“I`m 93, but I prefer to work…”

Jim Dowd. 93. Perhaps the oldest working man in Britain, was taking a rest yesterday from his six day week as a trolley supervisor at Sainsbury's\*. Mr. Dowd, a retired motor fitter, said he might put his feet up and watch television, "but it's usu­ally very boring and I prefer to work".

At Sainsbury's Finchley Road branch, north London, he pushes trolleys from bays in the car park to the store for customers. He works a 33-hour week Monday to Saturday, and said he was fit as a fiddle, apart from a slightly gammy knee. "I intend to go on working until I drop. There is nothing else to do, and I love it."

He joined the company eight years ago, having returned to work at 69 because he was bored and missed his job repairing cars. Sainsbury's allowed him to cut the tape when the store opened several years ago because he was so popular with cus­tomers.

The manager, Jim Rutledge, has offered him a job in the store but Mr. Dowd said: "I have refused it. The only job I want inside is his, and he won't let me have it." Mr. Rutledge said: "Custom­ers are very fond of Mr. Dowd, although they sometimes ask how long he can go on working. He is always cheerful, and we value his contribution." He travels to work by bus from his shel­tered accommodation in Hampstead. His wife died five years ago.

He spends most of his six weeks of holiday in the Lake Dis­trict, driving 300 miles to a farm near Cockermouth. He does not go walking but admires the lakes "by driving round all the passes".

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