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HSBC DUDLEY CELEBRATES 125TH ANNIVERSARY

- **Former branch manager started in first TV advert broadcast by a major UK bank**

HSBC UK's Dudley branch, one of the oldest in the banks' branch network, is celebrating its 125th anniversary since it first opened its doors for business.

Matt Ridler, HSBC UK Midlands Area Director said: "We are extremely proud to be celebrating 125 years of the branch being open to the Dudley community. This has given us the opportunity to appreciate how we as a branch have adapted to the change in customer banking needs over the years."

The Dudley branch was opened by the Metropolitan Bank in March 1893. During this period the area was experiencing a boom in local small metal and hardware industries in the 1870s which fuelled further growth for the bank.

With the Dudley branch joining a network of 60 branches across the Metropolitan Bank, Frank Morley Barker, the branch's first manager, felt the growth of business during the branch's first few years of opening meant a larger team was needed to support this and hired a couple of clerks and an apprentice as a result.

The Dudley branch began to be a part of an even larger network of 132 branches and after the Metropolitan Bank amalgamated with the London City and Midland Bank (now HSBC UK) in 1914, the customer reach continued to widen.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 resulted in four staff members being enlisted to join the Armed Forces and fortunately there were no casualties which meant all members returned safely to work. Retaining permanent male staff was also an issue during the Second World War with 5 out of the 17 men employed leaving the branch to support the war efforts. They all however returned safely from duty, but another two male staff members left the branch, stretching the team further which meant a small number of female employees were hired to support the running of the branch.

The 1950s was an exciting era for Midland Bank and the Dudley branch was involved right at the heart of this transition.

Matt Ridler added: "The branch through the 1950s continued to hold paper-based banking records, with staff relying on manual typewriters, ledger posting machines and hand-written reference cards, where today these processes are now completed with just a click of a button.

The customer experience would have also been significantly different to what it is like today as opening hours coincided with local market days and the services available would be limited to business advice and small loans, receiving deposits, withdrawals authorisations and cashing cheques in. Today, we offer customers a range of products in branch ranging from savings accounts across to mortgages which are all supported via our express-self service machines, mobile, online and telephone banking."

Dudley branch timeline:

- **1829:** The Metropolitan Bank opened as the Birmingham Banking Company, Birmingham's first joint stock bank.
- **1893:** The Dudley branch was opened by the Metropolitan Bank at 226-227 Market place.
- **1914:** The metropolitan Bank (of England and Wales) Ltd is acquired by the London City and Midland Bank
- **1914-1918:** Dudley staff serve their country in the First World War
- **1939-1945:** Dudley staff serve their country in the Second World War
- **1956:** Dudley branch appears on television screens across the UK
- **1968:** Midland Bank becomes the first British bank to offer non-secured personal loans
- **1970:** Dudley branch is computerized on 6 March 1970
- **1992:** Midland Bank becomes a wholly owned member of the HSBC Group
- **1989:** Launch of a new concept in banking
- **2015:** HSBC UK announces its plan to relocate back to the city of Birmingham
- **2018:** HSBC celebrates its 125th anniversary at the Dudley branch



Midland Bank branch in 1964



Current HSBC UK Dudley branch staff

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Note to editors:

HSBC UK

HSBC serves c17 million customers in the UK and employs approximately 43,000 people. In the UK, HSBC offers a complete range of personal, premier and private banking services including bank accounts and mortgages. It also provides commercial banking for small to medium businesses and corporate and institutional banking services. HSBC Bank plc is a wholly owned subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc.

HSBC Holdings plc

HSBC Holdings plc, the parent company of the HSBC Group, is headquartered in London. The Group serves customers worldwide from around 3,900 offices in 67 countries and territories in Europe, Asia, North and Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa. With assets of US\$2,522bn at 31 December 2017, HSBC is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations.

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