



Dear Customer

Villette Road Post Office®
53-55 Villette Road, Hendon, Sunderland, SR2 8RD

Local public consultation

Further to my letter dated 21 January 2019 in which I advised you of our proposal to move the above the branch to a new location - HJ Foodstore, 70 Villette Road, Hendon, Sunderland, SR2 8RP.

Regrettably, I'm now writing to let you know that the temporary postmaster at the current location has now decided to resign. The premises will no longer be available for post office use and the branch will close on Wednesday 6 March 2019. We apologise for the inconvenience this temporary closure may cause.

Our priority is to safeguard Post Office services to the local community in the longer term and subject to consultation, the Post Office will relocate. I would like to assure you that we are working hard to keep this temporary closure period to a minimum and to restore Post Office services as quickly as possible to the local community. The consultation on our proposal to move the branch is due to end on 5 March 2019 and I will contact you again once we review all feedback to make a decision.

During this period of temporary closure customers requiring Post Office services may use any convenient Post Office branch. Details of alternative branches are below.

If you're a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information with any local groups or organisations that you know within the community, for example on noticeboards, local charities and in GP surgeries, to help our customers and your constituents understand what is happening to the Post Office in Villette Road. If you would like a supply of these posters please let us know.

Yours faithfully

Gail Burnett

Gail Burnett
Area Network Change Manager

postofficeviews.co.uk

comments@postoffice.co.uk

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

FREEPOST Your Comments

**Please note this is the full address to use
and no further address details are required.**

Want to tell us what
you think right here
and now? Scan here.

If you don't have a QR
code scanner on your
phone, you can find
one in your app store.



Items sent by Freepost take two working days to arrive, so responses by Freepost should be sent in sufficient time to arrive before the end of the consultation period. Working days do not include Saturdays or Sundays. Responses received after the deadline will not be considered.

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.

Alternative branches:

Tunstall Vale Post Office

Wilsons Convenience Store
128 Queen Alexandra Road
Sunderland
SR2 9AB

Opening times

Monday	06:00 – 21:00
Tuesday	06:00 – 21:00
Wednesday	06:00 – 21:00
Thursday	06:00 – 21:00
Friday	06:00 – 21:00
Saturday	06:00 – 21:00
Sunday	Closed

Services

The same range of services will continue to be available with Euros, however excluding Comprehensive range of Travel Money, Car Tax, Passport Check & Send and On Demand Travel Insurance.

Access and facilities

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

Internally, there is a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

Transport/parking

Parking is available in the layby lane outside the branch. There is further roadside parking available on the side street on Turnstall Park. There local buses serving the surrounding area.

Distance

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

Grangetown Post Office

23 Stockton Terrace
Grangetown
Sunderland
SR2 9RN

Opening times

Monday	07:30 – 17:30
Tuesday	07:30 – 17:30
Wednesday	07:30 – 17:30
Thursday	07:30 – 17:30
Friday	07:30 – 17:30
Saturday	07:45 – 13:30
Sunday	Closed

Services

The same range of services will continue to be available with National Lottery, however excluding Passport Check & Check.

Access and facilities

This branch has a wide door and level access at the entrance. Internally, there is a hearing loop and space for wheelchair.

Transport/parking

There is a free car park opposite the branch and further roadside parking is available on the side street on Oswald Terrace. There is a frequent bus service from Villette Road and this branch. The nearest bus stop is within 50 metres.

Distance

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

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.

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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.