

Additional comments:

I am shocked that the proposal is for Deliver to Neighbour to include items with Recorded Signed For™ status.

Surely the whole value and point of that service is that the sender can have a good degree of confidence that the item they posted has been delivered to THE ADDRESS SPECIFIED ON THE ITEM and even though the signee AT THAT ADDRESS may not be the intended recipient at the address, the item will only be attempted to be delivered to THE ADDRESS SPECIFIED ON THE ITEM, or retained by Royal Mail until the addressee collects it or it becomes subsequently deliverable to THE ADDRESS SPECIFIED ON THE ITEM.

I use Royal Mail for all mail items that I post and view Royal Mail's historic lineage and their regulation as an implication that integrity of service and security of all mail items that are entrusted to them should be a key part of their business strategy, ethos and values. Deliver to Neighbour, as proposed, will erode these aspects of my perception of Royal Mail as a service provider.

Introducing such a change in the fulfilment of the service they provide surely carries with it a substantial risk that their market sector share as a 'carrier of choice' will decline.

Question 1:Do you agree that Ofcom should grant approval to Royal Mail for the Delivery to Neighbour service? If not please explain your answer. :

NO.

Not as proposed. For addressees to have to opt out by displaying a sticker is not a 'fail safe' opt-out. Addressees opting out may well be doing so because of concerns over the suitability of their neighbours to receive post on their behalf or because, out of principle, they would rather receive their own mail directly without involvement of third parties. Being required to display a sticker to opt out exposes opt-out addressees to:-

- * Wilful mischievous removal of the sticker where mailboxes are in communal areas or thoroughfares. This would result in the addressee appearing to have ceased their opt-out.
- * Fading/weathering-off of stickers where the mailbox fascia is exposed to the elements. This would result in the addressee appearing to have ceased their opt-out.
- * 'Awkwardness' in neighbourly relations if neighbours feel that they are 'not trusted' by opting-out addressees.

Far better and more equitable would be for the scheme to have 'OPT IN' displayed by sticker, where all households would be provided with an 'opt-in' sticker which they could choose to display if they would like to have undeliverable items left with a neighbour. The OPT IN sticker could then also provide a field for the addressee to write the number of the neighbour that they would like the mail to be delivered to.

Question 2:Are there other consequences following the roll out of the service across the UK that we have not included in our assessment? If so, please explain.:

YES.

In addition to my concerns, expressed in response to Question 1 above (which I repeat, below, in this answer), I have the following comments to make.

There are probably other categories of third party not thought of in that list. The scope for such untoward activities would be much reduced by explicit 'opt in' (i.e. 'OPT OUT' AS THE DEFAULT POSITION) as advocated in my other comments above and below, as an

addressee is more likely to notice on their property the surprise appearance of a 'OPT IN' sticker that they did not place there themselves, than the eventual disappearance of a 'opt out' sticker that they placed themselves and have seen so often that they almost 'filter it out' of their daily observations as they come and go from their property.

* As a user of Royal Mail (using Royal Mail for 99.9% of all items of mail that I post) I have to say that for Recorded Signed For™ items to be included in the proposal for Delivery to Neighbour seems utterly inappropriate. Please see 'Additional Comments' for my reasoning on this.

The following is repeated from my response to question 1.

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Question 3: Do you have any comments on the scope and wording of the proposed Notification and approval:

The proposal and notification should be rewritten to have 'opt out' as the default status, with addressees wishing to opt in prominently displaying a sticker that shows that they wish mail to be left at a neighbour's when undeliverable to addressee.

Also, Recorded Signed For™ items should be excluded from Delivery to Neighbour scheme.