



[REDACTED]

Date
24 December 2024

[REDACTED]

Post Office
100 Wood Street
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

Classification:
Public

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/01539

We are writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited (“**Post Office**”) on 25 November, which has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“**FOIA**”).

In your email, you have requested the information shown verbatim in bold below:

[REDACTED] **and I’m looking for information on the number of Post Office branches and sub-branches that have closed and Post Office services which have reduced their opening hours across Scotland in the past 12 months.**

I was told that this is information you hold.

I’d be grateful if you could provide a list of the Post Offices affected please, and the reduced hours services, from November 2023 to the present day.”

We can confirm that Post Office does hold the information you have requested.

However, the information on the number of Post Office branches and sub-branches that have closed, along with other details from November 2023 to present day, are being prepared for publication on the Post Office website. Therefore, we are not obliged to provide the information as it is intended for future publication and as such the information is exempt under S22(1)(a) of the FOIA.

Section 22 can be used where it is reasonable and correct for a public authority to delay providing the information requested, because the information will be made

generally available by publication. Section 22(1)(a) is a qualified exemption and therefore also requires Post Office to consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption is greater than the public interest in disclosing it.

We have considered the public interest in disclosure, which include being open and transparent, allow the public to understand how Post Office operates, in particular the state of its network. However, Post Office believes that providing the requested information now under an FOI request would not serve the public interest. Our network report is going through a rigorous process of auditing ahead of publication to ensure they are accurate. They must then be agreed upon and signed off by the government before publication. This has not yet been completed, and releasing the figures now may give the public an inaccurate picture of Post Office's network status.

As we are intending to publish our performance statistics this year we consider that the public interest lies in maintaining the exemption, and thus, withholding the information.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address above within 40 working days of receipt of this response stating your reasons for your internal review request or alternatively, by emailing information.rights@postoffice.co.uk.

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team

information.rights@postoffice.co.uk

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/access-to-information/access-to-information/>

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy, information about how we do this can be found on our website at www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy