



Business and Trade Committee

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Secretary of State
Department for Business and Trade
[By email]

8 July 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

On behalf of the Business and Trade Committee, I welcome today's publication of the first volume of the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry's final report. It is critical that the suffering caused by the Horizon scandal is recognised and that the need for urgent redress continues to be highlighted. As a Committee, we look forward to the publication of the Inquiry's full final report.

Our Committee and its predecessor in the last Parliament has had a long history of scrutiny in this area and has consistently fought to ensure that those who suffered because of the Horizon Scandal are recompensed without delay. Following the General Election, the Committee immediately returned to the scrutiny of redress payments. We heard from claimants still fighting for redress, including Sir Alan Bates. And, in January, we set out five key recommendations for Government to ensure that those who suffered because of the scandal were compensated without delay. Since then, we have followed up with regular correspondence to the Department. The annex overleaf sets out the Government's progress against our five key recommendations.

We acknowledge that the current Government has made progress, and we welcome the recent news that more than £1 billion has now been paid in redress and the recent publication of legal fees information. However, it is crucial that the Government continues to act. In this spirit, we would be grateful if you could inform the Committee:

- 1) When a decision will be made on transferring the administration of the Horizon Shortfall Scheme from the Post Office to the Department?
- 2) When will the Department be able to fulfil our request of 10 April 2025 for further analysis on claim progress and outcomes?

It is time for this painful chapter of history to be closed. We urge this Government to take the necessary steps to ensure that there is no further delay for those who are entitled to receive compensation.

Chair of the Business and Trade Committee

ANNEX – PROGRESS AGAINST OUR FIVE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Initial Government Response	Subsequent Government Action
Remove the Post Office from administering any of the redress schemes	Government partially accepted this recommendation. [agreed to take responsibility for Overturned Convictions Scheme, and would consider case for HSS¹ to be transferred]	Overturned Convictions Scheme moved in House at end of May 2025. Decision still to be made on Horizon Shortfall Scheme.
Up-front legal advice should be offered to claimants and paid for by the scheme's administrators for all schemes	Government did not accept this recommendation to give up-front legal advice for HSS.	Government to reflect on recommendation - but reasserted that providing upfront legal advice for HSS claimants would increase chances of delays. Officials have been asked to look into independent service to support with HSS Claims.
Introduce binding timeframes for scheme administrators at each individual stage of each scheme, with financial penalties passed on to the claimant if these deadlines are not met.	Government did not accept this recommendation for HSS. The Government partially accepted this recommendation for GLO.² [Expected to pay substantial redress to majority by 31 March] The Government did not accept this recommendation for HCRS.³	No mention of binding timeframes.
Appoint an independent adjudicator for each scheme and empower them to provide directions and case management to ensure claimants move through the process swiftly.	The Government accepted the recommendation for the case facilitator for HSS. The Government did not accept the recommendation for an independent adjudicator for the GLO.	On 8 April, the Government announced that facilitated discussions had been introduced in the GLO Scheme.

¹ Horizon Shortfall Scheme

² Group Litigation Order Scheme

³ Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme

Recommendation	Initial Government Response	Subsequent Government Action
Provide clear, strong instructions to taxpayer-funded lawyers to maximise the speed of redress, eliminate legal delays, enhance the benefit of doubt given to claimants, and publish the costs spent on lawyers for the public and Parliament to see.	The Government agreed with Committee's recommendation on stronger instruction to lawyers in context of HSS. The Government partially accepted the Committee's recommendation on the Mediation Route for HSS. The Government partially accepted the Committees' recommendation on Requests for Information on HSS but did not accept the Committee's recommendation on Requests for Information on GLO. The Government did not accept the recommendation for giving claimants the benefit of the doubt for HSS. The Government did not accept the Committee's recommendation on informing claimants of their right to redress for HCRS. The Government did not accept the Committee's recommendation on removing the Fear Factor for all schemes. The Department agreed to commit to publishing legal costs.	Confirmation that data on legal costs would be published shortly. Legal costs as of 31 March 2025 subsequently published on 7 July. Government defended its Scheme principles on not removing fear factor from full assessment, management of fixed sum offer, legal advice, Post Office disclosure, fully assessed route and instruction to lawyers.