



*European Communities  
Commission  
Press Release*

20 Kensington Palace Gardens  
London W8 4QQ  
Telephone: 01-727 8090

EMBARGO: Not for use by media  
nor on agency or club tapes until  
11 a.m. Wednesday, August 3, 1977.

August 2, 1977

EEC PUTS £100,000 INTO BRITISH HOUSING SCHEME FOR  
DISABLED

Pilot Scheme to improve Home Conditions

The Commission has just approved a grant of £100,000 towards a three-year programme in Britain aimed at removing difficulties in the way of disabled people in their homes. This is a new departure in the Commission's social policy in the field of housing.

The grant consumes almost half the financial allocation in this year's Community budget for pilot schemes aimed at the professional readaptation and social reintegration of handicapped workers; the policy recognises that such readaptation requires vigorous help to aid mobility in the home as well as outside.

The EEC funds will be paid to the Housing Development Directorate of the Department of the Environment, which will channel the money to the Crossroads Trust, Rugby.

The Director of the Trust, Mrs. Pat Osborne, will head a team working in cooperation with six selected local authorities in the United Kingdom. Mrs. Osborne's work in Rugby in setting up schemes which alleviate the stress on disabled people and their relatives, has been acclaimed by disablement organisations in Britain. She will now establish Crossroads agencies in the areas selected for study.

In each of the six participating local authorities, which have yet to be chosen, there will be an evaluation of housing programmes for disabled people. There will be special focus on people who are severely handicapped, who, with the benefits of convenient housing and improved domiciliary care services could remain in their local community instead of being moved to a residential home or long stay hospital unit.

About £30,000 of the Commission funds will be used to carry out structural adaptations to housing for people who can best be catered for by keeping their existing homes.

/...

For each participating local authority the Department of Health and Social Security (or the Scottish and Welsh Offices) will boost the local Crossroads scheme by matching the funds put into each project by the local social services departments, up to £5000 for each authority each year.

The programme is expected to begin this autumn and to be completed in June, 1980.

The EEC contribution is provided to cover additional and identifiable costs arising from the pilot nature of the study, such as finding individual solutions to the personal problems of the handicapped.

Apart from specific architectural modifications, these costs will include administration, research and evaluation, including salaries, office costs, insurances and travelling expenses, and other contingencies connected with local inquiries.

### BACKGROUND

1. Following a resolution by the Council of Ministers of the EEC in January, 1974, the Commission financed four pilot schemes and five studies in 1976 to test housing standards for the disabled. The Community hopes to continue to learn from experiences in the United Kingdom.

2. The Crossroads Attendant Care Scheme Trust was set up in Rugby in 1974 with Mrs. Osborne, a local district nurse, as Director.

For its first two years the trust was funded by Associated Television, Birmingham. The financial backing arose from the portrayal in the Crossroads serial of a paraplegic person in a wheelchair.

A young man, Noel Crane, who lived near Rugby and was almost totally paralysed after breaking his neck in a diving accident, contacted Crossroads to offer practical advice for the programme.

The Crossroads producer who visited Mr. Crane realised that it was his mother who most needed help in her daily, single-handed struggle to get her son out to work and keep him going. ATV offered £10,000 to set up the Trust; after two years the D.H.S.S. made a grant to continue it for a year and since then the Warwickshire social services authorities have taken on the cost.

.....

This news is also being issued by:

The Department of the Environment (contact Miss Tanya Malimson,  
direct line 01-212 3494)

The Department of Health and Social Security (contact Mr. C.P. Wilson,  
telephone 01-407 5522, extension 7446).