

No 007/24

5th January 2024

Dear Colleague

POST OFFICE: HORIZON SCANDAL - ITV PRODUCTION – MR BATES VS THE POST OFFICE

Branches have seen the ITV production being broadcast this week entitled “*Mr Bates vs The Post Office*”. The four-part series is extremely moving and accurately portrays the misery and suffering of hundreds of Postmasters and their families during and after the Horizon scandal, which has come to be widely perceived as the most serious miscarriage of justice in British legal history. The link to download the four episodes is: <https://www.itv.com/watch/mr-bates-vs-the-post-office/10a0469/10a0469a0001>

We would like to congratulate Alan Bates and the Justice for SubPostmasters Alliance (JFSA) who have campaigned for justice for the victims of this horrendous travesty for many years. Their determination and perseverance has helped to achieve the overturning of a significant number of unsafe convictions and securing compensation schemes for those who have suffered so terribly. The CWU is calling upon Government to provide more tangible support for the victims and to speed up the compensation scheme process.

The CWU as a Core Participant in the Sir Wyn Williams Inquiry on the Horizon scandal will be involved in the various hearings during 2024 and this will afford us the opportunity to help the victims highlight the horrendous tactics deployed by Post Office in its long running persecution of Postmasters. This will also allow us to add our voice to the increasing demand for accountability of the senior Post Office Directors behind the Horizon scandal. In this regard, below is a link to a petition which asks people to lend their support to have ex Post Office CEO Paula Vennells stripped of her CBE:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/strip-paula-vennells-of-her-cbe>

We would also like to highlight the comments earlier this week in the media by Kevin Hollinrake, Post Office Minister who said “... *ultimately you've got responsibility for what happened, you are the Chief Executive. If I was Paula Vennells I would seriously consider handing that [CBE] back voluntarily*”.

Lastly, the CWU has a fully functioning Postmasters Branch with Sean Hudson as Branch Secretary and a working Committee. We would urge all Branches and members when encountering Postmasters in their daily working lives to encourage them to join the CWU.

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary