

Additional comments:

Royal Mail Neighbourhood Delivery Scheme - fourth submission

Having now been able to open Ofcom's PDF Consultation Document and had the time to read it in full, I feel it incumbent on me to make further comment on this flawed scheme.

You are not furthering the interests of Citizens, one of your expressed aims. Although Royal Mail and Ofcom are trying to put this across as a service to the public, it is evident from Ofcom's Consultation Document that the real object is to save money. One of the aims of Ofcom is for Royal Mail to be Financially sustainable - in my opinion its main aim. Why deliver post if you can get the general public to do it for you?

What a cheek! I object to being thought of as a delivery point for other people's mail. I am not a delivery office. Am I going to be paid to accept and possibly deliver mail? Is this yet another crazy example of David Cameron's BIG SOCIETY?

I really cannot understand why the trial period itself went ahead since only 14 of 382 in the original Postcomm Survey were for it. The Ofcom Consultation Document itself is totally contradictory, stating sometimes that the majority of the public are for it, and then at other times that the majority are against it. I do not think I will be alone in not believing a word of it. The percentages shown are meant to mislead. They do not refer to 92% of those in the trial, only 92% of those whose post was delivered to neighbours, which were very few. Royal Mail's leaflet brazenly tries to mislead people as to this figure.

How can the public judge a trial report if such report is redacted. I can understand there may be business reasons for this but not to the extent of the submitted report. I suspect another deliberate attempt to mislead us.

The complaints by the various bodies before the trial were valid, not invalid just because none of those stated were supposedly experienced in the trial. The trial was too limited in time and areas. And, if it was such a success why do Royal Mail feel the need to extend it?

Why were the trials held in certain parts of 6 delivery areas and why were these chosen? Was it because in those areas most people were liable to be in and so no Neighbourhood deliveries would be made and therefore people would have no practical experience of the scheme on which to make any rational judgement?

There is no explanation of what the Royal Mail constitute as a Neighbour. I for one have 31 houses in my street but I really only know of the occupants of 4 households sufficiently enough to trust. In fact one of the houses has just been sold to new people who have not yet moved in, so how can judgement be made on their honesty.

There is still lack of clarity as to who would constitute a Neighbour, and no allowance for people to nominate a particular trusted Neighbour or Neighbours. (Surely the recipients know better than Postmen/women who are their trusted neighbours). This is not so with the Parcel-delivery services with whom I have dealt who have the facility to ask where an item should be left.

Your reference to TNT is not a good analogy as they give the sender or the receiver leave to

say where the item is to be delivered to. Royal Mail's proposal is not going to give this option, they are just brazenly going to carte blanche make their own decisions.

I was against the idea of private delivery services, not so now. However these should be responsible and liable. I think they should be licensed.

The judgement of Postal Staff is suspect. How can they know who is honest and vice versa? Quite often the postmen/women change frequently, especially those brought in at Seasonal-delivery times.

How can you train someone to know who is honest. Sometimes the most innocent-looking people are the most dishonest and vice versa.

Royal Mail say that in their trial there were no reported walk failures. As people do not know when their mail is expected then they would not complain about non-receipt. Therefore postmen/women could have held post back to deliver another day if they had had to spend their time delivering parcels to neighbours and then walking back to put a card through a recipient's door.

Or, was it because they did not deliver much mail to neighbours or just did not leave cards?

It is very generous of Royal Mail not to ask for general permission to deliver all items to a neighbour. I'm sure neighbours will be very grateful for the thoughtfulness of Royal Mail in this! It is very noble of Royal Mail to expect their postal delivery staff to do their jobs in some aspects of the system and not expect the general public to become general posting boxes!!!! And I am sure that Addressees will also be comforted. The question is, why would Royal Mail even contemplate delivering all mail to a Neighbour rather than to an Addressee? If Royal Mail do not want to do their job why don't they just ask everyone to collect their mail from the Delivery Office. Look what this would save - no postmen/women needed at all. (I am not, by the way, putting this forward for serious consideration even though Royal Mail and Ofcom may think it is a good money-saving suggestion).

Much has been made of Postmen/women not delivering parcels first-time as a problem to be dealt with. Delivering parcels to Neighbours and not leaving cards is a far bigger one to me and this has hardly had a mention.

There are already many malpractices going on in the Royal Mail. People are not given time to answer their doors before it is assumed they are out. One of my Postmen, who thought I was out and was no doubt trying to be helpful, said he had been going to sign for a packet and leave it somewhere on my premises. I was really surprised at this and pointed out to him that he should not do this as if anyone saw him they could steal the packet and it could then be argued that it had been delivered as it had been signed for. I told him that in future he should return any such items to the Delivery Office and leave a card to say he has done so. A good example of Postmen/women using their judgement?

It is very nice to be on good terms with your Postman/woman but not to the point of them overstepping the mark on how to deal with post. Now he delivers post to my Neighbours but does not leave a card which means my elderly neighbours have to deliver it to me, an unpaid postal service which will be exacerbated if this scheme goes ahead, let alone an embarrassment in that my Neighbours will probably think I am just too lazy to collect the post from them. I have now told him to take all my packets and parcels back to the Delivery Office if I am not in. However, if this Scheme goes ahead he will probably ignore what I have

said as it will become official practice that he can do this. Don't tell me there is an opt-out scheme I can use. I have already stated in my previous submissions that it should be an opt-in scheme.

The Neighbourhood Delivery Scheme may work in an isolated, stable, one-street community-setting but not in a densely-populated area with ever-moving population. Even in the one-street situation I know of Neighbours who no longer speak to each other because of denied parcel-receipt. This is one of the reasons why it should be an opt-in scheme.

Why were the Delivery Offices not already tidy, organised and safe? Surely this is a requirement of the Health and Safety Act.

One of Ofcom's aims is to make Royal Mail efficient - so the general public is to be used so that Royal Mail appears to be efficient!

Instead of using the unpaid general public in an effort to sustain the Royal Mail Service why don't they just put right the inefficiencies in the system - of which there are many. No doubt the next step will be to reduce the number of days on which post is delivered. (Again perhaps a suggestion which Royal Mail and Ofcom will think a good idea).

Are Royal Mail really going to pay compensation if your postmen/women say they have delivered an item to a neighbour? I believe they have left this open to future alteration.

Far from fostering good relations this scheme will be liable to decimate them, together with any previous goodwill held by any Charity, Business, Public or Government Body who unthinkingly agrees with this scheme.

Do Royal Mail and Ofcom think the general public are less intelligent than they are. It seems to me that from some of the stories I have heard that Royal Mail are at best, incompetent. People do talk to each other and now Royal Mail defects are fast coming to light which would probably not have been discussed by people before learning of this scheme. This is not yet a Police State, so Public Bodies still cannot dictate to people and think that their positions can allow them to do so. We are not flies to be squashed underfoot. If Royal Mail and Ofcom want to create anarchy then they are going the right way about it.

Maybe there were not any responses received from Royal Mail's competitors as they are happy to sit back, let the scheme go ahead and gather-in the pickings from Royal Mail's disastrous scheme.

I have already noticed a Delivery Service advert on TV. I expect there to be even more of these shortly.

I think that by now Ofcom should be sufficiently aware of the overwhelming public feeling against this scheme by people who have taken the time to learn what it entails and not allowed themselves to be taken in by Royal Mail's rhetoric. Neither Royal Mail nor Ofcom have really thought of the implications of this scheme.

If the Scheme is agreed Royal Mail and Ofcom will not have heard the last of it. If, as one of your Respondents says, he will take Class action if the scheme goes ahead and ask for others to join him, I shall be one of those. I am not going to be dictated to by Royal

Mail and Ofcom that my mail has to be delivered to a neighbour if I am out, and that I should reciprocate. Nor that if I don't want to do this I have to deface my door with a sticker. Like others I am already taking steps to deliver my own mail where possible, or use the telephone or a Friend's computer to bypass Royal Mail.

Yes, Ofcom will certainly be accountable should this scheme go ahead.

I do not believe this Scheme is conducive to Ofcom performing its general duties when it is putting at risk the very people it is deemed to protect, i.e. persons with disabilities, the elderly and vulnerable children, all of whom could be at risk of attack by persons of ill-will using "I have a packet for you" as a means of entrance to their homes. Such risk could even include ethnic communities who are already targets in some areas of the country. And, including Blind people in the scheme! What more can I say?

Some elderly people will not understand the true implications of the scheme and so are more liable not to comment.

Ofcom have not consulted widely with all relevant stakeholders, they appear in fact to have tried hard to ensure that the general public be given no knowledge of the scheme, or at very least the consultation process.

Yes, this scheme will certainly have an impact on the general public, but also on Royal Mail and Ofcom.

One of Ofcom's duties is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. You are only going to foster this if you allow this scheme to go ahead. If you do not discriminate why do you appear to be saying you will do so with transient younger people.

And how is an opt-out scheme going to foster good relations. It is more likely to cause disputes between neighbours. I do not think you have considered anything. You have just accepted what Royal Mail have told you willy-nilly.

You mention the Benefits of the Service - what are they? You are not furthering the interests of citizens.

Consumer Focus 5.6 footnote 16 Where is this?

Consumer Focus found when Delivery to Neighbour Guidelines were followed that the Scheme seemed to be operating well. How often will the guidelines be operated properly? Will it be carried out conscientiously by postmen/women?.

Special Delivery could still be left with Neighbours. Recorded Delivery has already been put through letter-boxes without being signed for.

The Consumer Focus trial appears to have discovered negative findings, not positive ones. And, Consumer Focus say their trial had limited success - they are certainly not overwhelmingly endorsing it.

Royal Mail will certainly be at a complete disadvantage if the scheme goes ahead, but maybe this is what they are after for their own dubious reasons.

If the Scheme is proposed to go ahead on 24th September how are Ofcom going to read and collate all the responses by then if the deadline is 12th September. Are they in fact reading

them?

People should be made aware of the scheme now, not after Ofcom approval. Not only has there been patchy information about the trials, there has been almost no information about the consultation process. Appropriate publicity is not Royal Mail's website, to which many people do not have access anyway.

How can the scheme be implemented on 24th September if Royal Mail have to tell people after the consultation which ends 12th September that it is to be implemented at least one month before implementation?

Why have you not adhered to your own Consultation principles?

There has been no announcement of a big consultation.

There has been no information on who has been consulted.

There has been no consultation for 10 weeks.

You have not reached out to the largest number of people.

There has been no explanation of why the principles have not been followed.

How Ofcom cannot see the adverse implications of this scheme I fail to understand.

I think your Consultation process already has enough evidence against this scheme to 'sink a battleship'. Perhaps you should 'pull the plug' on it now before you waste any more money and resources.

I am sure that now more people are angry with Ofcom than they are with Royal Mail as Ofcom appear just to have accepted Royal Mail's harebrained flawed scheme without thinking about the possible consequences and public outcry against it.

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, for the reasons given above and in my previous submissions.

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, as stated above and in my previous submissions.

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

Yes, for the reasons stated above and in my previous submissions.

