

Yoxford Post Office (Case Ref: TC119569)

Email received March 26th 2024

Dear Mrs Charles,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the Post Office's announcement to change its outreach services and for sharing the Parish Council's concerns.

I am very disappointed that the Post Office Ltd have taken the unilateral decision to stop the outreach service in Kelsale entirely, and make changes to the wider network, including transferring the Snape, Yoxford, Wangford and Walberswick outreach services to a mobile van operating from Ipswich rather than Saxmundham. As you may be aware, the Saxmundham Postmaster who has been running outreach services to these villages for some years, announced his retirement and sought a successor. This person agreed to continue the outreach services and continue serving these villages. Meanwhile, the Post Office Ltd took the decision to change the outreach offer to a mobile van. The proposals are a worsening of service, despite the government subsidising rural post offices with approximately £50M of taxpayer funding.

Last month, I met Post Office Ltd officials to challenge them to think again, especially regarding the provision for Kelsale. Overall, they say that it is much more expensive to run the outreach service in its current format than the mobile van post office format. I am continuing to engage the Chief Executive, Nick Read, on this matter and share the strength of feeling on this change locally.

I know that several residents regularly use the post office and it will be much more difficult to access their services in Saxmundham than the Post Office realises and the mobile van offer is further limiting opportunity to access services.

Finally, I met Post Office Minister, Kevin Hollinrake MP, to highlight the need to retain these much needed services and impress their importance to rural communities and I am grateful to Minister Hollinrake for listening to my representations and agreeing to take this up formally with the Post Office.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP

Suffolk Coastal

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