

Manpower 2.



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

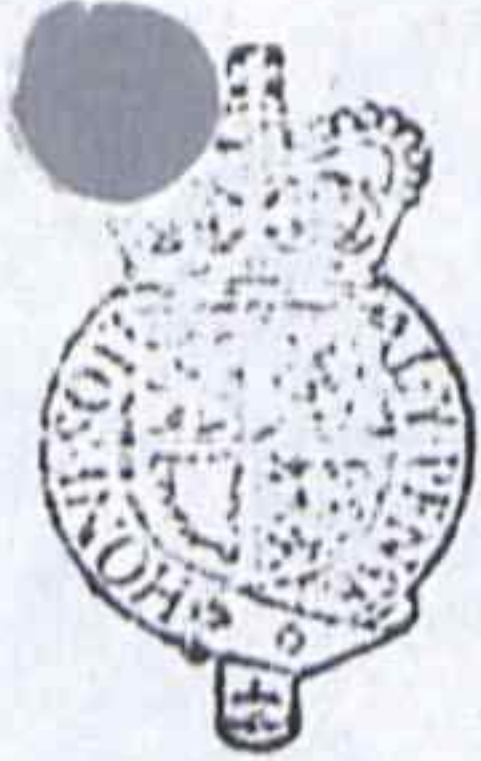
I attach replies sent by the Department of the Environment to three correspondents who complained of housing problems when trying to find jobs in a new area.

The Department has tried to be sympathetic in replying, but you will see that they can offer nothing in the face of local authority obstinacy. This is an issue which will need to be taken up when Ministers discuss mobility later in the autumn.

MR

2 September 1980

MB



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Correspondence and
other letters in G.R.

F Connor Esq
c/o 1 Argyle Avenue
HOUNSLOW
Middlesex

Your reference

Our reference

Date

27 August 1980

Dear Mr Connor

1. I have been asked to reply to your letter of 26 July to the Prime Minister about your problems in trying to get council accommodation in Hounslow. Your letter was referred to this Department because of the Secretary of State for the Environment's responsibility for housing policy.
2. I am sorry to hear of your difficulties. Responsibility for allocating local authority housing rests by law with district councils and the Department has no power to intervene in individual cases. However, because of your problems, I have consulted the London Borough of Hounslow. They told me that although you could in theory join the waiting list for accommodation, while your family still lives away, you would not get enough "points" to be offered a new home. If you cannot find temporary accommodation for your whole family in Hounslow, there does not seem to be any chance of you getting a Council tenancy in this way. It would certainly be unwise to give up your tenancy in Scotland unless you had been able to make firm arrangements in London.
3. Hounslow have "reciprocal transfer" arrangements with a number of other local authorities, but not with the Kilmarnock and Loudoun DC. (Hounslow consider that if they accepted you as one half of a reciprocal transfer, it is so unlikely that one of their tenants will want to go to the Kilmarnock area, that they would effectively be giving up a council home, which would otherwise have gone to a local family who had been waiting a long time.)
4. The Borough keep a list of tenants who are interested in making a direct exchange of homes with people from other areas. You can go and see the list at the Housing Advice Centre in the Town Hall at Treaty Road. The Centre is open between 9.30 am and 4.30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays - on Thursdays it is open until 7 pm. Alternatively you might consider trying some other local authorities in the area. There are also some private agencies which try to help people find exchange partners - the Locatex Bureau, PO Box 1, March, Cambridgeshire is one we have heard of.

5. This Department is currently involved in the development of a natural mobility scheme for the tenants of public housing authorities in England and Wales. The basic principles of the Scheme are set out in the enclosed copy of a Press Notice which records the statement by the Minister of Housing on 6 March. As you will see the Government hope to extend the Scheme to Scotland later, although at the moment we are concentrating on getting it into operation in England and Wales.

6. I am sorry I cannot be of direct help, but I hope this information will be useful to you.

Yours sincerely

W. Hills

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