

From: NIGEL TAYLOR - BARCLAYS

28 September 2017

Dear Mr Burt

Thank you for your letter regarding our meeting about the closure of our Billingshurst branch. My Apologies it has taken some time for me to respond.

I hope that during the meeting we made it clear the efforts that the team are making to ensure that the inconvenience suffered by customers as a result of this closure is kept to a minimum. Our experience with other closures is that people generally find alternative ways to bank locally – Post Office, cashback, contactless, alternative ATMs, and the numbers of people travelling to nearby branches is small.

Regarding the problem of Treasurers of local village organisations being unable to deposit cash, if you can send the details of those people affected through to me, then I will arrange for a colleague to call them to talk through their issues and see what additional support we can offer.

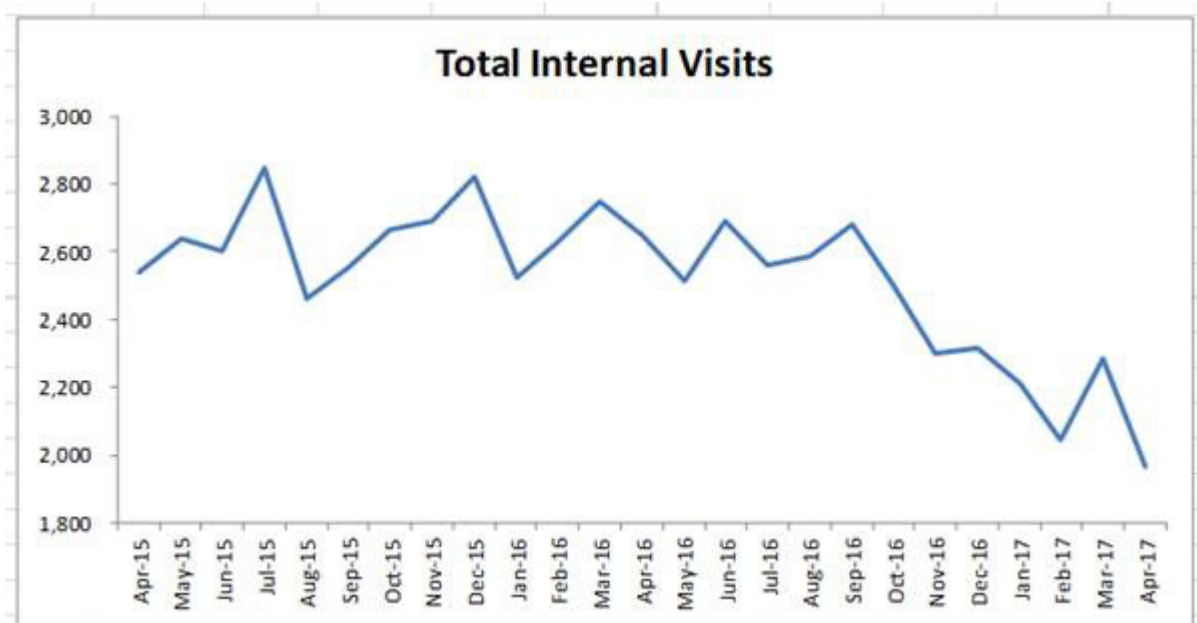
I understand your concerns that this branch closure will have an adverse effect on the viability of the village centre however our experience with other closures is that a large proportion of customers continue to visit the local centre to transact for example to access cash through cashback, an alternative ATM, or using the Post office.

Regarding the inconvenience caused to businesses by the closure, our branch team and business managers have been making contact with our customers to discuss their options and again, if you are aware of business customers who have unresolved issues please let me have their details and I will arrange for a business manager to make contact.

Currently, Barclays small business customers can pay in cash and cheques, and withdraw cash at any Post Office and our 'Barclays Collect' service for business customers will collect deposits straight from their door. This service means small business owners don't have to travel to a branch and make their cash deposits and gives them confidence that their money will be delivered and processed safely.

I acknowledge that the font on the Reasons for Closure Document could be clearer and I have passed this feedback to the team responsible for its production. As I mentioned there is an option to receive a large print, braille or audio version and the team at the branch would be happy to facilitate this for customers.

You asked for details of the branch usage for the branch from a date before the hours were reduced on the 24th of October 2016. I have pasted below a graph which shows the total internal visits from April 2015.



I can confirm that the last investment in the branch took place in 2012, however in view of the transaction trends in the graph shown above, I do not believe that an investment in the branch, or sub-letting additional space would have resulted in a change in the factors behind the decision to close.

I note your comments regarding the issues with the Post office and we will take these comments into account when advising customers on how to access their accounts once the branch is closed.

The two-day clearance time for cheques deposited through the Post office is something that we are addressing and we are confident that this will be reduced in the near future.

As I mentioned during our meeting our statistics show that there are a total of 80 customers who are regular users of the branch and do not interact with us in any other way. The team at the branch has been making contact with these customers, either by talking to them during one of their regular visits to the branch, or by telephone. We have managed to speak to the majority of these customers and in most cases have been able to address their specific needs. Where we have not managed to find a solution we are arranging for a home visit to take place to further investigate what can be put in place.

I would expect that any of our customers with illnesses which cause dexterity issues to be identified by the team at the branch, and we would help them to find suitable alternatives.

Regarding the lease for the building, I can confirm that we have a lease break coming up on the property, which is one of the considerations when making a decision to close alongside the usage of the branch and the availability of alternatives.

In light of our meeting, and your correspondence, we have taken the opportunity to review our decision regarding Billingshurst branch, however, our decision to close the branch remains. I understand this isn't the outcome you were hoping for. Closing a branch is never an easy decision, but I hope our Post Office arrangement, access to free cash machines locally, telephone and digital channels will support customers who are not easily able to travel to our other branches in the area.

Kind Regards

Nigel

Nigel Taylor | Community Banking Director | Sussex & Surrey Community