



23/01/2023

To whom it may concern

I am writing to you further to the news of 30 November 2022, when HSBC UK announced the planned closure of 114 of its UK branches in 2023. Within this group we have taken the difficult decision to close the HSBC UK branch in Frome on 6th June 2023. This will bring our number of branches in the UK to 327 by the end of 2023.

I would like to assure you that this decision has not been taken lightly and reflects the need to maintain a sustainable branch network for the benefit of our customers. Over the past five years, usage of the bank's branches by regular customers has fallen by 65%, with the vast majority of closing branches seeing more than a 50% reduction in footfall. Nine in ten customers' contact with the bank is now completed by telephone, internet, or smartphone, and 99% of cash withdrawals are made at an ATM. The rate of decline in branch usage has accelerated since the Covid-19 pandemic with no signs of recovering, with a number of branches now serving fewer than 250 customers a week.

While the closures are staggered throughout the year, we chose to announce them all at once to give clarity to our staff and customers. We have informed our colleagues at the branch and, wherever possible, are working with them to find them alternative roles with us. Posters are displayed in the branch giving details of the closure, and we are writing to regular branch users to provide more information about the closure, and the alternative services available to them. We have added a report to our website with more information on the closure. This shows how we believe it will affect the local community and can be found at <https://www.hsbc.co.uk/ways-to-bank/branch-banking/>.

Whilst many of our customers are choosing to bank with us using our mobile and digital channels, we appreciate that others still value our face-to-face service. These customers will continue to be able to make use of our other branches, as well as the Post Office network, with over 99% of the closures being within 1 mile of a Post Office.

Our priority over the coming months is to support customers who face particular difficulties as a result of the closure. We will be running Community Pop Up Events, where our branch staff will offer financial education as well as support with digital banking and fraud awareness. Our teams in branch will be available to explain alternative ways of banking and will proactively contact customers who may have difficulty accessing these with the offer of a one-to-one appointment. Support will also be given through our HSBC@Home programme, and we are also able to provide vulnerable customers with free tablets to help them access our digital services. If any customer cases are raised with you, I would be grateful if you could let me know.

We are fully engaged in industry-wide initiatives to maintain access to cash in ways that meet the needs of local communities. We have consulted the Cash Action Group on our planned closures and will continue to work closely with them and others, including the incoming Banking Hub company, to support the rollout of cash services where they are needed.

In closing, I am sorry to be writing with what I know will be disappointing news and want to reassure you that we remain fully committed to serving our customers in all parts of the UK. We are continuing to invest in our UK business and in 2023 our primary focus is to improve the experience and outcomes for our customers. This includes enhancing our digital self-service capabilities, increasing the availability and responsiveness of our telephony teams,

HSBC UK Bank plc

1 Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 1HQ

Registered in England number 9928412. Registered Office: 1 Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 1HQ

Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority

PUBLIC

and supporting our customers through the cost-of-living crisis. This will be a pivotal year as we transform our business to benefit our customers, now and in the future.

Please let me know if you would like to arrange a call to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Angharad Bowen-Jones', written in a cursive style.

Angharad Bowen-Jones
Local Director, Bath & Swindon
angharad.bowenjones@hsbc.com