

Invitation + advice needed

Justice For Subpostmasters Alliance

Mr Edward Davey MP
Minister for Postal Affairs
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
LONDON
SW1H 0ET

Alan Bates

GRO

20th May 2010

Tel: **GRO**

Dear Mr Davey

I am writing to you with regard to your position as Minister for Postal Affairs on behalf of the Justice For Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA).

We are an independent group of ex and serving subpostmasters who have suffered at the hands of the Post Office and their Horizon system ever since it was first installed. Our website jfsa.org.uk outlines how we came about and our aims, as well as offering sample cases that were provided by some of the group. Currently the group numbers close to 100, though we continue to be joined by others who have learnt of JFSA and have found that there is nowhere else to turn for help.

In every instance the Post Office acts as judge, jury and executioner and the individual is deserted by their reputedly representative organization The National Federation of Subpostmasters. Invariably these cases all stem from the flaws of the Horizon system the Post Office introduced and which they refuse to admit has ever suffered from a single problem.

The evidence is there to be found by anyone in a position of being able to unlock doors instead of placing barriers in the way of those pursuing the information. Our organization has access to a number of specialists who could provide the questions and analyze the resulting data if required. Though an independent external investigation instigated at Ministerial level would be the most appropriate, and would without any doubt easily find evidence of the error ridden system.

I am sure that you appreciate that there is not a single computer system that does not from time to time suffer from errors, especially when at the size and the level of complexity of the programs associated with the Horizon system. The Post Office blindly state that there are not, nor have there ever been any system errors, so subsequently anything wrong is entirely the responsibility of the subpostmaster as that is what they have agreed to when signing their contract. This is a contract that was produced in 1994 and does not address nor identify new technology, but they are still using it to intimidate and prosecute subpostmasters.

The weight of evidence we have been collating over the years continues to grow and gain in standing, it is only the flat refusal of the Post Office to allow experts to examine the system which is holding back this major scandal from breaking. But with the growing numbers in JFSA and the support we are now finding from the IT community and the media it is just a matter of time until the real truth about the Post Office and Horizon is exposed.

Over the years I have personally submitted written details of all this to the select committee of the DTI, and then on two other occasions to that of BERR, and put simply, the information has either been buried or disappeared. Others of JFSA have followed the route of contacting their MP's who would take the matter up with the Post Office on their behalf. Subsequently they are stonewalled or 'handled' by the Post Office often with off the shelf answers where they only change the name and address.

In writing to you on behalf of the group, I am asking for a meeting where we can present our case to you. Much has appeared in the press over the last few days that Government is going to change, I only hope that is true. If it is, the abuse of subpostmasters that has been going on under the protection of the previous Government may well come to an end.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

GRO

Alan Bates
Chairman
Justice For Subpostmasters Association

Email: **GRO**