

Witness Name: Ruth Simpson

Statement Number: WITN09400100

Dated: 14 August 2023

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF RUTH SIMPSON

I, *RUTH SIMPSON*, will say as follows...

1. This statement is made to assist the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry and relates to the RULE 9 request dated 5th May 2023, which relates to my experience at Marine Drive Post Office and my involvement in the litigation against Lee Castleton. At that time, I was responsible as a Sub-Postmistress for the Post Office, at First Lane, Hessle.
2. I confirm that I gave a statement on the 19th of October 2006 and attended at Court, as a witness, in proceedings to which that statement related, I gave evidence on behalf of the Post Office [**LCAS0000121**].
3. I confirm I have had the opportunity to consider the statement I made once again, and I confirm the content is a true account of my recollection, of the experience I had at Marine Drive Post Office. My recollection is limited to the

content of that statement and the documents provided to me by this inquiry, as it relates to an experience I had in 2004 which is now 19 years ago. I confirm that that in drafting this statement I sought legal advice and assistance from Elizabeth Rowley, a solicitor at Andrew Jackson LLP.

4. I have reviewed the following documents in order to prepare this statement:

- a. **[POL00083031]** – First Witness Statement of Catherine Oglesby dated 21 January 2006;
- b. **[POL00071592]** – Second Witness Statement of Catherine Oglesby dated 10 October 2006;
- c. **[FUJ00122334]** & **[FUJ00122335]** – Witness Statement of Andrew Paul Dunks dated 12 October 2006 and Exhibit AD1;
- d. **[POL00083641]** – Witness Statement of Christine Train dated 29 November 2006;
- e. **[POL00069282]** – Witness Statement of Dorothy Day dated 29 November 2006;
- f. **[POL00069275]** – Transcript of Mr Castleton and Ms Train's evidence in Post Office Limited v Castleton, Case No: HQ05X02706;
- g. **[POL00070183]** – Transcript of my evidence in Post Office Limited v Castleton, Case No: HQ05X02706;
- h. **[POL00073609]** - Catherine Oglesby's Summary of events at Marine Drive Post Office; and
- i. **[POL00071236]** – Note of Marine Drive Interview on 10 May 2004.

5. My career has been over a period of 39 years. In 1976, I started work at

Yorkshire Bank PLC, progressing to the bank branch manager, a role I remained in for 23 years. In 1999 I left the Yorkshire bank to be a Sub-Postmistress for the Post Office. From the year 1999 to 2015, I worked as the Sub-Postmistress, at First Lane Post Office, in Hessle, until my retirement in 2015.

6. During the year 2004, I was asked by a lady called Cath Oglesby, who was my then line manager at the Post Office, to stand in as Sub-Postmistress, at Marine Drive Post Office, following the suspension of the Postmaster there, Lee Castleton. I was informed that the suspension was due to the discovery of unauthorised losses.

7. I therefore ran the Marine Drive Post Office, between 23rd March 2004 and 21st April 2004. Cath Oglesby was my line manager before this date and with whom I had a good working relationship. Cath Oglesby remained my line manager during the time at Marine Drive Post Office. I am unable to recall the frequency of my communication with Cath Oglesby, before or during my time at Marine Drive Post Office, due to the passage of time. I believe I would have provided regular updates given the circumstances.

8. In relation to the weekly balances at the Post Office, whilst I was there, I can only comment from the information in my statement made 19th October 2006, which I refer to, as I have no further recollection. I can see that:

Wednesday the 31st of March 2004 there was a shortage of £101.95.

Wednesday 8th April 2004 a surplus of £19.38

Wednesday 14th April 2004 shortage of £10.76

Wednesday 21st April 2004 surplus £0.02

9. From my recollection, I do not think that I would have been concerned by any of the differences, shortages or surplus. I can say this, as whilst I was a Sub-Postmistress, in broad terms, I used to consider a balance of less than £20 either way, acceptable, given the volumes of cash and transactions.

10. I cannot add anything further regarding the Horizon IT system that was in place at the Marine Drive Post Office, to that, that is within my original statement made 19th October 2006. Specifically, in relation to the lottery error notices, I do not recall any issues with Horizon. In relation to the shortage of £101.95, my understanding and recollection is that this was pinpointed to the Monday of that week and attributed to human error. I cannot remember anything further regarding the computer IT freeze and reboot of the screen, than what is in my original statement of 19th October 2006. I do not recall any further investigation regarding these issues.

11. I confirm I was contacted by a solicitor, Stephen Dilley, on behalf of the Post Office, and he asked me to be a witness for the Post Office, regarding my time at Marina Drive Post Office. This was in the case against Mr Lee Castleton. I have considered all the correspondence I had with Mr Stephen Dilley:

- a. **[POL00071058]** – Initial contact letter from Stephen Dilley of Bond Pearce LLP on 22 August 2006;
- b. **[POL00069572]** – Letter to Stephen Dilley on 7 September 2006;

- c. **[POL00107444]** – Email from Stephen Dilley on 27 September 2006 regarding my draft Witness Statement;
- d. **[POL00069503]** – Letter from Stephen Dilley to you enclosed revised draft of Witness Statement, dated 4 October 2006;
- e. **[POL00069497]**– Attendance note of call between you and Stephen Dilley on 6 October 2006 regarding my draft Witness Statement;
- f. **[POL00069455]** – Letter from Stephen Dilley enclosing amended Witness Statement to sign, dated 17 October 2006;
- g. **[POL00069461]** – Attendance note of call to Stephen Dilley on 17 October 2006 to make further amendments to my Witness Statement.
- h. **[POL00081700_070]** – Letter from Stephen Dilley regarding hearing availability, dated 25 October 2006;
- i. **[POL00071744]** – Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 29 November 2006 regarding the lottery payment / tickets;
- j. **[POL00069918]** – Email from Stephen Dilley on 30 November 2006 regarding Mr Castleton’s Witness Statements;
- k. **[POL00069871]** - Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 1 December 2006 to discuss Christine Train’s Witness Statement;
- l. **[POL00069659]** - Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 22 December 2006 to discuss Christine Train’s Witness Statement;
- m. **[POL00070060]** – Attendance note of call between Stephen Dilley and Lee Castleton on 4 January 2007;
- n. **[POL00071881]** – Letter from Stephen Dilley to Lee Castleton dated 4 January 2007;
- o. **[POL00070054]** - Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 5

January 2007 to discuss what happened during the evidence of the last Post Office witness at trial; and

p. **[POL00073768]** – Email from Stephen Dilley to Mandy Talbot on 12 January 2007 outlining the hearing on 11 January 2007.

12. I cannot remember the details of any of the conversations that took place between myself and Mr Dilley. I do recall that I never met Mr. Dilley in person, our communication was via email and telephone.

13. I do not recall being made aware of anything about Mr Lee Castleton's case, other than I was asked to give evidence regarding my time at Marina Drive Post Office and the experience I had there.

14. In relation to software updates to the computers at Marine Drive Post Office and the Tivoli log during my time there, I have no recollection of this other than what is in my original statement **[LCAS0000121]**. I cannot therefore comment as to any relevance or effect of either of these now.

15. I do recollect attending at Court on a second occasion and giving evidence. I do not know the date of this second hearing. I cannot recall the specific reason or issues raised on this occasion, due to the passage of time. I simply remember attending twice.

16. I recall being notified (at the relevant time) of the outcome of the case **[POL00004325]**. I refer to the correspondence **[POL00098862]**. I had attended as a witness, to give evidence of my time at Marina Drive Post Office, I therefore

did not have any personal interest in the case or view upon it. I therefore cannot say if I was surprised by the outcome of the case. I attended as a witness, as I had been asked to and given a statement, I was then asked to give evidence about what I had experienced, as a Sub-postmistress during my time at Marina Drive Post Office.

17. I cannot add anything further to the original statement I made on 19th October 2006 or the documents I have been provided with, as I have little recollection due to the passage of time. My reflections upon the case and of my involvement are therefore also limited.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

SIGNED.. **GRO**

DATE... 14/8/23

Index to First Witness Statement of RUTH SIMPSON

<u>No</u>	<u>URN</u>	<u>Document Description</u>	<u>Control Number</u>
1.	LCAS0000121	Witness Statement of Ruth Simpson dated 19 October 2006	VIS00010361
2.	POL00083031	First Witness Statement of Catherine Oglesby dated 21 January 2006	POL-0079594
3.	POL00071592	Second Witness Statement of Catherine Oglesby dated 10 October 2006	POL-0068155
4.	FUJ00122334	Witness Statement of Andrew Paul Dunks dated 12 October 2006	POINQ0128548F
5.	FUJ00122335	Exhibit AD1 to Witness Statement of Andrew Paul Dunks dated 12 October 2006	POINQ0128549F
6.	POL00083641	Witness Statement of Christine Train dated 29 November 2006	POL-0080204
7.	POL00069282	Witness Statement of Dorothy Day dated 29 November 2006	POL-0065845
8.	POL00069279	Transcript of Mr Castleton and Ms Train's evidence in Post Office Limited v Castleton, Case No: HQ05X02706	POL-0065842
9.	POL00070183	Transcript of Ruth Simpson's evidence in Post Office Limited v Castleton, Case No: HQ05X02706	POL-0066746

10.	POL00073609	Catherine Oglesby's Summary of events at Marine Drive Post Office	POL-0070172
11.	POL00071236	Note of Marine Drive Interview on 10 May 2000	POL-0067799
12.	POL00071058	Initial contact letter from Stephen Dilley of Bond Pearce LLP on 22 August 2006	POL-0067621
13.	POL00069572	Letter from Ruth Simpson to Stephen Dilley on 7 September 2006	POL-0066135
14.	POL00107444	Email from Stephen Dilley on 27 September 2006 regarding your draft Witness Statement.	POL-0068307
15.	POL00069503	Letter from Stephen Dilley enclosing revised draft of Witness Statement, dated 4 October 2006	POL-0066222
16.	POL00069497	Attendance note of call between Ruth Simpson and Stephen Dilley on 6 October 2006 regarding draft Witness Statement	POL-0066060
17.	POL00069455	Letter from Stephen Dilley enclosing amended Witness Statement to sign, dated 17 October 2006	POL-0066018
18.	POL00069461	Attendance note of call to Stephen Dilley on 17 October 2006 to make further amendments to Witness Statement	POL-0066024
19.	POL00081700_070	Letter from Stephen Dilley regarding	POL-0078263_070

		hearing availability, dated 25 October 2006	
20.	POL00071744	Attendance note of call between Ruth Simpson and Stephen Dilley on 29 November 2006 regarding the lottery payment / tickets	POL-0068307
21.	POL00069918	Email from Stephen Dilley on 30 November 2006 regarding Mr Castleton's Witness Statements	POL-0066481
22.	POL00069871	Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 1 December 2006 to discuss Christine Train's Witness Statement	POL-0066434
23.	POL00069659	Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 22 December 2006 to discuss Christine Train's Witness Statement	POL-0066222
24.	POL00070060	Attendance note of call between Stephen Dilley and Lee Castleton on 4 January 2007	POL-0066623
25.	POL00071881	Letter from Stephen Dilley to Lee Castleton dated 4 January 2007	POL-0068444
26.	POL00070054	Attendance note of call with Stephen Dilley on 5 January 2007 to discuss what happened during the evidence of the last Post Office witness at trial	POL-0066617
27.	POL00073768	Email from Stephen Dilley to Mandy Talbot on 12 January 2007 outlining	POL-0070331

		the hearing on 11 January 2007	
28.	POL00004325	Approved Judgment in Post Office Limited v Castleton of His Honour Judge Richard Harvey QC dated 22 January 2007	VIS00005393
29.	POL00098862	Email from Stephen Dilley on 23 January 2007 regarding the outcome of the trial	POL-0098445