

# **TSB to close branches in Edinburgh and Midlothian**

**Bank branches including those at Corstorphine, Gorgie and Pilton, as well as branches at Penicuik and Dalkeith, may be due to close in the latest round of closures announced by the TSB.**

As part of TSB's strategy, the Bank had previously set out its intention to reduce its branch network in order to 'remain competitive compared to the wider industry. These changes today accelerate the pace of the overall branch transformation'.

There are 21 closures planned for this year and 164 in 2021 in the whole of the UK.



Debbie Crosbie. Picture by Robert Perry / Parsons Media

Debbie Crosbie, Chief Executive of TSB, said: "Closing any of our branches is never an easy decision, but our customers are banking differently – with a marked shift to digital banking.

"We are reshaping our business to transform the customer experience and set us up for the future. This means having the right balance between branches on the high street and our digital platforms, enabling us to offer the very best experience for our personal and business customers across the UK.

“We remain committed to our branch network and will retain one of the largest in the UK.”

Robin Bulloch, Customer Banking Director at TSB, said: “Alongside these changes, we will continue to invest in our remaining branch network to offer high quality banking services, fully integrated with improved digital capability.

“We are working to ensure the transition towards digital – which is being seen right across the economy – is handled sensitively and pragmatically for our colleagues and customers. We’re taking steps to support vulnerable customers and those in rural locations.”

Lothian MSP, Miles Briggs, said: “These bank closures are extremely concerning and a sign of the impact that Covid-19 is having on the economy in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

“In recent years there have been a number of bank closures which affect people’s access to banking facilities and makes it harder for people to manage their finances.

“It is crucial that bank employees who are being made redundant are fully supported in finding new roles and any training for those roles.”

Owen Thompson MP has urged a rethink from the TSB after the decision was announced today.

Mr Thompson has been a long campaigner against local bank branch closures and hosted a parliamentary debate on the issue earlier this year, following the announcement of the planned Bank of Scotland closure at Loanhead.

Mr Thompson said: “It’s ridiculous that yet again we see more Midlothian bank branches set to be lost despite being the fastest growing region of Scotland. The banks should be doing everything they can to make it easier for their local customers, not slam the doors shut permanently during a time

of crisis.

“There are no alternative TSB branches nearby to serve the busy communities of Dalkeith and Penicuik. The Post Office does all it can but they simply cannot be expected to pick up the pieces – and they can’t provide all the financial services of a bank. It’s not reasonable to expect people to travel to Musselburgh or Cameron Toll to do their banking, particularly given the impact of the pandemic on public transport. This is not the time to isolate people further.

“It is true that a majority use digital banking at least some of the time, but there remains a strong need for choice between face to face and other forms of banking, and for easy access to cash and counter transactions. It helps support the local economy and protects the most vulnerable citizens – and it gives us all a better choice.

“There is also still a sizeable minority who never use other forms of banking at all and completely rely on their branch. The TSB’s own figures for the Dalkeith branch found 29% of personal banking customers had not used online, mobile or telephone banking. For Penicuik this rises to 34% – more than a third of their customers.

“Banks should not abandon the communities they serve. I will be fighting these closures every step of the way.”

Christine Jardine MP for Edinburgh West said: “I am concerned about what this will mean for customers and my constituents across Edinburgh.

“Understandably, as our financial behaviour changes and we move towards online services, difficult decisions will have to be made, but this will hit vulnerable and older customers the most.

“Many people still need somewhere to go to access their finances, and not every problem can be solved online.

“Liberal Democrats would like to see banking hubs across the country to address exactly this issue.”

The Edinburgh Corstorphine branch is set to close on 8 June 2021.

The Edinburgh Gorgie branch is set to close on 18 March 2021.

The Edinburgh Pilton branch is set to close on 26 January 2021

The Dalkeith branch is set to close on February 11, 2021

The Penicuik branch is due to close on June 15, 2021.