

Process for handling Out of Area (OOA) Cards

Version 4

September 2017

Background

This process is to be used for those cards that are posted into the Stamp & Deliver scheme addressed to recipients outside of the defined delivery area. These cards are known internally as OOA (Out Of Area). The Scheme organisers recognise that the sender expects the Scheme to rectify the situation if there is a simple and minimal cost (recognising the Scheme stamp value) solution.

Process

1. When the Scheme is operating the Central Sort offices first identify OOA cards as part of their general sorting. These are put aside in an OOA box for subsequent checking.
2. Daily, senior Central Sort personnel will check and recheck that the individual card is genuinely Out of Area (OOA) recognising that some valid 'in area' addresses can also mention OOA destinations.
3. Each envelope is examined for any external indication of sender address or phone number. Any such cards are extracted into at 'Return to Sender' (RTS) box. Others remain in the OOA box.
4. After each central sorting session the OOA and RTS cards are gathered together in one place (currently the Borrowash Central Sort area).
5. If within the OOA cards there is a batch that appear to have come from the same sender (e.g. similar envelopes and handwriting /address labels) these will be kept together otherwise cards will be filed by town/village to allow quick identification should anyone enquire of the whereabouts of undelivered card(s).
6. Over the following few days those RTS cards that have sender addresses within the Scheme delivery area will be returned to the sender as long as the Scheme is still running along. The Return address is written onto a new larger envelope, the card enclosed along with a standard letter explaining the reason for the return and a handbill showing the 'in area' addresses. These RTS cards are then resubmitted to central sort for delivery.
7. If the external sender address is not within area an attempt will be made to reach them by phone. They will be asked to contact the sender informing them of the situation and inviting them to contact the Scheme if they wish to collect the card(s).
8. Generally no more than 10 minutes per card will be spent on attempting to contact either the recipient or the sender.
9. As and when queries are received through the hot line, email or the web site complaint form then the OOA file can be checked and the enquirer advised as to whether a card is being held or not. Where a card is identified in the held OOA file the situation is explained and the enquirer given the option to collect it. It is just possible that the Scheme is still operating in which case it can be returned to the sender as in step 6.
10. On or just after 7th January following Scheme closure the envelopes will be opened by two or more of the Scheme committee to establish whether (contrary to the rules of the Scheme) there are any contents of value. If so the Scheme committee will determine what, if any,

additional effort is made to track either the recipient or sender. Such action will be appropriate to the value.

11. During January a review will be made of the number of OOA cards by destination town to understand whether further efforts can or should be made to reduce the number of OOA cards in future years.
12. All remaining cards at the end of January following Scheme closure will be sent for recycling.

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