

# Mailroom

The Official Citipost Mail Newsletter

JUNE 2026



The latest industry insights  
and news from Citipost Mail

**CITIPOST / MAIL**



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# Why mail is winning back trust, and how data makes it pay

**Something interesting is happening in marketing communications. As digital channels scale and AI-generated content becomes more sophisticated, inboxes are filling up and feeds are growing noisier. As a result, people are becoming more sceptical about what is genuine and what is not.**

Physical mail does not face that same challenge. A piece that arrives through the letterbox has been printed, enclosed, addressed, and delivered. It carries a real return address and represents a clear investment by the sender. That alone signals intent and value in a way that digital channels often struggle to match.

In an industry where authenticity is becoming increasingly harder to judge, mail stands out by being tangible and deliberate.

However, that advantage, is fragile... The trust earned at the doormat is quickly lost if the detail is wrong. A misspelt name, an outdated address, or multiple versions of the same pack landing in the same household all undermine the message and credibility. At that point, the issue is no longer the channel, it is whether the brand appears to understand its audience.

This is where data has the biggest impact on results. Clean files, accurate addressing, suppression, and thoughtful segmentation are what turn a well-intentioned campaign into one that performs. These are not new practices, but they remain the areas where response rates are most often won or lost.

The brands seeing the strongest returns from mail right now are the

ones engaging with us early in the campaign. They are prioritising personalisation and relevance over volume alone and are building campaigns from the data up, rather than trying to fix them later in the process.

Across our Creative, Data, Print, and Mail teams, much of our work is focused on helping clients do exactly that by ensuring the pack arrives to the right person, with the right message, at the right time in a format that commands their attention on the doormat.

If you are reviewing your channel mix in the year ahead, mail deserves a serious look. Done well, it remains one of the few channels where brands can demonstrate, in a physical and credible way, that there is real intent and value behind the message, and that is what ultimately drives response.



**Owen Purkis**  
Director of Print Services



# Celebrating Our Investors in People Platinum Accreditation



Earlier this year, Citipost Mail achieved Investors in People Platinum accreditation, recognising the culture, collaboration and commitment that exists across our business every day.



## Latest Client Satisfaction Results

We're pleased to share our latest client satisfaction results, achieving an outstanding Net Promoter Score of 87. This reflects exceptionally high levels of client loyalty and positive feedback across the business.

While the score itself is something we are incredibly proud of, what matters most is what sits behind it. Client feedback consistently highlights the value of our collaborative approach, responsive support and the strong relationships built across our teams.

For Citipost Mail, maintaining high service standards goes beyond delivering campaigns and communications. It is about building long-term partnerships, understanding client objectives and providing reliable support in an evolving mail and marketing landscape.

We would like to thank all our clients who took the time to share their feedback and experiences with us. Your continued support, trust and partnership remain incredibly important to everyone at Citipost Mail.



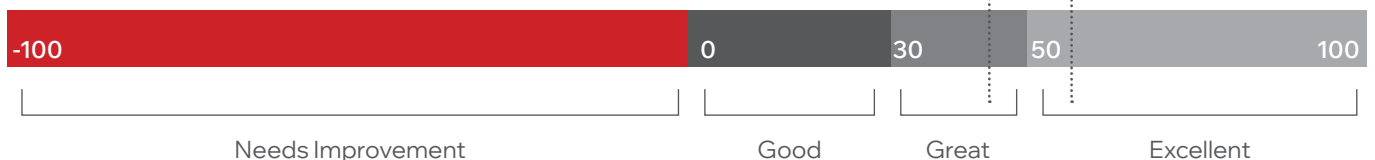
**While our Net Promoter Score of 87 is something we are incredibly proud of, what matters most is what sits behind it."**



Citipost Mail in 2024 (76)

Other Industry Average (54)

UK Average (44)



# Recognised as a Great Place to Work



**Citipost Mail has been named one of the UK's Best Workplaces 2026 by Great Place to Work UK, recognising the culture, collaboration and shared commitment across our business.**

This recognition reflects the environment our people have built together. Across every team, there is a clear focus on support, accountability and working together to deliver the best outcomes for our clients. It is that consistency in how we work that underpins both our culture and the service we provide.

For our clients, this means working with experienced, engaged teams who are invested in delivering high standards every day. Strong internal culture plays an important role in creating reliable service, long-term expertise and collaborative partnerships.



## A proud evening at the Derbyshire Business Awards

**We were proud to attend the Derbyshire Business Awards last week and celebrate the success of so many brilliant local businesses.**

It was a fantastic evening and a great opportunity to recognise the achievements of organisations making a real impact across the region. We were also honoured to be nominated for the Excellence in Customer Service Award, which reflects the commitment of our team to delivering great service every day.





Carbon Neutral

# Over 55% carbon reduction since 2022 – and four years certified carbon neutral

**At Citipost Mail, we want your mail campaigns to be backed by a partner that takes climate impact seriously – not just in words, but through measured action.**

## **What we have achieved**

Since our baseline year in 2022/23, we have reduced our organisational greenhouse gas emissions by 55.7%. In the most recent reporting year alone, our footprint fell by a further 16.0%, showing sustained progress rather than a one-off change.

Over the same period, emissions per fulltime equivalent employee have fallen by 60.4%, reflecting a more efficient, lower impact way of running our business. We have also maintained independent Carbon Neutral certification for four consecutive years by measuring our footprint annually, reducing what we can and offsetting the remaining emissions.

## **Where the reductions are coming from**

As a service led business, most of our impact comes from how we move and power people, not from heavy industry. Our latest assessment shows that around 9 in 10 tonnes of our footprint come from Scope 3 activities such as business travel, commuting and homeworking.

Within that, business travel remains our largest single source, but we have cut these emissions significantly over the last four years by questioning the need for journeys, using virtual meetings where appropriate and choosing lower emission options when we do travel. We have also reduced commuting emissions and continued to improve energy efficiency across our sites.

## **What this means for you**

For clients, this means your campaigns are supported by a supplier that is actively managing its carbon performance in line with recognised standards, not just reporting it. Our footprint is calculated independently using accepted methodologies and UK Government conversion factors, helping you connect our performance to your own ESG and procurement requirements.

Looking ahead, we will keep focusing on reducing avoidable travel, supporting lower emission commuting and building on our energy efficiency gains, while finalising a formal net zero strategy during 2026. We will continue to share clear, concise updates so you can see how our progress supports your sustainability goals.

Your usual Citipost Mail contact can share our latest Sustainability & Carbon Report or talk through what this means for your future campaigns.

Incentives

# Unlock **more value** from Royal Mail incentives in 2026

**In a year of tight budgets and rising expectations, postage incentives are one of the most effective ways to make your mail work harder. At Citipost Mail, we specialise in navigating Royal Mail's incentive portfolio so you can send more, test more and grow more – without blowing the budget.**

## **Why incentives matter now**

Royal Mail's 2026 incentives are designed to reward brands that are testing, innovating and increasing their use of mail. Used well, they can deliver meaningful postage credits that you can reinvest into reach, frequency, creative or data. Our role is to do the heavy lifting – matching the right incentive to your objectives, handling applications and helping you evidence the qualifying volumes.

## **What's new for 2026**

The biggest change for 2026 is the way seasonal activity is handled.

- Older named seasonal schemes (for example Summer, Back to School or Black Friday incentives) have been withdrawn as separate campaigns.
- In their place sits a single, flexible Key Calendar Events incentive under the Advertising Mail Test & Innovation (TIS) umbrella.

That means one route to enhanced credits for incremental campaigns linked to key moments in your trading year – from peak retail periods and fundraising windows to sector specific events.

## **There are also three important enhancements:**

- A new Sampling incentive for campaigns where every pack includes a product sample and the volume is incremental.
- An enhanced Business Mail TIS with a defined roll out period, so you can access support as you scale up a successful test.
- A simplified Publishing Volume Commitment incentive, replacing multiple schemes with a single, clearer route.



# The main incentive routes – in plain English

Below is a simple overview of the core 2026 incentives, how they work and where Citipost Mail adds value.

Incentive family	What it's for	How it helps you	How Citipost Mail supports you
Advertising Mail Growth & Volume Commitment (Year 1 & Further Years)	Brands increasing and then maintaining advertising mail volumes year on year	Postage credits on incremental and matched volumes, rewarding growth and consistency	Forecast potential credits, structure your volume plans and manage qualifying evidence
First Time User (Advertising Mail & Partially Addressed)	Businesses new to mail or returning after a break	Postage credits on your first year of eligible activity so you can test mail with less risk	Check eligibility, shape your first year plan and submit applications on your behalf
Test & Innovation (TIS – Always On, Acquisition, Sampling, Reinstated Mailing Test)	Testing new formats, targeting, data or reinstating lapsed activity	Credits on incremental test volumes so you can experiment and learn more affordably	Help define your test, map volumes, document incrementality and maximise credits
Key Calendar Events TIS (new for 2026)	Campaigns linked to major commercial or seasonal moments	Enhanced credits on incremental, event driven mailings via a single flexible scheme	Align incentives to your calendar, package activity for eligibility and manage submissions
Business Mail TIS	Innovation in business critical communications	Credits on tests and defined roll out periods when you improve formats or journeys	Identify test opportunities, structure trials and secure support into roll out
Publishing Volume Commitment	Publishers maintaining or growing mail volumes	Credits when you commit to and deliver agreed volumes over time	Model commitment levels, check the detail and manage performance tracking



## Why work with Citipost Mail on incentives?

The rules, caps and definitions behind each scheme can be complex – especially when you are juggling multiple campaigns and channels. As an established incentives specialist, Citipost Mail helps you:

- Choose the right route: We look at your objectives – from acquisition and reactivation to sampling, retention or publishing – and recommend the most suitable incentive mix.
- Build incentives into the plan, not bolt them on: We factor credits into budgets, timings and formats from the outset, so they support the strategy rather than dictate it.
- Handle the admin: We manage applications, liaise with Royal Mail, and help you evidence incremental volumes and qualification criteria.
- Learn and optimise: We use campaign results and incentive performance to shape future tests, growth phases and commitment levels.

With Citipost Mail as your partner, incentives stop being a nice to have and become a planned, measurable lever in your marketing toolkit.

### How Citipost Mail Can Help

With Citipost Mail as your partner, incentives stop being a nice to have and become a planned, measurable lever in your marketing toolkit.

## Here to help you plan 2026

Whether you are planning a first time test, scaling proven acquisition activity, adding sampling into the mix or building a calendar of event driven campaigns, we can help you unlock the full value of Royal Mail's 2026 incentives.

**If you would like us to review your current or upcoming mail plans against the available schemes, or to model the potential credits, please speak to your usual Citipost Mail contact or get in touch with our team.**



View our 2026  
Incentive Brochure

# Royal Mail USO reform – What it means for Citipost Mail customers

Royal Mail and the Communication Workers Union (CWU) have now agreed how Universal Service Obligation (USO) reforms, including an alternate day delivery model, will be rolled out across the UK by December 2026. As a Citipost Mail customer, you continue to access Royal Mail's network through our Wholesale services, but the delivery pattern to your recipients will gradually change as the new model goes live.

## The key changes in plain English

Ofcom's decisions mean that:

- Priority and First Class letters continue to be delivered Monday to Saturday.
- Standard (D+3), Economy (D+5) and Second Class mail will move to alternate weekday delivery, Monday to Friday only, with no Saturday delivery.
- Royal Mail has published a Quality of Service Improvement Plan and committed £500m of investment over five years, focused on completing every route every day.

In practice, Royal Mail expects customers to see a postie on their street every day from Monday to Saturday, but the mix of mail they deliver will alternate. On some weekdays they will deliver all parcels and letters (First and Second Class), and on others they will deliver parcels and First Class only, with Second Class and Economy letters delivered on the alternate days.

## How this affects Citipost Mail services

Citipost Mail hands your items into Royal Mail Wholesale for final mile delivery, so your underlying products and access services do not change. What does change is the pattern in which Standard (D+3), Economy (D+5) and Second Class items are delivered to recipients as Delivery Model 26 (DM26) is rolled out.

- Rollout of the new model is scheduled to start from May 2026, subject to the CWU consultative ballot.
- Around 240 delivery offices will move into the new model first, building on the 35 pilot units already operating.
- Royal Mail plans to migrate around 50 offices per week, with all c.1,200 delivery offices expected to be operating the new model by December 2026.

This means the impact on your mail will phase in gradually, depending on when individual delivery offices covering your recipients' postcodes switch over. Royal Mail is publishing details of delivery offices going live in advance, and we are tracking this closely, including the latest confirmed and planned go live sites.



If you would like to talk through specific campaigns or mailing profiles ahead of the webinar, please speak to your Client Relationship Manager or Business Development Manager, who will be happy to help.



## Our role – helping you plan with confidence

We are working closely with Royal Mail Wholesale and industry bodies to understand the detailed migration plan and to translate that into practical guidance for you. As your posting partner, Citipost Mail will:

- Provide clear guidance on how the alternate day model affects Standard (D+3) and Economy (D+5) deliveries, including easy to follow example timelines by posting day.
- Offer one to one reviews of your current mailing profile to identify whether changes to product mix, posting windows or handover days would be beneficial.
- Share regular updates as more delivery offices move into the new model, including postcode level go live information where available.

## Join our USO reform webinar – Tuesday 23 June, 11:00am

To help demystify these changes, we are hosting a dedicated Royal Mail USO Reform webinar for Citipost Mail customers on Tuesday 23 June at 11:00am.

We will:

- Explain the Royal Mail / CWU agreement and rollout in straightforward terms.
- Walk through what the alternate day, weekday only model means specifically for Standard (D+3) and Economy (D+5) services accessed through Citipost Mail.
- Share practical recommendations on how to optimise your mail programmes under the new USO framework.



You can register here

# King Charles indicia – action needed for campaigns from December 2026

Royal Mail’s move to the King Charles indicia design means the Queen’s Head indicia must not be used on any campaigns posting after 23 December 2026. To avoid last minute changes, reprints or compliance queries, we recommend updating your artwork templates and stocks to the King Charles indicia now as part of your standard artwork refresh cycle.



## What you need to do

- Do not use the Queen’s Head indicia on campaigns posting after **23 December 2026**.
- Update all templates, artwork and stock to use the King Charles indicia for Standard and Economy services.
- If you intend to use Priority services, contact your Client Relationship Manager, who will supply the correct Priority indicia artwork and guidance.

## Accessing the new artwork

King Charles indicia artwork for Standard and Economy services is available to download from the Citipost Mail website, ready to pass to your in house studio, creative agency or print partner. We have also refreshed the Citipost Mail branding on our element of the indicia design, so it is easier for brands and mailing houses to see at a glance when the updated artwork has been applied.

Citipost Mail’s specialist team continuously monitors Royal Mail specification changes and can sense check your current indicia artwork, planned campaigns or stock to ensure everything remains compliant with minimal disruption. Please speak to your Client Relationship Manager if you would like us to review and confirm you are ready for the December 2026 cut off.





Manual Mailmark

# Manual Catalogue Mail

## – final reminder and next steps

Royal Mail is withdrawing the non Mailmark Manual variant of Catalogue Mail from 3 August 2026, which means any campaigns still using Manual Catalogue Mail will need to move to alternative services before this date. This change is part of Royal Mail's broader move to barcoded Mailmark products across Access services, supporting a more data driven and future ready approach to direct mail.

### What this means for your campaigns

From **3 August 2026**, Manual Catalogue Mail will no longer be available, so catalogue and large letter campaigns currently using this route must migrate to other products. The main options include Catalogue Mailmark Large Letter, Mailmark Advertising Mail Large Letter or Advertising Mail Large Letter where eligibility criteria are met, and Manual Large Letter where Mailmark or Advertising Mail requirements cannot be met. Royal Mail has also increased the maximum thickness for Mailmark Large Letters to 13mm (previously 10mm), providing greater flexibility for pagination, inserts and extended catalogue formats.

### How Citipost Mail can help

To avoid disruption after August 2026, we recommend reviewing all campaigns that currently use Manual Catalogue Mail, identifying those that will be in market after the withdrawal date and agreeing migration routes with your Citipost Mail contact. Our team can advise on format and creative changes needed to meet Mailmark specifications and provide cost modelling so you can compare Catalogue Mailmark, Mailmark Advertising Mail and Manual Large Letter options. If you would like to arrange a planning session or have any immediate questions, please get in touch with your usual Citipost Mail contact and we will support you through the transition.

# Data and privacy – why first party data makes mail more powerful

**While headlines focus on cookies and big tech data debates, quieter changes to UK data law are now coming into force that matter for anyone using print and mail. Recent updates under the Data (Use and Access) Act and refinements to UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and PECR are designed to clarify and modernise the rules, not to ban data driven marketing. Data driven mail remains fully viable – but expectations on evidence of consent, transparency and security are higher than ever.**

At the same time, the tightening of digital and cookie based targeting is pushing many brands to look harder at the value of their own first party data and permission based channels such as mail. When customers have chosen to hear from you and you hold accurate, well governed records, direct mail becomes a compliant, high trust way to activate that data, rather than a risk to be managed. Good data hygiene, robust suppression and clear consent management are now genuine competitive advantages.

For marketers, that means three practical priorities. First, be clear on your lawful basis and consent records for the data you are mailing, especially where you are combining different data sources or segments. Second, make sure your privacy information matches what you actually do – including

profiling for targeting, personalisation and suppression. Third, ensure your suppliers handle data to the same standard you expect in house, with appropriate contracts, security controls and deletion processes.

At Citipost Mail, we see our role as helping clients use data confidently and responsibly rather than scaring them away from it. Our print and data services are set up to support good governance: from secure data transfer and processing, through to accurate suppressions, deduplication and targeting that reduces waste and improves relevance. That combination of strong data hygiene and well produced mail helps you demonstrate compliance, protect your brand and still get the commercial benefits of personalised, data driven campaigns.

If you would like to sense check how your data is currently being used for mail, or to review your approach to consent, targeting and suppression in the context of the latest UK changes, your usual Citipost Mail contact can arrange a short free data health check.



Scan for more information on our data services and how we can support you



“

When customers have chosen to hear from you and you hold accurate, well governed records, direct mail becomes a compliant, high trust way to activate that data.”

## Print Update

# Smart print – turning mail into a digital starting point

More brands are now using print as the start of a digital journey rather than a standalone channel. QR codes have become a familiar part of envelopes, inserts and catalogues, and we are increasingly seeing campaigns that also use personalised URLs (PURLs), secure codes, NFC tags and even AR markers to connect physical mail to online actions. Done well, this makes your mail more engaging and gives you clearer data on who responds and how.

## Designing mail that drives online action

To make smart print work, the brief needs to be clear from the start. Begin by defining the action you want recipients to take – for example, book an appointment, access a personalised offer, complete an application or update details. Then build the creative around a single, standout call to action and decide which mechanic fits best: a QR code to a responsive landing page, a personalised URL for one to one journeys, or an NFC trigger for mobile first experiences. Keep the journey short, mobile optimised and clearly signposted in the copy so people know what to expect when they scan or tap.

Placement and print execution also matter. Codes need to be large enough, with good contrast and clear quiet zones so they scan reliably; NFC tags must be located where phones naturally rest. Clear “scan or tap here” prompts, reassurance about security (for example “unique code just for you”) and a strong value exchange will all increase response. Thinking about these details at artwork stage avoids last minute compromises and ensures the technology enhances the piece rather than cluttering it.





## How Citipost Mail can help

Citipost Mail brings together data expertise and print and know how to make smart, interactive campaigns straightforward. We can help you select the right mechanic, structure data for personalised URLs or unique codes, and ensure your landing pages and tracking are set up to capture the information you need. On the print side, we work with you and your production partners to ensure codes and tags are specified correctly, tested in advance and integrated cleanly into your existing brand templates. That way, your mail doesn't just land on the doormat – it pulls customers seamlessly into a measurable digital journey.



If you'd like to explore how QR, PURLs, NFC or other smart print options could support your next campaign, your usual Citipost Mail contact can arrange a short planning session to look at ideas, feasibility and likely response.

## Sector Support

We support clients across a wide range of sectors, with specialist insight that helps make every campaign more relevant and effective. You can explore how we support the charity and travel sectors in particular here:



The Charity Sector



The Travel Sector

# Cath Cussons

**Meet Cath, our Head of Print Services. With more than 35 years of experience in print, production and direct mail, she leads our print team, helping clients maximise the impact of their campaigns through expert guidance, innovative solutions and exceptional service.**



**How long have you been with Citipost Mail, and how did you get into print?** I've been with Citipost Mail for two years, but my print journey started over 35 years ago with a one-week temp role hand-enclosing packs. That short-term job turned into a lifelong career, and I've seen print evolve while remaining a powerful communication channel.

**What has your journey at Citipost been like?** Fast-paced and rewarding. I've focused on strengthening our print offering, improving processes, and ensuring we deliver consistently high standards. There's always an opportunity to improve, which keeps things interesting and helps us deliver better results for clients.

**What does your role as Head of Print Services involve?** I oversee the full print process, from planning through to production and delivery, making sure everything runs efficiently, cost-effectively, and to a high standard. I work closely with clients and internal teams to find the right solutions, advising on formats, production methods, and efficiencies to maximise impact and value.

“

**Print has evolved enormously over the last 35 years, but it remains one of the most powerful ways to connect with people.”**



**What do you enjoy most about working at Citipost Mail?**

The people, without a doubt. We've got a strong, collaborative team that genuinely cares about getting things right. I also enjoy the variety, no two jobs are the same, and seeing a project successfully delivered from start to finish.

**What advice would you give to clients preparing print campaigns?**

Get us involved early. It allows us to guide decisions on format, materials, and production, saving time and cost. Clear objectives and realistic timelines also make a big difference, good planning keeps things simple and delivers better results.

**What trends are you seeing in print?**

Print continues to evolve as part of integrated campaigns alongside digital. Personalisation is growing, with data driving more targeted communications, and sustainability remains a key focus, with increasing demand for responsible materials and production methods.

**What do you enjoy outside of work?**

Spending time with family, keeping active at the gym (or trying to), and enjoying life with our four-legged friends, they're great company and never argue back. When it's time to switch off, I'm always happy with a Marvel film.

## Investing in the next generation of Direct Mail

**One of the biggest challenges facing our industry is bringing through the next generation of talent. Direct Mail continues to evolve, but its long-term success depends on developing people who understand both the craft and the strategy behind it.**

With that in mind, we are pleased to introduce two new members of our Print Services team, Alfie Brown and Lucas Kiernan.

Both joined us earlier this year following a detailed assessment process designed to identify future consultants to our clients. Since joining, they have completed a structured training programme, including time spent with our print partners, data suppliers and MarketReach, gaining a full understanding of how successful campaigns are built from data strategy and audience targeting through to production and delivery.

In a short space of time, both Alfie and Lucas have achieved JICMAIL training to silver level, alongside three Data & Marketing Association qualifications covering data usage and effective Direct Mail campaigns.

They are now working directly with clients, supported by Owen Purkis, our Director of Print Services, and the wider team.

Owen commented: "We are not hiring salespeople, we are building consultants. That mindset underpins how Alfie and Lucas have been trained, and how they will support clients as they develop in their roles."

For us, this is about more than growing the team. It is about continuing to raise the standard of advice and delivery we offer, ensuring our clients have access to the skills and insight needed to make Direct Mail work effectively.

If you would like to meet Alfie or Lucas, please do get in touch.



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