



Dear Customer

Sydenham Post Office®
44 Sydenham Road, London, SE26 5QX

Local Public Consultation Decision

I'm writing to confirm that following a period of local public consultation and review, the decision has been made to proceed with the proposal to transfer the running of this branch to a new retail operator. It will remain at its existing location. This change is being made as part of the continuing modernisation of our network to achieve commercial sustainability and will help us provide services that will meet customer needs and safeguard future service provision in Sydenham, now and for the long-term.

We apologise for the delay in announcing our decision, however it has taken longer than expected to finalise the details of the lease to ensure we are able to secure our future within the new premises. The current branch will close at 17:30 on Wednesday 20 February 2019, with the new branch opening at 09:00 on Thursday 21 March 2019. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused during this period of temporary closure, and we hope you will continue to conduct your business with us. Details of alternative branches which you may wish to use during this period are provided at the end of this letter.

Public consultation feedback:

During the public consultation period we received 19 individual representations from customers and local representatives. We also held a customer forum to talk about our plans and answer questions.

I would like to thank those who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information. 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, when making our decision. The main feedback expressed concern about our proposal to change the way the branch is run, with customers commenting about accessibility and the products and services that would be available following the change.

What the new branch will look like:

Our new retail partner plans a major refurbishment of the premises in early 2019, providing a brand new, modern Post Office branch and a retail offer of cards and stationery.

Access to the entrance of the premises will remain the same as currently and customer access both into and within the store will meet Post Office Ltd's own accessibility standards and all applicable legislation. We will be working with the new operator to ensure there are wide, clear aisles kept free of obstructions and there is sufficient space for all Post Office customers, including wheelchair users, to move around the store and reach the Post Office area with ease. Externally the store front will include Post Office signage, as well as an opening hours board. There will be directional signage from the entrance door through to the new Post Office area.

The Post Office counter will be built to Post Office specifications, including low level counters, PIN pads and hearing loops. There will be adequate space for people to wait for service and customer seating will also be provided.

The new branch will have five serving positions in total, made up of two screened, two open plan and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. Although we will not be introducing self-service kiosks to the new branch at this time, the number and type of serving positions has been carefully based on current and future predicted business levels. I'm satisfied that customer needs will continue to be met, however we will continue to monitor customer service at the branch and will work with the new operator to make sure service standards are maintained. Following the transfer, the Post Office will be open for longer, including Saturday afternoons, providing customers with more flexibility around their visits.

Access to Post Office services and products:

The same wide range of Post Office services will continue to be available, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office. The nearest alternative for this service is Brixton Post Office, approximately 4.7 miles away, which can be accessed by public transport. Electronic DVLA photocard renewal services will, however, continue to be offered. During the period of refurbishment, the external ATM will be out of service. The nearest alternative is 0.9 miles away at Penge Branch, 100-102 High Street, Penge, London SE20 7HA, which can be reached by a frequent bus service.

Staff, who will work exclusively in the Post Office, will be trained to provide information on financial products, including savings and insurances. Product information will also be available for customers to take away with them and our website and specialist customer helplines also provide information on what's available and how to make a purchase. Further details of the new branch, including opening hours, are provided in the attached information sheet.

Customer service training and existing staff:

Our new retail partner and their team are already experienced in running Post Office branches, and they have demonstrated to us that they are an appropriate franchise partner to operate the service at Sydenham and are committed to delivering excellent customer service.

Any person employed to work in Sydenham Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards and, just as with branches we run ourselves, the branch staff will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service related matters. Post Office Area Managers will work with the new operator and the branch team to provide support, in the same way they already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners. The retail offer will include a range of stationery items, which will be comparable with what is available at the branch now.

In respect of the team working at the branch, we have a strong track record of supporting our people through change. We will do all that we can to find a solution that works for each individual within the options available.

Conclusion:

After careful consideration of the feedback received, I am confident that the new branch will continue to meet customer needs and deliver an excellent service, whilst helping to provide future sustainability for the branch and maintaining a Post Office presence in Sydenham.

The new operator plans a major refurbishment of the premises, and to make this happen, the branch will have to close temporarily. We and your new operator will work hard to keep the closure period to a minimum, so you can start using your new branch as quickly as possible. Fit out plans are now being finalised for early next year and as soon as dates have been agreed, we'll let you know as well as providing full details of the arrangements in place for alternative service provision whilst Sydenham Post Office is temporarily closed. Customer information posters will also be displayed in branch at that time.

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at postofficeviews.co.uk

Yours faithfully



Roger Gale
Sales & Trade Marketing Director
Post Office Limited

How to contact us:

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

FREEPOST Your Comments

Sydenham Post Office information sheet															
Address	ZCO Ltd 44 Sydenham Road, London, SE26 5QX														
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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Fri	09:00 – 17:30														
Sat	09:00 – 17:30														
Sun	Closed														
New Opening times of Post Office service at retail counter	<table border="1"><tr><td>Mon - Sat</td><td>09:00 – 17:30</td></tr><tr><td>Sun</td><td>Closed</td></tr></table>	Mon - Sat	09:00 – 17:30	Sun	Closed										
Mon - Sat	09:00 – 17:30														
Sun	Closed														
Products & Services	The same wide range of products and services will still be available, with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office.														
Serving positions	There will be four serving positions in total, made up of three screened and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter. The total number of serving positions has been based on current and future predicted business levels.														
Additional Facilities	Two self-service kiosks for mails transactions including home shopping returns, E Top-Ups, and a range of bill payments.														
Access & facilities	Access will be level with automatic doors at the entrance. A low level serving counter, low level writing desk and hearing loop will be available.														
Retail	Cards and stationery														
Dates of temporary closure for refurbishment	Thursday 21 March 2019 at 09:00														

Alternative branches:**Penge Post Office**

100-102 High Street
London
SE20 7HA

Opening times

Monday	09:00 – 18:00
Tuesday	09:00 – 18:00
Wednesday	09:00 – 18:00
Thursday	09:00 – 18:00
Friday	09:00 – 18:00
Saturday	09:00 – 17:00
Sunday	Closed

Services

The same range of services will continue to be available with the exception of the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office.

Access and facilities

This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance.

Transport/parking

Pay & display roadside parking is available on Maple Road approximately 150 metres away. Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk

Route

This Post Office service is located approximately 0.9 miles away from Sydenham branch, along varied terrain.

Forest Hill Post Office

Forest Hill Station
Devonshire Road
London
SE23 3HD

Opening times

Monday	09:00 – 17:30
Tuesday	09:00 – 17:30
Wednesday	09:00 – 17:30
Thursday	09:00 – 17:30
Friday	09:00 – 17:30
Saturday	09:00 – 17:30
Sunday	Closed

Services

The same range of services will continue to be available with the exception of National Lottery, the Biometric Enrolment Service for the Home Office, DVLA Photocard Driving Licence renewal and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence application services.

Access and facilities

This branch has wide automatic doors and level access at the entrance. Post Office services are located on the first floor and can be accessed by stairs or a customer lift.

Transport/parking

There is a car park at Forest Hill Station within 40 metres of the branch. Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk

Route

This Post Office service is located approximately 1.5 miles away from Sydenham branch, along varied terrain.

Nearest branch offering the Biometric Enrolment Service:**Brixton Post Office**

242 Ferndale Road
London
SW9 8FR

Opening times

Monday	09:00 – 18:00
Tuesday	09:30 – 18:00
Wednesday	09:00 – 18:00
Thursday	09:00 – 18:00
Friday	09:00 – 18:00
Saturday	09:00 – 13:30
Sunday	Closed

Services

The same range of services will continue to be available with the exception of National Lottery.

Access and facilities

This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance.

Transport/parking

Time-restricted pay & display roadside parking is available on Nursery Road approximately 50 metres away. Public transport is available to and from the surrounding area. Information on routes and timetables can be accessed at www.tfl.gov.uk

Route

This Post Office service is located approximately 4.9 miles away from Sydenham branch, along varied terrain.

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 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.