

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE OPENING OF THE HALTON HOME OF
EXTRA CARE FOR THE FRAIL AND ELDERLY ON FRIDAY 8 APRIL 1983

As Lady Carrington said, I live just up the road at a place called Chequers and between you and me I hope to go on living there for another five years.

Naturally, I have always taken a great deal of interest in the work of the Abbeyfield Society. It is a wonderful organisation consisting of people who didn't merely say we have a need to build more houses for our older folk, they actually set to and did something about it. They were the doers in our kind of society and it is the doers that turn dreams into places like this.

I looked up the history and I came across this phrase 'the Abbeyfield Society is a cooperative effort by people of faith and goodwill'. I think that says it all. A cooperative effort, a teamwork to do this thing, people coming together, each to put in their own skill, each to do their own bit and they came together because of their belief, their faith and they did these things out of goodwill. If that spirit were to permeate the whole of our lives, as indeed some people try to ensure that it does, then we should really have very few problems today.

I know that the work of the Abbeyfield Society really is in two parts. First, when there are homes which consist of bed-sitting rooms for people to continue their independent lives there looked after by a staff. And then we go to places such as this, which are called, I think marvellously, 'extra care'. The whole of Abbeyfield is care and this is extra care.

I marvelled as I came in at the beautiful architecture and marvelled even more at the lovely decoration of the place in every room - every room is beautiful - every room is cheerful. But the marvels weren't at an end. I marvelled that you had such a wonderful Matron and staff, and everyone has said 'You know we have a marvellous Matron and we owe so much to her' and Matron says 'Yes I have a marvellous staff - not only the nursing staff but also the supporting

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staff who do the practical work in the laundry and in the kitchen'. And so it has been a tremendous teamwork, tremendous effort. I know there are always problems when there are bank balances - there always are. Somehow because of the faith and goodwill those problems are solved as well. I can only make this appeal, we are going to need more and more cooperative effort, and faith and goodwill because we are looking forward to a time when within twenty years we will have three million people over the age of 75 and $\frac{1}{2}$ million people over the age of 85. So really here we're giving an example of what is the best way to go about providing very attractive living circumstances for when we are over that age.

May I congratulate the architects and all those who had anything to do with this building. I noticed that they've kept the trees. I noticed that there is a nice view from every window. I noticed that the staircases are such as to make it easy. I noticed the design of the rooms, everywhere is lovely but most of all you have created a marvellous atmosphere.

I am particularly pleased to be here as you have among you an old suffragette, 95, Mrs. Spurway. We have already had a good talk and we could both of us have talked longer. I shouldn't be here but for her work and I'm very happy to say that when she talked to me she thought that some of her efforts had been worthwhile.

Also, again being a professional woman, Dr. Gilmour, one of our first doctors - they blazed the trail which our generation has taken up.

You also have here many people who have served their country in the armed forces and in many other ways. And my generation says thank you to your generation for having set the traditions and standards for us to live up to.

You have, I know, been open since November 1982. But every good building or house that I open has always been going for quite some time just to prove it's alright to open it. It gives me very great pleasure to formally declare open the Pulham House and say may God bless all those who live in her.

1. MISS STEPHENS
2. MISS ROBILLIARD

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE HALTON HOME FOR THE ELDERLY

During the visit last Friday, 8 April, the Prime Minister met Mrs. Eve Spurway, 95 years old, a suffragette. In her speech the Prime Minister said that she wouldn't be in her present office but for Mrs. Spurway's work and that Mrs. Spurway thought that some of her efforts had been worthwhile.

The Prime Minister promised to attend Mrs. Spurway's 100th birthday celebrations - she will be 100 on 9 October, 1987 - but hoped that the party would be arranged so as not to clash with the Conservative Party Conference that year. Mrs. Spurway, a very lively and lovely lady, was so pleased with this promise.

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11 April 1983