

Branch Closure Impact Assessment

Closing branch:

Crossmaglen
53 The Square
Crossmaglen
BT35 9HQ

Closure date:

18/11/2021

The branch your account(s) will be
administered from:

Newry

Information correct as at:

July 2021



**Bank of
Ireland
UK**

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The world of banking is changing and so are we

Bank of Ireland customers in Northern Ireland have been steadily moving to digital banking over the past 10 years. The pace of this change is increasing. Since 2017, for example, digital banking has increased by 50% while visits to our branches have sharply declined. Increasingly, our customers are using Post Office services with 52% of over-the-counter transactions now made in Post Office branches.

We have invested in technology that enables customers to bank digitally - including launching a new banking app and updating our online banking. Alongside this we have also introduced digital ways to pay with Google Pay and Apple Pay. Today, almost 80% of our customers are using online as their preferred channel to open a personal account.

As we continue to adapt, we must change how we provide banking services. Therefore, after careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to close Crossmaglen branch on 18 November 2021. However, in line with regulatory guidance, we will consider the impact on customers of the closure date should lockdown measures be in place at that time.

How we made the decision to close this branch

When we close a branch, we complete a detailed analysis which includes:

- ▶ How customers are choosing to bank with us.
- ▶ How often customers use the branch and how that is changing.
- ▶ The other ways for customers to do their everyday banking including the distance to alternative banking services.
- ▶ Access to cash including the impact on those who may need additional support.
- ▶ Availability and frequency of public transport.
- ▶ Location of remaining branches in Northern Ireland.

What will this mean for our customers?

We will invest in a smaller, modernised network of 13 branches with improved online services for customers. In addition, our customers can bank at over 500 Post Office branches across Northern Ireland, see page 10 for more information.

Following the closure, the cash machine will remain in service in Crossmaglen at its current location. You can continue to use any Bank of Ireland branch in Northern Ireland for your everyday banking. You can also use your local Post Office and withdraw cash at the nearest free-to-use cash machine (see page 9 to find out where they are located). However, accounts held at Crossmaglen branch will now be administered from our Newry branch. Key account details such as your sort code and account number will not change and you can continue to use your existing debit card and cheque book. Your closest alternative banks providing counter service can be found in Newry.

We are committed to supporting you through this change and the other ways you can continue to do your banking with us.

This document outlines the reasons for our decision and the alternative services available. It also sets out the steps we have taken to minimise the impact of our decision to close Crossmaglen branch on our customers.

We have written to members of the local community – including MPs, MLAs and Councillors, as well as Northern Ireland business groups and charities – and have provided further information on the changes on request. We have included their feedback in this document.

Customers who need more support

Bank of Ireland UK recognise that the closure of this branch impacts customers who find themselves in a vulnerable position, particularly during this period of COVID-19 restrictions. We are committed to supporting you, whatever your circumstances, so you can continue to access the banking services that you need – whether through Bank of Ireland UK or elsewhere. We will ensure that you receive information in a way which is appropriate to your needs, for example by providing larger print letters and branch closure information. If you are experiencing difficulties in accessing the branch, we can provide support to answer any queries that you may have. This support will also extend to us calling you if we believe that we can provide you with further help by phone. Our branch staff will also continue to be available to help and support you during the branch closure period.

Access to Banking Standard (updated October 2021)

We are signatories of the Access to Banking Standard with the Lending Standards Board. The Standard states: “Customers and relevant stakeholders of a bank branch that is closing will be provided with clear, understandable, accessible documentation and information about that specific closure as soon as the bank is able to do so, also what it will mean for them and how they can continue to bank following its closure.”

In line with the Access to Banking Standard, we have sent an Impact Assessment to customers of branches that are closing.

The Impact Assessment has now been updated to include feedback from customers and stakeholders.

Bank safely – Security information

Fraudsters may contact you pretending to work for Bank of Ireland. Bank of Ireland will never ask you to move money to a safe account or share personal information like your User ID, password, your full PIN or any activation code. If you do tell someone your personal information, or have any concerns regarding your account, please call us immediately on our Freephone number [0800 121 7790](tel:08001217790) (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). For more information on how to protect yourself from fraud, search 'Security and Fraud' on our website bankofirelanduk.com and follow us on Twitter [@BankofirelandUK](https://twitter.com/BankofirelandUK).

How to contact us

If you have any feedback or would like to know what additional steps you can take to continue banking with us, please call us on [03457 365 555](tel:03457365555) (lines are open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm and Saturday 9am - 2pm).

More information is available on our website bankofirelanduk.com/service-changes. Alternatively you can call into the branch.

Crossmaglen branch information

Monday - Friday 10am – 4pm (Lunchtime closing 12.30pm -1.30pm)

Crossmaglen branch facilities:



Inside
Cash Machine

YES



Outside
Cash Machine

YES

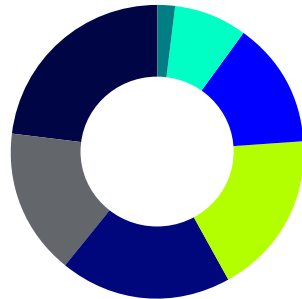
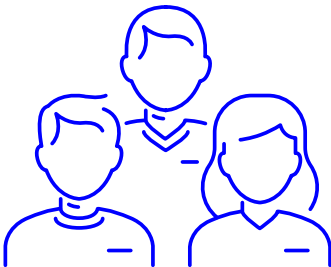


Counter
Service

YES

Fully accessible for customers

Crossmaglen customer profile



88% Personal customers

12% Business customers

Age of personal customers using Crossmaglen branch

< 18	3%	45-54	16%
18-24	11%	55-64	13%
25-34	18%	> 65	17%
35-44	21%		



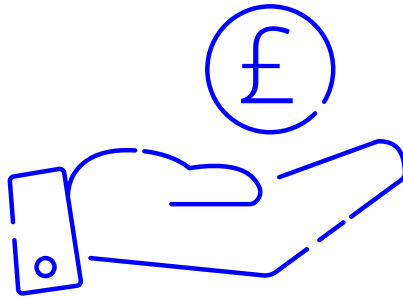
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personal customers will be proactively contacted to offer additional support and help with the alternative services available. This includes vulnerable customers.



How Crossmaglen customers are banking with us

The way that customers are banking at Crossmaglen branch has changed. The number of over-the-counter transactions has reduced by 41% in the past 4 years and the number of visits to the branch have fallen. 63% of customers at the branch are now digitally active, carrying out their everyday banking online or using the app. 13% of our customers make over-the-counter transactions and do not use online banking.



41%

The reduction in the number of over-the-counter transactions in the last 4 years.

13%

of our customers make over-the-counter transactions and do not use online banking.



63%

of our customers are digitally active

Other Bank of Ireland branches

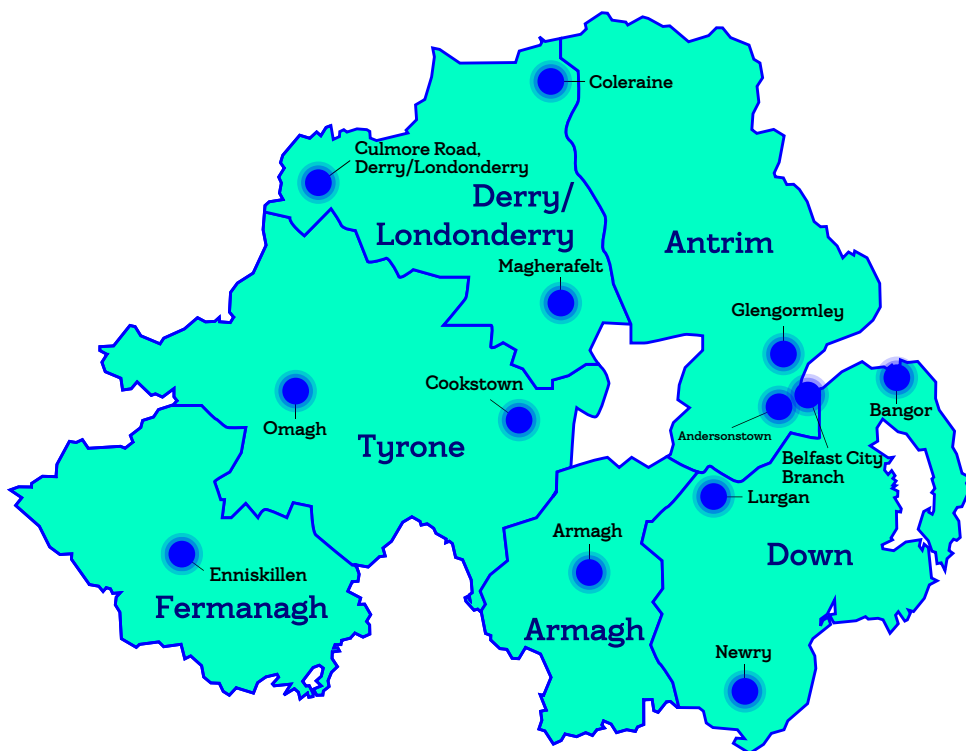
All Bank of Ireland branches listed below provide a full branch banking service and are fully accessible. They are within reach of public transport and public car parking. These branches are open Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm (lunchtime closing 12.30pm - 1.30pm). Information about public transport links can be found at translink.co.uk or by calling 028 9066 6630.

Bank of Ireland
12 Trevor Hill
Newry
BT34 1DN
15.8 miles

Bank of Ireland
11 Upper English Street
Armagh
BT61 7BH
21.8 miles

Bank of Ireland
13 Market Street
Lurgan
BT66 6AR
34 miles

Bank of Ireland branches that will remain open



Nearest Post Office

Crossmaglen
12 North Street
Crossmaglen
BT35 9AB
0.1 miles
(walking - 2 min)

Customers with a debit card can make immediate cash deposits and card withdrawals up to their card limit, and make balance enquiries. Personal and business customers can also deposit cash and cheques using a paying-in slip, with a pre-printed barcode, at any Post Office branch (the cash deposit limit for personal customer is £2,000, limits also apply to business customers). Deposits made at the Post Office using a paying-in-slip will take at least one additional day to credit to your account. We are planning to enhance services for business customers with the Post Office later this year.

Nearest free-to-use cash machines

Following the branch closure, the cash machine will remain in service in Crossmaglen at its current location. The nearest other free-to-use cash machines are shown below:

Centra Crossmaglen 12 North Street Crossmaglen BT35 9AB 0.1 miles	McNamees A7 Rathview Park Newry BT35 9HJ 0.1 miles
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Distances are based on postcode via AA Road Planner from closing branch to alternative service by road.

Broadband available close to this branch*

	Availability	Highest available download speed	Highest available upload speed
Standard	✓	18mbp/s	1mbp/s
Superfast	✓	80mbp/s	20mbp/s
Ultrafast	✗	N/A	N/A

* www.checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage

Other ways for customers to do their everyday banking

We want to make staying in control of your everyday banking as easy and convenient as possible. Over the years, we've introduced many ways you can bank without having to come into a branch.



The Post Office

Everyday banking available at Post Office branches:

- ▶ Cash withdrawals using your debit card
- ▶ Cash deposits
- ▶ Cheque deposits
- ▶ Account balance enquiry.



Bank of Ireland banking app

Carry out a wide range of banking activities, and manage your accounts with our banking app.



Online banking

Do your banking online, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Bank of Ireland online banking puts you in control.



Telephone banking

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can hear your balance, check transactions, pay bills and transfer money. Call 03457 365 555.



LINK cash machines

Withdraw cash free of charge at any cash machine displaying the LINK sign. You can check your balance, print off a mini statement and request a receipt too.

More information at bankofirelanduk.com/waystobank

Definition of key terms

“Branch facilities” - Breakdown of services available within the branch.

“Counter service” - Banking completed over the counter with a cashier – usually deposits of cash or cheques, cash withdrawals, or receiving change.

“Customer profile” - Type of customers of the branch; business or personal.

“Digitally active” - Customers who use our 365 services, online, on the banking app or on the phone.

“Everyday banking” - Withdrawing cash, paying bills, transferring money to other accounts, checking account balances, lodging cash and cheques.

“Fully accessible” - Refers to access to branches and services such as, wide doors, lowered counters, ramp access, hearing loops.

“Lending Standards Board” - The Lending Standards Board (LSB) is an organisation whose mission it is to drive fair customer outcomes within financial services through independent oversight. The LSB assesses adherence to the Access to Banking Standard.

“Nearest” - Closest services available, within 1 mile.

“Over-the-counter transaction” - Refers to withdrawals and lodgements etc made in the branch.

“Personal customers who we will proactively contact to offer additional support” - Vulnerable customers and personal customers who regularly make over-the-counter transactions.

“Transactions” - Refers to payments in to and out of your account, such as lodging or withdrawing cash or cheques.

“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.

Customer and Stakeholder feedback (added October 2021)

Before we made the decision to close Crossmaglen branch we carried out a thorough review to understand what impact the branch closure would have on customers and the wider community. In line with the Access to Banking Standard, we made a commitment to publish feedback from customers and interested stakeholders before the branch closed.

Communicating this change to customers

We wrote to customers of Crossmaglen branch 12 weeks before the branch closure to explain the factors we considered before we decided to close the branch (see page 3), the reasons for the closure, the date the branch would close and the alternative services available.

We have displayed a poster in the branch notifying customers of the closure and our staff are speaking to customers about the other ways they can do their everyday banking with us including at their local Post Office, online, over the phone, on our mobile app and at other Bank of Ireland branches in Northern Ireland. We are also making customers aware of other local banks and free-to-use cash machines nearby.

Engaging with the local community

Who we contacted

We contacted key stakeholders in August 2021 to ensure they were kept fully updated and had the information that would help them understand the key impacts of the change, when they would take effect and the reason for the change. We also provided details of the alternative services available to customers and the steps we intended to take to minimise the impact of the change including additional support for customers who may need it. We provided them with a link to the Branch Impact Assessment on our website. We also provided them with an opportunity to discuss the decision or write to us with their views and feedback.

We proactively contacted:

- ▶ All Party Leaders & Executive Ministers
- ▶ Local MP – Mickey Brady MP
- ▶ Local MLAs – William Irwin MLA, Cathal Boylan MLA, Conor Murphy MLA, Justin McNulty MLA, Liz Kimmins MLA
- ▶ Local Councillors – Councillors Grainne O'Neill, Gavin Malone, Roisin Mulgrew, Michael Savage, Charlie Casey, Valerie Harte, Gary Stokes, Jackie Donnelly, Garath Keating, Darren McNally, Sam Nicholson, Thomas O'Hanlon, Pete Byrne, Declan Murphy, Mickey Larkin, Oonagh Magennis, Aoife Finnegan, Barra Ó'Muirí, David Taylor
- ▶ Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade
- ▶ Newry Business Improvement District

- ▶ Newry & Mourne Co-operative and Enterprise Agency
- ▶ Armagh Business Centre
- ▶ Rural Community Network
- ▶ Consumer Council
- ▶ Advice NI
- ▶ Charitable organisations – Age NI, Alzheimer’s Society, Carers NI, Dementia NI and Disability Action
- ▶ We also contacted local Post Offices

The reaction/feedback we received

- ▶ Mickey Brady MP contacted us regarding the decision to close the branch and the impact on many of his constituents. We provided a response addressing the concerns he raised.
- ▶ Conor Murphy, MLA, contacted us regarding the closure of branches and the impact on customers and staff in rural areas. We provided a response addressing the concerns he raised.
- ▶ We met with members of the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to respond to their concerns, explain the rationale for our decision to close Crossmaglen branch and share information about the alternative services available.
- ▶ We were contacted by Councillor David Taylor, who expressed concerns about the closure of the branch. Councillor Taylor joined the meeting we had with Newry, Mourne & Down District Council providing an opportunity to respond to his concerns.
- ▶ We were contacted by Councillor Pete Byrne, who expressed concerns about the suitability of alternative services available at the Post Office as well as the possible relocation of the Crossmaglen cash machine. We provided responses to Councillor Byrne addressing the concerns raised and to reiterate the Bank would be retaining the branch cash machine.
- ▶ We met with Pat Gatney MLA, as Chair of the All Party Group on Fair Banking and Business to explain the rationale for our decision to close branches and address their concerns.
- ▶ We met with Andrew Muir MLA and Stuart Dickson, MLA to respond to their concerns regarding branch closures, explain the rationale for our decision and discuss the alternative services available.
- ▶ We met Paul Maskey MP, John Finucane MP and Caoimhe Archibald MLA to discuss our decision to close branches in Northern Ireland and our consideration of the timing of those closures.
- ▶ A meeting was held with Sinead McLaughlin MLA, Paul Gosling and Councillor Pete Byrne to discuss their concerns regarding branch closures and the alternative services available through Post Offices.
- ▶ Jim Shannon MP contacted us about the branch closures, cash machine provision and alternative services provided by Post Office. We provided a response addressing the concerns he raised.
- ▶ We met with Retail NI providing an opportunity to respond to their concerns, explain the rationale for our decision to close branches and discuss the alternative services available through Post Offices.

- ▶ We have spoken with local Post Offices to discuss the services they can offer to our customers and so they can plan for any change in customer demand.
- ▶ We are working with Age NI to look at new ways to support our senior customers. If you would like to find out more about the services Age NI offer you can contact their advice line on 0808 808 7575 or visit their website www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland

What we have done to make the change easier

- ▶ We have offered all customers support with the other ways they can carry out their everyday banking, including at their local Post Office, online and at other Bank of Ireland branches in Northern Ireland.
- ▶ We have helped customers who require additional support which has included setting up third party arrangements where requested.
- ▶ We have listened to customer concerns and responded to help them understand the other ways they can do their everyday banking with us, including services available locally, such as the local Post Office.
- ▶ We have used the information we hold about our customers, and staff have used local knowledge to identify customers who may find themselves in a vulnerable position, to support them during the branch closure. We have talked to these customers (including customers over 65) to discuss any support they may need following the closure of the branch.
- ▶ We have talked to both personal and business customers who frequently use this branch to discuss the options available and all alternative ways to bank, including the services available to them at the Post Office.
- ▶ We are working in partnership with the Post Office to support customers, so that Post Office branches can plan for an increase in demand.

We can provide this document in Braille, in large print and on CD or audio tape.

Please ask any member of staff for details.

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