



Date
23 May 2024

Post Office
100 Wood Street
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

Classification:
Public

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/00573

We are writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited (“**Post Office**”) on 4 April, 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:

“Please provide a list of Post Offices closed, with postcode or other geographic identity, for as far back as is possible and within the constraints of the legislation.”

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

Post Office does have a geographic identifier regarding the spread of closure by region that is compared year on year. This is published in the network report, which includes useful information regarding our network, including changes in Post Office branch numbers broken down by country or region in England.

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/key-reports-statements/network-report/>

You can also refer to a report produced by Parliament, ‘Post Office Numbers’:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02585/>

Post Office considers closures by postcodes is exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) FOIA as it would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Post Office.

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is a public interest in identifying where Post Office branches have closed as we appreciate the impact this can have on the local communities. We also note that understanding the Post Office branch network helps promote transparency.

There is, however, a strong public interest in withholding the information, as it would, if disclosed, prejudice the commercial interests of Post Office. Releasing the number of branches closed by postcode would allow Post Office's competitors to identify areas where Post Office no longer trades or is experiencing challenging trading issues. This would then allow competitors to target those areas with similar products or services which would damage Post Office's ability to reintroduce a branch into that area.

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