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## Poll shows public want a bank they can trust

YouGov poll results revealed by the Post Bank Coalition today (Monday) show that just under four out five people (78%) believe there is a need for a publicly run bank with just over three out of five (63%) saying they would be likely to use such a bank at the Post Office.

The poll, released the week before the government consultation into post office banking closes, is the latest evidence that there is growing demand for a new model of banking based on the trusted post office network.

Given the strong results, the Post Bank Coalition is calling on government to use the consultation as an opportunity to establish a publicly owned Post Bank in the Post Office. Growing consensus among politicians and the public make this an easily achievable 'must' for government.

### The key findings of the poll are:

- **78% agree that there is a need for a new model of bank run in the public interest and not solely for profit (only 4% disagree)**
- **72% agree that all of the profits from post office banking should stay within the business and be used to sustain the network (only 6% disagree)**
- **63% said they would be likely to use a publicly owned Post Bank run in the public interest (only 20% said they were unlikely to do so)**
- **Only 13% agree with the statement that high street banks currently meet the needs of local businesses and communities**

### Quotes:

**Billy Hayes, Communication Workers Union general secretary, said:** "This poll sends a clear and strong message to politicians: Britain wants a bank it can trust. Post Bank would serve real people, not just shareholders. The government has a golden opportunity to make this a reality with the current consultation. It would be a win for the Post Office, a win for communities and businesses, and from these poll results it would be a vote winner too."

**Simon Hart, Chief Executive, Countryside Alliance, said:** "Post Offices in rural areas form the hearts of their communities and provide a lifeline to the many young mums, pensioners and rural businesses they serve. The Government now has a chance to recognise the role of the Post Office as the social and economic centres of rural Britain by supporting the Post Bank proposal, which the Countryside Alliance is backing. These poll results highlight the wider public's awareness that the current system is not working, and Government should heed this and adopt this common sense solution. Let's take this chance

to create a network where our Post Offices provide banking services that not only support the network, but also ensure its future.”

**John Wright, National Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses said:** “Small businesses have had enough of the ongoing difficulties they encounter with their banks, and they need more options for taking out loans or extending overdrafts. The results from this survey show very clearly that the high street banks do not meet the needs of small businesses and that a Post Bank – a new bank set up in Post Offices around the country – would provide a solution to the problem of poor access to finance. It is time for the Government to listen to what businesses and communities want and make the Post Bank happen.”

**Dot Gibson, General Secretary, National Pensioners Convention, said:** "Pensioners are great supporters of the Post Office as it offers them a lifeline to the wider community. They want to see it flourish in the future and a publicly owned people's bank at the Post Office would be good news for all ages. It's time the political parties listened to public opinion before it's too late."

**Lindsay Mackie, campaign co-ordinator at nef (the new economics foundation) said:** “The message from these polls is so clear that it would be remarkably perverse of any government not to listen to it. The Post Bank Coalition calls for a Post Bank, for a strengthened post office network and for all parties to commit to supporting this unique, public and trusted institution that serves all communities, rural and urban.”

**Paul Reuter, Unite national officer, said:** “If ever there was an argument to give the public, small businesses and communities what they need, these results demonstrate it. The post office network is best placed to deliver these services and this should be through a Post Bank.

“Government is currently denying itself the opportunity to resolve the banking needs of most of the country and must take action to remedy this omission when it considers the responses to the current consultation, and establishes its conclusion, on Banking and financial services at the Post Office.”

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,097 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 26th - 28th January 2010. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- People in the north west were most likely to use a Post Bank (71%) while people in Yorkshire and the Humber had the lowest confidence in banks currently meeting local needs (6%). People in Wales felt most strongly that a new model of banking is needed (84%) and people in the south west felt most strongly that all profits from banking should stay in the Post Office (81%).
- The **Post Bank Coalition** is made up of the Communication Workers Union, Countryside Alliance, Federation of Small Businesses, National Pensioners Convention, nef (the new economics foundation), PIRC and Unite the union. The Coalition was formed to campaign for a wholly publicly owned bank in the Post Office to serve needs of business, communities and the financially excluded.
- The BIS consultation, Post Office Banking; A consultation on developing the banking and financial services available at the Post Office, can be viewed at: [www.bis.gov.uk/postofficebanking](http://www.bis.gov.uk/postofficebanking)
- Early Day Motion 344 backing Post Bank has been signed by 171 MPs.
- In March 2009, a poll by PoliticsHome showed 74% of people backed a Post Bank with only 15% not liking the idea.
- For case studies please contact the media office contacts below.

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