

**Record of Tape  
Recorded Interview**

Person Interviewed Janet Louise SKINNER (JS)

Place of Interview Bransholme Police Station  
Hull

Date of Interview 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006

Time commenced 13:26 hours

Duration of 44 minutes

interview

Time concluded 14.10 hours

Tape reference 043366

no

Interviewing Officer(s) Diane Matthews (DM)  
Stephen Bradshaw (SB)

Other persons present

Exhibit No:  
Number of pages: 15

Signature of interviewing officer  
producing exhibit

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
0.00		Introductions Cautioned Caution explained CS001 signed at 13.28 hours CS003 signed at 13.31 hours Solicitor declined 043707 and 043409 tapes seals for tapes that were faulty. JS confirms these were sealed in her presence
5.03	DM	I just want to go over your experience in the Post Office and specifically at North Bransholme. How long have you been at that office
	JS	Started the 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2003 I think it was
	DM	What capacity

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
5.55	JS	I was the Manager, I was taken on as the manager
	DM	Was the office owned by someone else at the time
	JS	Yes Caroline was the manager at that time
	DM	Had you had any previous experience of working in a Post Office prior to this
	JS	JS explains her working history at United News owned Post Offices which started in February 1995 at as a counter clerk includes spells at Orchard Park, Kingston Road 1998 as assistant manager, Dalsetter Rise as Manager, Spring Cottage as Manager. And Bodmin Road as manager. JS states she has been the Manager at North Bransholme since she started there.
10.15		JS explains in May 2004 she became temporary Subpostmistress at North Bransholme and Bodmin Road.
	DM	So you have quite a lot of experience of running a Post office and using the Horizon system
	JS	I was the first one in Hull to get training on it
	DM	Were you, so you're the expert round here are you
	JS	Yes
	DM	So would it be fair to say that you are happy with how to run an office and the procedures
	JS	Yes
	DM	And obviously the Horizon system
	JS	Yes
	DM	In your opinion what is the reason for doing a balance at an office
10.41	JS	To make sure that the books correspond and to make sure that everything is correct
	DM	So its also a fair assumption to give a record of everything that is held in

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## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
15.28	DM	<p>accurate account of the conversation.</p> <p>So the audit took place and the result was an overall shortage of £59,175.39. The breakdown of that is the cash element £58,942.41 short. The stock was £292.27 short and your postage was a surplus of £59.29. Giving an overall shortage of £59,175.39. Are you happy with that</p> <p>JS No im not happy at all.</p> <p>DM Do you accept that that is probably, I don't know if that was the figure that you were expecting</p> <p>JS No I wernt</p> <p>DM You have indicated £40,000</p> <p>JS Its just been going up and up and up for the past 5 months.</p> <p>DM When was your last audit at North Bransholme</p> <p>JS When I took it over</p> <p>DM May 2004</p> <p>JS Yes</p>
16.41	DM	<p>Do you want to give us your account of why there is over £59,000 short in your account.</p> <p>JS If I had the answer I would give you it but I haven't. It started of £7,500 and its just basically gone up and to be honest I just thought that whoever was taking it would be putting it back. I mean I can prove to you, im here because I want to prove that I am innocent. If you want to search my house you can, if you want to search my banks you can. I have nothing to hide what so ever, I am not a thief.</p> <p>DM When you said you had a shortage of £7,500 when was that</p> <p>JS Back in January this year</p> <p>DM Right just go back to this one instance first of all. You have got a</p>

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
17.43	JS	shortage of £7,500, did you complete the balance that night
	DM	Yes
	JS	Does your office have individual stock units
		It did we were running on individual stock units up until June last year.
		That was because one of the women <b>GRO</b> and it was mainly because of that person that we were on individual stock units because their stock unit was always, well, the balancing was always really bad it was sometimes over £100 and we had customers coming back saying she had short changed them of £100 and in one week we had 3 customers saying that she had short changed them off £100.
	DM	And who was this
	JS	Katherine Ayres. So that's why it went onto individual to start with. But when <b>GRO</b> basically there was only me and Colleen Kates and Theresa Holmes. Theresa went on holiday for 2 weeks, Katherine <b>GRO</b> it only left me and Colleen so it was just impossible to keep it on individual. Which is why we moved
	DM	OK so in January we have got this £7,500 loss. Just try and recap as much as you can to what happened when you balanced and you found that shortage.
18.18	JS	I was in the early hours the next morning and I didn't roll over that night, I went in the next morning and rechecked everything, got everything rechecked and it was still the same
	DM	And who was in that week
	JS	Me, Theresa, Wendy and Katherine
	DM	So she was back off <b>GRO</b>
	JS	Yes

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
19.20	JS	She came back in December but her unit was always short anyway
	DM	Right what do the staff have to make good their own losses
	JS	Yes unless they have balanced under and ive balanced over then we would give it because it could have been something that had been passed wrong but everything that was given to them and everything that was given to me was checked by me or by them. But her stock unit was wrong anyway.
	DM	So this £7,500 what stock unit was it in
	JS	It was showing up in AA because that's the main stock unit we were all using then.
	DM	Right so it was a shared stock and everyone was using AA.
	JS	Yes
	DM	What was the shortage in
	JS	Cash
	DM	And what did you do
20.14	JS	I just made the cash look like it was correct
	DM	And how did you do that
	JS	Just by making it as if it was there but it wasn't and then had a word with one of the girls I worked with and <b>GRO</b>
	DM	Who was that
	JS	Colleen Kates
		JS goes on to explain that this was a planned absence to have a <b>GRO</b> JS explained to Colleen there was a loss but not the amount.
	DM	So you made your cash look like you had £7,500 more
	JS	Yes
	DM	What denomination did you add it onto

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## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
21.12	JS	No
	DM	Did you add it onto £50 or muts
	JS	No not £50's because there is only a couple of times we have had a large amount of £50's and ive remmed them back anyway.
	SB	Did you inflate it by just the full amount in one denomination or did you spread it amongst denominations
	JS	Well I just spreaded it between £10 and £20
	DM	Why did you do that instead of showing the loss
	JS	Because it was a £7,500 loss and it's not something im in a position to make right and to be fair and I know it sounds stupid and ive never been in that position before never. JS explains that her first few weeks at Bodmin Road were terrible with big losses.
	DM	With this £7,500 what benefit is it to hide it rather than show it
	JS	I thought that whoever was taking it was putting it back.
	SB	Why would you think that
	DM	Because ive never been in that position before. Ive never ever had a balance show a large amount of money and the only physical way that sort of money could of not been there is if it has been removed from there.
	SB	But if somebody stolen £7,500, why would they put it back.
	JS	I don't know
	SB	Why would you think that they were going to put it back.
	JS	I don't know stupidity, I really don't know. I wish I did know
	DM	What made you think that somebody had taken it as opposed to a mistake being made
	JS	Because that amount of money just doesn't go missing.

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**Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)**

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
23.12	DM	Did you phone anyone up
	JS	No
	DM	So if you have not been in that position before why didn't you phone and get advice
	JS	Beacause all I could think of was if I was having to pay, because of the fact that I have to cover the shortages and the gains I were the one who has to be responsible for it.
	DM	But by adding it onto your cash when it wasn't there, do you think that was responsible.
	JS	No
	DM	Did you know it was wrong to do that
	JS	Yeah its defrauding isn't it
	DM	Its falsifying an accounting document and falsifying what is in the office after you have already said the reason for the balance
	SB	Did you know it was a criminal offence to falsify your accounts.
	JS	Yes like ive said it sounds daft really. It's a large amount of money and I hope it gets found. I can be investigated in any way and I have nothing to hide.
		Discussion takes place to decide when office went into branch trading
	DM	So the next week what happened at the balance
	JS	It was the same short again
	DM	And what did you do with the cash
	JS	I falsified it on again
	SB	You say by the same what do you mean the same. How much was it out the following week.
	JS	£9,500
	SB	So it wasn't the same then was it

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
25.25	JS	No
	DM	It was an extra £2,000
	SB	Gone up by another £2,000
	JS	It just kept going up
	SB	OK lets take it in stages. You have just had your first loss of £7,500 in the January and the following week it's gone up to £9,500 so £7,500 is the previous loss so your have rolled that loss forward and you have ended up with another £2,000 loss
	JS	Yes
	SB	Just to go back to what you said a few minutes ago that when the £7,500 went missing you thought whoever was taking it would put it back so now you have got within a week you have 2 instances where £7,500 went and then another £2,00 gone
	JS	Yes
	SB	What did you think then that the person was going to put that back
	JS	To be honest really I have just, yeah I did. Ive never been in this
	SB	Somebody with 10 years experience, you may not of come across losses as high as that each and every week but you have certainly as you said you had one for £800. Did that person put it back or have they stolen it from you.
		SB recaps on JS experience
	SB	What staff was in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> week
	JS	The same
	SB	So you have the same staff and 2 instances. What was said to the staff
27.30	JS	Just to keep their eyes open really because mistakes were being made
	SB	And what did they say

**Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)**

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
27.41	JS	They just said they would. I said that shortages were going by and they just needed to be careful of what they were doing and to keep their eyes and ears open basically
	SB	So do you believe the shortages have occurred by the staff being incompetent and handing it out to customers
	JS	I would say its been confident its not been handed out to customers because there have many times that customers have come back and they have been short changed so if it was being handed out they wouldn't come back and say they have been short changed. Discussion about the customers returning to complain takes place.
	SB	When you were on individual stock units, how was the balancing within the office
29.24	JS	Quite good actually. It was up and down but it was usually in Theresa or ours that she had given me something back or we had not given her it back.
	SB	So why in January did you not go back to individual balancing
	JS	Because I was short staffed at the time
	SB	Well short staffed just means you use less stocks less units out doesn't it
	JS	Yes I know
	SB	It makes no odds you have one staff or 51 staff it depends if you room to have 51 individual stock units at least then you would know where these losses occurred if someone from behind the counter
	JS	There has been an incident a few weeks back ive gone in on Sat afternoon. Ive basically gone in to do to sort the popos out because I was having a week off and I checked the draws before I left and there was money stuffed in a draw underneath a card
	SB	Could you trace that back to someone

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
30.32	JS	Who had been there was Katherine and Wendy.
	SB	And who was in charge when you were off
	JS	Colleen, but she came back from being off sick on the Friday came to work on the Monday and then she was only there that week then off on holiday.
	DM	Who has keys for your office
	JS	I have them on a Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday, Katherine always has a set as she is listed as a key holder as she lives 2 minutes across the road. The other set goes between Theresa and Wendy.
	DM	When you said Katherine has a set of keys, does she have the safe keys
	JS	Yes and door keys
	DM	So if you suspected Katherine of taking this money, why did you let her have keys
	JS	Because she was literally 2 minutes across the road
	DM	But if she is taking the money, that your going to have to be responsible for, why let her have a set of safe keys
	JS	When Colleen came back for the week that I was off, Colleen refused to let her have any keys because, I don't know why but she is not having the keys.
	SB	Your in charge, you have got one member of staff saying she is not letting another member of staff have keys. If this member of staff is the one you suspect of pinching the money of you but you still as Diane said to you, you still insist on giving her a set of keys and basically the run of the office.
	JS	Yeah
	SB	Its like letting a kid loose in a sweet factory isn't it
	JS	I know but its because, I live at the other end of Hull, I always tend to end

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
32.32	SB	up getting there late and that's the reason why ive always let her have the keys. She always had the keys before I went there
	JS	What time do you normally get in
	JS	I am meant to be there at 8.15 but I don't normally start till 8.30 by the time I get there
	SB	So its only 15 minutes. What time does the office open
	JS	8.30
	SB	What time does Katherine get in
	JS	One morning she was there at 8.10 and another it didn't open till 9.
	SB	Why not change your hours, put it forward or leave the house earlier.
	SB	Why do you suspect Katherine
33.15	JS	She has been, when I first took the office as manager when I took it off Caroline Rand the first thing I was ever told was to watch her because she is not to be trusted. For what reasons I don't know. I know she was investigated whilst working for United News I know it was to do with money but I don't know what for. She was cleared and reinstated but it is basically what people have said just don't trust her, she cant be trusted. She doesn't really divulge anything about her life but a few months ago her son came to the office
		GRO
		GRO
		GRO
	DM	When was that. When did the conversation take place
	JS	A couple of months ago. His girlfriend
		GRO
		GRO
	DM	Are you frightened of Katherine Ayres

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
35.05	JS	No
	DM	Does she have some sort of hold over you
	JS	No
	DM	You have got to see it from our point of view. When you first went there you were told don't trust her she has been investigated
	JS	Everything was fine
		Discussion took place on individual stocks and the losses that customers were returning to the office saying they were short changed.
	JS	Her stock unit (KA) was down by £1400 , customers kept coming back, to be fair it was customers you get to know them, you know who they are and you know who would and who wouldn't lie and you can tell and one of them was a disabled person who came back and said she had shortchanged them by £100. I wouldn't say go ahead Katherine pay them back its quite alright
	SB	I understand that. The shortchanging the customers by £100 and its happened on a few occasions. To shortchange a customer by £100 is an awful lot
	JS	Yes it is
	SB	Beacause counting the money out in front , the customers arnt soft when your counting out in front. But you have still allowed her
	JS	No cos what I do is I print of a transaction log, I print of what that customer has taken out I pri nt off what they paid and they give me what they have got
	SB	But you didn't do a cash declaration and check what cash she should have in her draw.
	JS	No
	SB	Also, after she had shortchanged the first customer, what did you say to

## Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
40.00	JS	Katherine I gave her a warning for it after the first time because it was £300 in a week
	SB	After the third time, £300 in one week
	JS	Yes
	SB	Not the first time, don't you find it strange that to shortchange by £100 is an awful lot
	JS	Yes I do, it is an awful lot of money, I don't like to shortchange customers
	DM	DM clarifies that the north bransholme was on branch trading in 23/11/2005 TP9
	DM	When in branch trading did you move each week to the next balancing period (BP)
	JS	No
	DM	So you rolled it for a month
	JS	A month Yes
	DM	How often did you do your cash declarations then
	JS	Once a month
	DM	So your cash decs were only once a month. So when you say the first shortage is £7,500 round about January, are you sure it was Jan and not earlier
	JS	Yes round about Christmas time coming into January
	DM	So could it have been in that Trading Period.
	JS	We had a lot of payouts because it was Christmas so we had a lot of cash in the office
	DM	So this £7,500 would that be in branch trading 10 covering December

**Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)**

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
	JS	23 <sup>rd</sup> up to mid Jan so would the inflation on the cash be in that It started then yes Master tape seal 043366 signed by all parties Tape ends 14.10