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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

from

STEPHEN HEPBURN, M.P., JARROW CONSTITUENCY

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24th February 2012
Our ref SH/kc

Edward Davey MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Dear Minister

I have been contacted by Mrs Carol Riddell, of East Boldon Post Office, 93-95 Front Street, East Boldon, NE36 0SA. Mrs Riddell is a sub-postmaster and runs East Boldon Post Office, acting as an agent on behalf of Post Office Ltd. She informs me that she would like to raise concerns of the difficulties faced by sub-postmasters such as the use of the computerised accounting and electronic system called Horizon. Mrs Riddell informs me that the system is difficult to use and over time she found discrepancies in her accounts that she was unable to explain. Mrs Riddell has informed me that she suffered significant financial loss due to the losses incurred using this system and was subsequently suspended from her contract with Post Office Limited. Mrs Riddell strongly maintains that it is not possible, when using the Horizon system, to establish the reason for any discrepancy and believes the system maybe to blame for the discrepancies that have occurred. I am informed by Mrs Riddell that although she has since been reinstated by Post Office Limited she has had to dismiss two staff members, both of whom are close trusted family members. This situation has caused a great deal of distress to Mrs Riddell and her family and Mrs Riddell informs me that she and other sub-postmasters are pursuing legal action against Post Office Limited for breach of contract. Therefore, I would be grateful if you could look into Mrs Riddell's concerns and let me know your comments.

Yours sincerely

GRO

Stephen Hepburn MP