

Anger as axe falls on more HSBC banks

Owen Hughes

HSBC is to shut another three banks in North Wales in the latest raft of closures - sparking anger in the communities affected.

The banking giant has announced 62 branches are shutting across the UK with 180 jobs affected.

These will include the banks at Holyhead, Llanrwst and Holywell in North Wales.

On Anglesey this will leave the HSBC bank in Llangefni as their last branch on the island after the closure of Amlwch and Menai Bridge sites last year.

The Llanrwst closure comes after the shutdown of the Betws y Coed branch last year and means the nearest branch for customers in the

Conwy Valley will be Llandudno.

HSBC said this would be the only cuts to its branch network that it would make in 2017.

Aberconwy AM Janet Finch-Saunders expressed her disappointment at the announcement that the Llanrwst branch of HSBC is to close on June 23.

She said: "This is a sad indictment of the times.

"Farmers, older people and families alike will be concerned about how they will be able to do their banking in the future. It is essential for banks across the country to be supporting the local communities in which they have a presence."

Ynys Môn MP Albert Owen was left fuming after saying he was given assurances about Holyhead last year.

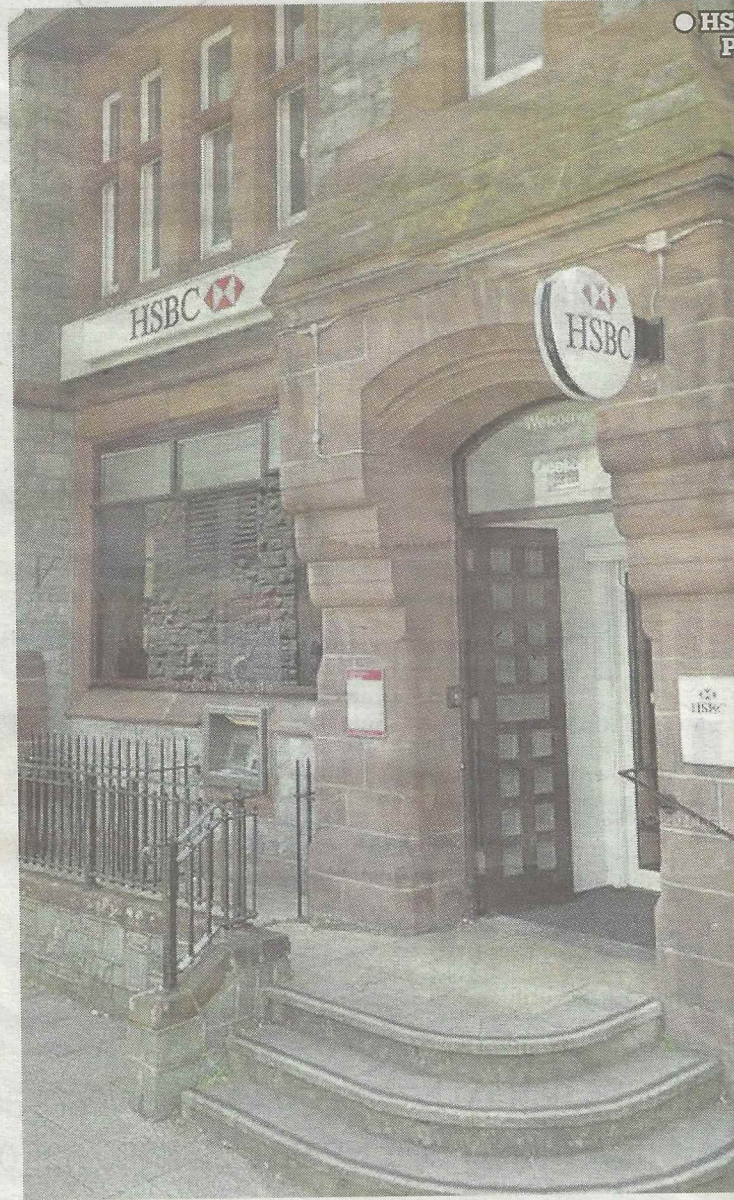
He said: "These words are meaningless. Let me be clear: HSBC and other high street banks have total disregard for local customers and local communities.

"They put profit before people.

"Banks are a vital part of the high street and to town centre regenerations. By abandoning these locations they are contributing to their decline."

Holywell residents are already battling the planned closure of the NatWest branch in the town.

Francesca McDonagh, HSBC head of retail banking and wealth management for UK and Europe, said: "The decision to close these branches ensures a more sustainable branch network as we continue to invest in our digital platforms and our people."



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