# Former Postmaster Alan Bates to Reject Compensation Offer for Second Time in UK IT Scandal



Former postmaster Alan Bates has stated he will reject a compensation offer related to the Horizon IT scandal for the second time after the government proposed just under a third of what he requested. Bates, who led the fight against the Post Office, revealed his dissatisfaction with the latest offer, which constitutes 30 percent of his claims. He previously declined an offer in January that amounted to approximately 16 percent of his demands, describing it as "cruel, offensive and derisory."

Bates was dismissed from his post at the Llandudno branch in 2003 for allegedly failing to account for shortfalls in his accounts, a decision he has been contesting for over two decades. He is one of around 900 sub-postmasters who were wrongfully prosecuted due to issues with the Horizon computer system, developed by Fujitsu.

Christopher Head, a former postmaster, expressed concerns over what he perceives as a vindictive stance by the Post Office toward Bates. He implied that the prolonged compensation process could be a form of retribution for Bates's pivotal role in exposing the scandal.

The Post Office Horizon IT scandal, which has been described as the largest miscarriage of justice in British history, involved the false prosecution of over 700 staff members based on faulty data from the Horizon system. Some affected individuals were imprisoned, faced financial ruin, or died before seeing justice.

A compensation scheme, the Group Litigation Order (GLO), has been set up by the government to address the grievances of these postmasters. However, the process has been criticized for its lack of transparency and the insufficient settlements provided. Bates noted that the claimants initially received £58 million in a settlement, but after legal fees, they were left with only £12 million.

Next week, former Post Office CEO Paula Vennells is scheduled to give evidence to the ongoing inquiry. Former executive Lesley Sewell testified that Vennells had sought her help in 2020 to "plug gaps in her memory" and possibly avoid an independent inquiry.

The Horizon scandal has been widely publicized, including through the ITV drama "Mr. Bates vs. The Post Office," which drew significant viewership and brought increased scrutiny to the issue.