



## Delivering local services

Is it time to talk to the Post Office?



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We'd love to talk to you about how Post Office can help you improve convenience and access to services and reduce your costs.

We are modernising. We are undertaking the largest investment and support programme in our history, with funding to improve and sustain thousands of Post Office branches in communities across the UK.

The investment is driving modernisation, growth and improved customer service including longer opening hours.

It will ensure our 11,500 branches are better placed than ever to help councils like yours improve the delivery and cost effectiveness of public services.



**Paula Vennells**  
Chief Executive,  
Post Office Ltd

**“ We are a trusted brand at the heart of communities across the UK, helping customers to access the vital public services they need**



## A human touch in a digital age

With more branches than the UK's banks and building societies combined, supported by online, telephone channels and cutting-edge technology, Post Office can offer your customers increased convenience and access to services while reducing your front office costs.

We are building on our long history of delivering public services to become a front office for government in the digital age.

We are uniquely placed to provide a wide range of application, payment and identity verification services. This includes supporting customers who are not online to transact digitally with councils.

- Identity verification – through document checking and biometric data capture, we can help reduce fraudulent applications for services such as benefits, licences and permits
- Supported applications – we ensure applications are completed accurately and submitted securely
- Secure payment service – transactions are processed via our secure infrastructure that can work seamlessly with your back office
- A digital gateway – we can support customers who are not online to transact with you digitally, as well as providing a face-to-face channel for those transactions that can't be done online
- Convenience – with 93 per cent of adults living within one mile of Post Office branch (rising to 99 per cent in urban deprived areas), we offer customers unrivalled levels of access to public services.



**Councillor  
Nicholas  
Botterill**  
Leader,  
Hammersmith &  
Fulham Council

“ This ground-breaking partnership is a match made in heaven. This innovative arrangement offers residents much more choice and convenience as council services will be accessible from thousands of locations nationwide instead of just one or two locally

**Councillor  
Melvyn  
Caplan**  
Westminster  
City Council

“ This innovative deal with Post Office will give Westminster residents more choice of where to make their cash or cheque payments across the borough



## Delivering local services

Post Office already provides services such as bill payments to over 370 councils.

With investment in new technology and transformation of our network and services, we are increasing the range of council services accessed via Post Office branches.

### Hammersmith & Fulham

In May 2012, Post Office won a framework contract with Hammersmith & Fulham Council. It is heralded by the Council's leader as “ground breaking” and a “radical revolution” in the way services are delivered.

Hammersmith & Fulham residents will soon be able to access a range of council services from any UK Post Office branch, including payments for council tax, business rates, housing rents and service charges.

The arrangement can also be extended to include other services such as parking permits and outbound payments, supporting residents without bank accounts.

The new contract will initially save taxpayers around £90,000 a year from 2013/14.

In a UK first, the framework contract is available for other London boroughs to use, saving them considerable

time and money in procurement costs and speeding up improvements to local service delivery.

### Westminster City Council

Seeking to increase access to services while simultaneously reducing costs, last year Westminster City Council signed a wide-ranging contract with Post Office.

Pursuing its ambition to go ‘cashless’, Westminster wanted to partner with a trusted service provider that could offer residents increased access to local outlets. Post Office was the natural fit.

Our branches now deliver a wide range of application and payment services that include council tax and business rate payments, parking permit applications and penalty charging notices, as well as casual street trader vouchers, parking scratch cards and commercial waste sacks.

**We are working with Liverpool and Lancashire councils, together with their private sector-led joint venture companies, to explore how Post Office can support them to deliver front and back office services in both urban and rural areas.**



## Future opportunities

With the support of the Local Government Association, we have established a Pathfinder Programme with 25 councils. A key objective of the programme is to better understand how Post Office can help councils deliver services in new, innovative ways and what scope exists for closer working, for example, regional partnerships.

Post Office is also supporting a number of planned pilots in both rural and urban areas to see how branches can support councils to improve access to services and reduce costs.

Our new contract with Hammersmith & Fulham Council is one of the first successes of the programme.

**Councillor Peter Box**  
Chair,  
LGA Economy  
and Transport  
Board



This is a welcome opportunity to explore how we can work together as partners with Post Office and local subpostmasters to help ensure that the local network best serves the interests of people, and to see what Post Office can offer in helping councils reduce their costs and improve access to services



### APPLY, BOOK AND ISSUE IT

- Licences
- Parking permits
- Travel passes
- Street trader licences
- Registrar appointments
  - Blue badges
  - Taxi licencing
  - Waste permits
  - Leisure classes

### PAY IT

- Rent
- Council tax
- Business rate
- Fixed penalty notice
  - Licence fees
- Housing benefit rebates
- Mortgage payments
- Adult education fees

### REQUEST AND REPORT IT

- Bin collection advice
- Waste recycling times
- All council forms, including print on demand
- Parking permits and scratch cards
- Incident reporting, e.g. housing repairs, street lighting faults
- Recycling information

Post Office branches have the potential to support councils across a wide range of services

### PROVIDE IT

- Enrolment
- Electoral registration
- Biometric enrolment
- Evidence management support, e.g. housing and council tax applications

### FIND IT

- Consultations, policies and plans
  - Elections
- Notices and news
- Contact points

### CLAIM IT

- Asylum seekers
- 16/18 care leavers
- School uniform vouchers
  - Rebates
- Council tax and housing benefit



## Modernising the Post Office network

The Government has recognised the enormous economic and social value of the Post Office. It is funding a significant support and investment programme for our network. Post Office is an independent business, recently separated from Royal Mail, and remains in the public sector.

We are now modernising our branch network and the IT infrastructure that supports it. Over the next three years, around 6,000 branches will be converted into new, more modern formats. There is no programme of branch closures.

At the heart of our modernisation plans are two new models.

### Main branch

Main-style Post Office branches offer a modern environment and in many cases extended opening hours.

They offer a dedicated Post Office counter with a

George Thompson  
General Secretary,  
National Federation  
of Subpostmasters



Post Offices provide a focal point for communities across the country, and our branches are the perfect channel for customers to access local government services in a trusted, convenient and professional environment





**Mark Cullinan**  
Chief Executive,  
Lancaster City Council



We are working with Post Office in rural and deprived areas and see opportunities to spread services from our town centres to a wider range of access points. We can't do cash transactions as efficiently as they can and it saves us the cost of handling cash

comprehensive range of products and services, as well as the majority of Post Office services available at the retail position during the extended hours the retail business is open.

Many branches will feature new assisted self-service technology.

We already have main branches operating across the UK and feedback has been positive.

## Local branch

The local model will see Post Office services offered on the retail counter, rather than from a dedicated Post Office counter. This means services will be available for longer – for the same hours that the retail business is open.

The model is designed to be used for automated transactions, making it quick and easy for staff to operate and helping to keep customer queuing times to a minimum.

We already have numerous local branches operating across the UK and feedback has been positive.



Consistently achieving more than **90 per cent** customer satisfaction at main and local branches

## Get in touch

If you are considering how to reduce your front office costs at the same time as improving convenience and access for residents and customers, now may be the time to talk to Post Office.

Email [government@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:government@postoffice.co.uk) with your details, where possible outlining your objectives, ideas and proposed timeframe for change.

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