



Dear Customer

**Wells Post Office®**  
**Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RA**

**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 Peacocks at 9-13 High Street, Wells, BA5 2AA.

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 Friday 24 July 2020. Following the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic our retail partner is preparing to reopen their premises in the near future and we will be working with them to restore Post Office services as soon as possible. When the re-opening date and new opening hours of the Post Office service are confirmed, updated posters will be displayed at the new premises to let customers know.

During transfer of the branch customers requiring Post Office facilities may use any convenient Post Office service. Details of two possible alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- St Thomas Street Post Office, Bath Road, Wells, BA5 3LF
- Westbury-Sub-Mendip Post Office, Stoke Road, Westbury-Sub-Mendip, Wells, BA5 1HD

This information is also available on the Post Office Consultation Hub at:  
[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://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**  
**Regional Change Manager**

[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

[comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)

FREEPOST Your Comments

**To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille call 03457 22 33 44 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.**

## **Appendix A**

### **Response to Local Public Consultation**

**Consultation started** 12 February 2020

**Consultation ended** 25 March 2020

#### **Consultation responses**

- 28 responses from customers and local representatives

#### **Key issues raised**

- Space within shop
- Staff training

#### **Responses to the issues raised**

##### **Space within shop**

Inside, the new branch will be in line with Post Office specifications, making sure there is sufficient space for the Post Office to operate alongside the retail offer.

We will be working closely with the new operator on the internal layout and some existing fixtures, fittings and retail stock will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises. The entrance, aisles and queuing area will be kept free from obstructions ensuring adequate space is available for customers to move around the store and access Post Office services without difficulty.

##### **Staff training**

We know our customers value excellent customer service at the Post Office and the new operator is looking forward to welcoming Post Office customers.

The new operator 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 areas such as Data Protection, Mail Handling and the need to respect customer privacy and confidentiality. Staffing levels will be carefully aligned to customer demand.

<b>Wells Post Office information sheet</b>	
	<b>New Post Office location</b>
<b>Address</b>	Peacocks 9-13 High Street Wells Somerset BA5 2DZ
<b>Post Office Opening hours</b>	To be confirmed
<b>Distance</b>	Approximately 120 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain.
<b>Products &amp; Services</b>	The same range of Post Office products and services will still be available.
<b>Serving positions</b>	There will be one screened and two open plan positions in dedicated area of the shop.
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p><b>Access and facilities</b></p> <p>The new premises will have a wide door and level access at the front entrance and ramp with handrail at the back entrance. Internally, there will be a hearing loop, a low level writing desk and space for a wheelchair.</p> <p><b>Parking</b></p> <p>There is a Pay &amp; Display car park including disabled parking at the back of the new premises.</p>
<b>Retail</b>	Clothing store
<b>Planned date of re-opening</b>	To be confirmed

**To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille please call 03452 22 33 44 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 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: 03457 22 33 44**

**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.