

20 September 2026

Our reference: 13494360

Your reference: SA46015



Stuart Anderson MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

185 Farringdon Road
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Dear Mr Anderson

Shropshire Council. Councillor Sharon Ritchie-Simmons

Thank you for your email dated 24 July regarding mail deliveries within the Cllrs Ward.

I am always disappointed when I hear that any of our customers do not feel that they are receiving the service that they ought to. I have contacted the Customer Operations Manager at Bridgnorth Delivery Office. They have advised that mail is being taken out six days a week, when there is mail available to deliver, with some letter deliveries being rotated. There has been resourcing issues, including employee sick absence which impacted on service in the areas. I am sorry for the inconvenience this will have caused.

We aim to deliver all items to their specification. In busy periods or when faced with resourcing challenges, our delivery offices will follow contingency guidance which prioritises products – both letters and parcels – based on urgency. This guidance means that our postmen and women may be asked to deliver the most urgent next-day mail – this would mean Special Delivery Guaranteed by 9am® and 1pm®, First Class letters and parcels, Tracked 24® letters and parcels and NHS correspondence. This is a contingency, not standard practice. These measures have been shared with Ofcom, which has not identified any suggestion that Royal Mail senior management direct the prioritisation of parcels over letters outside of these recognised plans.

The Customer Operations Manager has taken steps to improve performance. They have re-aligned duties and arranged for a number of agency workers to assist the operation. This has helped to support more consistent deliveries for customers.

The services our customers use have fundamentally changed in recent years. More and more bulk senders of mail – such as the NHS, hospitals, banks, and energy companies – are choosing to send letters on slower, lower-priced services. This may be because, for example, the letters they are sending are not deemed time-sensitive so a three- or five-day service meets their needs, or due to budgetary constraints. In 2026 to date:

- 48% of letters were sent on a five-day service (Access Economy product) – up from 6% in 2021/22.
- 44% of letters were sent on a three-day service (Second Class / Access Standard product) – down from 81% in 2021/22.
- 8% of letters were sent on a next-day service (First Class) – down from 13% in 2021/22.

To deliver an efficient service, our letter sorting technology is designed to group together letters that are due for delivery on a specified day, ensuring they meet the target timeframe for the service used. This can mean several items arrive together in a 'batch,' but we do not hold back mail if that means it would miss its target delivery date.

This approach ensures delivery rounds are the most efficient they can be. Our posties walk around 11km a day, with around 3km of this being up and down individual garden paths. Grouping letters for their delivery day reduces the time posties spend walking up to the front door and back again with only one letter to deliver by ensuring that, where possible, they are delivering a number of letters in one go.

We published our Quality of Service Improvement Plan in April which, with the Universal Service reform currently being rolled out, will make a real difference to Royal Mail's performance. Our plan is backed by £500 million of investment over the next five years across the UK. The plan is available at royalmail.com/receiving/the-future-of-letter-deliveries, where we will be keeping customers informed of progress against the plan.

Letters remain an important means of keeping us connected, but fewer and fewer are being sent these days. Following an extensive consultation process involving many stakeholders. Ofcom announced reforms to the Universal Service in July 2025. These changes will ensure the Universal Service remains sustainable, affordable, and reliable. They allow Royal Mail to deliver Second Class letters every other weekday, Monday to Friday. There will be no changes to:

- The one-price-goes-anywhere service to all parts of the United Kingdom.
- First-Class letters delivered daily, six days a week (Monday to Saturday.)
- The option of First-Class and Second-Class letters, providing the choice of price and speed.
- Parcels delivered up to seven days a week.

We have been working with both our recognised unions – CWU and Unite CMA – to implement the new delivery model.

Since late May we have been rolling out the changes to our delivery model in over 853 delivery offices, ahead of a wider rollout across all our 1,200 offices.

I understand that Bridgnorth has deployed the new delivery model and this service is being provided to customers across the area.

I hope that this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Gary Redmond
Executive Correspondence Manager