

I heard the news that Ofcom is proposing to allow The Post Office to deliver to neighbours, with some alarm.

But before I explain why, I'll point out some errors on your pdf about the scheme:

Consultation

Publication date: 11 July 2012

Closing Date for Responses: 24 August 2011

As you can see, the response date is wrong,

as is the web address to access the response form:

<http://stakeolders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/royal-mail-delivery-neighbour/> , which produced the response:

Internet Explorer cannot display the webpage

Once I added the missing h and deleted the space and comma after the last forward slash, I was able to access the response form

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/royal-mail-delivery-neighbour/>

I wonder how many people have been put off responding due to these errors?

### **Why I don't like the proposals**

On 9 July 2009 I received a parcel addressed to me, but with no flat number. It contained radio broadcasting and receiving equipment, not something I'm into. It had been paid for using a debit card in my name. On checking with my bank, I discovered that it was a brand new card that I was waiting for. The firm who had sent the equipment was able to give the Police the number of the mobile phone used to order the equipment, though as it was unregistered, the Police were unable to prove that it was my neighbour in the flat below who had stolen my card, even though there was a large aerial in their back yard.

The street door is common to all four flats in this block. What clearly happened was that somebody in Flat 1 had been checking the mail posted through the front door, and had stolen my card and the pin number. (They did the same to a store card for Flat 4). They were obviously relying on me being at work when the equipment was delivered. However, I was working a double-day shift at the time, so it was fortunate that I was at home that morning. Otherwise I wouldn't have known that £450 had been taken from my account until I received a bank statement. I suspect it would have been extremely difficult to prove that it wasn't me that had ordered, paid for, and received the equipment.

Since then, all my post from the bank has been sent to my local branch, from where I collect it periodically. I obviously can't ask other senders to send their post to my bank.

As far as I know, nothing else has gone missing\*, but how would I know unless it was something I was expecting? I receive quite a lot of post, and there are periods without any, so it does make me wonder if they are still helping themselves to useful items, or even that the postmen are not delivering. \*A cheque for a birthday present did go missing around that time, but as it was never cashed, so I can't blame the neighbours for that.

The practice of putting cards through the letterbox advising that an undeliverable package can be collected from the local sorting office is also open to abuse. I have never been asked at the Ilfracombe sorting office to prove that I am the person named on the card, so anybody who steals one of the cards can collect the package without me knowing, and without any hope of tracing who collected it. PO Box and Local collect are possible ways round the problem, but an organisation of which I am a member has closed it's PO Box because the recent increases in cost have made it prohibitive.

Clearly The Post Office is going to pot, and the *Royal Mail – roll out of Delivery to Neighbour scheme* will only make the situation worse.