step at the entrance to the proposed premises, however as part of the refurbishment works, the step would be removed, and an internal ramp would be installed to provide improved access for customers with a wide door at the entrance.
- Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about the proposal and to ask their views.
- Any information we receive will be carefully considered as we finalise our plans.
- If you are a local representative, we will write to you again at the end of the consultation to respond to the main issues raised and to explain our final plans for the branch.
- This consultation is being carried out in line with our Principles of Community Engagement which have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Consumer Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland - the independent statutory consumer watchdogs. An extract relating to consultation is available at the end of this letter.

If you are a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information through your social media channels and 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 the changes we are proposing to Smethwick Post Office. If you would like a supply of posters, please let us know. Our contact details can be found at the top of this page.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Your faithfully

*Sarah Cottrell*

**Sarah Cottrell  
Network Provision Manager  
Post Office Limited**

## **Smethwick Post Office Information Summary**

<b>Current Location</b>		<b>Proposed New Location</b>	
<b>Trinity Square Smethwick B67 7AA</b>		<b>3 Trinity Street (formerly SMK Solicitors) Smethwick B67 7EF</b>	
<b>Current opening hours</b>		<b>Proposed opening hours</b>	
Mon- Fri	09:00 – 17:30	Mon - Fri	09:00 – 17:30
Sat	09:00 – 13:00	Sat	09:00 – 13:00
Sun	Closed	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](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)**

### **Products & Services**

A similar range of products and services will still be available, however excluding Passport Check & Send, a comprehensive range of Travel Money, Vehicle Tax and On Demand Travel Insurance.

### **Serving positions**

There would be two Post Office serving positions at the retail counter

### **Access**

Currently there is a step at the entrance to the proposed premises, however as part of the refurbishment works, the step would be removed, and an internal ramp would be installed to provide improved access for customers with a wide door at the entrance.

Internally, there would be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

### **Getting there**

The proposed premises would be located approximately 60 metres away from the current branch, along hilly terrain.

No change to the existing parking, time restricted roadside parking is available nearby.

### **Retail**

Greeting Cards, Stationery, Gifts and Confectionery Store.

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**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.**

Smethwick Post Office services available		
For information about product availability call 03457 223344.		
For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the operator.		
	Current branch	Proposed branch
<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	✓	✓
Parcelforce Express Service	✓	Express 24 & 48
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓	✓
International letters & postcards (Inc. Tracked & Signed)	✓	✓
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>		
Personal & Business Banking cash withdrawals, deposits & balance enquiries using a card. Also enveloped cheque deposits and barcoded deposit slips.	✓	✓
Postal orders	✓	✓
MoneyGram	✓	✓
Change giving	✓	✓
Automated bill payments (card or barcoded)	✓	✓
Key recharging	✓	✓
<b>Driving</b>		
Vehicle tax	✓	✗
<b>Travel</b>		
Pre-order travel money	✓	✓
On demand travel money	✓	Euros / Dollars
Travel insurance referral	✓	✓
On demand travel insurance	✓	✗
Passport Check & Send	✓	✗
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓	✓
<b>Payment by cheque</b>	✓	✗
<p>Products marked ✗ are available at <b>Bristnall Fields</b> Post Office, 257 Pound Road, Oldbury, B68 8NQ</p> <p>Other Products are available at <b>St Pauls Road</b> Post Office, 30 St Pauls Road, Smethwick, B66 1EH</p>		

## **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](https://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 branch<sup>1</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>2</sup> local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives<sup>3</sup>, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>4</sup> 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 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, Consumer 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](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)  
03452 66 01 15

Comments@postoffice.co.uk  
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

**FREEPOST Your Comments Call:**

<sup>1</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>2</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.

<sup>3</sup> Locally elected representatives include but are not restricted to the Member of Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Parliament, or Northern Ireland Assembly, Local Authority Chief Executive, Ward Councillors, Parish or Community Council.

<sup>4</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 3 and 4 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.

