

# Appendix 1

## Ofcom Call for input – affordability scheme

Postmaster Survey, November 2025



## **Executive summary: Postmasters favour targeted, controlled affordability measures over free stamp schemes and express strong concerns about fraud, operational burden, and customer experience**

Post Office surveyed Postmasters to gather feedback on proposals aimed at maintaining affordability for vulnerable customers while ensuring operational feasibility. The short voluntary online survey took place during the **busy pre-Christmas period** (20-29 November 2025), limiting the response rate to 33 responses.

There was **not enough information** on the proposed **discounts, processes, remuneration or mechanisms** for Postmasters to provide a full evaluation of the options, but initial views are nevertheless **highly relevant**.

The feedback highlights **strong opposition to removing the second-class price cap and offering free stamps**, primarily due to **concerns about affordability, fraud, and misuse**.

There was strong support for the use of price caps, with respondents reporting the **increasing unaffordability of First Class services**.

Targeted discounts for First and Second Class letters received mixed responses, with **some support for controlled affordability measures**.

**Offline application** and eligibility verification mechanisms were viewed more positively, as was **raising awareness of discount schemes in branches**, which emerged as the most favoured proposal.

**Overall, Postmasters emphasise the need for well-designed, fraud-resistant schemes that protect the universal postal service and minimise operational burden.**

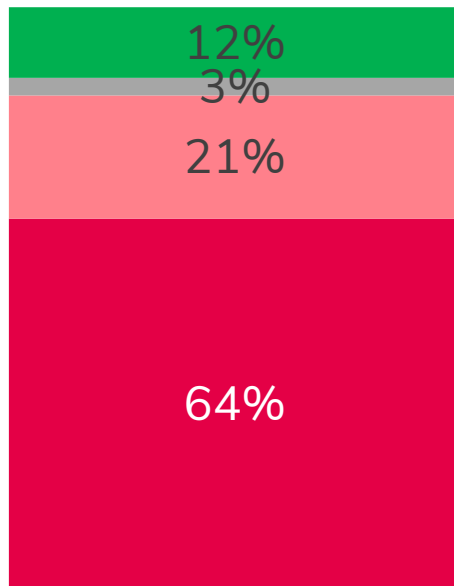
# Opinions on:

## 1. Removing the Second-Class Price Cap from Letters (after 2027):

### Strong opposition:

- 64% rated this option very negative
- 21% rated it negative
- Only 12% expressed positive views (with 3% very positive)

**Insight:** Postmasters overwhelmingly oppose removing the price cap, indicating significant concern about affordability and customer impact



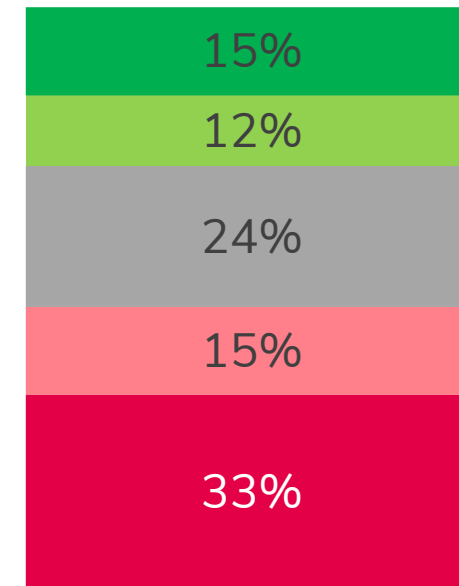
Removing second-class price cap from letters

## 2. Targeted Discount for Second-Class Letters:

### Mixed views:

- 33% rated this option very negative, and 15% negative
- 24% were neutral
- Just 27% expressed positive views

**Insight:** Although concerns exist, there is notable support for affordability measures aimed at vulnerable customers



Targeted discount for second-class letters

■ Very negative ■ Negative ■ Neither ■ Positive ■ Very positive

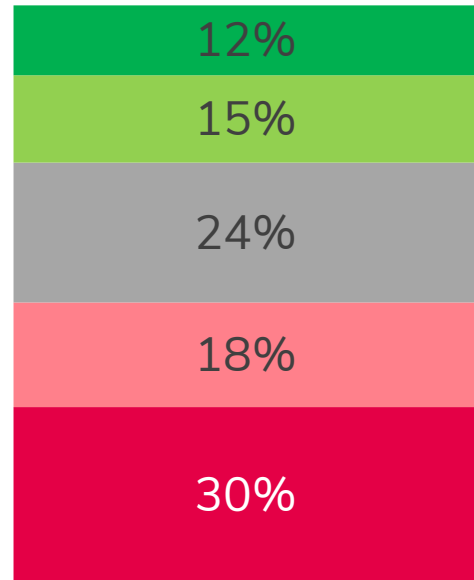
# Opinions on:

## 3. Targeted Discount for First and Second-Class Letters:

### Mixed but less negative than other options:

- 30% rated this option very negative, and 18% negative
- 24% were neutral
- 27% expressed positive views (15% positive, 12% very positive)

**Insight:** While concerns remain, this option received the most balanced feedback, suggesting some support for affordability measures across both classes of letters



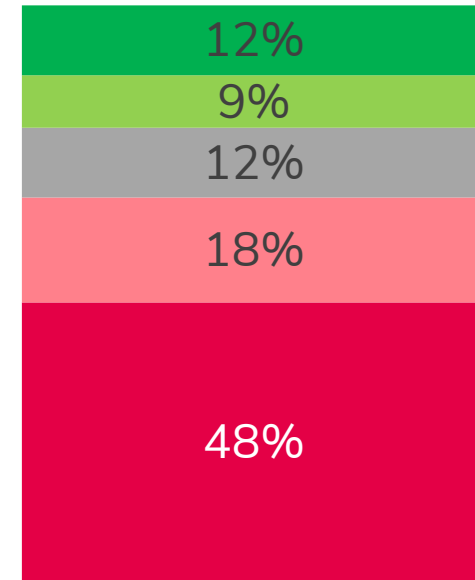
Targeted discount for 1st and 2nd class letters

## 4. Free normal stamps for general use by eligible customers

### Strong opposition:

- Two thirds of respondents were negative: 48% rated this option very negative, and 18% negative
- 12% were neutral
- Only 21% expressed positive views (9% positive, 12% very positive)

**Insight:** Postmasters largely oppose offering free stamps largely due to concerns around fraud



Free normal stamps for general use by eligible customers

Very negative Negative Neither Positive Very positive

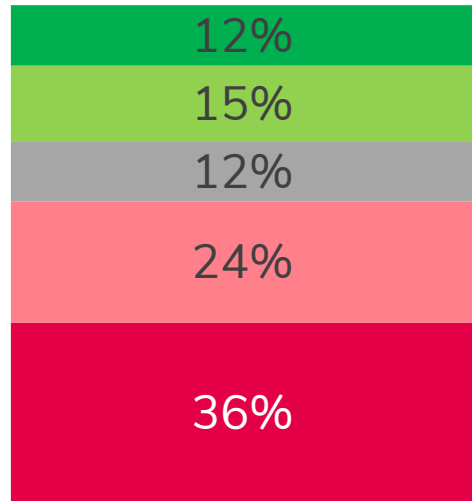
# Opinions on:

## 5. Discounted stamps with option to top-up for parcels :

### Predominantly negative sentiment:

- 36% rated this option very negative, and 24% negative
- 12% were neutral
- 27% expressed positive views (15% positive, 12% very positive)

**Insight:** While some support exists, concerns outweigh positives, indicating reservations about complexity and operational impact



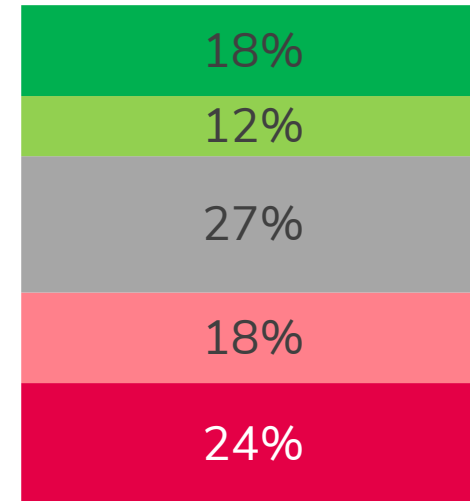
Discounted stamps with option to top-up for parcels

## 6. Discount or free stamps offline application form & eligibility verification:

### Mixed views leaning negative:

- 24% rated this option very negative, and 18% negative
- 27% were neutral
- 30% expressed positive views (12% positive, 18% very positive)

**Insight:** This option received the most mixed feedback among all proposals, suggesting that while operational challenges are noted, there is meaningful support for an offline mechanism to ensure accessibility



Discount or free stamps offline application form & eligibility verification

■ Very negative ■ Slightly negative ■ Neither ■ Positive ■ Very positive

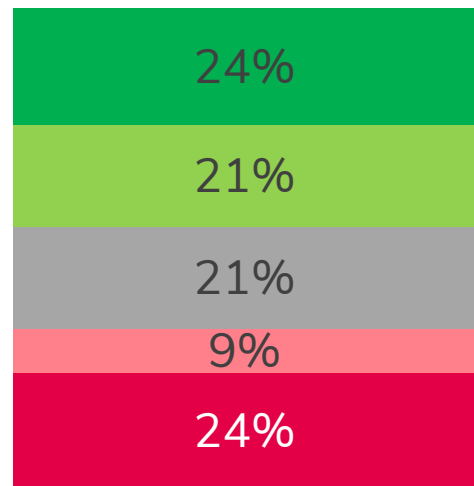
# Opinions on:

## 7. Raising awareness of discount schemes in Post Offices:

### Balanced sentiment with notable support:

- 24% rated this option very negative, and 9% negative
- 21% were neutral
- 45% expressed positive views (21% positive, 24% very positive)

**Insight:** This proposal received the highest level of positive feedback among all options, indicating strong support for awareness initiatives to ensure customers are informed about available schemes



Raising awareness of discount schemes in Post Offices

■ Very negative ■ Negative ■ Neither ■ Positive ■ Very positive

# Postmaster Verbatim Feedback

"If you are going to have a two tier system then every rural resident should have free stamps as often they have no internet or mobile connectivity to form fill".

"I think that removing the price cap will have an adverse effect on 2nd class postings by elderly and IT disenfranchised customers"

"How are you going to police it?"

"The current price levels especially for 1st class are having a detrimental effect on our stamp sales"

"Affordability is really important for everyone. Those that don't earn much shouldn't be excluded from communicating with loved ones & suppliers of services to them"

"Everybody should pay the same for postage - we don't agree with subsidising or granting free postage to poorer people, but the prices of postage should be very reasonable and not be raised just to provide more income for Post Office/Royal Mail; they should be a fair and representative price for all"

