



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

CC NO  
NBPM  
AT 30/9

The Rt Hon Patrick Jenkin MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment  
Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

29 September 1983

*De Patrick*

In your minute to the Prime Minister of 14 September you suggested that other Departments with an interest in Merseyside could usefully prepare short papers on their activities in the area. I fully support this suggestion and I have instructed my officials to prepare a paper on the work of my Department.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of your minute.

2  
1  
*TK*

TOM KING



014 25

Her Po

Innes

Cities

PK 21



30 SEP 1983



PRIME MINISTER

MERSEYSIDE

Prime Minister (2) 23 September 1983  
Policy Unit  
You saw this report last week.  
MCS 23/4

Patrick's report is well-meaning and copious, but it dodges the hard issues. The Task Force, despite your warnings, looks like becoming institutionalised - a permanent branch of the DoE with its own funding (£15 million last year, £40 million this year) as well as access to DoE schemes. This is exactly what we feared last summer.

The Task

After 2 years, we have surely now gone beyond merely demonstrating Ministerial concern, although this continues to be important.

Large sums of public money have been thrown at stubborn inner-city problems and many new types of solution attempted, particularly in partnership between public and private sector. These are listed in Annex B.

What we want to know now is: do these new solutions work? How many new jobs are they producing? How much extra private money is coming in? Paragraph 12 is wilfully vague.

The Next Step

The DoE want to initiate another round of projects with an even bigger budget. They also invite Ministers to follow the Merseyside approach in other inner cities.

1. Before committing any more money, we must have a detailed assessment of the schemes so far.
2. This assessment of Merseyside could be the first stage in a full-scale assessment of the Urban Programme as a whole, naturally without prejudging the Treasury's efforts in the bilaterals to reduce the level of spending on the Urban Programme.
3. Meanwhile, there should be no further steps towards institutionalising the Task Force until we know precisely what schemes we want to pursue.

FERDINAND MOUNT





✓ NO  
Prime Minister (4)

To note.

MS 15/9

PRIME MINISTER

MERSEYSIDE

In his minute to you of 15 July, Peter Rees expressed a wish to see a report on the lessons that could be drawn from the activities of the Task Force and the impact of Government policies on Merseyside. ms

Michael Heseltine gave a fairly full account of what had been done since the Toxteth riots of 1981 when he wrote to you on 21 December 1982 enclosing the text of the speech he had made which covered a full review of the initiatives with which he had been associated during his year as Minister with special responsibilities for Merseyside. Copies were sent to interested colleagues, including the Chief Secretary. In your reply of 23 December (copy enclosed) you expressed satisfaction with what had been achieved and looked forward to further advances in 1983.

I now enclose a paper prepared by the Merseyside Task Force, which describes the main features of its work to date, and discusses some of the lessons that have been learnt and their possible relevance to other inner city areas.

As you know, following our discussion on 6 July 1983, I announced proposals for building on the work of the MTF, including the reinforcement of the MTF as a more permanent presence on Merseyside. The special characteristics of the MTF will be continued and strengthened, and in addition, it is taking over responsibility for some of my Department's main programmes on Merseyside which have, until now, been handled by the DOE Regional Office in Manchester. I understand



CONFIDENTIAL



that Cecil Parkinson is considering the future of his Department's presence on Merseyside and it is essential that our two Departments should continue to work very closely in this area.

I suggest that it would also be helpful if colleagues in charge of Departments with interests in Merseyside could follow my report - which necessarily concentrates on the particular work which is primarily the responsibility of my Department as undertaken by the Task Force - with short papers on the related activities of their Departments. This would help us to put together a more complete picture of Government policies on Merseyside and I know that colleagues share our concern.

I am copying this letter and report to Peter Rees and to other Cabinet colleagues and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

PJ

PJ

14 September 1983



MERSEYSIDEREPORT BY THE MERSEYSIDE TASK FORCEBACKGROUND

1. Governments have long recognised the economic problems of Merseyside. Major examples of steps taken to encourage economic regeneration have been its designation as a special development area, a substantial advance factory building programme, and major investment in motorway and trunk-road building. In addition, the inner area of Liverpool is one of seven inner city Partnership areas in England and the local authority has received substantial support through the urban programme. Other Merseyside local authorities have also received additional support. The setting up of the Merseyside Development Corporation has directed further capital investment resources into the central area of disused docklands. There is an Enterprise Zone.

2. In spite of the efforts of recent years, however, Merseyside has over the last decade lost about 10,000 jobs net each year. The economic prospects for the sub region remain bleak. Present trends indicate that:

- the manufacturing sector on Merseyside will continue to contract;
- service sector employment will, at best, stabilise;
- the Port's long term future will be a considerably smaller operation than it is now;
- the number of firms being created in the conurbation is small, and comes nowhere near to replacing the



employment projected to be lost from existing activities being reduced in scale;

- there is some potential for expansion of tourism and leisure-related businesses on Merseyside but its impact overall cannot be very substantial.

3. A similar summary analysis can be offered to explain the difficulties faced by other conurbations or sub-regions in the Country. For Merseyside, however, the decline is not recent but has occurred over decades. For thirty years the unemployment rate has been running at roughly twice the national average (except for the last few years). The structure of Merseyside's industrial and commercial base is such that local companies overall are less likely to respond, in terms of additional employment likely to be offered, to a national economic upturn. New technology industries are under-represented. The poor industrial relations image and the general impression conveyed by the scale of physical dereliction are disincentives to investors. Manchester as the regional centre provides strong competition for Liverpool in attracting white collar service employment. Liverpool City Council as the major local authority has suffered from nearly a decade (until May 1983) of no single Party control. This has led to inefficiency and far too many changes in decisions.

4. These factors are likely to reinforce the pattern of population loss that has continued since the war, including a disproportionate element of fit, active and skilled workers



and those with entrepreneurial flair. In the absence of special measures the decline in business confidence and the scale of physical dereliction would be likely to increase.

5. This is the background to the activities of The Merseyside Task Force since the Autumn of 1981.

THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE

6. After the riots of July 1981, and an intensive period of Ministerial activity on Merseyside, it was decided that the Secretary of State for the Environment would be given a remit to take a special interest in Merseyside. To support him, the Merseyside Task Force was set up.

7. The special features of the MTF compared with a traditional regional office are:

- Ministerial leadership and involvement;
- joint working between the Department of Environment, Department of Trade and Industry, and the MSC and appropriate links with other relevant Departments;
- secondments from the private sector;
- an initiating and catalytic rather than a regulatory role for civil servants;
- availability of special financial resources to pump prime exemplary projects.

The MTF was given no special powers and is not an agency.

It works with a wide variety of local companies, with Government agencies - such as English Industrial Estates and the Housing Corporation - which have direct executive responsibilities, with local authorities and with voluntary organisations.



8. The MTF's role is to encourage, and where appropriate offer financial and other support, to local organisations to carry out projects which:

- enlist the resources of the private sector;
- bring vacant land and buildings into use;
- help to revive local business confidence;
- directly improve living conditions;
- encourage new ways for local organisations, public and private, to work together and involve the local community.

9. This approach was and is needed to show what can be done to tackle at least some of the many difficult problems of this area and to begin to revive confidence. The emphasis has not been on producing further studies of Merseyside's problems but on positive action geared to producing results on the ground and stimulating other initiatives. Much can and has been achieved by more effective use of the resources available, public and private.

#### SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

10. The selection of projects is governed by the objectives set out above. Whether a scheme proceeds necessarily depends on its acceptability to the body, whether public or private, which has executive powers. Where appropriate, public sector financial support is offered - particularly in those cases where private sector investment can be attracted. The degree of MTF involvement varies: where an agency has specific responsibilities such as English Industrial Estates, the Merseyside Development Corporation, or the Housing Corporation



it would be wrong for the MTF to intervene. Where, however, novel ways of packaging private sector and public sector funds from various sources can usefully be applied there is considerable MTF involvement, as there is in cases where financial resources are made available on a case by case basis such as through the derelict land or urban programmes.

11. In 1982/83, the MTF had available a special allocation of £15M. These resources were used as a supplement to the main programme and urban programme resources available to local authorities. The special allocation for 1983/84 is £40M. There has been a deliberate and heavy concentration of public sector funding on schemes which bring major and significant physical improvement to the area. Over a quarter of the budget will go to infrastructure, land reclamation, industrial units, improvement of industrial estates, and various refurbishment projects. Nearly a quarter will go to support housing schemes. There has been a very heavy concentration on capital projects and it is estimated that over 90% of MTF special allocation expenditure in 1983/84 will go to capital projects. A more detailed analysis of expenditure is at Annex A.

12. The gearing of private sector financing is difficult to estimate at this stage largely because it will take several years for many of the major projects to be completed. For example, many of the housing projects are directly related to increasing private sector housing provision and widening housing choice. Nor is it yet possible to estimate in terms of private sector investment what is the impact of improved advice to local businesses and measures to tackle the physical



dereliction in the area.

13. A summary of representative projects is at Annex B.

TOXTETH

14. The geographical remit of MTF covers the Merseyside County Council area and that part of the special development area which lies outside the County Council area. Therefore activities have not been confined to the Toxteth area of Liverpool within which the riots took place in July 1981. Nevertheless, a number of schemes have been set in hand to improve conditions in the area and since that time the two anniversaries of the riots have passed relatively peacefully. Both the police and the local authority have taken particular steps to improve relations between them and the local black community. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools published in early 1982 a report on education provision in Toxteth. Following this, DES, HMI and MTF are initiating a number of projects to improve relationships between schools and the community. The degree of HMI involvement is unprecedented.

15. Unemployment remains high on a residential basis particularly among the younger age groups. That is also the case, however, in many other parts of Merseyside. The local black community consider that black people have particular difficulties in obtaining employment and resent it. If high rates of unemployment and such resentment are potential catalysts for civil disturbance, then they are still present in parts of Toxteth. The effective measures taken by the police however are a factor in favour of stability.



16. A list of representative projects in the Toxteth area is at Annex C.

#### LESSONS

17. In terms of its distinctive character, organisation and methods of working, the main lessons of the Task Force may be summarised as follows:

##### MINISTERIAL INVOLVEMENT

This has been essential in enabling the MTF to seize quickly major opportunities and has been of considerable help in bringing in the private sector. For example, without Ministerial involvement the Stockbridge Village Trust, the architect/developer competition for the Anglican Cathedral Precinct site, and the Wavertree Technology Park schemes would not have happened. Ministerial presence demonstrates commitment and has encouraged local private sector and public sector agencies to be ready to produce and implement new initiatives.

##### JOINT WORKING BETWEEN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

This has concentrated on working together on specific projects. It has brought expertise and contacts from a wider range of Government services than is normally the case. It has facilitated the packaging of available programmes in relevant ways. Good examples are the training initiatives, the community refurbishment scheme, and upgrading of local authority industrial estates.

##### RESOURCES

The availability to the MTF of uncommitted resources



has been a valuable instrument in persuading local authorities and other bodies to embark on innovative schemes. Even though local authorities have made substantial contributions from their main programmes the additionality of main funding has been crucial in encouraging them to think more widely. By using urban programme resources in a selective and targeted way initiatives have been launched which would otherwise not have happened.

#### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The knowledge of local conditions and opportunities has greatly assisted the operation of MTF and has enabled it to negotiate new initiatives. Its special character has enabled it to adopt a radical approach which cuts across conventional local authority activities. For example, the failure of housing management and maintenance in the local authorities has had a demoralising effect on the local communities. MTF pressure has already forced through positive action on the worst estates.

#### PRIVATE SECTOR SECONDEES

The secondees have provided vital contacts in the local business communities. They have helped to change attitudes. The combination of their very different skills with civil servants' knowledge of the availability and range of Government programmes has greatly improved the capacity of the MTF to operate imaginatively.



## INNOVATION AND EXPERIMENT

As this note shows, many experiments have been launched which could have wider significance and might be adopted elsewhere. Many of these particularly in the housing field (such as community refurbishment schemes, inner city housing for sale, Stockbridge Village Trust) have encouraged private sector investment.

18. Probably the most significant lesson and the one to which successive Secretaries of State have attached most importance has been the fact that private sector resources and local community interest can be enlisted in the task of economic and physical regeneration - given sufficiently strong political leadership, personal commitment on the part of Ministers and officials, and the persistence needed to make progress. The value of this approach involves more than the individual projects that are set in train: the interest and stimulus generated through local effort and enterprise can be both repercussive and cumulative. If it is to be an effective counterweight to long running economic decline, this effort will have to be maintained over a longer period and with adequate resources devoted to it.

19. There has to be one word of warning. Reference was made earlier (at the end of paragraph 3) to the Liverpool City Council and the absence of overall control until May 1983. In that month a Labour majority was elected and the far left is now in control of the Council. It quickly became evident that a quite different attitude would prevail in



the city hall and this has begun to be apparent in decisions announced or pending. There is to be quite a different attitude towards participation in partnership ventures with the private sector. The municipalisation of a private housing estate being built by Wimpeys in Toxteth just at the point when individual owners were beginning to put down deposits to buy new houses in the heart of the Toxteth area may be a harbinger of things to come. Plans have been published for the expenditure of substantial sums on job creation - spending which seems bound if carried out to push the council into RSG penalty. It is clear that collaboration with the new council is going to be very much more difficult than hitherto, though it has to be said that there has been no open clash yet. Perhaps the real test will come when the budgets are published and the rate support grant settlement indicates the likely consequences for Liverpool.

#### FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

20. The problems of Merseyside run deep. The process of decay has been in train for so long that no early reversal is likely. Following the Prime Minister's meeting on 6 July the Secretary of State's announcement on 8 July of his proposal to build on the early work of the MTF and to establish a more permanent presence on Merseyside has been widely welcomed. The MTF will now take on much of the work for Merseyside which is currently the responsibility of the DOE office in Manchester. This strengthens its role with the local authorities, as it will now have responsibility for housing, the urban programme and derelict land. But the special characteristic of the Task Force to initiate and co-ordinate action on special projects will continue and be strengthened.



## CONCLUSION

21. It would hardly be practicable or necessary for central Government to replicate the MTF in other major urban areas in England. None suffers from the range and intensity of problems seen in Merseyside, and none perhaps has been afflicted by a similar lack of effective local government. In this respect, Merseyside must remain unique. But there are lessons for other areas where a concentrated and co-ordinated approach is needed if severe inner city problems are to be solved. DOE has taken the lead in encouraging the setting up of very small Area Task Forces by local authorities in Sandwell (Smethwick) and in Lambeth. The Sandwell Task Force is a good example - it comprises a secondee from DOE, an officer of the local authority, and a secondee from the private sector (Halifax Building Society). In its first 6 months it has been instrumental in putting together the first year's programme of work for Ministerial approval, following the designation earlier this year of Sandwell as a programme authority under the Urban Programme. In terms of innovatory work going beyond organisation, the most important lesson of the Merseyside Task Force has been the demonstration of the scope for enlisting private sector resources and local community initiative in practical projects designed to regenerate the local economy and physical environment. If it can work on Merseyside it can work in other inner cities: but it requires political leadership and some financial and manpower resources if it is to succeed.



# CONFIDENTIAL

ANNEX A

## MERSEYSIDE TASK FORCE EXPENDITURE

<u>Category</u>	<u>1982/3 £M</u>	<u>1983/4 £M</u>	<u>Expenditure Programme</u>
Upgrading industrial estates; reclaiming and servicing industrial sites	4.8	14.3	Derelict Land (DL) Urban Programme (UP)
Housing	1.1	11.3	DL/UP/Housing Corporation/Historic Buildings grant
Environmental projects	1.6	3.5	DL/UP
Tourist and leisure projects	3.0	9.0	DL/UP
Training	0.7	0.7	UP
Sport and Community projects	1.3	1.2	Sports Council/UP
CAV (1)	0.3	-	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	12.8	40.0 (2)	

### Notes

- (1) DOE's Central Administration Vote for MTF and FIG group support costs for 1982/83 only. Included in DOE's mainstream CAV for 1983/84.
- (2) Expenditure of £40M in 1983/84 is included in the following cash blocks:
- |  |      |   |
|--|------|---|
| DOE/LA1  | £32M | for DL and UP expenditure   |
| DOE/HC1  | £ 5M | for special Housing Corporation initiatives in Merseyside.                        |
| Class VIII, 4 - Royal Palaces, Historic Buildings etc. | £ 2M | to grant aid additional conservation work in Liverpool.                           |
| Class VIII, 2 - Central Environmental services         | £ 1M | for an enhanced programme of sports facilities grant aided by the Sports Council. |

---

£40M

---



PROJECTS ON MERSEYSIDETRAINING

Information Technology Centres: The Country's first ITEC opened in Wallasey in April 1982. There are now 7 ITECs open on Merseyside with 4 more due to start by January 1984. They provide high quality training for unemployed young people in word processing, micro computing robotics, and related electronic skills. A total of 150 centres are planned nationally. Particular emphasis has been given on Merseyside to using redundant buildings, improving them as necessary, as ITECs, to obtaining sponsorship from the private sector (Marconi, Plessey, Tandy), and to establishing the programme as quickly as possible.

Commercial Business Training Centres: These training centres, unique to Merseyside, provide training in basic business and commercial techniques for unemployed young people. 3 centres are now open with one more to follow shortly. Again, emphasis has been given to using redundant buildings, attracting sponsorship from the private sector (building societies and clearing banks) and speed in setting up the projects.

Small Firms Training Workshops: These projects will provide in ~~one~~ centre both a training workshop in manual and office skills for unemployed young people, and opportunities for new entrepreneurs who wish to be assisted in starting their businesses. 3 Workshops have now started training and some new businesses are being helped. It is hoped to attract more. Unilever are sponsoring 1 workshop, Pilkingtons are closely involved with another, Merseyside County Council sponsor a third similar scheme.

Training Centre in Petrochemical Operations: Foster Wheeler are considering using part of the redundant Burmah Oil Refinery in Ellesmere Port as a private training centre. They are proposing to move their present training centre from Italy either to the U.K. or U.S.A. Discussions have been held with MTF and the local authority (which is proposing to acquire the refinery site and assist its redevelopment and reuse using derelict land resources). This proposal is still in its early stages and has not been given any publicity.

Sandwich Students and Support for Small Firms: A pilot project has started this year for business studies students from Liverpool Polytechnic to spend a year helping selected small firms and also meeting their course requirements on practical training and experience. The Polytechnic approached the MTF because they were having difficulty in finding places for their students. MTF obtained constructive support from Giro Bank and the Post Office to help fund this project.



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Enterprise Newsletter: It became clear that, in particular, small firms found great difficulty in locating appropriate forms of advice and financial assistance. There appeared to be gaps in the marketing of assistance schemes and too many businesses appeared to be ignorant of what was on offer. To help get across the wide range of assistance available and to give examples of the way local businesses were being supported the MTF produced two editions of a newsletter. Over 3000 copies of each issue were distributed through the Chamber of Commerce and the clearing banks. Evidence of the newsletter demand is provided by the fact that reprinting of the first edition was required.

Contact with Major Employers: MTF has approached most large Merseyside companies both to inform them of its activities and to establish a network of personal contacts to develop entry points when seeking practical help for sponsorship of training projects, sponsoring of enterprise agencies, setting up the local purchasing exhibition, etc. MTF worked closely with the DTI Regional Office in the process. MTF with DTI has also been involved in following up closures and redundancies in selected cases. Care has been taken not to challenge the commercial decision of the individual companies. Rather has the aim been to ensure that companies were fully aware of the range of assistance available and to consider the scope for alternative use of surplus land and buildings.

Import Substitution and Local Purchasing: A private sector manager seconded to MTF arranged with CBI North West a "Can you Make It" exhibition whereby larger companies demonstrated what equipment they bought to encourage local firms to enter the market. Clearly the potential market for local firms depends on whether such firms are capable of producing the equipment but an important spinoff from the exhibition was that smaller firms were introduced to larger ones. It is the MTF experience that too many small firms seem to have difficulty in trying to enter new markets because of imperfections in small firms/large firms contacts.

Merseyside Innovation Centre: The purpose of this centre is to facilitate the commercial exploitation of research work carried out by Liverpool University and Polytechnic, and also to provide technologically based advice to small firms throughout Merseyside. An MTF/DTI official has been responsible for developing this centre together with other sponsors and obtaining private sector support notably from Dista and Plessey. DTI and DOE have contributed towards setting up and running costs. There are now good prospects that the first companies will soon start through the work of the centre.

Knowsley Industrial Park: This is an industrial estate which comprises a very varied mix of companies large and small. Total employment is about 14,000. The estate was run down and Liverpool Council as absentee landlords (the estate is



in Knowsley Council area) were reluctant to take effective steps to improve the estate and help to revive business confidence. The estate has now been sold to Knowsley by Liverpool and a programme to improve the road network, clear redundant buildings, and upgrade the estate generally is well under way. The companies themselves have set up an industrialists association which plays a direct and effective part in improving facilities and providing a measure of self help through the private sector. A private sector manager seconded to MTF was instrumental in developing constructive links between the public and private sectors. A number of similar though smaller, schemes to improve the industrial infrastructure are also underway.

Wavertree Technology Park: Adjoining the Plessey factory in the centre of Liverpool is a large 60 acre derelict site. This is now being prepared and serviced so that it can be developed for us by high technology industry. Plessey's together with the local authorities and English Industrial Estates have formed a company, chaired by Plessey, to oversee the development of this site with EIE providing factories and with Plessey playing an important role to support the technological orientation of the proposed development. MTF/DTI are closely involved both in the derelict land aspects and in developing the concept.

Enterprise Agencies: As part of the national programme to encourage private sector companies to support the enterprise agency concept there are now 5 such agencies operating on Merseyside. These provide support for small businesses, particularly those starting up, and have the advantage that they can discuss business problems with entrepreneurs in their own terms. Some agencies are also able to make available space for small enterprises which are then able to share the cost of common services.

#### KEY SITES

Merseyside has a large number of vacant sites, large and small, a considerable proportion of which are registered on the Land Registers and where therefore specific action is taken to try and bring them into more productive use. Some sites are located in prominent positions and particular attention has been given to these. For example:

a. Anglican Cathedral Precinct: This 20 acre site adjoining the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool has been vacant for many years and the local authority were unable to decide to what use to put it. The site has now been acquired by the Housing Corporation, an Architect Developer competition has been held in order to achieve a standard of development befitting this prominent site, and planning permission has been granted to the developer subject to conditions. It is hoped that development will start well before the end of this calendar year.

b. The site of the disused Tate and Lyle Sugar Refinery has been acquired by English Industrial Estates who



are now responsible for clearing the site and for overseeing its development. Because the site was heavily over-developed clearance work will not be completed for some months. Part of the site is being brought into use again through the adaptation of a warehouse as a sports centre aided by the urban programme.

c. In the heart of Liverpool commercial business sector is the disused Exchange Station Hotel together with 7 acres of backland. EIE have acquired this site for commercial redevelopment and will thus bring into use what is at present an eyesore.

#### SPORT AND TOURISM

£ for £ Scheme: The Government made available for 1982/83 £1M on condition that it was matched by £1M from non-public sector sources, to help finance a wide variety of projects to upgrade sports and leisure facilities. The Sports Council were closely involved in running this scheme and a large number of sports facilities have been improved including many run by the voluntary sector. In 1983/84 the Sports Council are promoting additional projects through their normal grant-aided programme.

The Merseyside Development Corporation are sponsoring the International Garden Festival to be held in 1984 on a large derelict site adjoining the disused South Docks in Liverpool. Preparations for the Festival are well under way and to support it a number of other projects to encourage tourism in the area are also under way. These include:

a. The Maritime Museum which is sponsored by the Merseyside County Council. The Secretary of State for the Environment has recently announced that over £5M of Urban Programme resources are being made available to the County Council to enlarge the museum, in particular by taking over part of the historic Albert Dock complex (the largest grade 1 listed building in the country).

b. Lime Street Station is in urgent need of improvement and this work is now in hand aided by urban programme resources. A private sector company will refurbish the adjoining Lime Street Chambers for use as shops offices and flats. The County Council are improving the road network and car parking associated with the station. The nearby Adelphi Hotel has been bought by a private company from British Rail and that company's investment to upgrade the hotel is being supported by a grant through the Urban Development Grant programme.

c. In Ellesmere Port there is a large canal basin which was surrounded by derelict land. This area is being upgraded with the assistance of derelict land and urban programme resources to provide a good quality waterways museum and a tourist attraction.



d. The Mersey Estuary has an unenviable reputation as one of the filthiest waterways in Europe. Its present condition inhibits the development of a wide range of leisure and tourist activities. A long term programme has now been set in hand to improve the water quality of the estuary and to support this additional investment by the North West Water Authority has been authorised.

#### HOUSING

Community Refurbishment Schemes: Too much of local housing on Merseyside is in poor condition. The MTF therefore invited local authorities to bring forward a proposal under which groups of about 500 dwellings would be improved.

Six schemes are under way with more to follow. The schemes are financed by the MSC, the local authority and the urban programme. Tenants are closely involved in the improvement schemes. Temporary labour is recruited where possible from those who are unemployed living on the estates concerned and financed under the MSC CP scheme. Local authorities set up local management organisations.

Stockbridge Village: Cantril Farm, now renamed Stockbridge Village, is a very large local authority housing estate of 3,500 dwellings owned by Knowsley Council. The estate was very unpopular, was poorly managed and deteriorating fast even though it was only built some 15 years ago. The estate has now been acquired by a Trust financed by the Abbey National Building Society, Barclays Bank and Knowsley Council. The Trust's main objectives are to upgrade the estate and attract private sector housing development. It is the only example known so far of a disposal of a modern council estate. The development programme will continue to require a mix of public and private sector financial resources.

Upgrading of other local authority housing estates: The MTF is encouraging local authorities to upgrade other housing estates and where possible to involve private housebuilders. A variant of the shared ownership programme is being promoted. If private house builders consider that the local housing market will not support housing development for sale outright, then arrangements are made with local housing associations to enter into shared ownership, with the builders having responsibility to market the dwellings and find those who are willing to enter into shared ownership arrangements and who have the appropriate financial status.



PROJECTS IN TOXTETH

The MTF has been involved in a range of projects to improve the local economy and living conditions in the Toxteth area. As with all the projects the degree of involvement has varied.

TRAINING

Information Technology Centre: The Charles Wootton Technology Centre sponsored by Littlewoods and the Charles Wootton Centre (a further education centre run by the local black community and funded by Liverpool Council and the MSC) opened in September 1982. Most of the staff and trainees are from the local black community. The Centre has also recently reached agreement with MSC to provide evening training for local unemployed adults.

Adult Commercial Business Training Centre: run by Sight and Sound, and opened in September 1982. The centre provides a six months training in basic office and commercial techniques for local unemployed adults, many from the ethnic minorities.

Housing Management Training Courses: Funded by MSC through the TOPS scheme, this project organised by a group of housing associations will provide training in housing management particularly for those from the Toxteth area. It is hoped that the project will get under way in September 1983.

Access Courses: These courses organised by Liverpool Council and Liverpool University began in Spring 1983 and are offered to those from the ethnic minorities who are over 21 and who are judged suitable to go on to further education courses at Liverpool University or Liverpool Polytechnic. The courses are designed to encourage those with the necessary aptitude to undertake in due course more rigorous vocational training.

Careers Office: Liverpool City Council are to open a new Careers Office in the heart of the Liverpool 8 area. This is designed to encourage young people to avail themselves of possible opportunities.

Toxteth Job Centre: Though not strictly related just to training, the MSC have opened a Job Centre in the heart of Toxteth and closed one nearby. The Job Centre which opened in January 1983 includes four staff from ethnic minority groups.



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business Development Officer, National Westminster Bank: The Bank have appointed a senior official from their Liverpool Area Office to work in the Toxteth area and give practical help and advice on the spot to those wishing to set up or expand their own businesses. In the last 18 months about a dozen small businesses have been started with his support, many in the consumer services field.

Shipping Frontages Improvement Scheme: Throughout Liverpool there are run-down shopping streets hit by a decline in trade as the local population have moved out, affected by planning blight, operating from premises badly in need of repair and improvement. Grants and loans are available from the Council to shopkeepers to encourage them to rehabilitate their properties. Rehabilitation work has begun in Lodge Lane and Granby Street in the heart of Liverpool 8. It is not clear to what extent the Council elected in May 1983 will continue to support this programme.

A person seconded from the private sector to MTF spends a large part of her time in the Liverpool 8 area providing basic advice for those wishing to set up in business.

## HOUSING

Princes Boulevard: This is the major thoroughfare through Liverpool 8. Restoration of this largely residential area is underway mainly through the activities of housing associations. The Boulevard has been declared a Housing Action Area and the association have been able to bring forward improvement work on properties they own. Other houses which are incapable of economic improvement will be demolished and the site redeveloped. Landscaping work has already been carried out along the central reservation of the Boulevard.

Minister Court: Myrtle Gardens was a derelict tenement block built in the 1930s which Liverpool Council had decided to demolish. Barratts bought the block in 1982 and have refurbished the flats. So far 170 firm offers have been received for the improved flats and of these about  $\frac{1}{2}$  are already occupied by their purchasers, many of whom are first-time buyers. Most of the funding for this scheme, now renamed Minister Court, was through private sector risk capital with a small amount of Derelict Land grant.

Intensive Management Projects: Too much of the local authority housing stock in Liverpool has suffered from years of inadequate management and maintenance. In the Toxteth area two local authority estates - Englefield Green and Chatsworth - are being improved to reverse the decline in their quality and popularity with tenants. Additional funding has been provided through the local authority's housing programme and through the urban programme.

Canning Street Conservation Scheme: Part of Toxteth comprises fine Georgian terraces and a particular effort is being made in the Canning Street area to encourage owners to take up grants offered through the Historic Buildings Council. Wimpeys and local housing associations are acting as managing agents



supported by a secondee from the Abbey National Building Society.

#### EDUCATION

Parent Support Unit, St Saviours School St Saviour's school hit the headlines in the summer of 1982 when there was an apparent breakdown in discipline in this Toxteth primary school. Since then the local authority has made some attempt to stabilise staffing turnover. Through the support unit parents have become more closely involved in the school and a variety of course are now offered using the schools premises and funded through the urban programme. This is one of a number of such projects.

#### POLICING AND RACE RELATIONS

Community Policing Experiment After public consultation, beat policing was introduced in part of the Toxteth area. This is supported by constables from the community liaison section who make particular efforts to contact youth clubs, local schools and residents associations. It is widely acknowledged that these efforts by the police have greatly improved police/community relations.

New arrangements recently introduced by the Home Office allowing more flexible use of grants to local authorities under S11 of the Local Government Act 1966 now enable Liverpool Council to give further support to the ethnic population. Liverpool Council have re-established their Race Relations Liaison Committee to provide a forum for discussions with the local community.

#### SPORT

Under the £ for £ scheme in the Toxteth area a full size synthetic football pitch was opened in February 1983, and a smaller outdoor games area is also being provided. In addition, a sports hall will be built funded by the urban programme, and the local authority are upgrading sport and leisure facilities aided by the urban programme.

#### VOLUNTARY SECTOR

For some years Liverpool Council have supported a wide range of voluntary projects, particularly youth clubs and community centres, in the Toxteth area. Funding has been provided both through the urban programme and through the rate fund. It is not yet clear to what extent and under what criteria the council elected in May 1983 will develop an effective partnership with the voluntary sector.



Regional Pl : Merseyside A3

