

8th October 2020



Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
Westminster  
SW1A 2AA

Royal Mail Headquarters  
100 Victoria Embankment  
LONDON  
EC4Y 0HQ

Communication Workers Union  
(CWU)  
150 The Broadway  
Wimbledon  
SW19 1RX

Dear Prime Minister,

We noted your thanks in your keynote speech at the 2020 Conservative Party Conference to your activists for their efforts at the last General Election “prodding leaflets through the letterbox and into the jaws of dogs”.

As you will know from your own political canvassing, dogs and other domestic pets can easily bite or swipe at individuals delivering leaflets through letterboxes if they are lower to the ground. For Royal Mail delivery staff, such attacks are a very serious - and occasionally life changing - matter. Some 2,445 dog attacks have taken place on postmen and women across the UK in the last year. Since 2013, over 650 postal workers have been attacked while posting mail through the letterbox. Some cases have resulted in the loss of fingertips and even amputation.

Royal Mail workers have also experienced over 16,900 absences related to back injuries in 2019/20. The act of bending or stooping to deliver mail to low letterboxes is a significant contributor to this. Royal Mail and the Communication Workers Union (CWU) have long called for enforcement of European Standard EN 13724 which sets a minimum and maximum height of 700mm and 1700mm from floor height respectively.

Royal Mail and the CWU welcome the Government’s activities in this area to date. We were pleased to support Vicky Ford MP’s Low-Level Letterboxes Ten Minute Rule Bill in 2019. We were also delighted when the Government announced that low-level letterboxes would be considered as part of the Building Regulation Advisory Committee’s review of building regulations last year. The Secretary of State reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to prohibiting low level letterboxes in September 2019 (Hansard, 5 September 2019, Column 379).

We have written to both the Minister for Housing and the Minister for Building Safety, requesting that they oversee the implementation of the European Standard EN 13724 urgently. This is especially important as the UK Government pushes for significant progress in the building of new

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homes. The c.90,000 postmen and women - who have played a key role keeping communities connected at this difficult time for the country - would greatly value your support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Gold". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

David Gold  
Director of Public Affairs and Policy  
Royal Mail Group

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Dave Joyce  
National Health, Safety and Environment Officer  
CWU

*Cc. Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP, Minister for Housing; Lord Greenhalgh, Minister for Building Safety and Communities*