

21 December 2020

Meg Hillier MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Royal Mail Headquarters
100 Victoria Embankment
LONDON
EC4Y 0HQ

Dear Ms Hillier

Thank you for your communication dated 10 December 2020 regarding mail deliveries in your Hackney South and Shoreditch constituency, and taking the time to speak with us on 18 December 2020. Please accept our sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused.

We want to reassure our customers that thanks to the extraordinary dedication of all our people, the support of the 33,000 extra temporary staff we have taken on, and the significant extra investment we have made in our network, we are in a good position to deliver items posted before the last recommended posting dates in time for Christmas. The introduction of new coronavirus rules on 19 December mean that we are expecting even higher volumes of mail over the next few days, particularly in areas impacted by the toughest restrictions, so if anyone has any items they still need to send they should do that as soon as possible. We anticipate we will deliver more UK parcels in these three and a half weeks than some of our competitors typically handle in an entire year.

I have spoken to the Delivery Office Managers at Islington Delivery Office, Bethnal Green Delivery Office and Leyton Delivery Office. Absence levels are currently higher than we would normally expect at this time of year (Islington – 13%; Bethnal Green – 18%; Leyton – 9%). The Delivery Office Managers have confirmed that parcel volumes are significant at present and capacity to deliver mail to addresses in your constituency has been reduced due to measures we have taken to protect our people and the communities we serve. This includes changing the way we sort the mail inside the delivery office to reduce the number of postmen and women working inside at any one time.

We have recruited 12 temporary workers across Islington Delivery Office, Bethnal Green Delivery Office and Leyton Delivery Office to help during the Christmas peak period. We have obtained additional vehicles to support the delivery of mail in single-man vehicles as well as purchasing additional delivery trollies. Please be reassured that we are doing everything we can to ensure we provide a six day a week service across your constituency.

Cont...

However, due to changing COVID-19 absence rates, we may occasionally not meet this commitment. Nonetheless, should a delivery round not be completed on a particular day, it will become the priority the following working day.

Every single parcel, letter and card is important to us. Our amazing postmen and postwomen, who have kept the UK connected throughout the pandemic and two lockdowns, are doing everything necessary to get letters and parcels to everyone ahead of Christmas.

I hope this update is helpful. As always, if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Verona Hulse
Government Affairs Manager