

## **Customer and Stakeholder Engagement: Bexhill-on-Sea**

On 30 November 2022 we announced the closure of 114 branches, including our branch at Bexhill-on-Sea. The following provides detail of the stakeholder engagement we have undertaken, and feedback received, since our announcement.

### **Customer and stakeholder contact**

On 9 January 2023 we wrote to all regular users of this branch. The letters advised customers of the reasons behind our decision and effective date of closure. They also provided customers with details of the nearest alternative HSBC UK branch, alternative ways to continue to access their usual banking services and how to access the closure Impact Assessment.

We wrote to Huw Merriman, constituency MP, on 30 November 2022 to advise of our decision to close the branch and offered to meet to explain the reasons and how we would be supporting all our customers during this period of change.

At announcement we also wrote to a number of key stakeholders. These included:

- Post Office
- HM Treasury
- Cash Action Group
- CBI
- British Chambers of Commerce
- Which?

On 9 January 2023 our Local Director additionally wrote to the following key local stakeholders to advise of our decision to close:

- Councillor Christine Bayliss
- Councillor Paul Courtel
- Bexhill Citizens Advice
- Age UK Bexhill
- Sue King, Post Office
- Graeme Bower, Post Office
- Bexhill Foodbank
- The Sara Lee Trust
- Together For Mental Wellbeing
- Bexhill Parish Council
- Howard Martin, Bexhill Chamber of Commerce
- Bexhill Library
- Warming up the Homeless

We published an Impact Assessment on our public website. The assessment provides further details on the reasons behind our decision, the information used, the nearest HSBC

*Information correct at the time of publication.*

UK and Post Office branches, alternative ways to bank and how to contact the bank for additional support. To view these reports just scan the QR code or visit <https://www.hsbc.co.uk/branch-finder>. Copies are also available in the closing branch.



Posters have been displayed at the branch with information on the nearest HSBC UK branch and cash machine as well as the nearest Post Office counter.

We provided extensive training to our branch teams in order that they could fully support both personal and business customers with accessing alternative ways to bank. Following this training our branch staff have been proactively engaging with customers, particularly those who are reliant on the branch services, to help them look at the alternatives that are available, including the services provided by the Post Office.

We have also been engaging with the nearest Post Office counters to the branch to ensure they know we are closing, are aware of the services they can provide to our customers and to address any queries or concerns they may have in meeting the needs of our customers.

### **Customer and stakeholder reaction/feedback**

- We have written to Huw Merriman, Constituency MP who responded to us expressing concerns which had been raised by one of his constituents. These concerns related to the elderly population of the town being unable to travel to an alternative branch. Concerns were also raised for local small businesses which they felt would be impacted negatively by the closure. Our Local Director, Paul Amos, responded by explaining the rationale behind the closure along with alternative ways of banking for our customers. He also covered the support that we are offering customers, especially our vulnerable ones. This response was much appreciated.
- Warming up the Homeless Charity responded thanking us for informing them of the branch closure.
- Customers have shown concern about the members of staff in the branch and have been pleased to learn that the team would be relocating to nearby branches.
- Some customers have expressed concerns that they will need to travel further to access branch banking, especially where this may incur increased costs such as petrol and parking charges. We have taken the opportunity to discuss all the alternatives available to our customers requiring this service, particularly sharing with them the benefits of using the Post Office.

- Staff in the branch have been actively supporting customers in setting up digital banking. One customer was supported to set up her digital banking on her own iPad. She told us she was really impressed with how easy it was to use and made her feel safer as she could keep an eye on her money. She was able to access her banking by biometrics which she found nice and simple. During the appointment our staff member also showed her how she could video call her grandchildren which she was especially pleased about.
- Calls to vulnerable customers have been well received and they have generally welcomed the opportunity to discuss the branch closure as a follow-up to the letter they received. During these calls we have taken the time to understand our customer's specific circumstances, which has allowed us to provide our customers with information on the services that may be suitable for them.

### **Follow up action taken**

- Our Network Manager has visited the local Post and met with Graeme Bower, Post Office Area Manager, who is being very supportive of the closure. He will be spending the day at the Branch to answer any questions from both Personal and Business customers regarding using the Post Office for transactional purposes. This has been advertised in the branch and spoken about when contacting customers informing them of the closure. This has been very well received by customers.
- We have offered customers the opportunity to attend a HSBC@Home session focused on alternative ways to bank. HSBC@Home is our digital education programme and has been designed to educate and upskill customers on a range of topics from digital tools and services to fraud and financial fitness.
- The branch team will be holding Pop Up events once the branch closes. Our branch experts will be on hand to offer important advice on how to reduce the risk of fraud on your account, give guidance and support on the different ways customers can do their banking, including the services available at the Post Office and help with queries about our products and services.
- The branch have supported customers who have no access to a compatible device for online banking through our community tablet programme, ensuring they are able to get online and educating them in how to navigate online and mobile banking.

### **Contacting the bank after closure**

Following the closure of this Branch, if you have any questions or need advice on how to access our services, you can contact us in the following ways:

- Visit us at <https://www.hsbc.co.uk/waystobank/>
- Contact us on 03457 404 404 (+44 1226 261 010 from outside the UK). Currently open 8am-8pm every day. Here you can:
  - Get help with your day-to-day banking enquiries

*Information correct at the time of publication.*

- Talk to us about your closing branch
- Visit any HSBC UK Branch (branch hours can vary so please check our website before you visit at <https://www.hsbc.co.uk/branch-finder>)

Braille, Large Print and Audio copies of this document can be provided upon request.