



Dear Customer

Newton Hall Post Office®
18 Alnwick Road, Newton Hall, Durham, DH1 5LX

Decision - move to new premises & branch modernisation

I'm writing to confirm that we will be proceeding with our proposal to move the above Post Office branch to McColls Retail Group Ltd, Unit 2, Alnwick Road, Newton Hall, Durham, DH1 5LX, where it will operate as one of our new local style Post Office branches.

We received a considerable number of comments and two petitions from customers and local representatives during the local public consultation period. We also met with a number of local community representatives, including County Councilors Mark Wilkes, Amanda Hopwood and Mamie Simmons. The level of response shows just how important the Post Office is to the community and I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their views.

The main feedback centered on concerns about the suitability of the new location and the level of Post Office services that would be available. Concerns were also expressed about staffing levels following the proposed change. As a direct result of feedback received during the period of local public consultation, we have made a change to our original proposal and I am pleased to confirm that we will be enhancing the range of products which will be available at the new branch and customers will still be able to transact Transcash and Royal Mail and Parcelforce International Services. Additionally cheques will continue to be accepted as a method of payment.

As part of the consultation process, Post Office Ltd also meets with the independent statutory consumer watchdog, which in Great Britain is Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, and in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council to review all the consultation responses and to ensure all relevant feedback is taken into account. The review and escalation process that exists between both parties led to further detailed discussions with Citizens Advice, who escalated the case as they had concerns about capacity at the new branch.

It's clear that the Post Office plays an important part in the lives of customers, particularly to elderly and disabled customers and we want to make our services as accessible as possible. Our new operator fully understands they are responsible for making sure that their premises meet with all relevant legislation and I am pleased to confirm that they will be making adjustments to improve access for customers. Subject to planning permission, the new operator plans to install a permanent access ramp. If planning permission is not granted the operator fully understands that he is responsible for making sure that his premises meet with all relevant legislation and a portable ramp will be made available for any customer who is unable to manage the step. To let customers know that a ramp is available, there will be a clearly visible sign at the entrance and a bell for people to ring for assistance; both this and the sign will be accessible to wheelchair users.

Internally the new branch will be in line with Post Office specifications, making sure there is sufficient space for the new style local Post Office to operate alongside the retail offer. We will be working closely with the new operator in the internal layout and some fixtures and fittings will be re-aligned or removed to make sure there is clear access into the premises. Aisles and the queuing area will be kept free from obstructions and adequate room will be provided for customers and a wheelchair to move around the store with ease.

www.postoffice.co.uk

We recognise that some customers may have concerns about carrying out their Post Office business in a different type of environment from what they are used to. 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 work with the operator to make sure there is an appropriate level of privacy at the Post Office serving point. For example, we discuss issues like queue layout and asking customers to stand back from the counter whilst they are waiting for service. Staff training is to Post Office standards and includes instructions and guidelines to safeguard customer privacy and confidentiality. Additionally, all our operators and their staff sign the Official Secrets Act. Similarly with security, as with any other branch in our network there would be strict guidelines and measures put in place to safeguard customers, staff and the cash and stock entrusted to the operator's care

Staffing level will be carefully aligned to customer demand and we will continue to work with the operator to make sure that customer service is maintained. We will closely monitor the new branch once it opens, to make sure that current and future customer demands and high service standards are met, and we will share these aspects with Citizens Advice three months after the branch has opened.

I have carefully considered my original proposal and the feedback received during the public consultation period. I am confident that the new branch is suitably located and that this new way of offering Post Office services will meet customer needs, whilst helping to provide long term viability and future sustainability for the branch.

Posters will now be displayed in branch to let customers know about this decision. We're currently making the final arrangements for the move and further posters will be provided in branch soon to let customers know the actual date the move will take place.

You can also find a copy of this letter on our website at postofficeviews.co.uk. When entering the website you will be asked to enter the code for this branch: 231313.

This change to the Post Office network is being carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice for changes to the network, as agreed with the independent statutory consumer watchdog. A full copy of the Code of Practice is available on our website at www.postoffice.co.uk/transforming-post-office, or by contacting us at the address provided at the end of this letter.

Thank you for your considering our proposal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne', written in a cursive style.

Suzanne Richardson
Regional Network Manager

How to contact us:



postofficeviews.co.uk



comments@postoffice.co.uk



Customer Helpline: 08457 22 33 44
Textphone: 08457 22 33 55



FREEPOST Your Comments

We've published our final plan on-line, to see it scan here.

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



Post Office Ltd can provide information and receive comments (where appropriate) in alternative formats, for example, to assist the visually impaired. To obtain further specific information, please contact the Customer Helpline on 08457 22 33 44.

Newton Hall Post Office information sheet															
Address	McColls Retail Group Ltd Unit 2, Alnwick Road Newton Hall Durham DH1 5LX														
Opening hours	<table> <tr><td>Monday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Friday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Saturday</td><td>06:00 – 21:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sunday</td><td>07:00 – 21:00</td></tr> </table>	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	07:00 – 21:00
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Saturday	06:00 – 21:00														
Sunday	07:00 – 21:00														
Distance	15 metres away from the current branch, along level terrain.														
Products & Services	The majority of Post Office products and services will still be available.														
Accessibility & accessibility works	<p>Access and facilities Subject to planning permission, access will be via a permanent ramp. If planning permission is not granted, a portable ramp will be made available</p> <p>Parking There is free parking for 90 minutes outside the premises. There are also three designated disabled bays.</p>														
Retail	Convenience store														
Date of Relocation	Dates to be confirmed														

Newton Hall Post Office® services available		
Your Postmaster or our Customer Helpline on 08457 223344 will be happy to help you with any queries about product availability or provide you with details of maximum value of transactions. Customers can also shop online at www.postoffice.co.uk		
	Current branch	New branch
Mail		
First & Second Class mail	✓	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 st class 6 & 12 only, 2 nd 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	✓	✓
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. signed for & Airsure)	✓	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	✓	✓
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓	✓
Local Collect	✓	✓
Drop & Go	✓	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments		
Post Office Card Account	✓	✓
Personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual)	✓	✓
Postal orders	✓	✓
Moneygram	✓	✓
Change giving	✓	✓
Bill payments		
Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)	✓	✓
Key recharging	✓	✓
Transcash (without barcode)	✓	✓
Financial services		
NS&I Premium Savings Bonds	✓	✗
Driving		
Car tax (you can pay in cash, by cheque or debit card)	✓	✓
Licences		
Rod fishing licences	✓	✓
Travel		
Pre-order travel money	✓	✓
On demand travel money	Euros	Euros
Travel insurance referral	✗	✓
On demand travel insurance	✓	✗
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers		
Mobile Top-ups & E vouchers	✓	✓
National Lottery Terminal	✗	✓
Payment by cheque		
Products marked ✗ are available at Durham Post Office, 33 Silver Street, Durham, DH1 3RE	Opening times: Mon – Fri 09:00 – 17:30 Sat 09:00 – 16:00	

Code of Practice for changes to the Post Office® network

What's a Code of Practice?

The Code of Practice contains guidelines we follow. They tell us how, and when to tell you about changes to your local Post Office services. We've worked with the independent statutory consumer watchdog on these guidelines, which in Great Britain is Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, and in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council. .

What kind of changes does it include?

Information about when we're planning to move or close one of our branches or outreach services. This also covers information about when a branch has suddenly closed unexpectedly because of something like a flood or fire.

Who do we tell about changes?

You and your representatives (who are often local MPs or local authorities and councils).

How will we tell you what's happening?

If there's a minor change – like changing opening times, then we'll let you know by putting up posters in the Post Office. If the plan is to move a Post Office then we'll put up posters and hand out letters in the branch as well as writing to your representatives. We'll have a press release and, the relevant information will be easy to find on our website.

How long will it take?

We'll let you know about any changes as soon as we possibly can. Sometimes, change is out of our control but we'll try to keep you as up-to-date about what's happening as much as we can. We try to make sure you have 4 weeks' notice before anything happens. If we're going to make big changes, there'll be a 'consultation period' which lasts about 6 weeks. This means that you've got time to let us know how you feel.

It's easy to let us know what you think...

We want to hear what you and your representatives think about change and to make sure it's easy for you to let us know, all of our contact details can be found on all our posters and letters. You can contact us by email, letter or 'phone.

How will you find out about the final plans?

We'll be letting you know in as many ways as possible. There'll be posters put up in or around your local area, letting you know what's going on. We'll also write to local representatives and, the information will be on our website.

If you let us know what you think, we'll make sure you know about our final plans either by writing to you, or having the information easily available in the Post Office or on our website.

What can you do if you think we haven't followed the Code of Practice?

If you don't think we've followed the Code, then please write to us or email us via the contact details included in this letter and let us know why.

To have a look at the full Code of Practice, it's on our website at www.postoffice.co.uk/transforming-post-office