



Dear Customer

**Stepney Post Office®**  
**502 Commercial Road, London, E1 0HY**

**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 7 Westport Street, London, E1 0RA, 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 19:30 on Wednesday 4 November 2020, with the new branch opening, at 7 Westport Street, London, at 09:00 on Friday 20 November 2020. 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 three alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- Ben Jonson Road Post Office, 52 Ben Jonson Road, Stepney, London, E1 3NN
- Philpot Street Post Office, 12 Philpot Street, London, E1 2DW
- Globe Road Post Office, 34 Globe Road, London, E1 4DU

The latest available branch information can be found on our website, [www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at: [postofficeviews.co.uk](http://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**  
**Change Area 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** 7 August 2020

**Consultation ended** 18 September 2020

#### **Consultation responses**

- 4 responses from customers and local representatives

#### **Key issues raised**

- Route
- Parking
- Queueing and Counters
- Staff Training, Privacy and Security

#### **Response to issues raised**

##### **Route**

The proposed new premises are located approximately 80 metres from the current site along level terrain, in a small row of shops. 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. Our priority is to safeguard Post Office services to the local community in the longer term. We believe this relocation is most effective way to secure the long-term viability of Post Office services in Stepney. The new premises, which is currently empty, will undergo a full refurbishment to incorporate a Convenience Store and Stepney Post Office.

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

##### **Parking**

While I 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 I am sure you will understand the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited. However, I have conducted a further review of parking and I can confirm Pay & Display parking is available outside the new premises and nearby, with designated marked disabled parking bays. I am therefore satisfied that parking at the proposed new branch will continue to meet the needs of customers using the Post Office.

### **Queueing and Counters**

Internally, the new main style branch will be built in line with Post Office specifications with a dedicated Post Office area, incorporating two security screened serving positions, with low level facilities and separate queuing area for Post Office customers.

After further discussions with the Postmaster, the opening times of the new branch have been slightly revised than originally proposed. The main Post Office counters will operate from Monday to Friday 11:00 – 19:30 and Saturday 10:00 – 18:00 and the retail counter will operate from Monday to Friday 09:00 – 21:00 and Saturday 10:00 – 18:00. Customers will be able to transact the same wide range of products and services as currently.

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 six days a week and will offer longer opening times than the main Post Office counters, allowing customers to transact the majority of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions across six days a week and at times that are more convenient for them.

We will work closely with the Postmaster to plan the interior layout, to ensure optimum use of the space within the store and that access into and inside is kept clear and free of obstacles. Aisles and the queuing area will be kept free from obstructions and adequate room will be provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

Full details of the new branch are at the end of this letter.

### **Staff Training, Privacy and Security**

We know our customers value excellent customer service at the Post Office and the Postmaster is looking forward to welcoming Post Office customers. The Postmaster and their staff will be fully trained in Post Office transactions and to the same professional high standard as in all our branches. Their training will include guidance on respecting customer confidentiality and safeguarding privacy. They are also required to complete compliance training for a number of areas, including Data Protection and Mail Handling and to take all reasonable precautions to safeguard the mail in their care until it is despatched. Similarly, with security, strict guidelines and procedures would be in place to safeguard customers, staff and the cash and stock entrusted to the Postmaster's care.

## Appendix B

### Stepney Post Office information sheet

<b>Address</b>	7 Westport Street London E1 0RA														
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon</td><td>11:00 – 19:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Tue</td><td>11:00 – 19:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Wed</td><td>11:00 – 19:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Thu</td><td>11:00 – 19:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Fri</td><td>11:00 – 19:30</td></tr> <tr><td>Sat</td><td>10:00 – 18:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon	11:00 – 19:30	Tue	11:00 – 19:30	Wed	11:00 – 19:30	Thu	11:00 – 19:30	Fri	11:00 – 19:30	Sat	10:00 – 18:00	Sun	Closed
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Sun	Closed														
<b>New Opening times of Post Office Service at retail counter</b>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mon - Fri</td><td>09:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sat</td><td>10:00 – 18:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr> </table>	Mon - Fri	09:00 – 21:00	Sat	10:00 – 18:00	Sun	Closed								
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Sat	10:00 – 18:00														
Sun	Closed														
<b>Distance</b>	Within 80 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.														
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>	The same wide range of products and services will still be available.														
<b>Serving positions</b>	There will be three serving positions, which will be a mixture of two screened and a Post Office serving point provided for use at the retail counter and available during shop opening hours.														
<b>Accessibility</b>	<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 Pay &amp; Display parking is available outside the new premises and nearby, with designated marked disabled parking bays.</p>														
<b>Retail</b>	Convenience store														
<b>Date of move</b>	09:00 on Friday 20 November 2020														

## **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.