

# Justice For Subpostmasters Alliance

Paul Scully MP  
Minister for Postal Affairs  
The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
1 Victoria St.  
LONDON,  
SW1H 0ET

1 November 2021

By email

Reference: The JFSA 555 Victims & Payment of Court Case Costs, Compensation and Shortfalls

Dear Minister

In an article published by the Shropshire Star on 30 October 2021 about your visit Waters Upton post office, it was reported that you made the following comments in response to questions put to you about the Horizon scandal and the Inquiry

"This is something that has been going on for 20 years, and we can't look to the future until what has happened in the past is sorted out."

"It is important that we ensure fair compensation to those who have been affected, and also ensuring that those who have had to make up shortfalls are also recompensed."

In particular I want to draw your attention to the second of your comments and to enquire as to when the fair compensation is to be paid out? Undoubtedly government, as the sole shareholder and responsible for Post Office is going to have to pay the compensation, a point emphasised by the present CEO of Post Office, Nick Read. Who in an article in the Sunday Times dated 31 October 2021 stated, he had "already said that ensuring quick compensation is a 'priority'" and the article continues, 'the Post Office said that it did not have the financial resources to pay for meaningful compensation itself, and was relying on the government to act.'

So Minister, it seems the ball is very much in your court to resolve the financial redress the victims group is owed and which you and your department are very well aware of. The Inquiry will be looking at the minutiae of who got things wrong, but the High Court has already established that it was Post Office that is incredibly guilty of this scandal and on that basis the financial redress to the

victims group should be settled as a matter of urgency and as a “priority”. You are going to have pay it at some point, so why are you continuing to make the victims suffer?

Your remark to the Shropshire Star about fair compensation goes on to comment about “ensuring that those who have had to make up shortfalls are also recompensed”. When is that to happen? You do know that the 555 victims group who brought the initial civil action had, and it now seems illegally, had over £8 million pounds extracted from them by Post Office for so-called shortfalls during the time they were serving Subpostmasters. When is this to be repaid and how? Post Office has blatantly excluded the victims group from the Historic Shortfall Scheme, so what is the mechanism for repaying them?

Finally, and referring to the first of your comments quoted above, where you recognise that “we can't look to the future until what has happened in the past is sorted out”. Never has a truer statement been made by a politician, because, as I am sure you are aware, we will continue to pursue the matter of the financial redress owed to victims through Parliament and the media, and when possible the courts, regardless.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Alan Bates', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Alan Bates

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