

Post Office Closure

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Comments Received

I don't know how to put this but the closure of any of these p/o in the borough is going to cause great hardship not only for the people who run them but the people who use them the old the young the disabled and able body people as well think you better put it to the vote and let the people decide if not this will be a big mistake.

I support the councils stand against Post Office closures. I live near both Pierremont (Milbank) and Cleveland Terrace branches and would need to travel to Cockerton or Crown Street if they were to close. I mark exam papers for several examining authorities and need easy access to a parcels branch to send off several heavy bulky parcels of marked scripts, and closures would make the job so much more difficult. Please add this to your, no doubt long list, of reasons against these proposed closures.

I would strongly like to protest against the present proposals to close all the local post offices, please fight it on our behalf, you are after all the listening council

I am very pleased to read that Darlington Council is fighting the decision to close Post Offices across the borough. I live in Hurworth and my son delivers paper for the post office at Hurworth Place. If this post office were to close it is likely that there would be no more newspaper deliveries for the Hurworth area since the bigger Post Office at the Spar in Hurworth prefers their customers to visit the shop (and spend more money!) rather than to provide a delivery service. Not only this but a local Post Office provides accessibility to old and young alike within the locality and I am sure many people would struggle to make the mile trek to the Spar Post office at Hurworth. Hurworth Place Post Office is ideally situated on a busy main road with on road parking facility and I understand that last year was its best year yet for business. Surely this has to count for something. I would be more than happy for my views to be passed on to the Post Office in support of your fight opposing the closures.

I object most strongly to the proposed closure of the post offices in the Darlington areas, at some time in a period of a month I use one particularly every week.

In response to your article in the herald post some of my views on post office closures. The number of intended to transfer to Cockerton P.O. will cause chaos it can just cope now with queues already to the door and building more houses at West Park, parking is very difficult and many elderly people unable to walk there from the 70 flats for the elderly to collect their pensions etc. Surely the post office is a service and to make it work and need the confidence and trust of the public.

I strongly object to the closing of Sadberge Post Office a lot of elderly and vulnerable people who use the post office on a daily basis because they cannot get into Darlington, will no longer be able to collect their pension or get daily necessities.

I would like to register my concern regarding the proposed closure of the Post Office, Hopetown branch, 7 Brinkburn Road, Darlington, Co Durham.

Hopetown branch is a very busy and well used branch of the Post Office, providing a valuable service to the many residents in this locality and further afield. I am particularly concerned for the many elderly people who use this facility on a regular basis and who have either private transport or the physical ability to travel to the suggested alternative post offices. Closure of this branch would result in hardship and distress to this vulnerable section of our community who are already struggling to cope with the pace and changes of the modern world. Their trip to the local post office to draw their pensions, buy stamps – some people still do write letters etc, can be extremely important to them and should be viewed as a valuable local service.

With regard to the alternative nearby branches – neither of these is within easy walking distance to anyone who is even mildly affected by age or health issues.

Albert Road branch is 0.5 miles away from Hopetown branch and a walk to this Post Office would involve negotiating a steep slope down and under a railway with an equally steep incline at the other side. The main road, North Road, one of the main routes out of town, would then need to be crossed at a very busy road junction which is difficult and intimidating even with the use of pedestrian crossings. The description of the route provided states, “along mainly level terrain”, which is clearly incorrect. The information leaflet also states that parking is available in the surrounding roads. I would challenge anyone to try and find a safe, legal parking place anywhere near Albert Road branch.

Cockerton branch is even further away from Hopetown branch and therefore even less accessible on foot. The literature states that there is roadside parking nearby. There are in fact some spaces – but these are limited and only safely accessed when travelling north along West Auckland Road as this again is one of the main roads out of Darlington and heavily congested with traffic. To get a car park anywhere along this particular section of road is a challenge and often requires the car driver to go a few times “around the block” in the hope that a space becomes available – which rarely happens.

I would strongly urge you to look again and your proposals to close Hopetown Branch and to reconsider as the loss of this particular branch would result in inconvenience to all of us who use the facility, but to those who are less able bodied, it will cause serious problems.

I want to add my protest at the proposed closure of Post Offices in Darlington and of the Pierremont Crescent office in particular. The reasons for my objection are as follows:

I know from experience that visits to the alternative offices at Cockerton and Darlington Central have become increasingly unpleasant thanks to unacceptably long queuing times in both. In Darlington Central even the small retail counter often has a queue waiting for minor postal transactions.

If you happen to be a pensioner with arthritis (as is my partner) it is too far to walk to either the Cockerton or the Darlington office.

Using a car is no answer because parking at both is always difficult and often impossible.

I am given to understand that Pierremont P.O. is not a loss making office.

If a drop in footfall may be demonstrable I would argue that this may not be evidence of a community devaluing of the facility so much as evidence of government promoted policies and procedures directing people away from their local post offices.

I understand that an argument from the personal (as in 2 above) is an insufficient basis for an business strategy but how else can the individual argue when hard business data relating to turnover, profitability, customer footfall is almost impossible to come by.

The DIRECTIVE 97/67/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 15 December 1997 on common rules for the development of the internal market of Community postal services and the improvement of quality of service states in Article 3 of Chapter 2:

Member States shall ensure that users enjoy the right to a universal service involving the permanent provision of a postal service of specified quality at all points in their territory at affordable prices for all users.

To this end, Member States shall take steps to ensure that the density of the points of contact and of the access points takes account of the needs of users. I do not believe that the proposed closure of Pierremont Post Office is consistent with the maintenance of a quality service nor with a density of access points which takes account of the needs of users

If the Council are going to do everything they can to stop these closure why don't they compose a standard letter that all effected residents of Darlington can use.

The Royal Mail plans to close 37 Post Office branches in the Tees Valley and North Yorkshire as part of a nationwide money saving review of the network. Many people will be adversely effected including the elderly, the disabled, those facing financial hardship and those without a bank account. Please show your support for your local Post Office branch by signing this petition by 26 March 2008 by clicking on the hyperlink shown below. Please can you include this information in the next issue of the Town Crier.

I read the article on the front page of the Herald & Post about Post Office closures and was horrified to see my local PO is one of those targeted.

I moved to Oakfield Lodge Estate in the Brinkburn area approximately seven years ago and one of the additional benefits I discovered soon after moving to the area was the facilities provided by Hoptown Post Office.

It is one of the few PO's left where you can park easily outside without causing undue congestion or obstruction to others; it is a PO in the purest form i.e. you don't have to wade through rows of groceries, stationary or cards to actually get to the counter.

But by far the biggest loss would be the service provided by the staff as they are very knowledgeable and always willing to help and assist customers in ensuring the correct product is identified to satisfy the customers requirements.

The comments above are driven from my personal and some might say selfish point of view so I would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of the many pedestrian pensioners I see using the PO. They may not have access to e-mail facilities to point out the extra burden that will be caused to them should Hoptown PO close.

I hope the decision is reversed by the Post office and they realise the moral obligation they should have to the communities that have supported them over the many previous years since these PO's opened.

I would like to protect in the strongest terms at the proposed Post Office closures. Post Offices are a central, social part of all communities and their removal will only go towards damaging community spirit.

To whom it may concern, I object to the closure of the Darlington post offices, it will be of great significance to my husband and I as the traffic pollution

on West Auckland Road is bad for our chests, and going into Crown Street, at the moment is impossible due to even more pollution.

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I object most strongly to the proposed closure of the post office in the Darlington areas at some time in a period of a month I use 3 of them I use one particularly every week.

I am writing in the strongest terms to request that you do not close Cleveland Terrace Post Office. For over 60 years the same family have served the local community and the Post Office has been at the heart of this community during this time. A sustainable community is not safeguarded by removing its heart. The closure of this Post Office will not only have a disastrous effect on the local economy but will also leave the vulnerable increasingly disadvantaged. The closure of Pierremont Road Post Office which is only three quarters of a mile away from Cleveland Terrace will now mean the vast majority of people are not within walking distance of a Post Office. The alternative consists of a time consuming return journey through a bust town centre to a Crown Office or to a Post Office over a mile away on the outskirts of Darlington. This will result increased car journeys, which will have a detrimental effect on the environment. The Warne family do not want to cease serving this community. This commitment was shown with a considerable investment in the branch as part of the Network Reinvention scheme only two years ago. There are substantial new residential developments within the close proximity to the post office which will only increase the post office usage. Once more I urge you not to close Cleveland Terrace Post Office.

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I would like to object to the closure of Hopetown Post office. I have a business off Whessoe Road so constantly use this Post Office to save time and convenience. All my business banking is through this branch as it is totally impossible for me to use the town alternatives suggested. North Road – no where to park – side streets always packed. If on foot crossing this road is dangerous. Cockerton – never been able to get parking space nearby – also have to queue every time. Hopetown – always able to park close by and quick service, which is paramount to my business – I'm a sole trader

so time is money. To close this branch is ludicrous.

I was so pleased to see the article in the free papers about the council fighting the closure of small Post Offices. I am totally against the closure of Hopetown Post Office or Brinkburn Road – the alternatives given by Post Office Ltd are really no alternative. Albert Road actually on North Road traffic lights right outside – one of the busiest crossroads in Darlington and Post Office expect people to take their lives in their hands to get from Brinkburn Road area to far side of North Road – no way, and to say with the addition of on live lottery as an incentive is a joke. Also in description manly level – what about having to go under Railway Bridge. Cockerton – have you as a resident of Bates Ave really been able to park consistently on the West Auckland Road which is what they're description is saying – I haven't also that road is so busy and its only one side to park, this also deals with DVLA & foreign money exchange so its always very busy – try and get all customers from Hopetown in there and we'll be queuing out the door, so make customer frustrated. Hopetown on the other hand – has easy parking never a problem always a smelly queue but nothing like Cockerton – which I must admit I use once a year to get my car tax. I really don't think who ever did the details of the 2 alternatives have been totally honest – but the truth a bit to serve their needs. Part of the criteria for closure I understand is distance 0.9 from Cockerton – 0.5 from North Road (66-70) could someone please tell me what the distance is between 66-70 North Road and 313 North Road (Harrowgate Hill branch) which is other branch in area – if this is less than 1 mile why pick Hopetown.

Mr Abbott phoned the Council several times to ensure that his very strong objections were added to the list.