Background to our approach

Santander UK is a signatory to the Access to Banking Standard, a voluntary agreement introduced in May 2017. The Standard aims to ensure that where banks decide to close branches, their customers are communicated with openly and treated fairly.

We continue to invest in our branch network and, over the last five years, all of our largest and busiest branches across the UK have been refurbished. Increasingly however, customers are changing the way they choose to bank. In addition to using our branches, more and more people are banking with us by phone, online, on tablets and smartphones as well as at cash machines and Post Offices. As a result, some of our branches are being used less often.

We don’t take the decision to close any branch lightly and we assess each branch individually to understand the potential impact for customers, and the alternative options available to bank locally.

This leaflet outlines our approach when considering whether to keep a branch open and our specific assessment of the Forest Hill branch.
**Branch assessment**
Before reaching the decision to close the branch at Forest Hill, a full internal review of the branch was undertaken, including:

- The facilities in our Forest Hill branch and the surrounding Santander branches
- The way our Forest Hill branch customers are choosing to bank with us
- The availability of alternative ways a customer can bank with Santander
- The availability of other ways to bank in the local area

**Customer behaviour**

- **94%** of customers transacting at Forest Hill branch already use a variety of ways to complete their banking
- **70%** of Forest Hill branch customers also use an additional Santander branch
- **54%** of customers have transacted using our Online, Mobile or Telephone Banking services
- Customers are using the Forest Hill branch less in comparison to our nearby Catford branch.

Based on customers transacting at the branch between January and June 2017.

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**Forest Hill branch customers**

We reviewed the range of Santander customers, who used the counter and/or cash machines in the branch between January and June 2017.

**Personal customers**

- 53.9% 35–64 years old
- 27.1% 18–34 years old
- 10.5% 65–79 years old
- 3.2% Over 80 years old

**Business customers**

- 4.3% of transactions were made by business customers using the cash machine
- Santander business customers can use any Santander cash machine or the Post Office to withdraw cash or make deposits. Accounts can be managed via Mobile or Online Banking or by speaking directly to one of our UK based team on **0800 731 6666**

Data accurate as at June 2017.
Ways to bank with Santander

Accurate at date of publication. Distances measured using Google Maps.

Closest Santander branch
Catford
162 Rushey Green, Catford SE6 4JT
Opening hours Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-5pm Weds 10am-5pm Sat 9am-12:30pm

Alternative Santander branch
Beckenham
212-214 High Street, Beckenham BR3 1EN
Opening hours Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-5pm Weds 10am-5pm Sat 9am-12:30pm

Our branch team can help you explore different ways of banking with Santander

Online Banking
To sign up for Online Banking, visit santander.co.uk/onlinebanking

Mobile Banking
Download our app directly from the app store or alternatively, we can send you a link directly to the app - just visit santander.co.uk/mobilebanking

Telephone Banking
Call 0800 9 123 123
Monday to Saturday 7am to 9pm
Sunday 8am to 9pm
Outside of these hours you can bank through our automated service 24/7

Banking at your Post Office
All current account customers can use the Post Office to:
- Withdraw money
- Check balances
- Pay in cash and cheque deposits

Access the Android Pay™ app on Google Play
Available through iPhone 6 or Apple Watch with iOS8.3 or later
Download from the Samsung Galaxy Apps store
Mobile to Mobile Payments. Register at santander.co.uk
Contactless payments (Up to £30)
Supporting you

Following our announcement to close Santander’s branch at Forest Hill we have been contacting customers and members of the local community to communicate our decision, understand any concerns and to make sure we provide any additional support required locally.

- We wrote to 5,360 customers to notify them of the closure, including details of alternative ways to bank with Santander and where to find our impact assessment.
- We also notified community representatives in Forest Hill, including the local Member of Parliament.
- The Forest Hill branch team has spoken to customers about the alternative ways to access their accounts, offering appointments to discuss options and support with the setting-up of telephone, online and mobile banking.
- Posters and leaflets have been available in branch and online, advising customers of the planned closure date and the range of alternative ways to bank with Santander.

Community Feedback

Following our announcement, ten responses were received from the customers or community groups we wrote to. The main themes were:

- Overall disappointment of the decision to close the branch
- Concern over the elderly and those with disability
- Customers who do not wish to bank digitally
- Concern about the additional travel needed to visit other branches
- Not wishing to use the Post Office to transact

We have undertaken the following activities in response to the key areas of concern:

- We are committed to offering our customers a variety of ways to bank locally with Santander, including telephone, online or mobile banking and the Post Office. Using other Santander branches is just one possible option for customers.
- The Forest Hill branch team has been completely focused on helping customers who are affected by the closure and has provided additional support to ensure customers understand the alternatives available. The team has also proactively contacted our elderly and registered disabled customers to offer additional help or support.
- For customers who are unable or do not wish to access online services, all Santander current account holders can also use the Post Office for cash and cheque deposits. We also have Telephony Advisors who are available to support customers with account management. The teams are available to assist 7am to 9pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 9pm on Sundays. You can reach them by calling 0800 9 123 123.
- The branch team was happy to escort customers to the local Post Office to show them how to transact and talk through the facilities they provide.

Next Steps

Forest Hill branch will close on 28 June 2018. This decision was not taken lightly and since the announcement was made we have notified our customers and the wider community and considered their feedback. We understand the impact the closure will have and continue to support our customers at this time.

Customers can continue to gain support for any queries relating to the branch closure from our dedicated UK based helpline, 0800 085 0879. We’re available Monday to Friday 8am-9pm and Saturday 8am-4pm or alternatively you can email us at CommunityEngagement@santander.co.uk.

Alternative local banking services

Banks/Building Societies

Barclays
1 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3TR

Post Office
Forest Hill Station, Devonshire Road, London SE23 3HD

Cash machines (Nearest free to use cash machines)

Barclays
1 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3TR

Sainsbury’s
34-48 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3HF

Accurate as at date of publication

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