



Under our proposals for NatWest & RBS to be broken up into a network of local banks, individuals would benefit in the following ways:

→ Keeping branches open ←

The bank would be required to keep branches open, particularly in areas where it is the last bank in town. There would be no more abandoned communities – instead, there would always be a place for friendly face-to-face banking.

→ Bank accounts for everyone ←

The bank would offer basic bank accounts to anybody that wanted one. This stops people from being excluded from the financial system, and helps those with bad credit history get back on their feet and avoid costly credit and loan sharks

→ More say over how your bank is run ←

Local people would have more control over how the bank is run and what the bank invests in. This gives people more of a say over decisions that affect their lives and communities, and makes the bank more accountable for its decisions.

In our current system, the four large shareholder banks dominate more than 70% of the personal current account market and 80% of the business current account market. Yet despite being relied on by so many, these banks are also closing branches at an alarming rate - with 650 closures in 2015 alone, contributing to over 1,500 communities in the UK without a bank at all. Of these banks, RBS is the worst offender, accounting for 1 in 3 branch closures and 1 in 2 last bank in town closures, cutting people and communities off from the financial system and costing both businesses and jobs. A reformed RBS would be incentivised to keep branches open and maintain services in rural and isolated communities, because of its public interest mandate and the removal of focus away from short-term share price gains.

Bank accounts, meanwhile, are essential for living in a modern society. Yet incredibly, more than 2 million people don't have a bank account in the UK - often because the shareholder banks don't deem these people to be profitable enough customers.

This exclusion from the financial system pushes people towards high cost lenders and into debt, ultimately worsening and deepening poverty. A reformed RBS focused on stakeholders would operate under a public interest mandate, offering universal access to basic bank accounts for anyone in the UK who wants one.

Finally, a reformed RBS would have more accountability to the community it operates in. Each local bank in the network would be managed by a team of banking professionals, but would report to a Board of Trustees that would include local residents, business representatives, civil society (like interest clubs and NGOs), and would also include finance professionals and representatives of the bank network's national executive. In short, the bank would have to balance the interests of the people, community and businesses that it is meant to serve, as well as pursuing profit and operating as a viable, sustainable banking business. This has the additional benefit of avoiding interference from politicians, which has been problematic in other, different systems.