

PRIME MINISTER

At this morning's diary meeting you agreed in principle to launch the Royal Society for the Prevention of Birds' £15 million appeal in support of its "action for birds" campaign. I have since spoken further to the organisers. What they envisage apparently is a large photo-call of the naming ceremony of one of British Rail's new engines which would be named the Avocet with the RSPB logo. This would take place at a cordoned-off area of King's Cross station.

On that basis it would mean your leaving here at about 1100 on Monday 16 January, attending a reception for a quarter of an hour at King's Cross, unveiling the naming plaque on the train and saying "a few words" about the appeal. You should be back at Downing Street by 1215.

This is much less of a "Green" occasion than we envisaged but it should nonetheless get good publicity and should involve much less of a substantial speech than we had thought.

John Whittingdale mentioned this morning that the RSPB were opposed to the Water Bill (their concern to retain access to land owned by the water authorities after privatisation). We have a good story to tell: sites valuable to nature conservation will be protected; DoE say that the RSPB's opposition is not such as to justify your turning down this invitation if you were still minded to accept.

On the above basis, content for us to work up these arrangements with the organisers?

(Order of the day)

(Outy clerk.)

(DOMINIC MORRIS)

5 December 1988

Yes

pp



DARBY

X RSPB

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

9 November 1988

Dear Adrian

I have made enquiries here about your two suggestions. I am afraid it is clear that it would be very difficult indeed for the Prime Minister to make a visit as you suggest, to York Minster on Sunday 9 April. I have also looked into the question of a reception at No.10 in October 1989 and as I indicated on the telephone, this will be considered in the late summer when all such requests are looked at by the Prime Minister for the year following.

Whilst I cannot tell you that you would not succeed in this bid, the fact remains that there is already a large number of deserving bids in the pipeline for receptions for that year. Your bid, therefore, could not have more than an even chance of success.

I do, however, think that the Prime Minister should help the RSPB in its centenary year. I therefore have another suggestion. It might be possible for her to visit your headquarters in Sandy one Friday afternoon after a visit to her constituency in Finchley, or on her way to Chequers. Might it not, therefore, be better to pursue this idea? You would then be certain of a visit rather than awaiting the uncertain outcome of a meeting, in the late summer, which considers receptions.

If you are agreeable I will certainly put this idea to the Prime Minister now. If you think it is a good idea it would be helpful for me to have some of your literature about the RSPB's activities, membership and its headquarters.

John Gier  
mark

MARK LENNOX-BOYD  
Parliamentary Private Secretary

Adrian Darby Esq

Adrian Darby.  
Kemierton Court  
Derby  
Glos  
TL20 7HY



HQ.  
Sandy  
Beds.

**10 DOWNING STREET**

Chairman

RSPB

89

Centenary ~~year~~ year.

would like to involve PM.

Annual members conference

at York university

3 days finishing on

Sunday, service in

Yorkminster. Address

our conference before

lunch + service

after.

Sunday  
9th April



\* I advised  
them to  
apply in  
July 89

**10 DOWNING STREET**

or a reception  
in Oct 89 (i.e.  
before year end) \*

They originally  
asked her to have  
a reception at  
Downing St. in  
Autumn 88.

(John Wakeham  
K. Carlisle)

PRIME MINISTER

1. 1989 will be the Centenary Year for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). They are most anxious to involve you in some way. Lord Home wrote to you four months ago and they have now approached me.
2. The Chairman of the Council (Adrian Darby) is married to Lord Home's daughter. Lord Home is a Vice-President. They have half a million members. Your visit would be publicised in the magazine, which is free to all members. You would obviously get very helpful publicity.
3. They have made several suggestions, including Lord Home's, that you hold a reception here for them.

None of these ideas is convenient. I have suggested to them that you might possibly visit their HQ in Sandy, Bedfordshire, one Friday afternoon next year. Their HQ is forty-five minutes' drive from Finchley and one hour from Chequers.

4. Content that I put this forward to a Diary meeting?

M.B

Yes mt

MARK LENNOX-BOYD  
2 December 1988

FILE

KIC.

MR. PERKS

cc Supt. Butler

The Prime Minister has agreed to launch the RSPB centenary appeal at King's Cross on 16 January. Ann Whitehouse and Janice Harnett from the RSPB are coming in here at 14.30 on Monday 12 December to discuss the arrangements.

You are very welcome to join in if you wish.

DOMINIC MORRIS

8 December 1988

# British Railways Board



Tessa Gaisman,  
Diary Secretary to the  
Prime Minister,  
10, Downing Street,  
London.  
SW1A 2AA

8 December, 1988

date  
o/r  
y/r  
tel ext

dis  
922 6907

Dear Mrs Gaisman,

Locomotive Naming Kings Cross: 16 January

I spoke to Simon Dugdale in the Press Office this afternoon and am writing to you on his advice. A potentially embarrassing situation has arisen because the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has made an approach to the Prime Minister, without our knowledge, asking her to name a locomotive at Kings Cross Station on Monday 16 January.

The background to this is that we offered to name a locomotive "Avocet", the bird which the RSPB use as their corporate symbol, to commemorate their centenary. The date was chosen to coincide with the launch in the same week of a new set of stamps by the Post Office.

We invited the RSPB to suggest names of some of their prominent supporters who might perform the ceremony and they tried first Joan Collins, and then Joanna Lumley.

They did not advise us that their next approach would be to the Prime Minister and we were suddenly advised today that Mrs Thatcher had been approached and had accepted.

We would prefer the invitation to be declined for the following reasons:

1. The locomotive concerned, the Class 89, is a one-off experimental vehicle and no others will be built.
2. Our Chairman, Sir Robert Reid, is out of the country (in Milan) on business that weekend and would regard it as a gross discourtesy if such an event was arranged on a day when he was unable to welcome the Prime Minister to British Rail.

- continued -

3. We are about to approach the Prime Minister to carry out a much more significant locomotive naming ceremony, to name the first of our new fleet of Class 91 locomotives Michael Faraday. These are the locomotives which will haul electric trains initially between London and Edinburgh.
4. I understand the Prime Minister will be receiving an approach from the Institution of Electrical Engineers in the New Year to unveil the first public statue of Michael Faraday in May 1989 and we planned to link the two events in some way.

I hope it will still be possible for the Prime Minister to withdraw from the 16 January commitment. You may rest assured that we will work with the RSPB so that the naming that day goes ahead in a way and with a personality which will ensure the Society receives good publicity.

Yours sincerely



T. S. Preston  
Director, Information Services



MRS GAISMAN

A man called Sid Preston from British Rail 'phoned me this afternoon to express his concern at learning that the Prime Minister is to name a new locomotive in honour of the RSPB. He said he had heard that the PM would name a loco called 'Avocet' at 11.30 on 16 January at King's Cross. BR think the loco is unsuitable for this sort of attention and were themselves about to invite the PM to name the first in a new series of locomotives.

I suggested that Mr Preston put his misgivings in a letter to you, by means of which he could also extend the invitation BR had been contemplating.



Simon Dugdale  
8 December 1988



File  
EM  
56

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

9 December 1988

Thank you for your letter of 8 December concerning the proposed launch of the RSPB centenary appeal.

The invitation which came from the RSPB to the Prime Minister was considered carefully and the Prime Minister responded to their wish for her to do something for the RSPB during their centenary year. She is of course aware of British Rail's involvement in this particular event, but has already agreed to perform the launch for the RSPB.

You mention in your letter that British Rail were considering sending an invitation to the Prime Minister for another event and, of course, should you wish to do so, this invitation would be considered on its merits.

Arrangements for the RSPB launch are being made by Dominic Morris in this office, in conjunction with Anne Whitehouse at the RSPB. I am therefore copying our correspondence to Mr Morris so that he is aware of it. If you have any problems concerned with the RSPB launch, perhaps they could be directed through Anne Whitehouse.

MRS. TESSA GAISMAN

T. S. Preston, Esq.

6