

Additional comments:

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. In an urban environment, it is highly likely that individuals will not know their neighbours at all well. Given this, and the fact that the items most likely to be left (i.e. oversized items) are likely to be of higher-than-average value (even if not delivered by special delivery), this amounts to permitting the leaving something of value with a complete stranger. In addition, any practical benefit for the consumer is lost when they have to collect their item - what is an "appropriate time" for collection? The current Delivery Office option, in particular in areas such as mine (Battersea) where there is a proximate office with good Saturday opening hours, will be more convenient than having to keep checking if my neighbour is in and doesn't mind being disturbed. It cannot be assumed that neighbours will always be available for subsequent collections (in particular if they live alone or both members of a household work outside the home). It will always be safer as the Delivery Office generally asks for ID before handing items over the counter.

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.:

Will the rolling out of this service be followed by a reduction in Delivery Offices across the UK? If so, the "opting out" option will be of limited value if it effectively amounts to a decision between accepting delivery to neighbours or having to collect items from distant Delivery Offices with restricted opening hours (particularly at the weekend).

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

Section 4, 4.6 - "Royal Mail considers a neighbour to be a person who lives within close proximity of the address on the item. They may be a next-door neighbour or someone who lives sufficiently close by" - is not adequate for an urban environment. If items must be left at a neighbour's, it should be subject to a distance limit (with some flexibility). Consumers should not be expected to visit neighbouring streets or visit houses several doors down from theirs to pick up their items. Given the reasonably frequent change of occupants in some urban areas, it is not reasonable to assume that a consumer would be comfortable with their items being left with anyone in their street.