

# Teleshopping comes to Bradford

**D**isadvantaged consumers such as the disabled and the elderly in Bradford are now enjoying the benefits of 'teleshopping' thanks to a new service formally declared open last November by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Rt Hon Kenneth Baker.

The Bradford Centrepoint Teleshopping and Information Service has been set up using advanced information technology to bring superstore shopping and a wide range of community information within reach of people who, because of their limited mobility, have up until now been denied these advantages.

Centrepoint is operated by Bradford Council's Unemployment Unit through the Manpower Services Commission Community Programme and in cooperation with Morrisons superstores. As such, according to Baker, it represents 'an outstanding example of cooperation between local government and the private sector'. Centrepoint, he said, would 'serve the needs of the community while training unemployed and disabled people in new communications and retailing skills'.

The heart of the system is a British ROCC 800/70 videotex computer linked to ROCC Tandata 1400 ordering terminals.

At the touch of a button, the consumer can order from a selection of over 4000 food items stocked at Morrisons superstores. He or she can either enter an order directly from a shopping list or, before choosing,



*Giving 'teleshopping' a try are (l to r): Mrs Dorothea Scholes, aged 77 and Mrs Eva MacDonald, aged 86, both long-time customers of Morrisons. "Never go anywhere else but Morrisons," said Mrs Scholes, who can look back 28 years to when 'Morrisons had a stall in the fishmarket'.*

*The TV set in the picture, installed at Birchlands Old Folk's Day Centre and linked to the ROCC videotex computer system, allows senior citizens to order goods from a Morrisons' superstore using the Bradford Centrepoint Teleshopping and Information Service.*

*The service, which is completely free to users, delivers the groceries ordered to the customer the next day.*

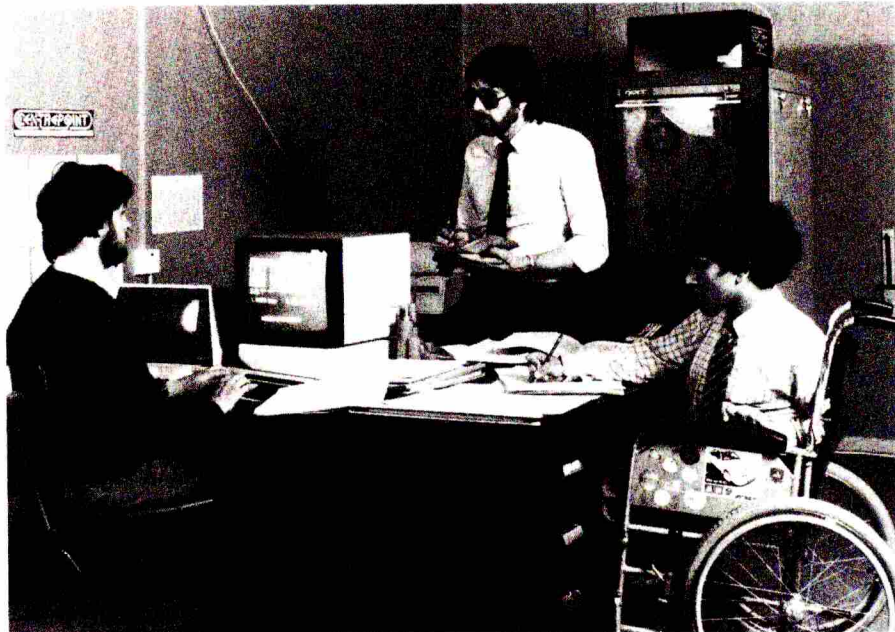
browse through the selection of foods on offer in a similar way to browsing along the shelves of the supermarket itself. Similarly, information about local events, benefits and community activities, such as chemists' rota times, library information and voluntary group details, may also be accessed.

For those who are housebound, a mobile visiting service has been established with ordering clerks calling on a regular basis to help serve clients' shopping and information needs. In the case of people with less serious mobility problems, staffed shopping and information outlets will be established at selected sites, including libraries, community centres, day centres, centres for the disabled, luncheon clubs, church halls and sheltered housing complexes. In this way, a number of people can be served in one place while community interaction is encouraged.

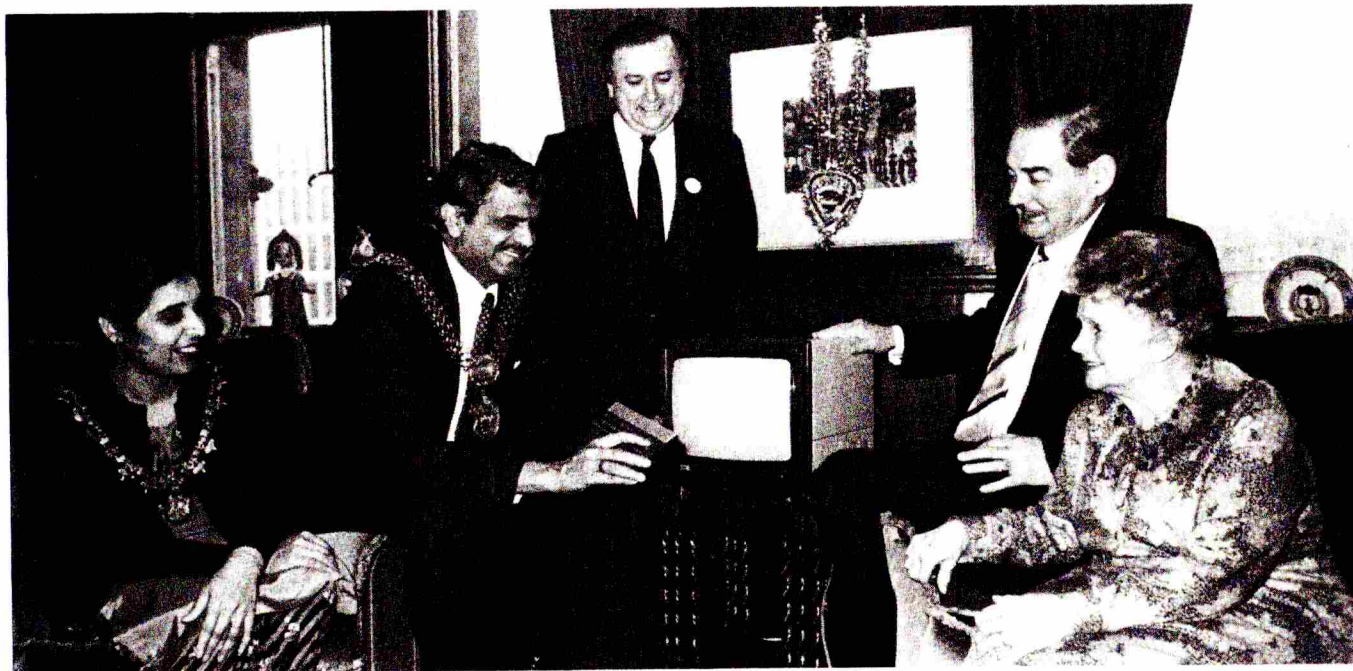
Orders are transmitted by telephone lines to Centrepoint's headquarters in Shipley from where the orders are relayed to a Morrisons superstore. At the superstore, the groceries are assembled by Centrepoint packing and delivery staff. Delivery is completed the next day by van, the goods being paid for on the doorstep. There is no charge for using the system.

The scheme plans to expand quickly and expects to process approximately 1000 orders per week. Profits from sales through the scheme will be donated by Morrisons to Centrepoint.

Further participation on this basis by other retailers would be welcomed by Centrepoint, according to its manager, Paul Nichols. Several companies had already expressed an interest in doing so, he said.



*BRADFORD TELESOPPING – at the heart of the Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council's Centrepoint Teleshopping and Information Service is a ROCC 870 videotex computer. The computer, which is attached to ordering terminals in a number of locations around the Bradford MBC area, brings superstore shopping and a wide range of community information within reach of people who, because of their limited mobility, have, up until now, been denied these advantages. The people behind the system are (l to r) Fred Thwaites – videotex operator, Paul Nichols – manager and Harjinder Singh – system supervisor.*



*At 83, shopping is not as easy as it used to be for Elizabeth Hlynskyj (pictured far right) or for many of her contemporaries. Now the housebound of Bradford can order their groceries via the Bradford Centrepoint Teleshopping & Information Service which was launched on November 29, 1985 by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Rt Hon Kenneth Baker.*

*From the comfort of an old people's day centre, the elderly and disabled order their groceries via a ROCC videotex system. A VDU installed in the centre lists some 4000 grocery lines stocked by a Wm Morrison superstore and a running total of what the customer has spent is shown on the screen. The orders are transmitted by telephone lines to Centrepoint's headquarters in Shipley from where they are relayed to a superstore.*

*Pictured with Elizabeth Hlynskyj are (l to r) The Mayoress and Mayor of Bradford, Michael Aldrich – chief executive, ROCC Computers Ltd and Ken Blundell – deputy chairman of Wm Morrison.*

The Bradford MBC district is a large, hilly and geographically diverse borough with a great deal of countryside, as well as urban areas. Around one third of the sheltered housing is in Keighley in the north, where a combination of steep inclines and severe winter conditions has often resulted in isolation for the elderly, disabled and housebound.

Centrepoint's application of videotex is serving to make this a thing of the past. Installations at the Birchlands old folk's day care centre, the Temple Row day centre for the disabled at Keighley and the Laisterdyke Community Library in Bradford will help enhance the dignity and quality of life of a significant part of Bradford's population.

According to Richard Wightman, chairman of Bradford MBC's Employment and Economic Affairs Committee, it is the aim of Centrepoint to provide much more than an ordering and delivery service, but one that ensures that a regular contact between Centrepoint staff and their customers is developed and maintained.

"I am determined that the new technology should not encourage isolation. I see the installation of terminals in libraries and centres as a chance to further encourage integration within the community," said Wightman.

The scheme employs 34 people as well as a centre manager, three supervisors and a clerk, with a number of Centrepoint staff having first hand experience of the problems of being disabled. There are four videotex operators whose job is to enter information into the computer. In addition, there are 16 ordering clerks, six packaging and delivery staff and three delivery van drivers.

Centrepoint has the potential to be developed from a service for part of the population of Bradford into a benefit for the whole of the community. The Unemployment Unit aims to enhance the system in cooperation with the Bradford Chamber of Commerce, the biggest of its kind outside London, in order to promote Bradford's industry and commerce. Plans are already advanced to exchange students and computer programmers with the Adhren Technocentre in Paris using the ROCC videotex system.

The Unemployment Unit has applied to the EEC for an additional £150,000 funding in order to develop better trading links with Bradford's twin town of Roubaix in France.

# Linda Becomes ROCC's Operator of the Year

**W**ith a high finishing score of 27,682 net characters per hour, Linda Rowland of Alpha-Numeric, Uxbridge, broke the magic spell by becoming the first operator, south of the Pennines, to win the 1985/86 UK Operator of the Year Keying Competition.

The final result was computed after 100 characters had been deducted for every character incorrectly keyed.

Stage I of the competition was held last November with operators keying in alpha and numeric from clean invoice data for a 30-minute period. The top eight operators from this stage went through to Stage II which was run in January 1986 and the top three went through to the final. This was held on February 6 at ROCC's Crawley headquarters.

The prizes were presented by David Parsonage, former head of sales, with Keith Bankes, director ITECH services, John McGregor-Temple, manager software services, field software engineering operations and Richard Handy, training manager in attendance.

In the evening the ladies were taken to dinner and the theatre to see 'CATS'.

The finalists each received cheques and certificates as follows:

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1st | <b>Linda Rowland</b> of Alpha-Numeric, Uxbridge.<br>(27,682) £250.00.             |
| 2nd | <b>Joyce Connor</b> of Spectrum Data Services Ltd, Bradford.<br>(24,496) £150.00. |
| 3rd | <b>Julie Askew</b> of Spectrum Data Services Ltd, Bradford.<br>(24,387) £100.00.  |

Operators achieving 19,000 net accurate keystrokes from Stage I were awarded Certificates of Achievement and qualifying operators in Stage II were awarded Certificates of Merit. (See page 32 for details of new competition).



*Pictured after the presentation are seated Linda Rowland (1st), Alpha-Numeric, Uxbridge, who won £250, (right), Joyce Connor (2nd) and Julie Askew (3rd), both of Spectrum Data Services, Bradford, who received cheques to the value of £150 and £100 respectively.*

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