

NW/AP

3 April 2020

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP  
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
Department for, Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Dear Secretary of State

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government for acknowledging the role Royal Mail postal workers are playing during this national crisis in the Daily Briefing on 31 March.

As the CEO of the UK's largest delivery management company, which is also Royal Mail's biggest customer, please do not overlook the broader delivery sector who are also Key Workers playing an equally significant role in keeping the UK economy moving. They enable small, medium and large retailers to trade because the majority of physical retail outlets are closed.

The broader delivery market plays an important role in many ways by getting critical information to every household such as the Prime Ministers CV19 guidance letter, through to transactional mail – bills and statements which are typically at a peak at this time of year due to the new tax year and are key to keeping cash flowing through the system.

Even leaflets are critical as they are promoting local businesses that have adapted to the current situation and maybe offering new delivery services from pubs to restaurants or announcing diversification of their service into delivering hygiene essentials such as sanitisers.

Please remember not everyone has a mobile phone device and is digitally connected especially the older generation who are now in isolation and would not be aware of these developments if it were not for the communications they receive through their letterbox

The one area that has been very busy is packet and parcel delivery and I wanted to give you some anecdotal evidence of how your guidance issued 23 March: *'Online retail is still open and encouraged and postal and delivery service will run as normal'* and reiterated in the Prime Ministers Questions 25 March is making a difference to the daily lives of people while they are observing social distancing measures at home.

One example is Thompson Morgan, one of the UKs leading online seed and plant suppliers who use Direct Mail and leaflets to promote their services and play a key role in keeping people physically fit and mentally healthy in the garden. We are entering peak season for this market and with garden centres shut the only way for people to continue planting is through online deliveries. This is what their customers have been saying...



**I have just placed my first online...**

I have just placed my first online order. I always buy your brand of seeds from garden centres and they have always come up trumps! Due to the Corona virus with everything shut down I was able to purchase from your website, where so many have no stock, so very happy.

As you know charities are also suffering at this time with their retail outlets, a key fundraising source, closed. Macmillan Cancer Support Head of Procurement, Dave Sharp, wrote to us:

*"Postal donations are a lifeline to charities at this moment in time and it is great to see that the mail system is working just fine. Could you please feed this back to the team at Whistl as it really does make a difference as we need to maintain our donations so that we can continue to support people living with cancer."*

Those at home with children who want physical materials to use as part of their children's home schooling are using delivery services. Toucan who provide creative crafts and magazines to children aged 3 to 10 are seeing exceptional growth with feedback from their customers such as this:



Sarah Jones  
@MsJones\_14

Our first @toucanbox came today - a great distraction while in isolation!



10:22 · 30/03/2020 · Twitter for iPhone

The end of this letter summarises well the feedback our customers are giving us about the role of all those in the delivery sector:

We understand and appreciate the efforts that our delivery partners are making during this lockdown period. So many vulnerable people are being helped and isolated families empowered with these deliveries.

Thank you Whistl, let's hope we can keep this going for as long as we remain needed.

Yours Sincerely

Charlie Chen

Anything 4 Home Ltd

So, as you can see every player in the UK household delivery supply chain from collection through to fulfilment, to printers, to mailing houses, to final mile delivery are playing their role during this pandemic and it is important that the Government continues to support everyone in the sector.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Wells". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Nick Wells**  
**CEO**

Cc: The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP,  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office

Paul Scully MP,  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets)

Dame Melanie Dawes, Chief Executive,  
Ofcom