

Bank To Close Brighton Call Centre With Loss of 410 More Jobs

The Bank has today announced its intention to close its Contact Centre at Sussex House, Brighton on 28th May 2010 with the loss of 410 Telephony jobs. It is possible that a further 76 jobs at Personal Lending Department (PLD) - also based at Sussex House - will also be moved out of Brighton.

This is the latest of several blows the Bank has inflicted on Brighton jobs over recent months, the last being on 10th November when it said it would be cutting 220 jobs from its operation at City Park Hove.

The Bank has admitted that there are likely to be few staff who will be able to avoid being made compulsorily redundant.

Key Staff Issues

For staff at Sussex House, the key features of the Bank's closure plans will be:

- **Sussex House will close on 28th May 2010, with all 410 Telephony roles being made redundant.**
- **Most Telephony Staff are likely to be made compulsorily redundant. Though the Bank employs thousands more staff in the Brighton & Hove area, there will be limited opportunities for redeployment, since other areas are also cutting back on staff numbers.** For example, earlier this month Group Operations said it would itself be cutting 220 jobs from its Collections & Recoveries operation in Hove.
- **Personal Lending Department will move out of Sussex House sometime between the end of May and 15th October, with the Bank**

The number of job losses the Bank has announced in Brighton over the past six months is fast approaching a thousand.

Meanwhile, it insists on retaining well over 5,000 jobs in its offshored operation in India.

admitting that it may no longer remain operating from Brighton or Hove.

Abandoning UK Jobs In Favour Of 'Jobs To India'

It is wholly unacceptable that the Bank should be condemning many hundreds of staff in Brighton to compulsory redundancy - with serious consequences for the local economy - as over 5,000 jobs are retained in India merely because the Bank can get away with paying lower salaries to staff working there.

The Bank should accept that it has a responsibility to not only its existing staff in Brighton, but also the local economy; especially when it has been so dependent upon UK taxpayers' financial support over the past year.

LTU will be continuing its intensive lobbying of MP's to force the Bank to return jobs to the UK to save existing jobs - one local MP, Celia Barlow (Hove) met with a Treasury Minister earlier this month - and we will also be asking the local Council and Media to support our campaign too.

Another Blow For Brighton Jobs

The closure of the Brighton Contact Centre is just the latest of a series of blows to local jobs inflicted by the Lloyds Banking Group over recent weeks.

This will severely restrict the prospects for staff of finding suitable alternative employment locally in other parts of the Bank, since other areas are also suffering significant cutbacks in staff numbers:

- **In June the Bank announced that it was pulling all of its operations out of Quest House in Brighton, transferring the work to sites elsewhere in the Bank. The majority of these Information Technology roles were transferred to Haywards Heath.**
- **In July the Bank announced that 87 jobs (FTE) were to be transferred from the Recoveries operation at City Park Hove to HBOS's operations at Rosyth and Livingston. Up to 20 further jobs were**

also being lost in Hove from the Bank's Complaints and Business Support operations.

- **On 10th November, Group Operations announced that it would be slashing over 220 further roles from its Brighton and Hove operations.** This will involve cutting 57 roles from its Collections & Recoveries operation at City Park Hove by the end of 2010; 130 roles from Banking Operations at Queens Road Quadrant in Brighton during the second half of 2010; and a further 33 Business Services roles will be transferred out of Elder Place in Brighton.

Meanwhile members across the Bank are reporting escalating numbers of customers complaining about the appalling service provided by the Bank's Collections operation in India. This was previously based in Brighton and could easily be returned to the UK to save jobs in Brighton.

LTU's Key Priorities

LTU has a reputation for giving members the highest quality professional support available from any UK trade union and this will be no different whenever the Bank announces the closure of a Contact Centre.

Throughout the Bank's Contact Centre closure programme, LTU will have four key priorities:

Minimising Compulsory Redundancies

LTU will ensure that the Bank takes all possible steps to minimise the number of staff who will be made compulsorily redundant.

Though it is inevitable that there will be compulsory redundancies at all Contact Centres that the Bank closes, LTU will be maximising pressure on the Bank to do all it can to keep these to a minimum.

Measures must include seeking volunteers for redundancy in other areas of the Bank to create vacancies for staff to transfer into; whether this be other LBG operations elsewhere in the local area or

even providing full financial support to any staff who might consider relocating to other Contact Centres that have a longer-term future elsewhere in the Bank.

Maximum Support Finding Alternative Work

LTU will be making sure that whenever a Contact Centre is due to close, all staff are provided with the maximum possible support and assistance in finding alternative work either inside the Bank or with alternative employers.

The Union has already made a number of proposals to the Bank in respect of the Sussex House closure, including that it should provide staff with additional skills training to make them more attractive to new employers. Other measures that LTU intends to pursue with the Bank include close liaison with the local authority and other public bodies to identify alternative job opportunities, assistance with childcare for staff who might be unable to continue on their current work patterns with new employers, etc.

LTU also provides our members with a free CV Design & Preparation Service to help them find new jobs both inside and outside of the Bank.

Avoiding 'Forced Redeployment'

Often during Bank reorganisations, an issue for many staff that is almost as emotive as redundancy is the forced redeployment of people into alternative roles that they may not wish to accept (perhaps preferring Voluntary Severance) or consider unsuitable.

In the Sussex House closure this is unlikely to be an issue for most staff, although it could well be with other Contact Centre closures where staff may be in close proximity to other Bank operations that might be able to offer them work.

LTU will also provide all members with our fullest support including, where necessary, representation through the Job Security Appeals Procedure to ensure staff are not forced into accepting unsuitable alternative roles.

Campaigning For Return Of Jobs From India To The UK

LTU will be stepping up our already high-profile campaign to pressurise the Bank into abandoning its 'Jobs To India' policy, forcing the return of work to the UK.

LTU is the only trade union operating within the Lloyds Banking Group that is actively opposing the Bank's Offshoring Policy. In fact, LTU's campaign

contributed to the closure of the Bank's Mumbai Call Centre (which was set-up when the Newcastle Contact Centre was closed), with the return of over 750 Telephony jobs to the UK in March 2007.

It is wholly unacceptable that whilst the Bank is making so many jobs redundant in the UK, it continues to maintain over 5,000 jobs in India merely because it can get away with paying lower salaries. This includes a large telephony-based Collections & Recoveries operation in India, which could easily be returned to the UK, and therefore provide employment for many existing Contact Centre staff in the UK who will otherwise face the prospect of being made compulsorily redundant.

LTU has been intensifying its lobbying of MP's over recent months as we seek their support to make the Bank live up to its responsibilities to the UK economy by returning jobs from India to the UK.

Local Political Pressure

In Brighton, this campaigning has succeeded in eliciting the active support of many MP's for LTU's Offshoring Campaign, including Cynthia Barlow - MP for Hove - who recently met with a Treasury Minister to discuss these issues.

LTU is planning to work closely with other West Sussex MP's and the local council to intensify this pressure on the Bank to return jobs to the UK.

Voluntary Severance Register

One way that compulsory redundancies can be reduced is a process known as 'Bumping'.

'Bumping' in Brighton would involve Sussex House staff who would like to remain working for the Bank swapping places with staff in other business units who would happily leave the Bank on Voluntary Severance Terms.

This can leave both sets of staff - those leaving and those remaining - satisfied.

With the Bank itself being unwilling to run Voluntary Severance Registers, LTU has launched its own.

Any members in the Brighton & Hove and Haywards Heath areas who might be interested in leaving the Bank on Voluntary Severance Terms should register their details on the enclosed Registration Form. This also explains how members' details will be handled by LTU to help achieve a 'win win' outcome for all affected staff.

To join call 01234 262868... today!

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ltu
.co.uk

Professional Support You Can Count On

What staff are clearly going to need over the coming two years whilst the Integration of LTSB and HBOS continues is the sort of high quality, professional union representation that only LTU is equipped and committed to providing.

This is particularly so since in the past some staff have mistakenly believed that the unions operating within Lloyds are all the same, rather than understanding that the unions offer vastly different levels of support to their members.

LTU guarantees to provide our members with:

- **Regular visits to Sussex House by our experienced full-time official, Stuart Rankin.**

Naturally, Stuart specialises only in representing Lloyds Staff - not staff in other companies or even industries - and through his one-to-one meetings with members will be able to provide staff with the professional, reliable and local support they will need.

- **Frequent, detailed Newsletters explaining staff rights and entitlements.**

LTU publishes around fifteen times as many Newsletters a year as Unite. Members need only make a comparison between the 10 pages of detailed advice that LTU published today for Sussex House staff and Unite's own communication to appreciate how fundamentally different the two unions are. Going by past experience, the Unite Newsletter will struggle to fill a single page!

- **A genuine 24 Hour Advice Line Service - staffed only by people who focus exclusively on representing Lloyds Staff - that members can phone at any time of the day, night or weekend. The telephone number is 01234 262868.**

- **Regular negotiations and consultation between Senior Management and LTU, where the Union is able to ensure that full account is taken of the needs and concerns of staff.**
- **Individual Representation that is provided by professionals: officials paid directly by the Union who have considerable expertise at successfully representing members in Job Security, Performance, Disciplinary and Grievance Hearings.**

Unlike other unions, LTU does not use Bank staff to represent members since we believe that on matters that may have major implications for individuals' employment, they should be represented by people who are independent of the Bank and have the experience that comes from being involved in representation on a daily basis.

Not All Unions Are The Same

No doubt there will be a lot of hot air from Unite over the coming days. But talk is cheap. **LTU will be working hard to deliver to staff the high quality professional support we have a reputation for!**

Brighton staff should not leave it until it is too late to join the only Union they can be sure is reliable, effective and completely independent of the Bank.

And of course, most staff will appreciate that LTU's greatest strength is our focus and dedication to meeting the needs of Lloyds Staff, rather than being a union that is spread very thinly over a wide range of different banks or industries and which suffers from a poor detailed knowledge of Lloyds and its staff policies.

How To Join

Staff who are not already members can join by either returning the enclosed Membership Application Form or by phoning LTU on 01234 262868.

STEVE TATLOW
Assistant General Secretary

To join call 01234 262868... today!