



Dear Customer

**Local public consultation – Decision**

**Witley Post Office  
Petworth Road, Witley, Godalming, GU8 5LP**

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 Witley Village Stores at Chester House, Petworth Road, Witley, GU8 5LY, where it will continue to be operated by the existing postmaster as one of our local style branches.

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 17:00 on Tuesday 7 November 2023, with the new branch opening, at Witley Village Stores, Chester House, at 08:00 on Monday 13 November 2023. If there are any unforeseen circumstances which mean these dates change, posters will be displayed in branch to let customers know.

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

- Milford Post Office, Portsmouth Road, Milford, Godalming, GU8 5DS
- Hambledon Post Office, The Cricket Green, Godalming, GU8 4HF

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. An extract relating to Consultation is available at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

*Jason Collins*

**Jason Collins  
Network Provision Manager  
Post Office Limited**

[comments@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:comments@postoffice.co.uk)  
[postofficeviews.co.uk](https://postofficeviews.co.uk)  
FREEPOST Your Comments

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy. Information about how we do this can be found on our website at [postoffice.co.uk/privacy](https://postoffice.co.uk/privacy)

**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.**

## **Appendix A**

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

**Consultation started** 1 June 2023

**Consultation ended** 13 July 2023

#### **Consultation responses**

- 38 responses from customers

#### **Key issues raised**

- Distance and Parking
- Access and Space
- Counters, Privacy and Queues

### **Response to issues raised**

#### **Distance and Parking**

Customers welcomed and supported the move because the new location is more centrally located in the village and offers convenient access to Post Office services. Some customers raised concerns that they will have further to travel to access Post Office services. I acknowledge that for some customers the move may mean a slightly longer journey than currently, however the new premises are located closer to the village, on the same road, with a walking distance from the current site. In situations such as this there will always be some customers who are more inconvenienced than others and we can only apologise for this.

With any relocation it is inevitable that whilst some customers will have an easier journey, or find the premises are closer than at present, regrettably others will have further to travel. However, we remain confident the move will not significantly impede customer access to Post Office services.

We can confirm the new branch will be located on the same road, approximately 160 metres away from the current branch, along mostly varied terrain. We believe this relocation is the most effective way to secure the long-term viability of Post Office services in Witley. We can confirm pedestrian access to the new location, there are well maintained pavements, with dropped kerbs along the route from the previous site.

While we have considered some comments raised about parking in the area surrounding the new premises, it is fair to say that this is a problem faced generally in many locations nationwide. Whilst the availability of parking spaces is outside the direct control of Post Office Limited. A further review of parking has been carried out and we can confirm that customers using their own transport, roadside parking is available nearby. We are therefore satisfied that there is adequate car parking in the area surrounding the new branch to meet the needs of customers using the new Post Office.

## **Access and Space**

We recognise that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of our customers, particularly to the older and disabled people and we want to make our services as accessible as possible. We are pleased to confirm that before the new Post Office opens, access will be level with a wide automatic door at the entrance to the new premises. Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

Internally, the new branch will be built in line with Post Office specifications with a dedicated Post Office area, and making sure there is sufficient space for the Post Office service to operate alongside the retail offer. We will be working closely with the postmaster on the internal layout, to ensure optimum use of the space within the store and that access into and inside is kept clear and free of obstacles. Some fixtures and fittings will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises, ensuring the entrance, aisles and the waiting area are kept free from obstructions and adequate room is provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around without difficulty.

## **Counters, Privacy and Queues**

The new local style Post Office will operate from a Post Office counter position located alongside the shop counter enabling customers to carry out the same range of Post Office products and services alongside retail transactions. The Post Office transactions are designed to be quick and efficient to operate to enable fast and effective customer service and helping to reduce queuing.

The change also means that local residents will benefit from significantly longer opening hours, including Saturday afternoon, Sunday opening and longer opening times throughout the week, allowing customers to spread their visits and access our services seven days a week and at times that suit them better.

Although the local style format is a different way of offering Post Office services, it does not compromise the professional service standards that we provide at all of our branches. We will also be working closely with the postmaster to make sure an appropriate level of privacy is provided for Post Office customers. For example, we discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service or handing a receipt that contains any financial information face down. This includes respecting customer confidentiality and adhering to the stringent security procedures which will be put in place to protect staff and customers. Additionally, any staff that will handle Post Office transactions will also have completed compliance training for a number of areas, including Data Protection and Mail Handling. Open plan working also lends itself to more discreet conversations as customers don't have to raise their voice to be heard. Staff will be fully trained with staffing levels aligned to meet customer demand particularly at peak times.

## Appendix B

### Witley Post Office Information Sheet

Witley Village Stores  
Chester House  
Petworth Road  
Witley  
GU8 5LY

#### New opening hours

Mon - Sat	08:00 - 19:00
Sun	10:00 - 16:00

**Some branches may need to make changes to their 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 products and services will still be available.

#### Serving positions

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

#### Access

The new premises will have a wide automatic door and level access at the entrance.  
Internally, there will be a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.

#### Getting there

The new branch will be located approximately 160 metres away from the current branch, along mostly varied terrain.  
Roadside parking will be available nearby.

#### Retail

Convenience store.

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## Witley Post Office services available

**For information about product availability call 03457 223344.  
For details of maximum value of transactions, please speak to the operator.**

	New branch
<b>Mail</b>	
First & Second Class mail	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 <sup>st</sup> class 6 & 12 only, 2 <sup>nd</sup> class 12 only)	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓
Signed For	✓
Special Delivery	✓
Home shopping returns	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓
Express & contract parcels	<b>Express 24 &amp; 48</b>
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. Tracked & Signed)	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓
Local Collect	✓
Drop & Go	✓
<b>Withdrawals, deposits and payments</b>	
Personal & Business Banking cash withdrawals, deposits & balance enquiries using a card. Also enveloped cheque deposits and barcoded deposit slips.	✓
Postal orders	✓
MoneyGram	✓
Change giving	✓
Automated bill payments (card or barcoded)	✓
Key recharging	✓
<b>Travel</b>	
Travel insurance referral	✓
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓
National Lottery Terminal	✓
<b>Payment by cheque</b>	✓
<p>Other products and services are available at <b>Milford Post Office</b>, Portsmouth Road, Milford, Godalming, GU8 5DS</p> <p>Opening times:  Mon – Fri      09:00 – 17:00  Sat              09:00 – 13:00  Sun              Closed</p>	

## **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, Consumer 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, Consumer 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**  
**Call: 03452 66 01 15**

**Comments@postoffice.co.uk**  
**Textphone: 03457 22 33 55**

**FREEPOST Your Comments**

<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.