

Additional comments:

OLD PEOPLE AT RISK FROM ROYAL MAIL 'GOOD NEIGHBOUR' SCHEME SAYS CONCERNED CITIZEN

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.

Having now seen the submission by Age UK it has brought to mind that the scheme may put elderly and vulnerable people in peril. They do not appear to have thought about this and also seem to think it only applies to parcels.

Have you considered the risks to these people, especially those living alone and who may crave company, from those with mal intent who will see this as another means of exploiting the vulnerable? You must be aware of the many incidents, some of which have even resulted in murders.

A conman or conwoman may target those who have no sticker by pretending that they have a card to collect a parcel or that they have a parcel for them. You must know that many elderly and vulnerable people will be taken in by this and may even invite them into their homes.

They may hand over an item to this person that belongs to a neighbour. This may even be an important recorded signed for item. You must be aware that many elderly people are very trusting and can be easily confused and manipulated.

The old person may not actually have an item but they will want to be helpful and you must know that those who crave social contact are even more vulnerable.

They may even be asked for money that the conperson claims to have kindly paid on their behalf. You must be aware that these things happen and elderly and vulnerable people have even been taken to cash machines.

It will encourage vulnerable and elderly persons to go to a neighbour to collect a parcel. That is fine if they have a trustworthy neighbour that they know well. Not everyone does.

There will be elderly and vulnerable people who do not display a sticker because they want to be helpful and those who are deterred by having to apply for one for reasons that are many and varied.

There are those who may not opt out of the scheme because they think it will bring them social contact and make them feel needed.

As elderly and vulnerable people are more likely to be at home they could be inundated with neighbours mail and effectively become an unpaid Royal Mail distribution point because they want to be helpful or do not want to upset their neighbours. Does this not strike you as a naked exploitation of the elderly?

This is an opt out scheme. You should know that opt out schemes are particularly undesirable for elderly and vulnerable people.

It is not a good idea for the elderly and vulnerable.

Should they be encouraged to even open the door to strangers?

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. See for example

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/jun/13/pensioner-hammer-murder-judith-richardson>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2168567/Conmen-tricked-way-pensioners-house-posing-water-company-workers-stole-200.html>

and hundreds of others.

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

Yes. As above.