

I live in the Croydon (South London) sorting area. Over the last five year the reliability of Royal Mail deliveries, both walk and van, at times has been abysmal. For example:

- a) My post has at least once a week been posted in neighbours houses
- b) Two years ago, half of my Christmas cards, December journals etc. were delivered in mid-January. When I spoke to the sorting office they told me they had a backlog of at least two weeks but when I spoke to the manager of walks and vans he denied there was any problem.
- c) I have experienced times when van drivers just stuffed a card through the letter box advising of missed delivery without ringing the doorbell. When I collected the parcel at Croydon sorting office all but one of the more than a dozen people queuing to collect deliveries complained about the same behaviour – at home but nobody rang the doorbell,
- d) I have had post dumped on my front path. I even witnessed a postie throwing a parcel from the pavement onto my front path (I don't have any animals on the premises).
- e) At times during the last five years a quarter to a fifth of my post has been "lost in transit".
- f) Post from central Croydon was taking 4-5 working days to be delivered

My response to such problems has been:

- 1) To radically reduce the mail sent to me. Five years ago I could expect to receive between six and twelve items in the post daily; some days it would be delivered by van. I have since proactively encouraged senders to email everything and if they must send physical things to use a courier other than Royal Mail. These days I can go for several days without receiving a single item in the post and then it may only be one or two items. I have now largely reduced my letter post to unwanted advertising which I wouldn't know if it went missing!
- 2) Almost everybody who sends me an item by post (except journals) advises me of its dispatch by email.
- 3) I have tried using call and collect but this did not significantly reduce the number of items "lost in the post".
- 4) I have complained many times on Royal Mail's website, to call centre, local sorting office manager for my walk and overall manager for Croydon area but they are unable to address individual items going missing.

Today I depend on Royal Mail for delivery of some mail order items, printed journals and a few things like car tax disc. Because of the unreliability of the local Royal Mail service I want to keep the process of deliveries as simple and straight forward as possible. The more intermediaries there are then the more difficult it will be for me to track where problems are arising in the chain. So I would like Royal Mail to keep it simple and take full responsibility for the delivery of their service and not seek to offload their difficulties onto others.

I would also like to be able to collect non-delivered items after 24 hours and not after 48 hours as is the current arrangement. I understand from my postie that it takes 48 hours because the item is re-posted in a street letter box and then has to be collected, resorted and sent back to Croydon sorting office for collection.

