

CAMPAIGN TO SAVE RURAL POST OFFICES.

PETITION FROM STOKE BY NAYLAND & POLSTEAD VILLAGES IN SUFFOLK.

More than 500 households and businesses have supported the petition. (Responses still coming in every day.) The petition stated:

The Government is now working on plans to close one in three rural post offices. The two post offices in this area - at Polstead and Stoke by Nayland - are at risk.

Many people feel that, as well as providing essential postal, banking and other business services, the post offices are part of the "Social Glue" which holds our communities together.

If you think closing one or both of our local post offices would cause problems to you or your neighbours, please sign below. Please add your reasons.

The gravest & most frequently expressed concerns are from:

- elderly and disabled members of our community
- self-employed and small businesses
- parents with young children
- green-minded people who are trying to reduce their carbon footprint.
- ordinary people who pay the same rates of tax as everyone else in return for dis-proportionatly less services. They feel they are now being seen as an easy target for post office cuts.

Summary of main issues:

In addition to providing all the usual postal, banking and other business and financial services, the village post office is repeatedly described as the hub - the essential information and social contact point in the community. For many local people the post office is a trusted old friend.

There are many despairing comments from older people who don't have cars and who foresee their social isolation and dependency getting worse.

There is a strong element of bewilderment and exasperation from car owners who are doing their best to curb the driving habit.

Above all is the realistic fear that post office closure would be the thin end of the wedge and that before long the co-dependent shop(s) would also close. Many respondents say that without post office or shop the villages would be gutted and would die.

Below is a selection of responses:

I am a pensioner and use the post office every day..... **its a lifeline to the whole village.**

I rely on it to do my mother's pension and banking. Nearest banks are miles away.

I am an old age pensioner and its my post office and I want it saved.

I am a pensioner. The Post Office is vital to me.

Closure of the post office would create severe problems for the elderly and put pressure on economic viability of the village shop. Loss of the shop wd be an utter disaster for the village.

Closing post offices puts villages like Stoke by Nayland at risk of slow death. Please don't let this happen.

The post office is an essential part of our village. A lot of elderly people unable to drive depend on the P.O.

Post offices are an essential hub economically and socially.

Closure of our post office will be sad and unwise. I will never vote for the responsible political party again.

We need and love the local post office. Please please keep it.

Post office is essential to residents and local businesses.

Being now 90, my post office is my lifeline.

Essential to village life and reduces our carbon footprint.

I want to walk to my post office and not use my car.

Why encourage more use of cars by closing local amenities?

Post office is vital to prosperity of village shop.

Post office is so important for those who don't have transport but also as a centre where people get support, information.

As a disabled person it would make life more difficult.

Keeps local communities alive...

...Having to use another post office by car is unsustainable...

I walk to the post office twice a day to pay in cheques, bills, send parcels (for local business.) If we lose the P.O. and drive to Nayland we will pollute the atmosphere, we don't have time, nowhere to park car in Nayland.

If we lose our post office the villagers, particularly pensioners, will lose their only means of services.

A vital service which local people wd struggle without, pensioners and local businesses.

Essential to local business and older generation.

Very vital. Cannot use transport. Ill husband.

Saves fuel only having to visit local P.O.. and shop.

Crucial service for the village and surrounding country.

Post office is central part of village life. Used constantly.

Vital for pensioners and mothers with small children to collect pensions etc.

Used daily - but apart from us what about the elderly who don't drive?

We use the post office for our business. Without it we would be lost.

Much needed for business activities.

Much needed raft of community services. This is a vital part of the village and a social service which should be funded like NHS or education.

Let's KEEP our community.

I would lose my job.

Post offices are essential part of village life. For some people its their only day out in the week to collect their pensions. The mother and baby group I run have just opened a post office account because its near and handy to pay our fees into.

If we lose the post office we would lose 2 valuable assets + an essential village community centre.

Would cause excessive travel without local post office.

All financial business dealt with at P.O.

This will cause indescribable hardship to many many people.

Lifeblood of the community...

Post office and shop are interdependent. Lose one you lose both - end of village centre.

Don't close this very important part of village life.

I am able to walk there.

I work from home and my local post office is essential for this.

In a small village without other shops a post office is essential for community relations.

It would be a blow for the village if we lose our post office.

We have just moved from a village which lost their post office.. One of the main reasons to move to S by N was the facility of post office and store.

Closing the post office would take the guts out of the village. We need help to save facilities, not to demolish them.

I use the post office every other day and enjoy the community.

Use the post office 2 or 3 x week both as P.O. and bank.

Use P.O. for paying bills.

I use the post office 3 x week for banking. I don't want to drive an extra five miles...

I live in Wales where many local post offices have closed.....more driving....

It would kill the village as a living community, turning it into a dormitory village

Save on pollution.

In Suffolk a v. high proportion live in villages

The Post Office going is the end of village life and will end up being a dormitory.

I don't drive. The bus goes hourly into town, sometimes takes 2 hours to come back. It will take an inordinate time to do transactions.

Work mainly from home. Post office is vital but more distant P.O. would force me into car and take too much time.

An essential social service.

With my husband's disability proximity is essential.

Closure would force me to drive....think of the carbon footprint...

A trip to Colchester is not eco friendly and extremely expensive.

No car. Use Post office to pay household bills.

I run my own business, employ 5 local people, and use the post office every day. We need it.

I use it regularly particularly for cash. Please please re-think.

I depend on the post office to run my business and use it daily.

How un-environmentally friendly to force customers to drive elsewhere. This government have totally lost the plot.

Wonderful service **plus exercise walking to collect pension.**

A real "must" for the community, a useful way to draw money out **and not clutter up the towns...**

It has social as well as economic value.

Close them all and be prepared for millions of extra tons of carbon emissions.

Stop asset stripping. Give sub-post offices a chance to survive.

S by N post office is a vital service for my 3 local businesses.

Business and local services should be maintained and enhanced.

My business relies on posting to deadlines.

I work from home and need the "walk to" post office.

Journey to the next nearest post office = more fuel consumption

Post offices keep life in the village.

We all need it. Don't kill our village.

Essential because many local people don't have transport.

Essential element in rural life....providing facilities without adding to congestion in towns.

Why should anyone wish to degrade our villages by closing such essential services?

With a small child its my lifeline.

Not a green idea!

closing local post office would add to driving and parking congestion.

Post office is a practical and social necessity in the village.

We need our post office - simple as that.

What happens to OAPs who draw their pensions at the post office?

Many elderly folk have no transport....

A valuable cash point.

Outside walking distance to nearest other post office.

Cannot walk far, haven't a car

Close PO. Lose shop...

For practical purposes I am unable to get cash from a bank... for many years have drawn pension in cash from P.O.

Devastating..

Not everyone can drive..

Part of rural life

Any policy encouraging increased car use goes against efforts to reduce carbon footprint.

Increased traffic and parking problems

We should be encouraging current climate of increased diversification of employment in rural areas by maintaining postal services

The most vulnerable in our society wont be able to get to a post office miles away.

Would probably have to move if we lost the post office. This and the shop are absolutely necessary.

Aged 95 - couldn't do without it.

We are elderly and cant walk far..

At 86 cant go far.

It is of paramount importance in the village.

As founder of the award-winning 2nd oldest community shop in the country (Polstead Community Shop) I feel the loss of the Post Office would be a devastating blow to the community

Life would be very difficult...

More people work from home nowadays and need the post office. But of course the most important factor is the needs of the elderly.

Many elderly people depend on Post Office services. They will feel stranded...

DON'T DO IT.

Essential to the smooth running of the business for us.

Essential for home workers.

We are supposed to be encouraging working closer to home and keeping rural communities alive..

Retention of essential services is critical to rural life.

Post Office facility essential part of our existence out here.

A lot of young families on limited incomes and elderly without cars.

It a great big help to us all.

No car. Baby. We need it.

This is a total necessity as well as a service

Where will I send my Ebay items from ??

Much valued for business and personal use and
to close one of the best friendship places in the village.
What a crazy idea

We need the resource HERE.

I thought we were supposed to think local and not drive.

I don't have a car. What will I do?

It's a scandal that the government thinks only of money.

The church is not as important as it used to be as focal point of life in our
villages. The Post Office stores takes its place in a way.

I used to draw my pension there and wish I still did. OF COURSE the
post offices are losing money because the pension work has been taken
away from them.

The children get their sweets and I do my business there.

Once again the vulnerable members of the community will be the losers.

An integral part of village life.

The social consequences far outweigh the questionable economic
argument.

The government's finances might benefit marginally from closure of post
offices but the overall cost to the country in human terms would be
incalculable.

The Post Office/shop is **the beating heart of the village.**

...I would expect the community spirit to wither. Its not the same at Tesco's

Closure would be another nail in the coffin for community life..

It would be impossible for many people to function.

...the end of the local community facility.

More petrol miles and pollution would ensue..

What will go in its place for the elderly? A mobile P.O.? How crass.

Without a P.O. we wd have to travel, emitting clouds of CO2.

Closure would hurt community shop

...integral part of the village

Closure would have serious impact on community and surrounding area

Local residents without transport would have great difficulty getting money.

Having no transport post office & shop have been a lifeline.

It will rip out another pat of our treasured community

Sir, try living in Polstead or any small village when you are 80 and no post office.

Cant walk far

Vital to life blood of the village

A daily visit sets me up each day...

V.V. important - **No shop/P.O. in village = ghost town**

Do we all have cars ???

As a young mother I need to be able to walk to the post office in my village

Closing another vital service to country & village life! Who thinks up such stupid ideas?

Some who haven't got any transports need this service. Everything is so far away from here.

With limited public transport where will people go?

Much needed resource for people who live & work here.

I have a young child. Its vital for both old and young.

People will lose their jobs

I came from Leavenheath where we already lost our post office. Where are we supposed to go if they close Stoke?

cls. 12.6.07