

# *Branch closure impact assessment*

Closing branch:

Danske Bank,  
49-51 University Road,  
Belfast BT7 1ND

Closure date: 22 October 2021

Information correct as at: 9 July 2021

Danske Bank

## Our Approach

We regularly undertake strategic reviews of our business to determine how best to serve the evolving needs of our customers. While branches are still an important part of our offering, many customers are using them much less frequently, instead choosing to use digital channels, banking on the telephone and the Post Office (where Danske Bank customers can carry out banking services). A decline in transaction levels at University Road branch means that it is no longer economically sustainable, and we've made the difficult decision to close the branch on 22 October 2021. The external cash machine will also be removed on this date.

These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis following a thorough, strategic review and approval process, taking many factors into consideration – including branch usage and the availability of alternative ways to bank.

We've invested over £3 million in our branch network and the transformation of several key branches over the past number of years, and we continue to invest in enhancing our digital and online offerings.

This Impact Assessment sets out the steps we have taken to minimise the impact of our decision to close our University Road branch on our customers, in-line with our responsibilities under the Access to Banking Standard.

## Our Decision for closing University Road Branch

We regularly review the use by customers of our branches across Northern Ireland by monitoring the level of activity taking place including number of counter transactions. We also consider whether each branch location can remain economically sustainable.

During the process we consider a range of factors including:

- The level of transactions within a branch. Transactions in University Road branch have reduced by 24% from Jan 2017 - May 2021.
- The customer profile of University Road branch (detailed on page 5).
- Alternative ways to bank, including free to use ATMs in the local area.
- Distance to nearest alternative bank branches and Post Office.
- The number of employees affected.
- The cost of running the premises.

## Access to Banking Standard

The Access to Banking Standard, overseen by the Lending Standards Board (LSB), is designed to ensure that customers affected by branch closures receive sufficient communication and clarity on the reasons for the closure and adequate support in accessing alternative banking services. As part of the Access to Banking Standard, we publish this Impact Assessment on our website when we announce our decision to close, it is also available in hard copy at our University Road and Donegall Square West branches, and can be printed on request at any branch or made available through our customer contact centre. This Impact Assessment is also available in Braille, large print, on tape and on disc. Please ask a member of staff for more details.

From 9 July, we will be reaching out to local public representatives and other community groups to share the news that University Road branch is closing and to provide contact details to address any questions, queries or investigate any support requirements. Two weeks before the closure, we will publish an updated version of our Impact Assessment (available on [danskebank.co.uk/branchchanges](https://danskebank.co.uk/branchchanges)), which will include any communication and feedback from stakeholders.

## How to contact us

If you have been affected by our decision to close University Road branch, or if you would like to know what additional steps you can take to ensure you continue banking with us, please call our dedicated line on **0345 601 0089**. For general banking enquiries, please call **0345 600 2882** (both lines are open Monday - Friday 8am - 6pm; Saturday and Sunday 9am - 5pm).

# University Road branch information

University Road, Belfast, BT7 1ND



Monday, Tuesday, Friday: 9.30am - 4.30pm (lunchtime closing 12.30pm - 1.30pm)  
Wednesday, Thursday: 10.00am - 4.30pm (lunchtime closing 12.30pm - 1.30pm)

## CUSTOMER PROFILE



**97%**  
PERSONAL  
CUSTOMERS



**3%**  
BUSINESS  
CUSTOMERS

## BRANCH FACILITIES



Internal ATM	NO
External ATM (without deposit functionality)	YES*
Internal ADM	NO
Counter	YES
Safety deposit	YES

Fully accessible for customers.

\*this will be removed on 22 October 2021.



## AGE PROFILE OF PERSONAL CUSTOMERS

AGE <18

**5%**

AGE 18 - 27

**11%**

AGE 28 - 49

**33%**

AGE 50 - 64

**24%**

AGE 65+

**23%**

UNKNOWN

**4%**

## HOW UNIVERSITY ROAD CUSTOMERS BANK WITH US



**47%**



also use other branches

**54%**



only use this branch

**48%**



already use digital channels

We define use of a branch as at least three visits over a six-month period. We analysed data from November 2020 - April 2021, however we expect Covid-19 to have had an impact on usage, so we have also included data from September 2019 - February 2020.

## ALTERNATIVE SERVICES

If you have any concerns, questions or require additional support with the closure of University Road and the alternative services listed below, please don't hesitate to talk to the team in branch or over the phone in our customer contact centre.



### DONEGALL SQUARE WEST

1 MILE AWAY (BY ROAD)

Donegall Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS

Mon, Tues, Fri: 9.30am - 4.30pm  
Wed & Thurs: 10.00am - 4.30pm

Fully accessible

**Lunchtime closure:** No

**Saturday opening:** Yes

**Public transport:** Bus

**Public parking:** Yes – on street parking available.  
Nearby car parks: Montgomery Street, Castle Court and The Tannery.

**Counter service:** Yes

**Internal ATM:** Yes  
(with deposit functionality)

**Internal ADM:** Yes

**External ATM:** Yes  
(without deposit functionality)



### FORESTSIDE

2.5 MILES AWAY (BY ROAD)

Forestside Shopping Centre,  
Upper Galwally, Belfast, BT8 6FX

Mon, Tues, Fri: 9.30am - 4.30pm  
Wed & Thurs: 10.00am - 4.30pm

Fully accessible

**Lunchtime closure:** No

**Saturday opening:** No

**Public transport:** Bus

**Public parking:** Yes – shopping centre parking is available.

**Counter service:** Yes

**Internal ATM:** Yes  
(with deposit functionality)

**Internal ADM:** Yes

**External ATM:** Yes  
(without deposit functionality)



### DANSKE BANK KENNEDY CENTRE

2.6 MILES AWAY (BY ROAD)

Kennedy Centre, 564-568 Falls  
Road, Belfast, BT1 1 9AE

Mon, Tues, Fri: 9.30am - 4.30pm  
Wed & Thurs: 10.00am - 4.30pm

Fully accessible

**Lunchtime closure:** No

**Saturday opening:** No

**Public transport:** Bus

**Public parking:** Yes – shopping centre parking is available.

**Counter service:** Yes

**Internal ATM:** Yes\*  
(with deposit functionality)

**Internal ADM:** Yes\*

**External ATM:** Yes\*  
(without deposit functionality)

\*available during shopping centre opening hours.

## OTHER DANSKE BANK BRANCHES

Information on all our branches can be found at [danskebank.co.uk/branchfinder](https://danskebank.co.uk/branchfinder)

Your nearest alternative branch is at Abbey Centre.

## NEARBY POST OFFICE® - <0.02 MILES AWAY (1 MINUTE WALK)

95 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NG



Monday - Sunday - 8.00am - 5.00pm

Everyday Personal & Business Banking available at the Post Office®:

- Instant cash withdrawals (using your Danske Bank Debit Mastercard – up to a limit of £500 per transaction).
- Instant cash deposits (using your Danske Bank Debit Mastercard – please visit [danskebank.co.uk/personal/ways-to-bank/post-office](https://danskebank.co.uk/personal/ways-to-bank/post-office) to view latest limits for Danske Bank customers. Individual Post Offices limits will also apply).
- Cheque deposits (NI only). Cheques can be deposited using a Danske Bank/Post Office envelope, which is available from the Post Office or Danske Bank branches. It must also be accompanied by a bank giro credit with your account details (sometimes these can be found at the back of your chequebook, or you can ask us to send a bank giro credit book out to you for lodgements). Cheques are processed the day we receive them.
- Account Balance Enquiry (using your Danske Bank Debit Mastercard).
- Foreign currency available.

Find other Post Office branches, as well as opening times and services available at: [postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder](https://postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder)



## NEARBY PAYPOINT SERVICES

PayPoint offers in-store payment services for customers - including bill payments and cash functions.

Found on [consumer.paypoint.com](https://consumer.paypoint.com) and searching BT7 1ND.



### Centra Bradbury Place

2-6 Bradbury Place, Belfast,  
BT7 1RX

Open Monday - Sunday 6.00am - 11.00pm



### Spar

51 Bradbury Place, Belfast,  
BT7 1RX

Open Monday - Sunday 8.00am - 10.00pm



### Spar - Botanic

Units 1-4 The Carriages, Belfast,  
BT7 1JQ

Open 24 hours

## NEAREST FREE TO USE CASH MACHINES



Found at [link.co.uk/consumers/locator](https://link.co.uk/consumers/locator)  
The external cash machine at University Road branch will be removed on 22 October 2021.



### AIB

35 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1ND



### Tesco

13-19 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NA



### Bank of Ireland

28 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NH

## OTHER LOCAL BANKS



### AIB

35 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NH  
0.04 miles away (by road)



### Bank of Ireland - due to close on 24 June 2021

28 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NH  
0.09 miles away (by road)



### Ulster Bank

91-93 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NH  
0.2 miles away (by road)



### Halifax

10-11 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DG  
0.5 miles away (by road)

## BROADBAND AVAILABILITY WITHIN THE AREA OF MALLUSK BRANCH\*

	Availability	Highest available download speed	Highest available upload speed
Standard	✓	12 Mbps	1 Mbps
Superfast	✓	75 Mbps	20 Mbps
Ultrafast	✓	500 Mbps	35 Mbps

\*Information found on [checker.ofcom.org.uk](https://checker.ofcom.org.uk) and searching BT7 1ND.

# OTHER WAYS TO BANK WITH US

After University Road branch closes, you can complete day-to-day banking at any Danske Bank branch in Northern Ireland. We do also have a number of alternative ways to bank with us, without having to visit a branch.



## eBanking (Personal customers)

eBanking lets you manage your accounts online and stay in control of your finances 24 hours a day. Through it, you can check your account balances, account transactions, make transfers, view statements and more. Customers who have Savings accounts with no cards are able to transfer money between accounts using eBanking and our Mobile Banking App. Accessible on internet browsers on any device through [www.danskebank.co.uk](http://www.danskebank.co.uk), after you have registered for eBanking.



## District (Business customers)

District is an online banking platform for business customers, where you can check account balances, view transactions, make payments, view statements and more.



## Mobile Banking App (Personal customers)

Manage your account and carry out a wide range of banking activities, all through our App. Available through the App Store and Play Store.



## Text and email alerts (Personal customers)

You can set up alerts to help you manage your accounts, through our Account Balance Service and Overdraft Alerts service.

Account Balance Service lets you set up customised text and email alerts, which can be set up to be sent daily or when a certain activity happens on your account - for example, if your account goes above or below a certain balance, or when a payment enters or leaves your account.

Overdraft Alerts help you stay on top of your account if you have an overdraft. If we have your mobile number, we'll text you when you go into an arranged or unarranged overdraft so you can take any action needed.

For more information on both, including how to get set up, please visit [danskebank.co.uk/personal/ways-to-bank/alerts](http://danskebank.co.uk/personal/ways-to-bank/alerts)



## Post Office

Complete day-to-day banking at any Post Office branch in the UK. You can:

- Withdraw cash using your Debit Mastercard.
- Deposit cash using your Debit Mastercard.
- Check your balance with your Debit Mastercard.
- Lodge cheques to your account (NI only). You will need a pre-printed envelope (available at Danske Bank branches and the Post Office) and a bank giro credit with your account details (sometimes these can be found at the back of your chequebook, or you can ask us to send a bank giro credit book out to you for lodgements). Cheques are processed the day we receive them.



## Contact Us

Our customer contact centre has advisers that can help with any and all everyday banking queries. You can also organise appointments over the phone, and get further help that you might need with banking. Phone us on **0345 600 2882** (Monday - Friday: 8.00am - 6.00pm and Saturday and Sunday: 9.00am - 5.00pm).



## Cash machines

You can use your Danske Bank Debit Mastercard to withdraw funds from cash machines. Most provide free withdrawals, but you will be given a warning before completing your transaction on fees that may be charged. You can view free to use cash machines at [link.co.uk/consumers/locator](http://link.co.uk/consumers/locator)

At Danske Bank cash machines, withdrawals from Danske Debit Mastercards are free of charge, and you are also able to access your Danske Mastercard balance onscreen or request a mini statement of your account.



## Automated Deposit Service

In recent years, we have made investments in our Automated Deposit Services in some of our branches across Northern Ireland. This includes our Automated Deposit Machines (ADMs) which take note and coin deposits, as well as our adaptations to ATMs inside and outside a number of branches, which can facilitate withdrawals and deposits using your Danske card.

These aren't available in all branches, but can be found at Abbey Centre\*\*, Altnagelvin, Armagh, Ballymena, Banbridge\*, Bloomfield\*\*, Coleraine\*, Cookstown, Donegall Square West, Downpatrick\*, Dungannon\*, Enniskillen, Forestside, Kennedy Centre\*\*, Lisburn, Magherafelt, Newry, Newtownards, Omagh\*, Portadown\*, Shipquay Place.

To get more information, please get in touch with your local branch or you can call our customer contact centre.

\*Deposit facility available outside branch 24/7

\*\*Deposit facility available during shopping centre opening hours



## Account assistance

If you need help accessing your account, we have a number of options that can help. These include:

- A Carer's account
- Power of Attorney's, Enduring Power of Attorney's and Court Protection orders can also be registered on accounts
- Mandates.

We appreciate that there can be times when due to a temporary or permanent situation, you might require additional assistance or support from us. If you need further help or more information about your options, please get in touch with the team at University Road before closure, or you can contact us on **0345 601 0089** (line is open 8am - 6pm Monday - Friday and 9am - 5pm Saturday and Sunday). After closure, the team in Donegall Square West or any of our branches can help, or you can contact us on the phone.

Get more information at: [danskebank.co.uk/waystobank](http://danskebank.co.uk/waystobank)



# Impact Assessment Update 08.10.2021

As part of our adherence to the Access to Banking Standard, we give a commitment to update customers and stakeholders on any feedback that has been provided since the announcement of the branch closure and withdrawal of the ATM.

The original impact assessment has now been updated and is available online (at [www.danskebank.co.uk/branchchanges](http://www.danskebank.co.uk/branchchanges)) and hard copies will continue to be available for customers in our University Road and Donegall Square West branches up to and after the branch closure.

We appreciate the closure date is fast approaching and you may want to speak to a member of staff to discuss your future banking arrangements. We also want to remind customers and stakeholders that even after the branch closes on 22 October at 12.30pm, there is still support and assistance available for any issues or concerns you might have, or any questions you might need to ask us. You can continue to contact us to address any of these queries or questions:

- By phone: Using our dedicated phone line for these queries, **0345 601 0089** (line is open 8am-6pm Monday-Friday and 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday);
- In branch: You can use any Danske Bank branch, and speak to any of our colleagues who can assist you. Until closure, our University Road team will be on hand to help you and after that, your nearest branch will be Donegall Square West;
- Online: Through our Secure Mail function on eBanking or through your Mobile Bank App.

## Customer engagement

Twelve weeks before the closure date, we sent letters to impacted customers. In these letters, we detailed our decision to close the branch, included alternative ways to bank with us and shared alternative services (including the Post Office, other Danske Bank branches and free to use cash machines). From the morning of the announcement, we also displayed this decision to close in posters and countertop notices in University Road branch.

We recognised the need for some of our customers registered to University Road who may require different forms of communications. Braille and large print letters were created and sent to customers and proactive phone calls were made as required.

Our branch staff used our data as well as their local knowledge to identify customers who may need additional support during the branch closure and an outreach programme was undertaken to speak with these customers either by phone or face-to-face in order to address any concerns and offer solutions to address their banking needs.

Since the announcement, we've attempted to contact (by telephone) 80 University Road customers who have no card attached to their account, so we could explain the closure and alternative options available. To date, we have successfully contacted 38 customers.

We have a further 305 University Road customers who we have identified as requiring additional support and proactive contact is being made as required to support customers and discuss banking alternatives.

In University Road branch, we've been proactively engaging with customers both by phone and at the counter, to discuss our online and mobile banking options, services offered by the Post Office, cash machine services, telephone banking and raising awareness of fraud and scams in order to help support our customers. You can find more information on our alternative ways to bank in this document, on page 8 and 9 and our staff will be happy to demonstrate our online banking should you need a little further support in this area

Hard copies of our Step by Step banking guide continue to be available for customers to take away in our University Road and Donegall Square West branches - these can be requested up to and after the closure, and can also be posted to you if requested. Alongside that, in August we hosted a Ways to Bank webinar for any customer to attend and find out more about the alternative options to bank.

## Community and stakeholder engagement

On the day we announced the decision to close University Road branch, we also proactively contacted local stakeholders to let them know about the closure, share alternative services and provide an opportunity for them to discuss our decision with us.

We contacted (by phone and/or email):

Local MP – Claire Hanna

Local MLAs – Matthew O’Toole, Christopher Staiford, Paula Bradshaw, Deirdre Hargey, Claire Bailey

Local Councillors – Emmet McDonough-Brown, Tracy Kelly, Aine Groogan, John Gormley, Gary McKeown

Retail NI, Federation of Small Businesses NI, Consumer Council, Age NI, UK Finance NI, NI Chamber of Commerce.

We informed the Post Office of the closure, so they were aware that their nearby branches may see more customers completing banking transactions there.

Locally, University Road branch colleagues also proactively contacted regular customers including addressing any queries in Branch and contacting community organisations about the closure and alternative options. These organisations included:

Queen’s University Belfast Student Guidance Centre, local Post Office, and business customers.

## Community and stakeholder feedback

**Comment:** We’re aware that the Financial Services Union (FSU) is calling for a pause to branch closures, and for the setting of a Banking Forum.

**Action:** We retain a close working relationship with the Union and have met them since we announced the closure of University Road branch.

**Comment:** Two political contacts expressed disappointment but understood the rationale at the closure of the branch and requested information on our decision, as well as staff impact.

**Action:** We discussed the Post Office banking service, which was positively received as an alternative by both. The letter that had been issued to customers and the University Road Impact Assessment were also forwarded by email to all political stakeholders, for a further look at the data supporting the reasons for closure of the branch and alternative banking options available for their constituents. No compulsory redundancies for staff was confirmed, and we confirmed we would be working with colleagues to situate them in another Danske Bank branch after the closure.

## Customer feedback:

**Comment:** We had one complaint from a customer about the closure of University Road. The customer had already been impacted by a branch merger, and commented his unhappiness at the lack of ability to lodge cheques digitally

**Action:** The complaint was processed by our Customer Resolution Team, as part of their usual process. We explained alternatives to our customer, including lodging cheques at the Post Office. We also flagged the feedback internally about lodging cheques digitally internally.

# Definition of key terms

Term	Definition
Access to Banking Standard	The Access to Banking Standard, overseen by the LSB, is designed to ensure that customers affected by branch closures receive sufficient communication and clarity on the reasons for the closure and adequate support in accessing alternative banking services.
Accessible (Pg 5 and 6)	All our branches are fully accessible, with the majority having level access. When level access is not provided, mobile ramps are available. The majority have height-adjustable teller counters. All have automatic doors, hearing loops, low level writing desks, ground floor meeting rooms and welcome assistance dogs.
Automated Deposit Machine (ADM):	Some of our branches have Automated Deposit Machines (ADMs) inside. They allow customers to lodge notes and coins into their Danske Bank account with or without their card.
ATM with deposit function	Some of our branches have ATMs with additional functionality, where customers can withdraw and also deposit money into their accounts using their Danske Bank Mastercard.
Banking services / branch facilities	Range of banking services for Danske Bank customers include in-branch, self-service machines, on the phone, online, appointments, cash machines, counter service, self-service machines and appointments available.
Customer contact centre	Our customer contact centre helps service our customers over the phone, online and through direct mails. Advisers there can complete many of the transactions that would happen over the counter at branch and answer queries you may have.
Counter service/Counter	Banking completed 'over the counter' with a teller - usually cash or cheque deposits or withdrawals, or could be receiving change.
Customer profile	Breakdown of Personal and Business customers who have an account at the branch.
Customers who actively use this branch	Customers who have used the branch at least 3 times in a six-month period (to account for Covid-19 impact, data was analysed for September 2019 - February 2020, and November 2020 - April 2021).
Demographic	By 'Demographic' we mean the breakdown of customers by age range.
Increasingly digital world	More and more services move online - including banking. For Danske Bank, our digital world is focused on our personal eBanking and Mobile Banking App, and our District services for business customers. As well as our customer contact centre, where customers can complete banking online or over the phone.

Term	Definition
Miles away	All mileage calculated using Google Maps and Apple Maps.
Other Danske Bank branches	Alternative Danske Bank branches to the branch closing – addresses and miles included.
Other local banks	Alternative non-Danske Bank bank branches.
Nearest	Closest services available.
Public transport	For access to alternative Danske Bank branches, we've listed public transport where it is available. To get the most up to date travel information, we'd advise you look at the local provider. Translink operates coach, bus and train services throughout Northern Ireland, and the most up-to-date routes can be found on their website ( <a href="http://translink.co.uk">translink.co.uk</a> ). Some routes may require more than one service from starting to final destination.
Self Service / Automated deposit service	At some of our branches, we have self service equipment/Automatic Deposit Machines (ADMs) where Danske customers can make note and coin lodgements into their accounts. There are also some branches with ATMs which have a deposit functionality too - meaning you can withdraw and deposit at some of those cash machines.
Stakeholder	A stakeholder is defined as an individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organisation. For our branch closures, we consider the political representatives of a local area as key stakeholders, as they and their constituents are impacted directly.
Strategic review	A strategic review is a structured process to identify a business's progress towards achieving its overall goals. This could be about improving the performance of an existing area or making changes to the existing ways of working to improve performance.
Traditional banking	Banking solely in a branch, with no additional online banking.
Vulnerable customer	The Financial Conduct Authority defines a vulnerable customer as someone who, due to their personal circumstances, is especially susceptible to harm, particularly when a firm is not acting with appropriate levels of care.

This publication is also available in Braille,  
in large print, on tape and on disk.  
Speak to a member of staff for details.

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