



Dear Customer

St Stephens Parade Post Office®
6 St Stephens Parade, Green Street, Forest Gate, London, E7 8LQ

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 a new premises at 164 Green Street, Forest Gate, London, E7 8JT, 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 14:00 on Saturday 2 January 2021, with the new branch opening, at 164 Green Street, Forest Gate, at 09:00 on Thursday 7 January 2021. 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 two alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- East Ham Post Office, 125 High Street North, London, E6 1HZ
- Forest Gate Post Office, 21-23 Woodgrange Road, London, E7 8BA

The latest available branch information can be found on our website, www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder

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

Jason Collins

Jason Collins
Network Provision Manager

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.

Appendix A

Response to Local Public Consultation

Consultation started 24 September 2020

Consultation ended 6 November 2020

Consultation responses

- 11 responses from customers and local representatives

Key issues raised

- Distance, Premises and Location
- Parking and Public Transport
- Staff, Counters, Products and Services

Response to issues raised

Distance, Premises and Location

The new premises are located approximately 500 metres from the current site along varied terrain. 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 recognise 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. In making the decision following public consultation we have had to balance the comments and concerns raised against the need to ensure a commercially viable and sustainable service into the future. Like many high street retailers, we've had to develop our ways of working so that we can maintain Post Office services for our customers. The move of the branch into a new retail environment, will continue to operate as one of our Mains models and this will help secure the long-term future of Post Office services to the community in St Stephens Parade.

We recognise that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers and we want to make our services as accessible as possible. I can confirm the new premises will have a wide door with level access at the entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.

Parking and Public Transport

Generally parking is a problem faced in many locations nationwide and I am sure you will understand the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited. I can confirm there is Pay & Display parking available nearby. There is limited time restricted roadside parking available on the nearby side streets, with designated marked disabled bays. In addition, parking is also available at the Shaftsbury Road Pay & Display Car Park within 350 metres from the new premises. The extended opening times will allow customers to visit at quieter times which may also help ease any potential traffic congestion issues. I am therefore satisfied that parking at the new branch will continue to meet the needs of customers using the Post Office. For customers choosing to use the local bus service, I can confirm there is a frequent bus service from the current branch to the new premises. The nearest bus stop is located within 50 metres from the new premises.

Staff, Counters, Products and Services

Internally, a modern, main style Post Office branch will be built to our high specifications, with one screened and two open plan counter positions and incorporating low-level facilities. We will be working closely with the Postmaster to plan the interior layout, to ensure that access into and inside the store is kept clear and free of obstacles and adequate room is provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around the store without difficulty. Aisles and the queuing area will be kept free from obstructions and adequate room will be provided for customers to access Post Office services.

Inside, the new branch, will be in line with Post Office guidelines, making sure there is sufficient space for the new main style Post Office to operate alongside the retail offer. The new branch will continue to offer the same wide range of products and services as currently. Customers will benefit from longer opening times on Saturdays, including Sunday afternoons

Additionally, there will be a Post Office serving point located at the retail counter where customers can access the majority of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions. This serving point will be open seven days a week and will offer significantly longer opening times than the main Post Office counter, allowing customers to transact the majority of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions across seven days a week and at times that are more convenient for them. Full details of the new branch are provided at the end of this letter.

All staff handling Post Office transactions will be fully trained and the staff training approaches used are of the same high standard as those undertaken in all our branches. This includes respecting customer confidentiality and adhering to the stringent security procedures which will be put in place to protect staff and customers. Additionally, any staff that will handle Post Office transactions will also have completed compliance training for a number of areas, including Data Protection and Mail Handling.

We will also be working with the Postmaster to make sure there is an appropriate level of privacy at the Post Office serving point. For example, we discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service. Similarly, with security, as with any other branch in our network there would be strict guidelines and measures put in place to safeguard customers, staff and the cash and stock entrusted to the operator's care. Also staffing levels are aligned to meet customer demand particularly at peak times.

Subject to survey, any required consents and planning permission, the Post Office external cash machine will be transferring to the new branch. Customers can also access cash at the Post Office counter over the extended opening times of the new branch. If required, customers can also access 24-hour cash machine at Forest Gate Post Office which can be reached by a direct bus service.

Appendix B

St Stephens Parade Post Office information sheet

Address	164 Green Street Forest Gate London E7 8JT														
Post Office 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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Sun	Closed														
New Opening times of Post Office Service at retail counter	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon - Sat</td><td>08:00 – 18:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>11:00 – 15:00</td></tr> </table>	Mon - Sat	08:00 – 18:30	Sun	11:00 – 15:00										
Mon - Sat	08:00 – 18:30														
Sun	11:00 – 15:00														
Distance	Approximately 500 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.														
Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will still be available. The current branch has an external Post Office branded cash machine. Subject to planning permission, an external Post Office branded cash machine will be available at the new premises.														
Serving positions	There will be four serving positions, which will be a mixture of one screened and two open plan, with a Post Office serving point provided for use at the retail counter and available during shop opening hours														
Accessibility	<p>Access and facilities The new premises will have a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low-level writing desk, a low-level serving counter and space for a wheelchair.</p> <p>Parking There is limited time restricted roadside parking available on nearby side streets, with designated marked disabled bays. There is Pay & Display parking nearby. Parking is also available at the Shaftsbury Road Pay & Display Car Park within 350 metres from the new premises.</p> <p>Buses There is a frequent bus service from the current branch to the new premises. The nearest bus stop is located within 50 metres from the new premises.</p>														
Retail	Stationery Store														
Date of move	at 09:00 on Thursday 7 January 2021														

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.