

PRIME MINISTER

Return to
West Midlands File

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WEST MIDLANDS VISIT

Your visit covers a large part of the area from Wolverhampton in the north west to Birmingham in the south east. If the weather permits the helicopter will spend about 15 minutes flying over the conurbation before you arrive at Wolverhampton. As you make your way by road from Wolverhampton to Birmingham there will be an opportunity to see more closely the mix of industrial dereliction and the progress being made to reclaim the land for private housing and small industry.

The first part of the morning will be spent with the Crypt Association Ltd in Wolverhampton with a heavy emphasis on how they are trying to help those suffering from long term unemployment and social deprivation, particularly in a mixed ethnic community.

This will be followed by a visit to a ladies hat and accessories shop in Bilston, one of the depressed areas in the Black Country, started by two unemployed sisters three months ago with help from an Enterprise Allowance.

You will then see a good example of how the demand for private housing in the area is being met with Tarmac's development of the former site of the Bilston Steelworks. This shows what developers can do in reclaiming derelict industrial land for housing purposes.

This will be followed by a visit to the newly formed Black Country Development Corporation offices at Oldbury. From the roof of the offices there is a panoramic view of industrial buildings within that area. You will also meet the owner of the office building who is developing the site with small workshops, and with a small engineering firm making tools for the car industry.

At lunch time you move to the BBC studios at Pebblemill, Birmingham for lunch and to present the Radio Times Enterprise Awards for 1987 (see Annex I)

In the afternoon you will visit Handsworth Technical College to see special courses being run mainly for Afro-Caribbean people from the area, going on to the centre of Birmingham to visit the site of the Birmingham's £120 million International Convention Centre.

Photographers will be with you for most of the day and there will be an opportunity for you to talk to reporters before lunch and at the end of the afternoon programme.

The programme is as follows:

On arrival at Wolverhampton Racecourse you will be met by three Regional Directors:

Mr Hugh Ellis-Rees, Dept of the Environment
Mr Arthur Pryor, Dept of Trade and Industry
Mr Gregory Hyland, Dept of Employment

(Photographers will be present)

Mrs Philippa Holland, Regional Controller for urban Policy, will be available to travel in the car with you to give a commentary as you drive between various points. I suggest that Mrs Holland be in the car between the Tarmac housing development at Bilston and the UDC Offices, Oldbury, as the route chosen takes you through the heart of the Black Country.

WOLVERHAMPTON CRYPT

- started in Wolverhampton Crypt.

You will be met by MR COLIN BROWN, Chairman (he is a senior probation officer in the area), MR GEOFF PARSONS, Chief Executive, and MR PAUL HOBSON, Company Secretary. Since its inception in 1964 the Crypt has grown and developed a wide range of community services, and is among the region's largest sponsors of employment training. It employs over 1,000 people of differing race, background and ages. It receives £3.5 million a year from the MSC, £100,000 from the local authority, and smaller amounts from the Home Office and Department of the Environment. It raises about £200,000 a year through its own efforts and receives support from local industry.

Mr Parsons will take you into a small conference room to explain the work of the Crypt. He will then show you some of the Crypt's activities, including the data processing centre where people are taught computer techniques and where computer programs are developed; a section where help is being given to the long-term unemployed, mainly by those who have had similar experiences; the kitchens where staff are either on YTS or Community Programme employees; and the playgroup area. The group gives support and help to single parent families. Most of the children are from ethnic minority groups living in the more deprived areas of the town. Children from a local women's refuge also attend. You will also visit the busy reception area at the Crypt.

New Task Force

MR NORMAN PERRY, Director of DTI's Inner Cities Unit and responsible for the TASK FORCES will invite you to launch the Wolverhampton Task Force. This is one of eight new Task Forces added to the existing eight in April.

It has now been staffed and is about to start its public work. The launch is being held in the Crypt for convenience and as a symbol of the Government's wish to link up with important local agencies. The Wolverhampton Task Force leader is MR FRED PICKERILL, on loan from the MSC. He was formerly an area employment manager for Shropshire and the Marches.

(Press will be outside the Crypt and a small number will accompany you on your tour).

THE COMPLETE LADY, BILSTON

This is a retail outlet specialising in classic high fashion ladies' accessories such as hats, bags and gloves. It is situated in a depressed area of the Black Country and it is surprising that there is a market for the goods. Two sisters, first generation black Britons, DIANA DAVIES (24) and DOREEN DAVIES (19) had both been unemployed for some months ago when they saw advertising for the Enterprise Allowance Scheme. They carried out their own market research by delivering questionnaires to homes in the Bilston/Wolverhampton area and canvassing shoppers in Bilston. Following a positive response the girls moved into premises used by the Citizens' Advice Bureau. They designed the shop fittings, selected the colour scheme, and display theme, and carried out all the internal alterations and decorations themselves. They have also done all the window dressing. Hats are ordered from London and Manchester. In the three months of trading, sales have exceeded all expectations. The sisters are very optimistic as to their future progress.

(Press will be present but they will not be allowed inside the shop)

SEDGEMOOR HOUSING ESTATE, BILSTON

This is the former site of the Bilston Steelworks where iron and steel had been worked for 200 years until it closed in 1980. This became the largest area of dereliction in the West Midlands. Seven years later the steelworks has gone, new homes are spreading over the site, and a new road link to the M6 motorway is under construction. There are also hopes for new industry.

On arrival you will be met by SIR ERIC POUNTAIN, Chairman of Tarmac, MR BRIAN BAKER, Managing Director and MR SAM PICKSTOCK, Chief Engineer, Housing Division.

Three housing subsidiaries of TARMAC are building 450 homes ranging in price from £20,000 to £40,000. They cater for both young marrieds, who 10 years ago would probably have had to go on to a council house waiting list, and Asian families who need larger homes. 80 have been built and sold since May. The company has received a £2m Urban Development Grant.

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The developers have faced considerable physical difficulties. The site is split by a railway line and canal and beneath the ruins of the steelworks the ground was heavily mined and polluted. 25 mineshafths have had to be capped.

After visiting one of the show houses you will walk through the site to meet one of the couples in a starter home and an Asian family in one of the larger houses.

(The Press will be at the site and will follow you as you go to the houses you are to visit. They will not be allowed into the homes. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO SPEAK TO REPORTERS AT THE END OF THIS VISIT)

BLACK COUNTRY URBAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OFFICES

You will be met by MR BILL FRANCIS, Chairman (president elect of the Institution of Civil Engineers), MISS JEAN DENTON, Vice-Chairman (director of Burson Marsteller and non-executive director of BNFL and Ordnance Survey), and MR DAVID MORGAN, Chief Executive.

The offices were opened in May 1987. The development area covers nine square miles, has a population of about 40,000 and supports some 50,000 jobs.

Black Country House was the former Accles and Pollock building and has recently been refurbished by a local private developer MR LISLE who you will meet during your visit. Most of the offices have now been let as have all the adjacent industrial units.

Inside you will meet Board Members. From a podium on the roof you will have a panoramic view of part of the Black Country.

On returning to the groundfloor you will meet MR LISLE. Outside in one of the units that has been recently let you will meet MR IAN AITKIN, Area Director for Lovell's Homes. They are moving into the premises this weekend. At the rear of the premises is a small engineering workshop specialising in toolmaking. Here you will meet MR REG HYDEN. He started the business a year ago and now employs seven people. They are doing work for Rover and Jaguar cars and also for Rolls Royce aero engines.

(Press will be present for your arrival and a limited number of photographers will accompany you on to the podium).

BBC PEBBLE MILL

At BBC Pebble Mill you are to present the BBC Radio Times Enterprise Awards for small businesses (see Annex 1 for full details). You will be met by MR MARMADUKE HUSSEY, BBC Chairman, who will introduce you to other guests and also to the ten finalists of the competition. The BBC had 500 entries this year.

You will make the presentations after lunch. BBC radio and television have requested short interviews with you about the Enterprise awards before you depart.

HANDSWORTH TECHNICAL COLLEGE

You will be met by MR CHRIS WEBB, Principal, who will introduce you to CLLR BERT CARLESS, Chairman of Governors, CLLR LES BYRON, Chairman of the Education Committee, and CLLR MRS NAJMA HAFEEZ, Chair of the Continuing Education Sub-Committee.

Mr Webb will explain briefly the work of the college. Before taking you to the Personal services Workshop area he will ask you to unveil a plaque to mark your visit. In the workshops you will see Afro-Caribbeans and Asians being trained in hair dressing, beauty therapy, child care and special care for the disabled and elderly. The final room you will visit is the management training course for the Community Programmes. These courses are partly funded by the MSC and the Home Office.

The college has about 4,500 students covering a wide age range. About 85 per cent are Afro-Caribbean and Asian. The campus you will visit has about 2,000 students.

(The Press will be present for your arrival. A very limited number of photographers will accompany you into two of the classrooms).

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

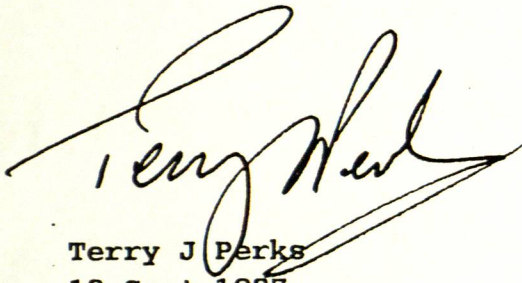
You will be met by CLLR DICK KNOWLES, Leader of the Council, CLLR REG HALES, former Lord Mayor, and CLLR PAT SEVER, Chairman of the Committee responsible for this project. Also present will be MR JOHN DOUGLAS, chairman of the contractors.

This is a £120 million project being built in the centre of Birmingham on what was the site of the old Bingley Exhibition Hall. There are a number of listed buildings bordering the site and these are being kept. Eleven concert/conference halls are being built in this complex with a central mall running through it. There will be hotels and commercial development within the area. The whole project is due for completion in 1991.

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You will go into the site office for a description of the project. You will also be able to have an overall view of the site from this point. You will then leave the offices and walk on to the site to meet some of the workmen and apprentices at two points. The company has a policy of employing 10 per cent apprentices. The company will provide a hard hat but you will need some boots for this part of the visit.

(The Press will be present for your arrival but will not come into the offices. They will, however, be with you as you tour the site. **THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO REPORTERS** before the end of the visit).



Terry J Perks
18 Sept 1987

1987 ENTERPRISE FINALISTS

WINNER

ABI ELECTRONICS

Ian and Alison Fletcher
Mason Way
Platts Common Industrial Park
Barnsley, South Yorkshire

The company designs, develops, manufactures and markets its own electronic test equipment. The testers, designed by Ian Fletcher, are used to test digital micro-chips in or out of circuit, and to locate defects in printed circuit boards. They are low cost, of unique design, and fill a gap in the market for an affordable and easy to use tester.

Began business in 1984 with grants from Barnsley M.B.C. and D.T.I./E.E.C.

Employs - 9 people

Turnover 1986/87 - £220,000

RUNNERS-UP

1. ASHWOOD

Derek Lodge
Cunliffe Drive Industrial Estate
Kettering, Northants

Beech and oak chip manufacturers, supplying solely to the food industry for smoking of meat, fish, poultry and bacon. An ex-merchant navy man, Derek Lodge went into sales supplying hardware to food retailers. He was made redundant, and after a fruitless search for a job, was loaned a machine to make

chips for an ex-customer in the food business. He borrowed timber, a vehicle and petrol and has never looked back. Customers include Ross Foods, Asda, and Farm Kitchen Foods.

Established 1 April 1983; no grants

Employs - 5 people

Turnover 1986/87 - £70,000

2. HI-FAS ENGINEERS SUPPLY LTD.

John Quinn
Unit 31
Stirling Enterprise Park
Kerse Road
Stirling

Suppliers to all engineering and building trades - everything from a screw nail to a compressor. Same day or next day delivery within a radius of 100 miles, especially to the Scottish E.G. Board.

Established October 1985.

Employs - 16 people

Turnover 1986/87 - £650,000

3. TAPE TECHNIQUES

Steve McCauley
The Audio Design Centre
Watnall Road
Hucknall, Nottingham

Under license with the record industry and the music publishing industry, the company provides original artist music programmes on cassette tapes to shops, pubs,

restaurants, hotels and leisure establishments. Customers include Bass, Whitbread, and Allied breweries; Midland Bank, Beefeater Steak Houses, etc.

Established September 1983; New Enterprise programme at London Business School; YTS; YWS; Graduate Gateway Programme; Growth Programme; Management Extension Programme.

Employs - 16 people (plus 2 part-time)

Turnover 1986/87 - £460,000

BEAVER MECHANICAL SERVICES LTD

John McCarthy
306 Burbury Street
Lozells, Birmingham

Designs, installs, services and maintains all types of heating, hot and cold water, gas ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration to all types of industrial and commercial buildings, ie. hospitals, schools, leisure centres, churches, etc. The company operates from one of the worst inner city areas in the country - Handsworth. // John McCarthy began the business after becoming dissatisfied with his previous employer.

Established November 1983.

Employs - 9 people

Turnover -1985/86 - £226,000

BIOPHARM UK LTD.

Dr. Roy Sawyer
2/8 Morfa Road
Swansea

A small R&D company, run by an American married to a local Welsh girl, at the forefront of a specialised area of medical biotechnology to isolate active enzymes from the salivary glands of leeches and other blood-sucking animals. To this end Biopharm has set up the world's only leech farm. Biotechnology will dissolve blood clots and help in micro-surgery.

Established in November 1983; initial finance from Government Guaranteed Loan Scheme plus City of Swansea New Enterprise Loan Scheme.

Employs - 10 people

Turnover 1985/86 - £75,000

CALIFORNIA CAKE & COOKIE COMPANY LTD

Debra Turkington
67 Elderspark Workspace
100 Elderspark Street
Glasgow

Manufactures American-style cakes and cookies to traditional recipes - all hand-made, no artificial flavourings, preservatives, or colourings. The business was set up during a Manpower Services New Enterprise programme at Glasgow University, but the response was so good that Debra Turkington, an American, settled in Glasgow and turned it into a full-time business.

Established 1 July 1985; Strathclyde Region Employment and Equipment grants; Scottish Development Agency Training and Employment grant; Department of Employment Youth Workers Scheme; Department of Trade and Industry Regional Development grant.

Employs - 29 people

Turnover 1986/87 - £310,000

NET-TEX AGRICULTURAL

Donald Yates
8 Milton Road
Gravesend, Kent

Agricultural animal equipment, specialising in sheep breeding/husbandry/lamb care products. Most innovative product is the hot rug for lambs, which has dramatically lowered annual lamb mortality rate. All products are now brand leaders in the UK; also strong in the USA and Canadian markets.

Established June 1983

Employs - 8 (although manufacturing is sub-contracted to firms in the Midlands)

Turnover 1986/87 - £271,355

RAINBOW ENTERPRISES

Bill Dewhurst
Lower House Mill
The Holme
Sabden, near Blackburn, Lancashire

A small family business (mother, father, and three children) designing, manufacturing and marketing soft toys, especially Treacle Miners based on local folk stories. The idea came out of necessity - the father was made redundant and took advantage of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme and his wife's sewing ability.

Established February 1985; Lancashire Enterprises Rosebud Fund and COSIRA Redundant Building grant.

Employs - 5 people (plus 3 part-time)

Turnover 1985/86 - £11,322

SOVEREIGN SOFT FURNISHINGS

Barbara Devlin
Albion Works
Albion Street
Birkenhead, Wirral

The company is engaged in making up fabric to clients' specifications - curtains, cushions and bed linen. Biggest order so far is supplying 10 miles of curtains to Saudi Arabia. Barbara Devlin set up in partnership with Ingrid Johnston after they were made redundant twice. They picked up orders from the bankrupt firm and bought machines from the liquidator.

Established June 1985.

Employs - 5 people

Turnover 1986/87 - £36,000

CONFIDENTIAL

PROGRAMME FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO TEESSIDE

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16 SEPTEMBER 1987

Teesside

- 0820 Depart No. 10
- 0900 Depart Northolt by HS125
- 1000 Arrive Teesside Airport
- 1015-1030 Visit derelict site of former Head Wrightson engineering works at "Stockton Loop" of River Tees, Middlesbrough, earmarked mainly for new housing, (photocall)
- 1035-1045 Visit derelict site of former Britannia steel works within Middlesbrough Enterprise Zone and earmarked for retail and business development (photocall)
- 1050-1115 Meet members of Teesside Urban Development Corp. - High Force Road, Riverside Park, Middlesbrough.
- 1115-1130 Witness signing of Smith's Dock expansion agreement and meet parties involved (photocall) - Teesside UDC offices.
- 1135-1205 Tour Cadcam Centre Riverside Park, Middlesbrough. Unveil commemorative plaque and make short speech to open Phase 2 of Cadcam Complex (photocall)
- 1205-1215 Opportunity to talk to media.
- 1215-1235 Visit Systems Control of Cadcam Centre, Phase 1
- 1235-1335 Lunch hosted by English Estates, Unit 14c, Phase 2, Cadcam Complex, Riverside Park. (photocall)

*Middlesbrough
Langbaur
Middlesbrough*

*Sea-bed equipment -
Commemorative
Inscribed*

*Computer Aided Design
Manufacturing*

*Former
Innocent
site,
Steelworks from
Pechelby
supermarket
Middlesbrough*

*2,000 visitors - 600 companies in
15 centres throughout the
whole week see that;*

1340-1410 Visit St. Hilda's Housing Scheme, Middlesbrough
(photocall)

1415-1445 Visit Cleveland Youth Business Centre, North Street,
Middlesbrough (photocall)

1500-1530 Visit Harkers Engineering, Church Road, Stockton-on-
Tees (photocall)

1530-1540 Opportunity to talk to media on departure

1600-1700 Meet Party workers at St. George's Hotel, Teesside
Airport

1715 Depart Teesside Airport

1815 Arrive RAF Northolt and drive to No. 10