

**Jobcentre Plus South
London District**

**Movement of Greenwich Local Authority SE28
postcodes from Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus to
Woolwich Jobcentre Plus**

Equality impact assessment for movement of Greenwich Local Authority SE28 postcodes from Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus to Woolwich Jobcentre Plus

This document is an equality impact assessment for the proposed movement of some SE28 postcodes (and current and future customers with these postcodes) from Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus to Woolwich Jobcentre Plus. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that in moving these postcodes we do not discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and/or religious belief on either on either customers or staff.

Aims and objectives of the change

Policy aims

London Jobcentre Plus region is undertaking a review to ensure all its offices continue to meet customers' needs and provide value for money. This policy helps to make sure that the best possible service is delivered to the greatest number of customers with the resources we have available.

Background

London Jobcentre Plus has come to the end of a five year transformation programme. The changes delivered provide our customers with a wide choice of ways to access our services including by telephone and internet so they no longer have to visit our offices to apply for jobs or make a claim to benefit. We also offer specialised advisory help for people with significant barriers to work, Europe's largest job bank and specialist tailored services for employers.

Customers do not have to visit a Jobcentre in order to access and apply for our vacancies. These can be accessed through our website or through our telephone-based service. The vacancies are the same as those available via the Jobpoints inside our offices. Our website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk and the Government's website www.direct.gov.uk also provides additional information on our services and benefits.

The review of our Service Delivery plan is aimed at ensuring that customers experience the best route to our services and that our business can live within its means at this time of increased demand.

Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus offers the full range of Jobcentre Plus services. We have increased the space in our customer area to the maximum capacity allowed by the site. A postcode move would allow us to ease the space issues on site by reducing the numbers of customers using the Jobcentre. Consideration has also been given to feedback from the local MP. We have explored travel patterns and Woolwich would prove a more convenient option for those customers living in the Greenwich Borough SE28 postcodes. Therefore we propose to move customers living in the SE28 postcode from Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus to Woolwich Jobcentre.

What is the purpose of the change?

To ensure all customers have equal access to the full range of services provided by Jobcentre Plus on a daily basis. The district has reviewed its postcode catchment areas and Woolwich Jobcentre Plus is more convenient for customers whose postcode is SE28. Moving customers with this postcode to Woolwich will result in shorter travelling time to the Jobcentre for the majority of customers living in SE28, and no change for the remainder.

Who will benefit from it and how?

Customers will be able to continue to:

- Access the full range of services/specialist advisors from Woolwich Jobcentre Plus office within daily travelling distances of their homes.
- Access services through our websites and telephone-based services.

Locally, Jobcentre Plus will continue to work with interested partners and organisations to support our customer needs and provide a holistic service where opportunities present themselves. A central feature of the new arrangements for support to our customers in these areas will be through ensuring we continue to develop, implement and review flexible service delivery options, working with partners in the area.

Customers currently travel 5.66 miles from the furthest point of SE28 to Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus. Their journey will reduce to 3.71 miles when moved to Woolwich Jobcentre Plus. The shortest journey for SE28 customers will reduce from 4.73 miles to 1.43 miles, approximately 30 minutes walk. There are excellent transport links by bus. The longest bus journey would be within an hour and costs no more than £2.00 return using the Oyster (travel card). On average the journey will be shorter for the majority of customers, with no change to the current travelling times and costs for the remainder.

There are long established rules for reimbursing Jobseekers Allowance customers attending a Work Focused Interview, particularly where the interview does not fall on the normal signing day. For normal fortnightly attendance to sign on, customers are expected to meet the cost of their journey to the office. Customers in receipt of Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Employment and Support Allowance can claim for the reimbursements of their expense in a similar way. If any customer had to travel over one hour to their nearest office we would consider postal signing.

What data on the diversity of both your customers and staff is available to you?

We have reviewed the ethnicity, gender and disabled customers data available for both the London Borough of Greenwich and Bexley's customers affected by moving SE28 postcode. Detailed information is not available down to selected postcodes. The data below is sourced from the 2001 Census, and covers the boroughs in which this postcode sits. Further information concerning customer numbers within the postcode sourced from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Neighbourhood Statistics and NOMIS (software package used to collect official Labour Market Statistics).

2001 Census Data	London Borough of Bexley	%
White British	191,947	87.93
White Irish	3,025	1.39
White other	4,538	2.08
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	868	0.4
Mixed White and Black African	394	0.18
Mixed White and Asian	915	0.42
Mixed Other	695	0.32
Asian Indian	5,548	2.54
Asian Pakistanis	334	0.15
Asian Bangladeshi	386	0.18
Asian Other	1,111	0.51
Black Caribbean	1,762	0.81
Black African	4,085	1.87
Black Other	405	0.19
Chinese	1,555	0.71
Chinese other	739	0.34
TOTAL	218,307	100%

Workforce Data: 8.61% non white, 91.39% white

2001 Census Data	London Borough of Greenwich	%
White British	151,291	70.56
White Irish	4,862	2.27
White other	9,182	4.28
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	2,203	1.03
Mixed White and Black African	942	0.44
Mixed White and Asian	1,328	0.62
Mixed Other	1,387	0.65
Asian Indian	9,397	4.38
Asian Pakistanis	1,902	0.89
Asian Bangladeshi	1,225	0.57
Asian Other	2,015	0.94
Black Caribbean	6,755	3.15
Black African	15,302	7.14
Black Other	1,697	0.79
Chinese	2,540	1.18
Chinese other	2,375	1.11
TOTAL	214,403	100%

Workforce Data: 22.89% non white, 77.11% white

Data collected shows that no group is adversely or disproportionately impacted by this change. Both Jobcentres provide the full range of services to our customers and travel

time to Woolwich Jobcentre Plus from the furthest reaches of SE28 will on average be shorter for the majority of customers and be within a 30 minutes walk for the rest.

We have informed our customers, local MPs, local Citizen Advise Bureaux, Greenwich Welfare Rights and local Councillors of the proposed change. There was no negative feedback reported from this and we continue to work with them to make sure that customers will continue to receive a service which is acceptable to them.

Staff

Staff will not be required to move from Bexleyheath to Woolwich jobcentre. Staff have been consulted and appropriate Health and Safety risk assessments will be carried out.

Does collected data show that there may be a disproportionate or adverse impact on either customers or staff?

It is not envisaged that the implementation of the postcode move from Bexleyheath to Woolwich Jobcentre will have any diverse impact on any group. Both sites are fully compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Locally, Jobcentre Plus will continue to work with interested partners and organisations to support our customer needs and provide a holistic service where opportunities present themselves. A central feature of the new arrangements for support to our customers in these areas will be through ensuring we continue to develop, implement and review flexible service delivery options and working with partners in the area.

Conclusion

In view of the information available it is not considered that either customers or staff will be unduly or adversely affected by this change, or that the change could discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religious belief. Customers currently serviced by this office will have the same opportunities and services as customers throughout the London Boroughs of Greenwich and Bexleyheath – which is within South London District. All affected customers will benefit from this change as Woolwich Jobcentre Plus is closer to them than Bexleyheath Jobcentre Plus.

Name and contact details of the officer(s) responsible for the assessment

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