

## **Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Kensington High Street Branch**

Following the closure announcement of this Branch on 09 October 2020 we have been engaging with customers and members of the local community.

### **Customer and stakeholder contact**

We have written to all customers who have either opened an account at this Branch, use it often or live nearby. This letter has given customers details of the nearest alternative Branches, the services available at the nearest Post Office®, how to access the Impact of Closure report, alternative ways to bank information and the bank's contact details.

Posters have been displayed at the Branch with details of the nearest HSBC UK Branch and cash machines and Post Office® counter. We have also made copies of the Impact of Closure document available at Kensington High Street Branch.

During the Covid-19 pandemic we have been unable to hold our usual face to face meetings with customers. We have however been proactively calling customers who are reliant on Branch services to provide advice on the alternatives available to them. These customers are not registered for either Online, Mobile or Telephone banking and we have been discussing how they can use these channels to access their usual banking services. We have also discussed the availability of nearby HSBC UK Branches as well as the services available from the Post Office.

Following the closure, customers will be able to visit any HSBC UK Branch for advice and guidance on banking with us.

Our business relationship managers have also been telephoning their customers to discuss options that suit their needs.

We contacted the following key stakeholders and provided contact details should customer queries or concerns be brought to their attention:

- Citizens Advice
- Which?
- Age UK
- Alzheimer's Society

We contacted Felicity Buchan MP on 25 February to advise the Branch would be closing in October and offered to meet to explain the reasons for the decision and to discuss how we are supporting our customers.

We have engaged with the nearest Post Office® to the Branch, to ensure that it is fully aware that we are closing, aware of the services it can provide to our customers and to address any questions they may have.

## Customer and stakeholder reaction/feedback

- We have had no contact from Felicity Buchan MP or any additional stakeholders after the letters were sent.
- The Post Office® visits went well and had no concerns around customers potentially visiting them. They were pleased to have been informed personally about the Branch closure. We did mention that there are two other local branches nearby Kensington High Street therefore the expectation is that more customers will visit the HSBC Branches as opposed to the Post Office®.
- Whilst customers visit the Branch, we have been ensuring our customers are set up for Telephone Banking, Mobile Banking or Internet Banking and encouraged them to attempt to log in a few times to ensure they can show us they are able to log in successfully before they leave the branch.
- Some customers who are nervous about using Internet and Mobile Banking without assistance have been provided with the Telephone Banking details they will need. We have also reassured them they can still visit other HSBC Branches nearby.
- We have been explaining the benefits of Mobile Banking and in particular cheque scanning so our customers are aware of the service.
- We have called 223 customers who have been identified as Potentially Vulnerable that use Kensington Branch, discussing the digital options i.e. Internet, Mobile and Telephone Banking. We also discussed Post Office® options, however this has not come across to many customers as a popular alternative due to their enhanced queues during COVID-19 but they are aware and recognise the option.
- When we contacted our Potentially Vulnerable customers, we found that a number were hard of hearing which made it difficult to discuss the alternative ways to bank with HSBC over the telephone.
- We have been proactively identifying customers who are Potentially Vulnerable Customers and continually putting them into contact with the Branch Manager of Notting Hill Gate Branch.
- A lot of customers have misunderstood the closure letter, reading it as they must now bank at Notting Hill Gate and have proactively visited the branch to confirm if they can bank at another local branch such as Hammersmith. Local businesses that bank with HSBC Kensington are upset they will have to travel further in their lunch breaks to complete their business banking. A couple of customers mentioned starting a petition to keep the site open.

## **Follow up action taken**

- Some of our elderly customers have confirmed they have access to Internet Banking but prefer to come into the branch to complete their banking needs therefore we have been supporting them digitally whilst they are in the branch and will continue to do so.
- Customers prefer to use Kensington High Street as it's quieter and customers are worried about service levels offered at other branches as have always seen Kensington as a Premier Branch however we have reassured them the service will be the same at the next closest branch.
- Those customers we contacted that are hard of hearing, we have personally completed letters attaching the Impact of Closure report, so they have all the information they'd need. These customers were delighted and wrote thank you letters back to the Branch.

## **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 any HSBC UK Branch
- Contact us on 03457 404 404 (+44 1226 261 010 from outside the UK)



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