



Dear Customer

## **Local public consultation - Have your say**

**Whitehills Post Office  
6 Loch Street, Whitehills, Banff, AB45 2LT**

We are moving the above Post Office branch to a new location - 8 Loch Street, Whitehills, Banff, AB45 2LT.

### **Why are we moving?**

Our partners and agents operate sub Post Office branches alongside their private retail business, and it is important that they make the very best use of their resources to ensure future sustainability of the service. An opportunity has arisen for the postmaster to incorporate this Post Office alongside convenience store and cafe into their newly built premises nearby.

The current branch will close on Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 13:00 and will reopen at the new location on Saturday 22 October 2022 at 09:00. During transfer of the branch customers requiring Post Office facilities may use any convenient Post Office branch. Details of two alternative Post Office branches are provided below for your convenience:

- Banff Post Office, 11 Castle Street, Banff, AB45 1DH
- Macduff Post Office, 25 Duff Street, Macduff, AB44 1TL

Our priority is to safeguard Post Office services to the local community in the longer term and postmaster firmly believes that the move will help secure continued access to Post Office services locally, as well as supporting the viability of their business.

### **We'd like your help**

We're now starting a period of local public consultation and your feedback is important to us as it will help to inform our decision. For more details of the services and accessibility at the new location, please see the branch information summary later in this consultation document.

### **What exactly are we consulting on?**

Whilst the decision has already been made to move Whitehills Post Office branch, we would still like your views on access into and inside the new location. We'd welcome your comments on the following areas:

- **Are the new premises easy for you to get into and are they easily accessible once inside?**
- **Are there any other local community issues which you believe could be affected by or affect the Post Office move?**
- **Is there anything we could do to make it easier for customers?**

Local Public Consultation starts	<b>14 September 2022</b>
Local Public Consultation ends	<b>26 October 2022</b>

The new service will open on Saturday 22 October 2022, however, this does not affect the period of public consultation which is ongoing until Wednesday 26 October 2022.

You can share your views on the change through our easy and convenient online questionnaire via [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk). When entering the website, you can use the search function to find the consultation for this branch either by branch name, postcode or the unique branch code **419801**

### **How to share your views:**

**Consultation Hub ([postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk))**

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

Call: 03452 66 01 15

Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

**FREEPOST Your Comments – N.B.** This is the full postal address. Items sent by Freepost take 2 working days, please allow enough time for responses to be received.

**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.



**Good to know**

- Customers will access Post Office services at a low-screened, open-plan, modern serving point that's part of the retail counter.
- Working with the postmaster, we will adapt the newly built premises layout, fixtures and fittings to accommodate the Post Office till if needed.
- The Post Office will offer the same products and services.
- All staff employed to work in the new branch will be trained to the highest standards with on-going training on products and services, as well as operational and service related matters.
- Posters and leaflets will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about our plans and to ask their views.
- Any information we receive will be carefully considered as we finalise our plans.
- If you are a local representative, we will write to you again at the end of the consultation to respond to the main issues raised and to explain our final plans for the branch.
- This consultation is being carried out in line with our Principles of Community Engagement which have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland - the independent statutory consumer watchdogs. An extract relating to Consultation is available at the end of this letter.

If you are a local representative, it would be helpful if you could share this information through your social media channels and 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 Whitehills Post Office. If you would like a supply of posters, please let us know. Our contact details can be found at the bottom of the first page.

Thank you for considering our plans.

Yours sincerely

*Kenny Lamont*

**Kenny Lamont  
Network Provision Lead  
Post Office Limited**

## Whitehills Post Office Information Summary

Current Location	New Location
6 Loch Street Whitehills Banff AB45 2LT	8 Loch Street Whitehills Banff AB45 2LT

### Current opening hours

Mon- Sun	05:15 – 20:00
----------	---------------

### New opening hours

Mon - Sun	05:15 - 20:00
-----------	---------------

**During the Coronavirus pandemic the branch may need to make changes to its opening hours. The latest available branch information can be found on our website [www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)**

### Products & Services

The same range of products and services will still be available,

### Serving positions

There will be a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

### Access

Access will be level with an automatic door at the entrance to the new premises.

Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

### Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 50 metres away from the current branch, along varied terrain. There will be a customer car park, including disabled parking spaces, directly outside the new branch.

### Retail

Convenience store & cafe

---

**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 (extract)**  
A full version of this document is available on our Consultation Hub - [postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)

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 **Consult** where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch<sup>1</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>2</sup> local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives<sup>3</sup>, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities<sup>4</sup> 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> 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>2</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.

<sup>3</sup> Locally elected representatives include but are not restricted to the Member of Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Parliament, or Northern Ireland Assembly, Local Authority Chief Executive, Ward Councillors, Parish or Community Council.

<sup>4</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 <sup>3</sup> and <sup>4</sup> 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.