

RBS to close Leith branch this year

The Leith branch of the Royal Bank of Scotland will close on 10 October according to an announcement made today.

The closure forms part of a new tranche of network closures from the NatWest group with branches on Nicolson Street and Bruntsfield Place also set to close. This will leave only three permanent RBS branches remaining in the city (St Andrew Square, Princes Street, and St John's Road), plus a mobile branch. In its closure announcement the bank promised "no further review of our Royal Bank of Scotland branch network until at least 2026".

The Edinburgh North and Leith MP has written to the bank requesting further information about the decision.

Ms Brock said:- "I am shocked by the decision from RBS to close their branch in Leith. This is one of the most densely populated parts of Scotland and the closure will greatly disadvantage many small businesses and customers in our community who rely on counter services.

"There are plenty of people who still prefer face to face custom, and many more who still need it. Not everyone uses phone banking and more vulnerable people shouldn't be expected to travel up to the city centre or head to Musselburgh every time they need to bank.

"It all started for RBS back in 1727, before they became the bank which was 'too big to fail' in 2008 and were bailed out

from the public purse. Now it's sad to see more and more branches disappearing from our High Streets. Like all banks, they should have a duty to meet the diverse needs of their customers, not just the dividends of shareholders.

"The promise that they won't close any more before 2026 doesn't exactly give confidence of a long term commitment to keep the remaining branch network running.

"Decisions like these taken in corporate boardrooms do untold damage to communities like Leith and if the banks won't act, perhaps government should to protect the network. Otherwise we are hurtling headlong towards a cashless society and deepening the digital divide – we need to pause and take stock before it's too late.

"I have written to RBS seeking more details on why they chose to close the Leith branch and what they are doing to protect both customers and staff affected."



Deidre Brock MP for Edinburgh North and Leith