



Dear Customer

**Soho Road Post Office®**  
**235 Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B21 9RZ**

**Local Public Consultation Decision**

We are writing to confirm that we have proceeded with our proposal to move the above Post Office branch to Sahota Boutique, 206 Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 9LR, where it will continue to operate as one of our Main style Post Office branches.

We have received 14 individual responses from customers during the local public consultation period. The main feedback centred on area of the new branch location, distance of the nearest bus stop and parking. This feedback helped me to understand customers concerns and to make sure that all such information was taken into account before finalising our plans.

We appreciate that the proposed premises are located approximately 27 metres from the current site. 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. The proposed site is over the road and around 53 metres away from the old branch. There is a crossing 10 metres away from the proposed site to enable customers to cross the road safely

Distance from the nearest bus stops are available on both sides of the road, with the nearest being around 63 metres to the left of the proposed Post Office. The bus stop over the road is approximately 80 metres away.

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 we have conducted a further review of parking and we can confirm there is a pay and display car park approximately 106 metres away. We are therefore satisfied that parking at the proposed new branch will continue to meet the needs of customers using the Post Office.

We have carefully considered our original proposal and the feedback received during the public consultation period. We are confident that the new branch is suitably located and that this new way of offering Post Office services will meet customer needs, whilst helping to provide future sustainability for the branch.

The new local style Post Office will operate from an open plan till, located at the shop counter, enabling customers to carry out a wide range of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions. Customers will also benefit from the following facilities at the new branch: 2 open plan counters and 3 fortress counter positions.

The current branch closed on Saturday 26 January 2019 at 17:30, with the new branch which opened, at Sahota Boutique, 206 Soho Road, at 13:00 on Tuesday 29 January 2019.

Posters will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about this decision.

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at [postofficeviews.co.uk](http://postofficeviews.co.uk)

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Yours faithfully

*Mathew R Wilkes*

**Mathew R Wilkes**  
**Area Network Change Manager**

**How to contact us:**

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

**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.**

Soho Road Post Office information sheet															
<b>Address</b>	Previously known as Sahota Boutique 206 Soho Road Handsworth Birmingham B21 9LR														
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table><tr><td>Monday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Thursday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Friday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Saturday</td><td>08:30 - 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Sunday</td><td>Closed</td></tr></table>	Monday	08:30 - 17:30	Tuesday	08:30 - 17:30	Wednesday	08:30 - 17:30	Thursday	08:30 - 17:30	Friday	08:30 - 17:30	Saturday	08:30 - 17:30	Sunday	Closed
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Saturday	08:30 - 17:30														
Sunday	Closed														
<b>Distance</b>	27 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.														
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>	The same range of services will continue to be available.														
<b>Accessibility &amp; Accessibility works</b>	<p><b>Access and facilities</b> The new branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.</p> <p><b>Transport/parking</b> Roadside parking is available nearby. There are local buses serving the surrounding area.</p>														
<b>month of change</b>	Tuesday 29 January 2019 at 13:00														

## **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 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**  
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**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.