

Saintfield Customer guide: Update

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Danske Bank

We shared our Customer Guide on 9 February 2024, which outlined our reasons for closing our Saintfield branch and cash machine, and ways you can continue to bank with us.

You can view it, and this update, at www.danskebank.co.uk/branchchanges or ask us for a copy.

In it, we told you how we were planning to share the news of the branch closure. In this update, we will tell you what outreach took place, reactions to the closure and any actions.

With the branch closure date coming up (7 June 12.30pm), you might want to speak to us about your banking. You can do this:

- By phone: using our dedicated phone line, [0345 601 0089](tel:03456010089) (line is open 8am – 6pm Monday-Friday and 9am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday).
- In branch: you can use any Danske Bank branch. Any colleague can answer your questions.
- Online: use Secure Mail on eBanking or your Mobile Banking app, or Chat on danskebank.co.uk

We follow the requirements of the Financial Conduct Authority before closing a branch or cash machine, to support our customers and colleagues.

Customer engagement

After talking to our colleagues, we wrote to Personal and Business customers impacted by our decision on 9 February 2024.

When we decide to close a branch, we make sure to give at least 12 weeks' notice. This way, customers have time to consider their options.

In the letters, we:

- shared our decision to close Saintifeld branch and cash machine
- detailed other ways to bank with us
- included information on other services - nearby Post Office branch, free to use cash machine and alternative Danske Bank branches.

We sent out four large print letters and one audio letter to customers impacted by the planned closure.

From the 9 February 2024, we displayed printed posters inside the branch with details on the closure and alternative ways to bank with us.

On 7 May 2024 in Saintfield branch, we hosted a session alongside the Post Office to give customers the opportunity to explore the ways to do everyday Personal and Business banking at the Post Office. The Post Office Manager, our branch colleagues and a Business Banking colleague were on hand to talk to customers.

We sent 1,490 emails and 642 SMS texts to Saintfield Personal and Business customers, reminding them about the ways they can do their everyday banking at the Post Office, ahead of the closure.

At a local level, our Saintfield branch colleagues proactively contacted and met with customers to address queries and contacted community organisations impacted.

This included:

- 92 Business customers
- 30 Personal customers who don't hold a bank card
- 17 customers with an additional support need
- Local organisations: Saintfield Library, Home Instead
- Local nursing home: Silver Birch Nursing Home, Tullywest Care Nursing Home
- Local Post Offices directly.

We provided printed Customer Guides for more information and support when required.

Community and stakeholder engagement

On the day of announcement (9 February 2024), we proactively contacted local political representatives to share the news and give them an opportunity to discuss our decision with us.

We contacted (by phone and/or email):

Local MP: Jim Shannon

Local MLAs: Michelle McIlveen, Harry Harvey, Nick Mathison, Mike Nesbitt, Kellie Armstrong

Local Councillors: Terry Andrews, Callum Bowsie, Jonathan Jackson, Tierna Kelly, David Lee-Surgenor.

Our Head of Communications, our Head of Branches and our Head of Personal Banking Development had a follow-up meeting with DUP representatives Michelle McIlveen, Harry Harvey and Callum Bowsie on 1 March 2024.

We also told several business stakeholders (by phone and/or email), including:

- NI Chamber of Commerce
- Retail NI
- Federation of Small Business NI
- Consumer Council
- UK Finance NI
- Local media: including BBC, Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, The News Letter, The Down Recorder, Down News
- Representatives in the Post Office.

Feedback we received and what we did

Comment: General concerns were noted from some local political representatives. This included concerns about our colleagues and the impact on customers.

Action: Most concerns were addressed during our initial contact, including reassurance that there would be no redundancies as a result of the closure. We shared this feedback internally and flagged with our branch teams. Our branch team used opportunities to talk to customers since the announcement to explain and show the alternative ways of banking. That included hosting the joint session with the Post Office on 7 May.

We had a follow up meeting in Saintfield with DUP representatives to talk over their concerns in more detail and show support and alternative ways to bank available for their constituents.

Comment: We had six formal complaints from Personal customers, and two from Business customers. The customers mentioned disappointment in the branch closure, worry for staff being relocated and concern about the impact on older customers.

Action: The complaints were processed by our Customer Resolution Team, as part of their usual process. Each complaint is investigated and responded to individually which could be by phone, in-person, a letter or a mixture of these.

We explained the alternatives available to our customers from the customer guide and all customers were assured of the decision and approach to closing branches, including impact on our colleagues.

Other formats

If you'd like this guide in Braille, large print or audio format, please let us know. You can ask any of our branch colleagues or call us on 0345 601 0089.

Lines are open between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays in Northern Ireland) and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Call charges may vary. Please contact your phone company for details. We may record or monitor calls to confirm details of our conversations, and for verification and quality purposes.

Facts correct as at 17 May 2024.