On 11 October 2018, it was announced that 74 Crown post offices will be franchised (privatised) to WHSmith. Of these 74 Crown offices, 33 are currently ‘hosted’ in a WHSmith, but directly run and staffed by the Post Office, and 41 are in their own dedicated Crown office premises, often in prime high street locations. Once privatised, the 41 post office premises will be closed and counters moved into WHSmiths, and all staff of the 74 offices will be directly employed by them as well.

This, as you know, is just one of several announcements over the years to close and privatise our post offices and we believe it amounts to a determined effort to end our post office network.

The consequences of privatising this national asset to WHSmith - the worst retailer on the high street (and arguably one of the worst employers) - are clear, and the catastrophe will be felt most by workers, customers, the High Street and the public who own these counters (but are being denied a say in the future of this public asset).

Work is already underway on this campaign; MPs have been asking questions of the Minister and the Post Office Ltd was forced to appear in front of an All-Party Parliamentary Group where they were given a thorough roasting. While this work continues in earnest, we need you to boost this campaign by mobilising your local community to take action.

OUR AIM AND YOUR ROLE

We need to force the Government and Post Office Ltd to end the rounds of post office closures and privatisations and implement a plan for growth.

This pack outlines 8 steps for you to build a community based campaign that can show its strength on our National Day of Action on 1 December, and exert political pressure nationally through the petition and MP email tool. All the resources you need are at the back, and many are also available to download online.

Taken together, these steps will help to;

・ Build pressure on the Government so that a policy of closing post offices against the wishes of the people becomes too politically toxic for them to pursue.

・ Expose the Post Office Ltd’s decision to privatise the Crown offices as being deeply unpopular, disastrous for the post office network, and lacking the vision to grow the business

・ Highlight the appalling standards in, and precarious future of WHSmith.

THE CAMPAIGN

There is a social movement just waiting to be galvanised to campaign on this – consider how many local people will be angry to learn that their post offices are being privatised to the worst retailer on the high street, and that they are being deliberately excluded from having any say over the future of an asset they own. At the same time, local businesses will be concerned if they are losing a standalone post office, and all post office customers will be alarmed to know the impact of privatisation on their post office service.

We need you to help spread the word, harness the energy of local groups and make clear to those making the decisions that that there is a positive alternative business plan.

We must mobilise now to secure the long term future and growth of the post office network. You are essential to the campaign and your efforts, combined with the work of all of our members, could make all the difference.