



Press Release

21 September 2023

BLAINA POSTMASTER SOON TO RETIRE AFTER 41 YEARS' OF POST OFFICE SERVICE

- **Blaina Postmaster Garth Collier to retire, aged 74**
- **Loyally serves Gwent Post Office customers for nearly 42 years**
- **Independent councillor for 12 years**

Long-serving Postmaster, Garth Collier, is soon to retire after nearly 42 years running Post Offices in Gwent along with his wife Julia.

Garth had been a builder, but with his forthcoming wedding to Julia, they decided to start their own Post Office to provide a more stable income.

They started at Brynithel Post Office in November 1981 and they both ran the branch together until they also took on the bigger branch of Blaina ten years later. They ran both branches for three years.

The couple are very popular. They are very community-minded and they really care about their customers.

Garth was independent councillor for Blaenau Gwent County Borough for 12 years until 2022. During that time he served as Deputy Leader. Prior to that he was Chairman of the Chamber of Trade and worked hard to get major improvements made to Town Square.

Postmaster, Garth Collier, said: "When I was young my Father, who was self-employed, gave me a piece of advice that I always remembered: Always give back to the community that you take your living from. So, I always support community events and I became a councillor. Julia and I, and our staff, have always gone above and beyond for our customers.

"During the pandemic the community was absolutely superb. They wore masks and they were very considerate. We were very busy during the pandemic, especially with parcels and banking. People wanted to stay local. They were sending parcels to people that they could not see and returning lots of home shopping items."

Post Office Area Manager, Ceri James said: "I want to sincerely thank Garth and Julia for their loyal and committed service to the people of Blaina and Brynithel for nearly 42 years. They are very well respected. They are kind and committed. They always go the extra mile. I wish them both a well-earned retirement."

Garth is now 74-years-old and Julia is 8 years younger, following Garth's stroke two years ago, he decided that it is now time to retire.

They are looking forward to a Caribbean Cruise and to having more time to spend with their granddaughters. Gareth has always been a keen rugby fan and he will now have more time to enjoy the game. He has held many different roles at Abertillery Rugby Club.

Gareth's retirement date had been announced as 19 September, however, he and his staff have agreed to stay on longer whilst we look to find a temporary Postmaster to continue to operate the branch. We also continue to look for a permanent solution and this vacancy is advertised on www.runapostoffice.co.uk

There are reduced opening hours from Wednesday 20 September for 4-5 weeks. The temporary opening hours are: Monday – Friday: 10am till 3pm. Saturday & Sunday: Closed.

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Notes to editors

- With over 11,500 branches, Post Office has the biggest retail network in the UK, with more branches than all the banks and building societies combined.
- Post Office is helping anyone who wants cash to get it whichever way is most convenient. Partnership with over 30 banks, building societies and credit unions means that 99% of UK bank customers can access their accounts at their Post Office.
- Cash withdrawals, deposits and balance enquiries can be made securely and conveniently over the counter at any Post Office; and the biggest investment by any organisation or company in the last decade is being made to safeguard 1,400 free-to-use ATMs across the UK.
- Post Office is simplifying its proposition for Postmasters with a focus on its [cash and banking](#); [mails and parcels](#); [foreign exchange](#); and [bill payments](#) services.
- [Research](#) has found that visits to the Post Office help drive another 400 million visitors to other shops, restaurants and local businesses equating to an estimated £1.1 billion in additional revenue for High Street businesses.
- 99.7% of the population live within three miles of a Post Office; and 4,000 branches are open seven days a week.