

LPO



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 October 1984

Dear Mr Keery

I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to visit Minster Court and to meet some of the residents. I was astonished to see the transformation you have been able to achieve, from derelict tenements into attractive dwellings at very reasonable prices. I hope that Barratts will have the chance to repeat this not only in Liverpool but in other cities.

You have set a marvellous example of what can be achieved by the public and private sectors working together.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

J. Keery, Esq.

JK

Mr Keeney in MB
Barratt Urban Renewal
(Northern) Ltd



File

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434
My ref:

Your ref:

4 October 1984

Dear Andrew

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO LIVERPOOL ON
2 OCTOBER

I enclose a copy of a note from the Merseyside Task Force which is I think self-explanatory.

You will however wish to consider whether the letter at Annex A should be sent to Councillor Hamilton as the MTF suggest. If you judge that a letter would be appropriate I would advise the deletion of the last sentence of the draft.

I doubt whether the draft at Annex A is suitable for the names at Annex B (2). I would therefore suggest a further draft letter to Lord Aberconway, Donald Forster, Leonard Epple, Barry Marsh, and Basil Bean at Annex G and a separate letter to the two Bishops at Annex H.

Your sincerely

John Ballard

JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

Andrew Turnbull Esq

2 of 11

cc Mr. Renshaw
Mr. Morrison

PS/Secretary of State

Prime Minister's Visit to Liverpool on 2/10/84

As requested by No. 10 I attach draft letters which the Prime Minister may wish to send to those to whom she was introduced during the course of her visit to Liverpool on 2 October.

The letter at Annex A has been drafted in general terms and could be sent to the majority of those concerned - names and addresses at Annex B. I have only included the main personalities who were introduced at each point during the course of the day eg Councillor John Hamilton, Leader of Liverpool City Council, and not all members of his delegation.

A separate letter is called for when writing to the individual exhibitors at the Wavertree Tech Shop Exhibition. It would seem appropriate for the Prime Minister to write to the Head of the Companies concerned rather than those running the stalls. A draft is at Annex C and a list of names and addresses at Annex D.

No doubt the Prime Minister will want to write in more specific terms to Sir John Clark and Sir Leslie Young in view of their special roles at Wavertree and the IGF/Albert Dock respectively. Draft letter to Sir John is at Annex E and to Sir Leslie at Annex F.

R. K. Madders

R. K. Madders
Merseyside Task Force
4 October 1984

DRAFT LETTER FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO SEND TO THOSE PEOPLE LISTED
AT ANNEX B

I was pleased to meet you during the course of my visit to Liverpool on 2 October. It was useful to see, at first hand, some aspects of the City's life and meet with those directly involved. It was a stimulating and encouraging day.



LIVERPOOL HOUSING TOUR

The Prime Minister will see examples of the problems and potential which exist in the City Council's housing stock. Examples of pre and post-war housing will be covered. The tour will cover also private sector initiatives and older private housing in housing action areas. The route passes a number of schemes funded through the Urban Programme including sports and health and community provision and landscaping works. Security considerations prevent a close look at some of the more run-down areas, particularly high-density modern estates which are poorly designed, badly managed, particularly unpopular with tenants.

9.50am Grafton Crescent Housing Cooperative

An example of a housing cooperative scheme funded by the City Council. The scheme provided an opportunity for local residents to remain together as a community following demolition of the poor quality 1930's Council tenement in which they lived.

There will be an opportunity here for the Prime Minister to walk through the completed scheme and to call on residents.

10.00am Hill Street/Prince William Street

An area of run-down and neglected public housing, which demonstrates the effects of poor housing management and maintenance.

There will be an opportunity here to leave the car for a short walk

10.20am Dickens Street Housing Action Area

Drive through an area of older 2 storey terraced properties improved following declaration of a Housing Action Area in 1979.

10.25am Joliffe Street, Toxteth

A private sector development by Wimpey which was a response to Government efforts to introduce new private sector housing into inner Liverpool. In a controversial move, the estate was municipalised by the incoming Labour Council in June 1983.

10.30am Princes Boulevard

Principal Victorian thoroughfare; part of built heritage of Liverpool. Problems of large houses where private sector will not act. Local protests after environmental improvements led to Michael Heseltine promising that housing would be improved. Action mainly through Housing Associations.



10.35am Anglican Cathedral Precinct

Development of a prominent site in front of the Anglican Cathedral by Crudens Ltd. The site had lain derelict for over 20 years until the then Secretary of State for The Environment took the initiative and proposed a developer/architect competition which was sponsored by the Housing Corporation. The development, which is now under way, is mainly private housing with some commercial facilities and high quality landscaped areas.

10.55am Minster Court, Toxteth

Refurbishment for sale of a derelict and partially demolished local authority tenement block. The flagship of Barratt Urban Renewal Ltd. There will be an opportunity for the Prime Minister to see some of the development and residents.

11.10am Depart for Wavertree Technology Park.



HOUSING TOUR

The people who will meet the Prime Minister during the course of the Housing Tour are:

i) Grafton Crescent Housing Co-op.

Sophie Krajewska, Area Manager for Cooperative Development Services (CDS), the Housing Association which assisted the Co-op with its plans.

Mick Ryan Secretary to the Co-op and Jimmy Pettit Treasurer to the Co-op. Both are residents.

Paul Lusk CDS Development Officer.

ii) Minster Court.

James Keery, Managing Director Barratt Urban Renewals (Northern) Ltd.



LIVERPOOL HOUSING TOUR

- ① GRAFTON CRESCENT HOUSING CO-OP
- ② HILL ST / PRINCE WILIAM'S
- ③ DICKENS ST HOUSING ACTION AREA
- ④ PRINCES BOULEVARD
- ⑤ JOLIFFE ST
- ⑥ ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL PRECINCT
- ⑦ MINSTER COURT
- ⑧ EVERTON *Program will now stop*
- ⑨ GREAT HOMER ST at Minster Court.

LIVERPOOL HOUSING

Characteristics

- Current housing stock in Liverpool : 190,000 dwellings
- 69,000 are in Council ownership (36%), 15,000 are owned by Housing Associations
- Housing conditions on many council estates are appalling. 25,000 dwellings (36%) of the City's stock are unsatisfactory
- No overall shortage of dwellings
- Major social/housing problems on post-war estates particularly in unpopular and unsatisfactory flats and maisonettes
- A high level of dissatisfaction amongst tenants
- Weak, centralised and inefficient management and maintenance of the Council stock
- A lack of effective demand in the private sector
- A relatively successful programme of improvement of older private housing, mainly through Housing Association activity funded by the Housing Corporation

The City Council's approach

The City argues that poor housing conditions reflect inadequate capital housing allocations over many years.

The City Council has produced a 5 year Urban Regeneration Strategy. The aim is to bring together capital resources of the Housing and Urban Programmes to tackle housing and living conditions in 17 Priority Areas and covering 14,000 dwellings.

The strategy envisages demolition of 5,000 dwellings and a loss of a further 1,000 through conversions of flats to 2 storey houses. Families displaced would be rehoused through a programme to build 4,000 new council houses. Other dwellings would be improved.

Government response

Ministers have taken the view that housing problems in Liverpool merit attention and action. The issues confronted are not unique, it is the scale which sets the City apart.

Whatever the reasons for the present housing conditions, the fact is that much public money will need to be spent to give large numbers of Liverpool people the opportunity of decent housing. There are no cheap solutions: the objective must be to get the best value for every pound spent.

The response should not be rooted in the replacement of unpopular

municipal stock; the aim should be the most cost-effective approach which provides housing choice and uses all available resources, including the private sector and the resourcefulness of local communities.

The City's reliance on a physical solution underplays the social problems on estates and the extremely poor record on management and maintenance. The municipal solution is very expensive and rides roughshod over people's aspirations to own a home of their choice or to be involved in the management of their own housing.

Ministers have set out these views consistently. The Secretary of State has made clear that Government support will need to take account of the nature of the programmes put forward. Our current assessment is that the City Council is unlikely to modify its ~~the~~ approach. Bad housing conditions would be allowed to remain with the Council blaming Government for the frustration of local expectations.

Action elsewhere on Merseyside

There are many examples of improved Council estates in other Merseyside authorities which have not relied on municipal action. Through the Merseyside Task Force initiatives have been set in hand covering more than 10,000 dwellings. Housing choice has been widened through the privatisation of the 3,000 dwelling Stockbridge Village estate in Knowsley and smaller estates in Wirral and Sefton.

Through a package of Urban Programme and MSC funds improvements to run-down estates are being secured by tenants themselves on Community Refurbishment Schemes. 12 schemes are now underway covering 6,500 dwellings.

Private builders are taking part in an initiative to develop sites which would not normally have attracted private funds, over 800 new homes are being provided.

None of the major initiatives are in Liverpool. The previous Liberal Council ran a successful build for sales programme and sought opportunities to involve the private sector in the refurbishment of problem housing. Barratts successful renovation for sale of a derelict 1930's tenement block: Minster Court, is a fine example. There was also active support for housing co-operatives to be formed. The present Council has municipalised those co-op schemes in the pipeline and has adopted a much less encouraging stance on joint initiatives with the private sector.

HOUSING TOUR

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James Keery, Managing Director Barratt Urban Renewals (Northern) Ltd.



Merseyside Task Force

Graeme House, Derby Square

Liverpool L2 7SU

Telephone 051-227 4111 Ext. 587

Your Reference

Our Reference

Date 29 August 1984

David Barclay Esq.,
Private Secretary,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

BB 8/1

Dear David,

VISIT TO LIVERPOOL

Thank you for your letter of 20 August 1984. I have been considering the possible content of a housing element to the visit. I am sorry that I have not got my proposals to you earlier.

I have had regard to your advice not to try and pack too much into the time available. I suggest therefore that we should concentrate on the Liverpool 8 area, which is on the route between the Garden Festival site and the City centre. A tour of this area could include

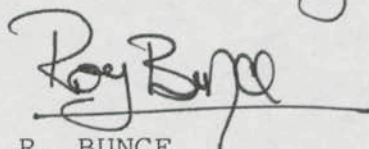
- a "Priority Area" declared by the City Council which, although not the worst housing in Liverpool contains typical examples of tenement blocks, unpopular walk-up flats and maisonettes and high-rise blocks.
- New housing development by housing co-operatives. Where people unable to own their own home have come together as a group and, with help from a sponsoring housing association have been involved in the design and now the running of their own small housing estate.
- A Housing Action area which demonstrates the impact of improvement grants and housing association ^{activity} on older privately owned housing.
- Minster Court: a good example of refurbishment by the private sector of a large tenement block previously owned by the City Council and scheduled for demolition. The work was undertaken by Barratts (Urban Renewal) Limited. Almost next door is another block, Myrtle House, which is in a similar state of dilapidation to Minster Court before Barratts started work. Barratts are interested in Myrtle House, but have been unable to negotiate a deal with the City Council.
- Areas of large Victorian and Edwardian houses, which are an important part of Liverpool's heritage but which are difficult to rescue for present day housing uses at an economic cost.

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This might look like a formidable list, but little travelling would be involved as the examples are all relatively closely grouped. If time permitted we could arrange a short journey to the north of the City centre where some of the very worst examples of bad design, neglect of maintenance and repair, and generally poor management are to be found. These areas, however, have been visited recently by the Secretary of State and the Minister for Housing and Construction.

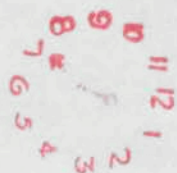
Your suggestions for the other elements of the visit seem quite practicable. My DTI colleague has not, however, been able to make contact with Sir John Clarke, Chairman of Plessey, so for the moment there has to remain a slight question mark over the exact format of the visit to the Wavertree Technology Park. We hope to finalise those details as soon as Sir John returns from holiday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Roy Bunce', written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

R. BUNCE

PM: PM's visit to Liverpool Sept '81



30 AUG 1984

John ...
[Signature]