

# Call Centre Workers Face Redundancy

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**By Gayle Tomlinson, The Evening Chronicle**

Just 17% of doomed call centre staff have been given new jobs by their bank bosses.

Around 390 members of staff at Lloyds TSB will be made redundant on November 30 when it shuts its doors for the last time.

The bank announced last year that it was moving 1,000 jobs to India.

Already 370 members of staff have left not wanting to wait around to find out if they would be jobless for Christmas.

And despite an offer from Lloyds to deploy all staff who wanted to stay in the firm, only 170 staff have taken up jobs elsewhere in the bank.

Many have been offered positions at the bank's call centre in Sunderland and in its branches across the region.

It is understood 150 of the staff sticking with the company until closure have been offered training packages of up to £2,000 which they can spend on education of their choice.

Gillian Amer, 39, of Newcastle, is one member of staff who is being made redundant.

She said: "It is very worrying with Christmas coming up, especially when you have a family and a mortgage. It's a very difficult time.

"I would have taken redeployment in the area but all they were offering was Sunderland. There were one or two other jobs available on the board but we had to apply for them like anyone else."

Lloyds TSB Union (LTU) said many of the staff who have taken on new roles at Sunderland have jumped 'out of the frying pan into the fire,' while those who had resigned had been 'got rid of on the cheap'.

Assistant general secretary Steve Tatlow said: "Just 20% of staff have been found alternative jobs within Lloyds TSB. Many of these

jobs have been at the bank's Sunderland call centre, which LTU believes is also at risk of closure.

"Nearly 40% of staff have simply resigned. In other words, the bank has got rid of them on the cheap by not having to make a redundancy payment.

"The bank would only pay staff redundancy pay if they remained working until the closure date - rather than allowing some to be paid redundancy if they found an alternative job before then. Many staff who have been offered an alternative job could not risk missing out and facing unemployment in the run up to Christmas.

"More than 40% of staff have not resigned and have not been redeployed. Many of these therefore face the real prospect of compulsory redundancy and unemployment."

A Lloyds TSB spokesperson denied rumours that staff were being offered redeployment as cleaners in Plymouth.

She said all positions offered were local unless staff asked specifically to be relocated elsewhere.

She said: "The situation is that we have only offered roles in the local area except for where people ask to be relocated.

"Many of those redeployed are going to the Sunderland call centre and the branch network. Some are going into roles in business banking."