

Agenda Item 5

Royal Mail
Bulford Delivery Office
Marlborough Rd
Bulford Camp
SALISBURY
SP4 9JB
01980 633308

27 – 08 – 09

Councillor Mike Hewitt

RE: Closure of Caller's Office sections at Amesbury and Tidworth Delivery Offices

Dear Mr Hewitt

As you are aware, on Monday March 9th Royal mail closed the callers section of both Amesbury delivery office and Tidworth delivery office, relocating all non-deliverable item collections to the delivery office in Bulford Camp. There has been a lot of miss-understood local press speculation as to why this has been done, and on your request I am writing to give the reasons, as I know them, as to why this had to happen, and also to correct any factual errors that have circulated since.

Royal Mail operates in a challenging market place facing competition not only from rival postal operators but also electronic communication such as e-mail and SMS text messaging. As I am sure you can understand, given the challenges we face and with the current financial climate, as with all businesses we have to constantly review our operations and make changes to remain financially viable. Following such a review the decision was taken to relocate the callers office facility at Amesbury and Tidworth Delivery offices. As well as reducing Royal Mail costs it also helped to overcome a resourcing issue where we had not been able to fill job vacancies in the area.

Out of the three offices affected, it made sense to choose Bulford as the office to retain its callers section for several reasons. Geographically it is central to all three; therefore cutting the extra distance customers would have to travel. Of the three offices, Bulford has a large car park to the left of the building, whereas both Amesbury and Tidworth have no valid parking. As the Amesbury office is just up from a major traffic light crossroads, amassed roadside parking could be deemed dangerous and obstructive, and the Tidworth office is situated right at the exit of an army camp, where again amassed roadside parking could be deemed dangerous and obstructive. The building at Bulford also had the interior space to accommodate the extra parcels from the other two areas, whereas once again Amesbury and Tidworth did not.

This was something that could not be avoided, and we have tried to make the best of the situation. I know there are many that have been and still are angered by the change, and believe me I have had to deal with many of them face-to-face. As said by many, it can be a problem for some people, especially the elderly, to get across to Bulford. As stated on the P739 cards (the little red 'sorry you were out' cards as most like to call them), we can still redeliver any items on a date convenient to the customer, and if this also is a problem, we can also deliver parcels to most local Post

Office branches with our 'Local Collect' service, enabling customers to collect items locally and for a longer period of time during the day. Again this is explained on the P739. Customers can also set up 'Safe Places' for the delivery officers to leave NON-SIGNATURE items, by getting in contact with me or by requesting so with their delivery officer. Again this is explained on the P739 as obviously is out contact telephone number along with a central company out-of-hours contact telephone number.

To clear up a few 'miss-informed' recent local press pieces, the time changes we had to adhere to a year or so ago were to make our offices compliant with changes made at our mail centre in Southampton. These are in no way connected with the callers section closures. Throughout each morning the mail is brought to each office separately, as it always has been. It is not all brought to Bulford only for us to have to take it to the other two offices.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Shales, SOPG Bulford Delivery Office

Jayne Walters, Cluster Delivery Office Manager for SP Garrisons. (Amesbury, Bulford, & Tidworth)