

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT SCANDAL – RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Joint statement by the Department for Business and Trade, Fujitsu Services Limited and Post Office Limited

Recommendation 19 of volume 1 of the report of the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry said:

By 31 October 2025, the Department, Fujitsu and the Post Office shall publish, either separately or together, a report outlining any agreed programme of restorative justice and/or any actions taken by that date to produce such a programme. For the avoidance of any doubt, the word Fujitsu in this recommendation is intended to include both Fujitsu Services Limited and Fujitsu Limited.

The Department, Fujitsu Services Limited and the Post Office have accepted this recommendation, and this is our joint statement in response.

Making apologies meaningful

Before going into any detail, we would all like to take this opportunity to sincerely apologise again for the damage that our organisations have caused to every person who has been affected by the Horizon IT scandal. We are appalled by the failures that led to this most widespread miscarriage of justice.

However, we also recognise that a general apology such as this one is nowhere near sufficient. We are committed to working with the Restorative Justice Council over the coming months to continue to lay a firm foundation for direct and personal apologies where we can; and to support a wider and longer-term programme of restorative justice to make amends in other ways.

Being postmaster-led

The Department, Fujitsu Services Limited and the Post Office firmly believe that such a programme must be led by the views of postmasters. To that end, we together commissioned the Restorative Justice Council to ask postmasters to share their thoughts and feelings about what a future restorative justice programme should include. This project was announced on 1 September.

The Restorative Justice Council engaged 145 former and current postmasters through five in-person listening sessions held in different parts of the UK and two online meetings. At the Restorative Justice Council's request, those sessions were attended only by postmasters and their supporters – our organisations were not present. The Restorative Justice Council's findings are set out in their report (available here) and summarised very briefly below.

The Department, Fujitsu Services Limited, the Post Office and the Restorative Justice Council have also engaged with officials supporting the Inquiry's Legacy Committee so

that we could reflect their learning from the Inquiry Legacy Project. We will coordinate our plans with The Postal Museum, as an official partner for the Legacy Project, as they develop their proposals to consult and collaborate with the postmasters and those affected by the scandal.

The Restorative Justice Council's report

The report describes what postmasters would like to see from restorative justice. The key points included:

- The need for public acknowledgement and memorialisation of the injustices suffered and recognition of individuals' unjust suffering
- Demand for personalised and meaningful apologies – whether public or private
- Opportunities for those affected to come together to share experiences and collectively seek national recognition
- Practical actions – for instance mental health support, family counselling, and opportunities for communal healing through leisure and therapeutic activities.

The views of postmasters set out in the report naturally go further than restorative justice. They express:

- Frustration with the pace of the process of redress. The Department and Post Office continue to strive to ensure that redress is full, fair and prompt. The pace of redress has increased markedly. Over £1.2bn in redress has been paid, a five-fold increase since July 2024. Nonetheless the Department and Post Office recognise that more remains to be done.
- A desire to see those responsible for the scandal held to account. The second volume of the Inquiry's report will provide essential underpinning for such accountability. The Metropolitan Police already have over 100 staff engaged in its Operation Olympos; the bodies regulating lawyers and auditors are also undertaking investigations.
- Demands that the three organisations demonstrate that they have learned from the scandal and taken actions to prevent anything similar happening again. The Department, Fujitsu Services Limited and the Post Office are taking a wide range of action to address the lessons of the scandal and will consider how to demonstrate that in the context of this restorative justice programme. All our organisations hope to be able to speak directly to postmasters through the restorative justice programme to address their concerns.

Establishing a long-term restorative justice programme

Over the coming months the Department, Fujitsu Services Limited and the Post Office will work together with the Restorative Justice Council to continue to listen to those harmed and ensure postmasters and their desires remain at the heart of the work to

establish a practical, funded long-term programme. Plans for that programme will be announced in spring 2026 and are likely to evolve further in the light of experience, and of further understanding of postmasters' views.

As well as the substance and financial structure of the programme, we will look to develop its future governance. We hope to include postmaster representatives in that.

Continuing the pilot

Alongside developing and commissioning the long-term programme, we will continue to work with the Restorative Justice Council on the pilot of the programme through to March 2026. We are asking the Restorative Justice Council to continue to engage more postmasters and hear from others harmed, including children of victims and to postmasters from historically marginalised groups. In particular, we will work with the Restorative Justice Council through March 2026 to pilot the following measures:

- **A Restorative Listening and Well-Being service**, fully funded by Fujitsu Services Limited. This service will be staffed by trained and experienced restorative listeners who have a deep understanding of the context of the scandal and its impact on those harmed and their families. Further details about this service will be made public in the coming weeks
- **Group-Based Circles**, where multiple affected individuals will be able to communicate with organisational representatives either directly or indirectly to facilitate shared narratives and collective healing
- **Individual Restorative Meetings** to allow affected individuals to engage privately with the organisational representatives they wish to meet, enabling them to discuss their experiences and expectations without the complexities of larger group settings
- **A Postmaster Support Network** to create a peer-led support group, providing essential opportunities for affected individuals to connect, share experiences, and discuss coping strategies in a safe environment. (Northern Ireland has been identified for the pilot, given the strong support for this initiative and the existence of a small informal network of harmed postmasters)
- **Preparing staff** in the Department, Fujitsu Services Limited and the Post Office to take part in restorative justice. This is critical for equipping staff with the necessary skills and understanding of restorative justice principles, fostering a shared commitment to accountability and healing while recognising the diverse experiences of all participants involved.

Conclusion

We are conscious of the Inquiry's work with postmasters through its Legacy Committee. Our three organisations would welcome any further contribution which the Inquiry

wishes to make on the development of the restorative justice programme, drawing on its own extensive engagement with postmasters.

Department for Business and Trade
Fujitsu Services Limited
Post Office Limited

31 October 2025