

## **Customer and Stakeholder Engagement: Portadown**

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

### **Customer and stakeholder contact**

On 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 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 Carla Lockhart, 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. We also wrote to the following members of the Northern Ireland Assembly:

- Doug Beattie MLA
- Jonathan Buckley MLA
- Diane Dodds MLA
- John O'Dowd MLA
- Eóin Tennyson MLA

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

- Councillor Kyle Moutray
- Councillor Paul Duffy
- Councillor Julie Flaherty
- Councillor Lavelle McIlwrath
- Councillor Eamon McNeill
- Alderman Sydney Anderson
- Councillor Declan McAlinden
- Councillor Catherine Nelson
- Councillor Margaret Tinsley
- Alderman Kenneth Twyble

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- Councillor Thomas Larkham
- Councillor Ciaran Toman
- Councillor Sorcha McGeown
- Councillor Louise McKinstry
- Councillor Keith Haughian
- Councillor Peter Lavery
- Councillor Liam Mackle
- Alderman Stephen Moutray
- Karen Munn, Post Office
- Community Advice Craigavon
- Craigavon Area Foodbank
- AMH Action Mental Health
- The Trussell Trust Food Bank
- Dart Partnership
- Age NI
- RNIB
- Michelle Craig, Portadown Library
- Portadown Chamber of Commerce
- Alzheimer's Society in Northern Ireland
- Citizen's Advice Craigavon

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 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.

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## Customer and stakeholder reaction/feedback

- We have written to Carla Lockhart, Constituency MP and there has been no further correspondence.
- Local Councillor, Paul Duffy, replied to thank us for the update on the closure of the Portadown branch. He thanked all the staff for their service to the people of Portadown and the surrounding areas over the years and wished them all the best in the future. He asked us to reach out if we required any support from the council.
- Michele Smyth of Advice NI replied with details of services offered by the organisation, including advice on personal debt, business debt, HMRC/tax and benefits. Michele was keen to reach as many people as possible with Advice NI services and offered to meet to discuss ways to collaborate. Our Local Director, Neil Roberts has met with Michele and Advice NI and discussed various ways we may be able to work in partnership to support the most vulnerable in our community.
- Jenny Redman of The Consumer Council asked if HSBC UK would proactively contact impacted customers and advise them of the Current Account Switch Service. Neil Roberts replied to say that we will be contacting our vulnerable customers impacted by the closure in writing, over the phone and face to face where the opportunity presents, to ensure they understand alternative ways they can bank. This includes explaining how customers can switch to alternative providers using the Current Account Switch Service, if that is what they choose to do.
- General customer sentiment was disappointment that the branch was being closed as there is a large distance to travel to the nearest branch to access branch services. The staff within the branch have been actively supporting these customers and discussing the counter services available at the Post Office along with other alternatives.

## Follow up action taken

- Our Network Manager, Gayle Suarez-Mitchell, has visited a number of local Post Offices. The proprietor of the closest main Post Office, West Street, showed interest in spending a day in Portadown branch to talk to customers about the services available at the Post Office. The Post Office confirmed they regularly see HSBC UK customers and have plenty of capacity for serve more. All the other Post Offices we spoke to confirmed they are already serving HSBC UK customers and have details to reach out to us if they have any queries.
- 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

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customers can do their banking, including the services available at the Post Office and help with queries about our products and services.

- The branch has been speaking with customers who have no access to a compatible device for online banking, about our community tablet programme. This programme supports customers getting online and educates them in how to navigate online and mobile

### **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
  - 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.