



Upchurch Post Office® is changing

Last year we asked your views on some key areas about our plans to change your Post Office to one of our new-look **local** branches. We received **4** submissions about the possible changes and we've now finalised our plans for the change to your branch. While it's not possible to respond to each individual issue raised, a summary of the main comments we received is provided below.

We've now finalised our plans and your new-look Post Office is scheduled to open at the current location on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 13:00. To make this change happen, the branch will need to close for refurbishment on Monday 21 May 2018 at 17:30.

We asked why you use this Post Office and what you like about it.

You said.....that you use this Post Office for a variety of services, it is local and convenient and the staff are friendly and helpful.

You'll be glad to know that most of what you like about your branch won't change. Your new Operator is keen to provide the same high standard of service as is currently received. The new style local format is a simpler operating model than a traditional style Post Office. It is designed to handle products and services that are automated, meaning that customers can be served quickly and efficiently and transactions processed more quickly.

We asked for your comments about the changes to the branch.

You said.....You are concerned about having the Post Office and retail counters together, as this would cause longer queues. You are also concerned about privacy and security when carrying out transactions at an open plane counter.

We fully recognise people can be wary of change and we are pleased that you took the time to let us know what's concerning you. Although the local style format is a different way of providing a service, security or privacy is not compromised. As with any other branch we have robust security procedures in place and anyone handling Post Office transactions including new staff will be fully trained on all operational and service issues including customer privacy. I would also like to reassure you that when we are talking with the operator we work with them to make sure there is an appropriate level of privacy at the Post Office till point and discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service.

Additionally, your new Post Office counter is planned to be located along the back wall adjacent to the new retail counter. During identified busy periods and to help manage waiting times, the Operator is expected to manage staffing levels at retail and Post Office service points appropriately.

We asked for your comments about any changes to the opening hours.

You said.....that you welcome the longer opening hours.

We already have over 2000 branches offering Post Office services in this new way. Feedback from customer satisfaction surveys supports that customers particularly like the longer opening hours the local style branch offers. This means that customers can choose to visit their local branch at times that suit their lifestyle better, whether this be first thing in the morning, during the day, or later in the evening, which also helps to spread customer visits throughout the day.

When the new branch opens customers will benefit from longer opening hours:

Monday – Saturday 06 :00 – 19 :00 & Sunday 07 :00 – 15 :00

We asked for your comments about how you will access the Post Office products and services that will no longer be available at the branch if the change goes ahead.

You said.....you said that the removal of payments by cheque would be inconvenient for customers, and you would like this service to continue to be available.

The new-style local format is a simpler operating model than a traditional style Post Office. It is designed to handle products and services that are automated meaning that customers can be served quickly and efficiently and transactions processed more quickly. You may need to go to an alternative Post Office for a small number of transactions which are more complex or manual, paper based transactions, like Parcelforce Worldwide International Parcels. But the majority of services will still be available, including the acceptance of Royal Mail international letters, parcels up to 2kg and printed papers up to 5kg.

The small number of services that will no longer be available at Upchurch Post Office will continue to be offered at Rainham Post Office and Deanswood Post Office.

We asked for your comments about the potential closure period during the refurbishment or access to other branches in the area.


You said.....that the closure period is necessary, and you would like the refurbishment period to be kept to a minimum. Some of you said that having to use an alternative branch will be inconvenient for many people.

We recognise that even a short term closure will be inconvenient, for which we apologise. However we've been working with the Operator to keep the closure to a minimum and we will ensure that the nearest alternative branches are displayed and publicised. We've also given you 2 weeks' notice of the closure period, so you have time to make necessary alternative arrangements.

Please look at the poster displayed in branch for more details about the change.

We'd like to thank all those who took the opportunity to let us have their views about the changes.

How to contact us:

-  postofficeviews.co.uk
-  comments@postoffice.co.uk
-  Customer Helpline: 03452 66 01 15
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55
-  FREEPOST Your Comments

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