

#### IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS...

**Club 403 Computer**  
(021) 618 1111  
**Viewtel Services**  
(021) 236 8277  
**Helpline**  
(021) 236 3366  
ext. 403



## Tune into Club 403 and join the switched on people

Club 403 is the only system in the world to offer a comprehensive interactive home shopping service. As a world leader in this field the Club ensures that it keeps its members abreast of the latest changes in visual technology and offers users up-to-date information, news and services via the Prestel network.

Launched exclusively in the West Midlands to forge new techniques in electronic information, the Club has successfully produced numerous services direct to the homes of more than one thousand Midlanders.

It has introduced instant Armchair Grocery and Mail Order Shopping along with Booking to its subscribers and a whole host of information pages that encompass leisure, motoring, finance and travel information, as well as education and children's sections.

If you tune into Club 403 you can guarantee becoming one of the country's "Switched On" people. In short you will have the news, views and shopping facilities of UK and the West Midlands at your fingertips...

● A Club 403 User takes advantage of the Armchair Shopping Service. Order your goods from home and have them delivered, all at the flick of a switch...

Inside  
this  
issue...

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© HAIL, RAIN OR SNOW the 403 vans deliver grocery, meats and frozen foods to Club 403 users. Irrespective of the weather the delivery schedules are kept to time — it is service with a smile day in and day out — and in this photograph two of the vans are about to set off from Carrefour on yet another daily journey.

## Service with a smile . . .

Are YOU fed up with your weekly super-market shop — crowded aisles, long queues, loading and unloading that wretched trolley? Then why not let our friendly delivery service take the strain?

We have a fleet of vans ready to deliver to your door any afternoon, evenings, Tuesday to Friday, top quality branded and brand-free goods direct from Carrefour. Plus, on a Thursday each week, quality meat from the Master Butcher and gourmet foods from Rackhams.

### Delivery

Key in your grocery list in the comfort of your armchair and Sue, Angela or Rose at the Delivery Service will make sure it's delivered when you want it.

They will also brief the drivers on any special requests or problems — perhaps you would like this particular order left with a neighbour as

you've had to go out unexpectedly. Or you wish to return an item and need a refund. Whatever the problem, whether an imminent birth (congratulations to Mrs. I. of Walmley on her recent happy event!) or a special difficulty, knowing about it will help us to give you a better service.

### Boon

Our deliverymen — Andy, Keith, David, Nigel and Colin (the Gaffer) — will be happy to help you and to pass on any queries or problems. Think what a boon not to have to go out to shop in appalling weather, or even on a lovely sunny day when there are better things to do!

**REMEMBER** — You only pay the Carrefour shelf prices, and there is no delivery charge if your order is over £25\*. So may we deliver YOUR order with a smile?

(\*Under £25 a delivery charge of £2 is added — minimum order £15).

## Computers play an important role at the world's number one society

The Halifax has been the world's number one building society for over 70 years, and during that time it has built up a network of more than 640 branches throughout the UK. The only way to ensure that an operation on such a massive scale as the

Halifax functions efficiently is with extensive computerisation.

Each day the society handles around 300,000 customer transactions, and with over nine million customers' accounts to administer, computers play an important role. The first computer

was installed some 20 years ago at the head office in Halifax, and in 1982 customers were able to experience at first hand the effects of the new generation of teleprocessing equipment.

### Face-to-face

The introduction of

counter-top terminals means that customers are no longer asked to wait while cashiers make enquiries in the back office — most transactions can be made face to face.

This revolution gives staff more opportunity to deal with customer enquiries and to offer

advice, while customers can obtain an instant up-date of their account and carry out transactions at any Halifax branch throughout the country. Branch opening hours have been extended as a result of the speedier end-of-day accounting procedures.

### Mortgages

tion of mortgage applications was introduced. Every working day the society handles between 1,000 and 2,000 mortgage applications. Computerisation has eased congestion and simplified the procedure.

A recent computer-linked services for customers has been the

introduction of automated teller machines at larger branches. Just as the society pioneered the opening of branch offices, it was also the first building society to install a national network of ATM machines in yet another innovative move.

The Cardcash machines are open 18 hours a day, seven days a week. Cardcash holders can withdraw up to £250 in cash, make cash or cheque deposits straight into the machines, obtain an instant balance or mini statement, or request a full postal statement. Free standing orders and a high rate of interest paid enhance this service.

## Empire's future is allied to Technology

Empire Stores has a tradition of high standards of service in retailing going back over 150 years and it has not survived so long without looking to the future.

Speaking to Club 403 News, Mr. Robert Brett says "Empire joined the Club 403 experiment because it felt that the future of retailing is very much allied to technology, particularly in the home."

"Club 403 was offering a unique service which has improved greatly during the past 18 months, and now that it has a firm commercial base and Empire is looking forward to being able to offer its services to a very much larger number of members."

### Improved

At Empire Stores Ltd., it is felt that its service offered on Club 403 has improved considerably since it first went "on air." Empire has very quickly realised that it must offer an exciting range of goods at competitive prices. Also, that the way in which it presents these offers has to be carefully considered.

"More and more of our Agents and Customers" Mr. Brett continues, "are taking advantage of our Fastlane Ordering Service because of its speed and convenience. Club 403 combines this convenience and speed with all the advantages of Viewdata Technology."

As more speedy convenient ordering services become available, extra responsibility is placed on the Empire Stores own delivery service which has to ensure that parcels are delivered as quickly as possible. Empire prides itself on having the best delivery services in the business.

### Offers

Empire Stores, has taken full advantage of the Viewdata Technology by offering a different Special Offer each day. "Hopefully, over a period of a few days should be able to offer something of interest to almost everyone in Club 403," said Mr. Brett. "In the meantime," he added, "Keep checking the Special Offer of the day (Page 4037882). It may just be the bargain you are looking for!"

**WHICH BUILDING SOCIETY  
GIVES OVER 9 MILLION PEOPLE  
A LITTLE XTRA HELP?**

**HALIFAX. THE WORLD'S N°1**



PRESTEL ENTRY NUMBER \*20265#



## WHY HAVE THE HASSLE OF YOUR OWN TRANSPORT.

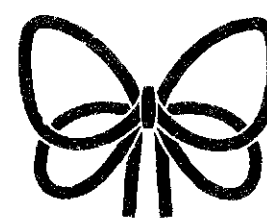
403 FLEET VANS ARE AVAILABLE MONDAY TO SATURDAY, FOR REGULAR OR ONE OFF DELIVERIES. COVERING AN AREA FROM LICHFIELD TO HENLEY IN ARDEN, STOURBRIDGE TO COVENTRY.

FOR FRIENDLY SERVICE, REASONABLE RATES

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## Empire Stores and Club 403 'LOOKING TO THE FUTURE'



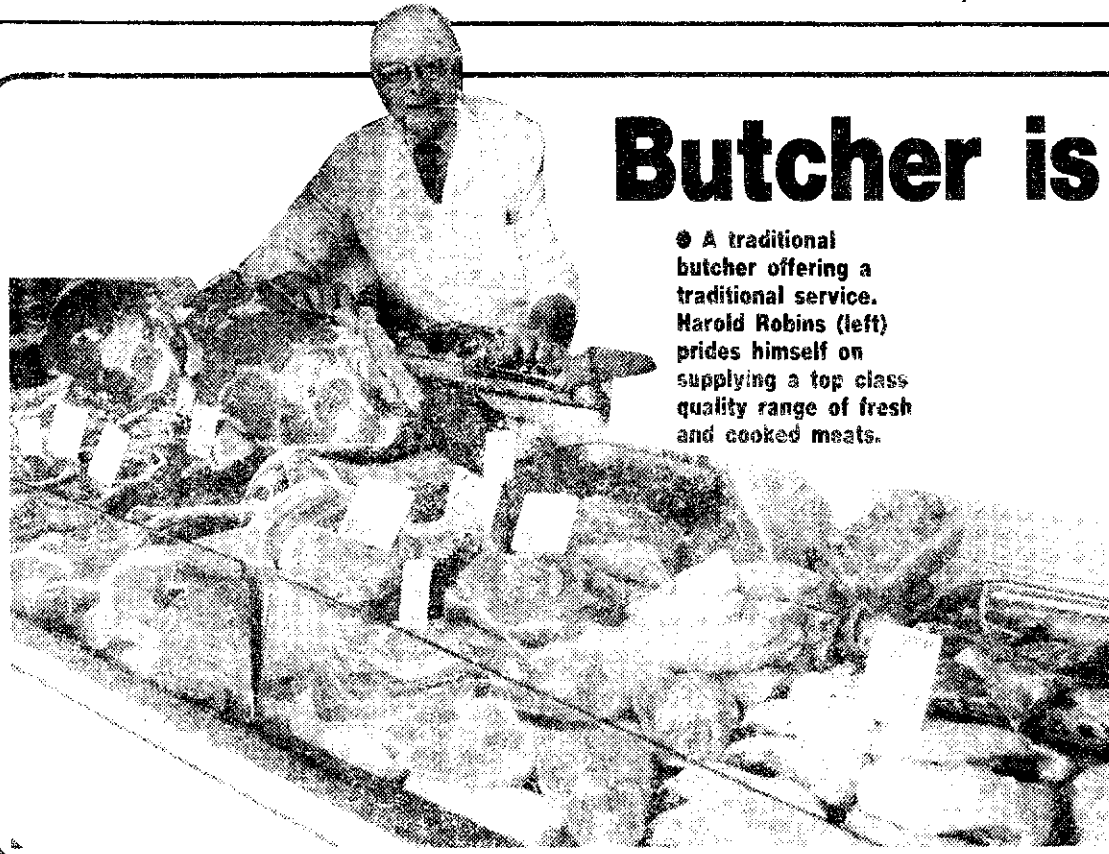
Empire Stores

**Congratulations to Club 403  
on the success to date of a  
very exciting venture.**

*Good Luck for the Future.*

**Our exciting range of offers  
starts on page 403788  
Call it up NOW!**





## Butcher is a 'cut above' the rest

● A traditional butcher offering a traditional service. Harold Robins (left) prides himself on supplying a top class quality range of fresh and cooked meats.

The ordering through the screen of fresh meat and its delivery direct to users homes is just another of the more popular services found on the ever expanding Club 403 pages. In addition the butcher offers, we believe some of the most competitive prices around.

We understand how much housewives appreciate being able to see and judge the quality of the meat they buy, so a great deal of care and thought initially went into our choice of butcher.

### Family

The first essential was that our butcher was a family butcher providing family orders, and most important, that the meat he sold was of the best quality and at the best prices.

We believe we have found all we want and more with William Smith, a traditional butcher who has traded from the same street in Norton Canes, Staffordshire, for more than 60 years.

The firm is run by Harold Robins, aged 67. Harold started in butchery fresh from school in Lichfield, driving pigs from market to the back of the shop for slaughter. Now at the time when most men are enjoying retirement, Harold, along with sons David and Alan, have

become the world pace setters as the first electronic butchers taking their trade into the next century.

### Rely

Mr. John Connor, product co-ordinator Club 403, said: "We are delighted to have found a butcher on whom we and more importantly our customers can rely."

From the outset we viewed this as a major step forward for Club 403 and yet another step towards our intention of eventually providing a complete and fully comprehensive shopping service that can justifiably claim to be the best in the world."

The butchery service includes all the regular cuts of meat covering beef, lamb, pork and bacon, a comprehensive selection of cooked meats, along with a bulk ordering service. All the meat is fresh, top quality and, with bulk orders, is prepared in a selection of steaks and joints ready for freezing.

If anything is not on screen, or, if you want special cuts, you can send a message for your requirements to the butcher on screen. The page number you need is 4031653.

# From horse and cart to push button technology

Established in 1882 by Harry Case H. Case (Hardware) Ltd., has developed from a small traditional hardware shop/ironmongers to its present medium sized hardware, housewares, garden, and tool specialist.

One hundred years ago deliveries were made by horse and cart. Sales at that time included oil lamps, gas fittings, lead baskets (containers used for a type of coke utilised in hand chain making) and chain-maker's

hammers - which sold for 2d each. Today by using the revolutionary armchair shopping on Club 403 the company feels that it is on terms with advanced marketing techniques.

Harry Case was succeeded by his son Arthur, who retired in

**"A pioneering firm that keeps its 'eye' on high-tech developments. H. Case Ltd., looks to the future with confidence."**

1973. The company is now run by Colin Case and his son Martin - great grandson of the founder.

### Altered

Two years ago Martin's brother Peter joined the firm making the seventh member of

the family to work in the business.

The store has stood on its present site since 1883. In 1950, as a result of increasing business from trade customers, office accommodation was added and 1956 saw a further extension for storage. In 1975 the warehouse and office complex was increased again to give a floor area of more than 10,500 sq. ft.

Throughout its life H. Case has been in the forefront with new ideas. When the first

motor cars appeared it supplied the petrol - in two gallon cans.

Later the first wireless crystal sets could be purchased from the shop. H. Case claims it was also the first shop in Cradley Heath to use fluorescent for its lighting.

### Computer

Over the last twenty years a considerable trade business has been built up and, with over 500 live accounts to service and maintain, the Company, which is always aware of new technology, decided to computerise the accounts department. In

addition it brought a second computer into operation which calculates and prints price tickets for the goods on display.

With a stock range of approximately 35,000 lines H. Case are always looking for new ways of informing its customers of exactly what it sells.

Now, in keeping with its pioneering outlook, the Company has taken another step forward, by advertising nationally on Prestel. With the revolutionary idea of armchair shopping from Club 403 (Page 202255) H. Case feels that it is on to a winner in terms of advanced

marketing techniques. Now its catchment area, instead of being fairly locally based, extends throughout the country, and it is hoped that over the next few years this new medium will contribute to a significant proportion of turnover.

### FREEPOST

CLUB 403 operates a FREEPOST service.

If you want more details or a home demonstration, send us a letter.

All you need to do is address the envelope to: CLUB 403, FREEPOST, BIRMINGHAM B4 6BB.

## A double first ...



Last month Club 403 scored two notable firsts. It awarded one of its coveted "Pub of the Month" awards to its first Banks' pub, the Plough & Harrow, Roughley, Sutton Coldfield, and it explained its structure, ideas and future operations to a Solihull teacher who is attending Westhill College on a one-year course to gain an advanced diploma in computer education.

Both firsts are encompassed by the photograph (above) in which teacher Peter Hughes (right) hands over the certificate to Plough & Harrow

manager Chris Bithell (centre), watched by brewery area manager Joe Creighton.

### Mailbox

The Plough & Harrow won the award after two Club 403 members, using Mailbox, recommended it for its good beer, comfortable surroundings and the friendly atmosphere afforded to customers by mine host Chris Bithell, his wife and his staff.

Peter Hughes, head of physical education at Kingshurst Comprehensive School, has just been seconded to Westhill, says: "The

college requires students on the computer course to spend one month in industry or commerce that uses some aspect of 'Hi Tech'.

"I chose Viewtel because I had an interest in electronic communication. Viewtel with its Mailbox and the interactive shopping facility of Club 403, was ideal."

"I will report to the Solihull Education Authority on the service that Viewtel and Club 403 offer and I will be writing a 10,000-word dissertation on the electronic medium run by Viewtel Services Ltd."

## IN OUR BUSINESS THE CUSTOMER IS KING!

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to buy what you need; to find us on PRESTEL PAGE US ON 202255

FOR BUSINESS: Industrial Hand Tools: Power Tools: Cutting Tools and Files; Abrasives; Adhesives and Sealants; Safety Products; Fixing Devices; Nuts, Bolts and Screws; Spanners; Precision Equipment; Electrical Accessories; Paint, and Decorators' Sundries; Locks and Security Products.

**TOMORROW'S SHOPPING TODAY**

FOR THE HOME: DIY Hand Tools; Power Tools; Housewares and Kitchen Gadgets; Garden Tools and Equipment; and many more items for Home Improvement such as Locks and Security Products and Draught Excluders.

OVER 35,000 LINES IN STOCK

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## WILLIAM SMITH FAMILY BUTCHER

Norton Canes, Cannock.

Tel: 0543 79308

Chosen to serve you via Club 403.

Top quality beef, pork and lamb supplied at competitive prices.

Also fresh chickens, home-made pork sausages, smoked and plain bacon.

We aim to satisfy.





# A NEW YEAR A NEW

With the start of 1985 Club 403 moved into a commercial phase and it now faces the years ahead with determination, knowing that the experience gained during the last two years will enable it to consolidate its position.

At the same time it aims to expand its services and continue to develop innovative users of technology similar to its successful interactive armchair shopping service, that is without doubt a world beater.

Although having a somewhat leaner and sleeker look Club 403 will continue to encompass the important shopping, news and information pages that users have come to rely upon.

But the major criteria for the development of a residential interactive database like Club 403, remains the need for concise dissemination of information therefore, a considerable amount of listing information that is currently contained within Club 403 will be removed. The benefit of this exercise will be more noticeably changing service with users being able to identify, far quicker, the areas of the database that have changed since they last used the service. The proven effect will be a greater justification for maintaining the service at home.

Q: Noticeboard is currently acknowledged as one of the most actively used areas of the existing database, how will it develop?

A: Noticeboard will develop in two specific sections: **Open Board** which will provide the launch-pad for sections of the database that will be accessible to any Prestel user. It will indicate the benefits of being a Club 403 member and generally highlight the Club aspect of the database.

**Members-board** which will allow non-members to see, at index level, some of the locally available special services that are available to club members.

Q: Going Places is another important part of Club 403. How will it be presented?

A: There will be a more lively approach to this area of the database, with specific events being highlighted each weekend linked to suggestions of "What to do" and "Where to go."

A strong travel section will incorporate a holiday-view that will be relevant to the time of the year. Tour operators will be encouraged to make particular holidays available, possibly to members only.

A link through Viewtel 2024 will offer users general access to Prestel.

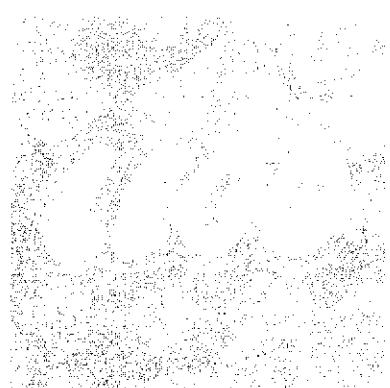
Q: Mailbox has always been a cornerstone of 403. Will it survive?

A: With the introduction of the Prestel national mailbox there will no longer be required for Club 403 special Mailbox.

However, it is important that a member's benefit is perceived. This will be achieved by continuing to offer a club mailbox directory and the introduction of Special User Group Mailboxes for example to children.

Q: The future of the Viewtel/403 concept could be in presenting a strong Education section. Will tomorrow's generation continue to have an education base to learn from?

A: As the Prestel Education Service develops there is an increasing need for more specific local



## A DIFFERENT TOY EVERY DAY



Join the **LEGO Club**



**LEGO Competitions and Prizes**



**Order the LEGO Catalogue**



**Buy the LEGO Products**

See Us on Page 403789



information and services. Club 403 will continue to develop its relationship with both councils within the current area.

An area of service to be developed could be Homework, but another important area of this section is adult education and with this in mind, discussions are taking place to provide a "Learn a Language" service on screen.

**Q:** The leading section is without doubt the Club 403 shopping and booking pages. How will these continue to grow?

**A:** Shopping and booking is already identified as the most critical service area of the database, the shopping section will continue to develop with as many relevant retailers as possible being given the opportunity to test the uses of the technology in their field.

The greengrocer, butcher and gourmet services will continue in their present format while the development of the mail order section will continue with encouragement being offered to mail order companies, with Private Viewdata Service to make them available via Gateway.

**Q:** Children have always been regular users of 403. Will they still have the opportunity to show their expertise answering our competitions etc?

**A:** Magic Box and the Children's Club is an area of tremendous potential and the database will encourage the use of interactive facilities for competitions and quizzes along with even greater use of Mailbox.

Although this area of the database is a costly section to maintain (children expect the content to change dramatically every day), it is thought to be extremely worthwhile for the development of both awareness and use of the technology.

Within Magic Box there will be an area for older children to include a Carecentre service where school leavers will be able to advertise their services. This section would be open to all users, especially the business community.

**Q:** Quite a lot of people tune into the News, is this still to play a part in the new look 403?

**A:** Local news and sport will be provided in a format similar to the existing database.

The weather forecast, although well used, will be substituted by the weather forecast currently screened by Viewtel 202, and links will be provided by the Met' office into specialist news on Prestel.

**Q:** What about family finance? Is it to continue in its present form?

**A:** No, family finance is currently an information database. It will develop with the use of the HomeLink and Bank of Scotland gateway and a more directional approach to information and services for the family.

A till paying service for gas, electricity, rates and telephone is currently being explored. Opportunities also exist for banks and building societies to offer more interactive services, using Club 403 members initially, as a test bed for a national service.

**Q:** How will users be able to get help in a hurry?

**A:** By using Helpline. Designed as a "panic button" service, Helpline will provide short, sharp information that is needed in a hurry. Telephone numbers and 24-hour contacts will be screened for gas, electricity, chemists, vets, plumbers, local police, medical and Samaritan type services.

Helpline will also provide cross-routes into the Social Services section for services such as home-help, baby-sitters etc.

**Q:** What about the features currently on 403? Where will they go?

**A:** I take it you are referring to Gardening, Video, Recipes, Horoscopes and Motoring etc. Well these will be encompassed within the Special Features sections designed as the mini-magazine of the database.

These will be on open access to all Prestel users, with some teleshopping links accessible to members only.

**Q:** Will the local authorities still be represented?

**A:** The awareness of Club 403 is high with Birmingham City Council and West Midlands County Council.

Local authorities are keen to progress their involvement and are currently looking at using the Club 403 database within their programme of community information centres.

The database is planned to become more inter-active with the addition of a "Talk to your Councillor" feature. Again, links into the social services database will be provided.

**Q:** Finally. One of the important aspects of life today is the work and advice people can get from Social Services. Is 403 interested in this concept?

**A:** It certainly is. Developing the theme of Club 403 as a service is important, especially within the elderly user groups.

Therefore, working closely with the Department of Health and Social Security, Club 403 will continue to look to develop specific services for their needs.



## WHAT IS CLUB 403?

- ★ It is an electronic system which links your TV and telephone via Prestel network.
- ★ A system that offers the world's leading interactive shopping service.
- ★ 403 contains sections on family finance, insurance and money matters.
- ★ It offers mail order — direct to your home — from leading companies.
- ★ Education and Magic Box, two areas aimed exclusively at children.
- ★ National, international and local news, weather reports and traffic information constantly updated.
- ★ Holidays galore, plus the latest information from National Bus, British Rail and Midland airports.
- ★ The chance to use Mailbox, the only two-way messaging system.
- ★ Entertainment, Going Places and What's New.
- ★ Keywords: highlighting what's on, whose on and what to do...

## Joining the Lego Club

If you are a LEGO enthusiast then the LEGO Club is for you, with its own magazine, badges, and membership cards. The Club offers enthusiasts the chance to keep up to date with the latest models, competitions, and take advantage of special offers from the Mail Order shop.

The LEGO Club was launched in August 1978 and now boasts 40,000 members. Almost 90 per cent of these are boys aged between 5 and 9 years but there are a number of older members including several grand-parents in their 80s.

### Magazine

The Club's 12 page colour magazine "Bricks 'n Pieces" is sent to members three times a year and keeps them up to date with new LEGO models, of LEGO exhibitions and events to visit. It also provides ideas for models to build, includes the comic strip adventures of Captain Indigo and his assistant Polka Dot, and offers the chance to win new LEGO sets through competitions.

### Contribute

Members are encouraged to contribute to the magazine by sending pictures of models they

have designed themselves. If the photograph is published they become a Master Builder and get a special gold badge.

### Shop

"Bricks 'n Pieces" also contains a Club Mail Order Shop which supplies badges and T-Shirts and informs members about special offers which allow them to purchase new models at special prices.

In addition to receiving editions of the Magazine members get a card on their birthdays and at Christmas from the President. When you join you get a pack containing LEGO Club badge, a Space sew-on patch, stickers and a Membership Card which entitles you to special reduced admission prices at places of interest all over the country, such as the Coventry Toy Museum, the National Tramway Museum in Derbyshire, London Transport Museum and many other locations including steam railways and wildlife parks all at reduced prices.

It is simple to join the LEGO Club, you can find an application form in a LEGO catalogue or inside some LEGO sets. Or by using Club 403 Mailbox. Press page 403789 for details.

## A zoo with a view

Go on push an electronic button and safari through the wilds of Club 403, for you just might find yourself at... Twycross, Leicestershire, the world's first zoo to join a public viewdata system in 1983.

Club 403 subscribers have for ages been able to page information about the zoo's latest births and arrivals, education and volunteer programmes, animal of the month and much more.

For those seeking advice about any aspect of wildlife, the zoo provides an 'ask-a-zoo' service which is a good opportunity to find out more about our animal friends and try out the interactive nature of Club 403 at the same time.

All the chores have been taken out of shopping for Club 403 users. There is no need for them to go out in the cold, the wet or even the very hot weather, all they need to do is turn on the 403 system and order their grocery, greengrocery or meat... Club 403 does the rest.

Even the ordering principle is simplicity itself, so we asked one of our regular users to explain, step by step just how easy it is to get your shopping delivered to your home without setting a foot outdoors.

"First, says Mrs. Green, I sit down and very carefully read through my Armchair Grocery Catalogue, (which is sent free of charge to every Club 403 member) and leisurely make a list of the code numbers. These are, incidentally, to the left of the description of the goods.

"My next step is to connect to Club 403 and then go direct to the Armchair Grocer page to check on what special offers are available.

"If there are some that attract me, I add these to my shopping list, by the way, the special offer

codes are shown on the screen. Once I have checked on these offers, I select from the page that enables me 'To place an order' and connect to Carrefour's computer.

### Attention

"Now comes the part that needs the most attention. I key in my list of codes, remembering that for every five codes the computer will reply with a list of corresponding items that show me the price and availability of the goods I have ordered. If I decide against ordering any of the items I can discard them, while I am still on this page.

"When I have entered my whole list, and I am satisfied that I have included all the goods I require, I then select a delivery day and time and at the same time make a note of the final total of my order which appears on this page.

"Once I have selected a day and time I still have the choice to cancel or confirm the entire order.

"At this point, if I wish, I can store my order to use for the following week. This means I do not have to list all the codes all over again. I just use the ones in store as a base to work from.

"I must say I find the system easy to follow. In fact I am extremely pleased with it, for it allows me to order groceries, frozen food, delicatessen, dairy items, fresh fruit and veg and even Carrefour's fresh baked bread. There is also a family butcher which provides exquisite meat.

### Utopia

"All this, when added to the fact that I get FREE DELIVERY if my order is more than £25, plus that I can choose to have my goods delivered on any of four weekdays and at anytime after 3 p.m., without having to leave my own home, is a boon indeed.

"The Armchair Shopping service is without equal, and I hope it continues to grow, for it is as near to shopping utopia one can ever hope to get," said Mrs Green finally.

## In the fast lane . . .

A new facility for

Club 403 members was unveiled at the National Exhibition Centre during last October's International Motor Show when Viewtel Services Ltd., moved into the fast lane by launching Motor View, the world's first electronic motoring magazine.

Aimed at motorists of all ages throughout the U.K. Motor View news is updated daily, with weekly changes to

stories on cars products and accessories.

Covering the motoring scene comprehensively Motor View also offers Road Reports from the A.A., Service Advice and expert hints and tips.

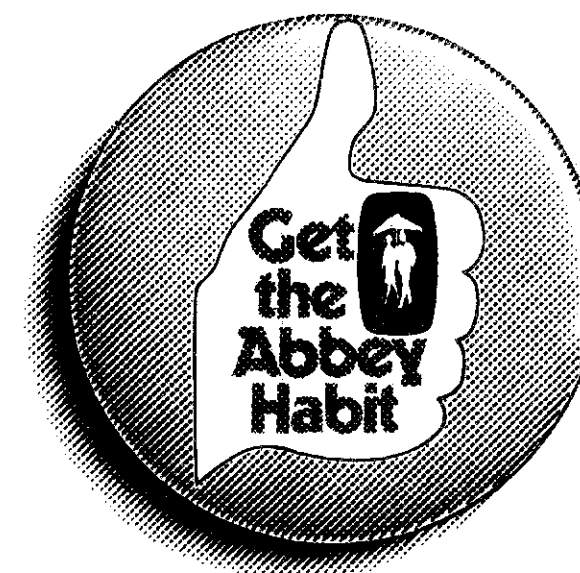
### List

It carries a full list of dealers, names, addresses and company details, plus new car prices as well as offering advice on insurance from some of the

country's leading insurance firms.

Users can also obtain details on where to get Driving Instruction from a growing network of instructors or book road tests through the screen.

If you want to keep up with the latest information from the motoring world key 20213 to browse through the pages of what we feel is the world's most futuristic magazine.



# for the security you need today

ABBREY NATIONAL BUILDING SOCIETY

Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL.

Telephone: 01-486 5555.





## Scottish Bank choose Tandata

Bank of Scotland customers who wish to access Home Banking, the new electronic home banking scheme will be using an alpha numeric viewdata adaptor developed by Tandata Marketing. The bank has selected the Tandata adaptor following a comprehensive survey of available equipment.

The adaptor acts as the vital link between a television set and telephone, allowing customers to carry out transactions seven days a week almost round the clock from home, office, or anywhere there is a suitable TV and telephone.

### Leader

Tandata, the viewdata terminal market leader in the UK, supplies equipment which is currently used in the home by subscribers to Prestel services such as CityService as well as most private business services in the UK and overseas.

## Easy seat booking is appreciated

The Directors and Staff of Birmingham Hippodrome would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Viewtel on the successful completion of Club 403's initial launch period and to extend warm wishes for the future. The ease with which theatre seats may be booked "from the armchair" is greatly appreciated by patrons who belong to the Club.

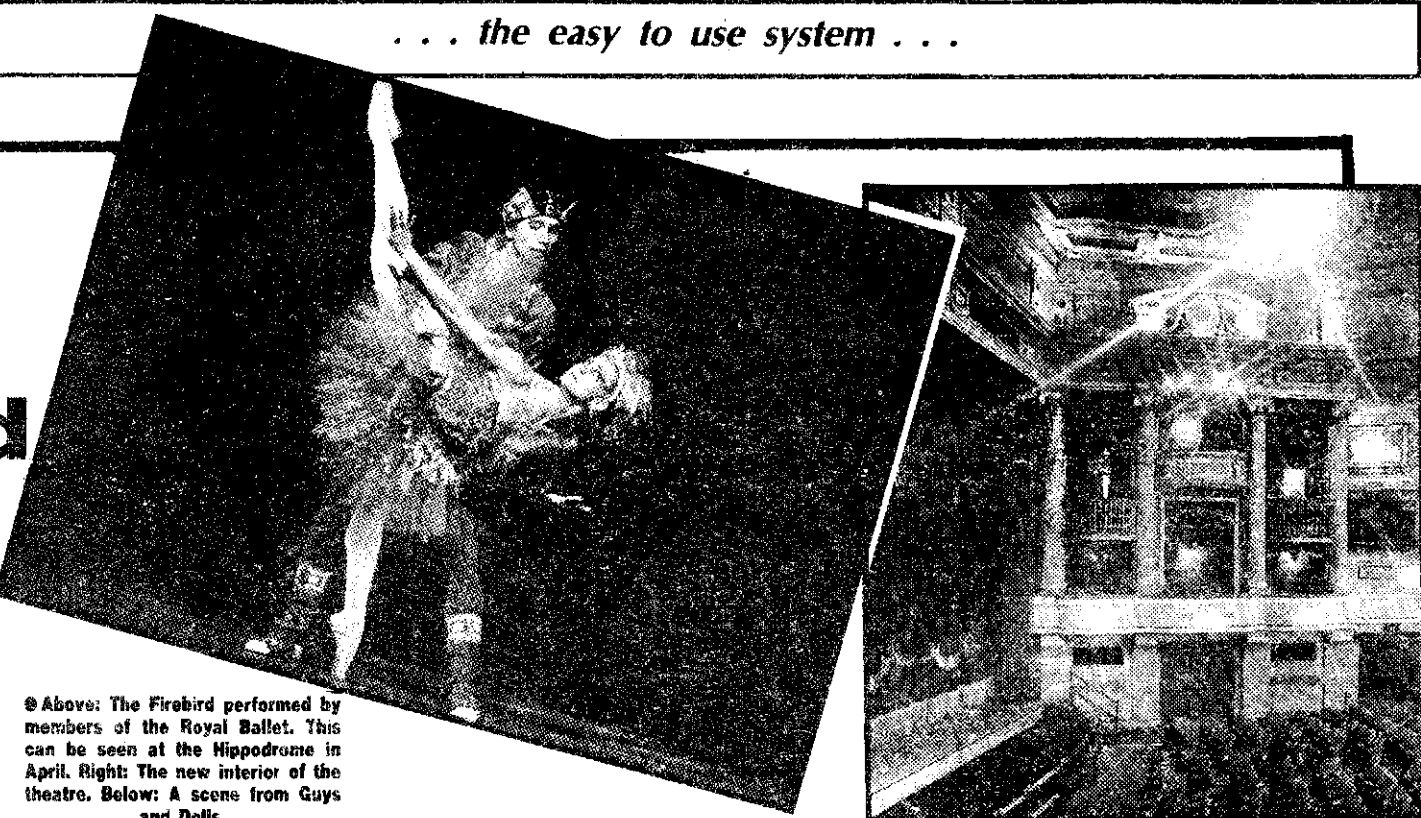
For Club 403 members who don't know Birmingham Hippodrome, it is the City's most exciting theatre, regularly presenting the best touring productions of musicals, ballet, opera and light entertainment. There

really is something to suit every taste!

### Stage

The Hippodrome is large, seating nearly 2,000 and with a huge stage to go with it. In fact, it has the largest stage outside London for a theatre of its type — which means it is bigger than several West End stages. The size of the stage means that the most spectacular productions "on the road" fit comfortably into the theatre without being cramped and having to lose pieces of scenery.

A four-year refurbishment programme has just been completed with all areas of the Hippodrome, both backstage and "front-of-house", upgraded to maximise comfort for audiences and convenience for performers. The enlarging of the stage to its current size was completed in Summer



① Above: The Firebird performed by members of the Royal Ballet. This can be seen at the Hippodrome in April. Right: The new interior of the theatre. Below: A scene from Guys and Dolls.

1984 and was the final phase in the redevelopment programme.

### Highlights

The Spring 1985 season at the Hippodrome promises to be one of the most exciting yet with highlights including:

- \* Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (February 26 to March 9) — the British stage premiere of the sparkling MGM musical.
- \* The Royal Ballet (April 8 to 13) — the Royal Ballet return to Birmingham after an

absence of 40 years with Manon (Mon-Thurs.) and a triple bill including The Firebird (Fri-Sat.). To celebrate the Company's return, there will be a Royal Gala Performance in the presence of Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaret, on Wednesday, April 18.

\* Guys and Dolls (May 15 to June 8) — the National Theatre's block-buster musical is taking to the road after 19 sell-out months in London.

These are just a few of the shows Club 403 members can book directly.



## Valuable experience for all the partners



RELAY  
FLORIST

There are waves in the ocean  
that never break on the beach,  
Just as there are depths of emotion  
that can find no expression in speech.

"FLOWERS SAY  
IT ALL"

Key Prestel Page No. 2022310

Since 1983, Prestel has been involved in the trial period of Club 403, which offered a "first" in comprehensive domestic viewdata services including tele-shopping and home-banking.

This trial has provided all the partners in the venture with valuable experience in a completely new field. A spokesman for Prestel says: "We are pleased now to welcome Club 403 into its new era as a commercial service and hope that our ever-widening range of services will be

extended to existing members, and to large numbers of new subscribers."

In the two years since Club 403 started there have been many changes and enhancements to the Prestel service and many of these have been of particular interest to residential users.

### Services

Prestel Messaging Services offer Telexlink — a means of sending telexes directly from a Prestel set to any telex

UK machine, and Mailbox, a national form where messages can be sent and received on any of Prestel's computers. And it has proved to be a popular service, both for its straightforward messaging and for the range of pre-formatted "greetings cards."

Another major development has been the introduction of home banking. Club 403 users are already accustomed to Homelink, the world's first commercial viewdata banking service, the result of the unique partnership between the Nottingham Building Society, and Bank of Scotland.

Now the Bank of Scotland has launched an additional banking service on Prestel, offering a wide range of facilities for home and office use.

### Education

One of the latest Prestel services is Education which includes careers information provided by Manpower Services Commission, The ECC-TIS Courses Guide (details of higher edu-

cation courses more than six weeks in length provided through a "Gateway" link), ED-IT (a service for teachers on educational applications of information technology, including details of IT courses, projects and examples

of "microviewdata" databases — DIY Prestel) and Educational Microcomputing (news, software reviews and soon special education software).

With many more enhancements planned, including an extensive

national teleshopping service," we hope, the spokesman added finally, "members of Club 403, both present and future, will find Prestel and its services playing a continually increasing part in their day-to-day lives."

## FLOWERS SAY IT ALL . . .



Relay Florist has been Club 403's official florist since the start and it has grown steadily with the club. Now it has expanded its market place by going on to Viewtel and can offer a nationwide service to Prestel users.

In this photograph owner Louise Rand (left) discusses a bouquet with one of her regular customers. See Page 4035928 for service details.

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### Magic box

Aimed at the youngsters and the "young at heart," Magic Box is crammed full of goodies. Go on Kids Press 403444 and enjoy yourselves.

## Get the Abbey 'Prestel' habit

Abbey National is a building society which has always been at the forefront of the financial world in terms of involvement with new technology.

Abbey National, for instance, has a sophisticated computer-linked automatic telling service in operation in all branches. This automatically updates both clients pass-books and its main frame computer record of their account, within seconds of depositing or withdrawing money. It's quick, easy and highly efficient.

### Value

With such a pedigree in computer technology it's no wonder that Abbey National has also been quick to recognise the value of the Prestel system and in particular the value of becoming involved in a closed-user group such as Club 403.

"When we were first approached some two years ago," says John Smith, project manager responsible for setting up the 403 link, "Prestel was still very much an unknown quantity to many companies. Its value as a means of communicating with sales forces and

management teams had at that time been recognised by a number, but there are still doubts as to the value of the system as a means of communicating with a company's customers."

Abbey National in common with other building societies, banks and insurance companies, is ideally placed to provide a service to its customers through the interactive facilities of Prestel.

However, with Club 403 Abbey National has gone further than being a simple information provider.

"We enjoy very good relations with schools up and down the country," says John Smith.

"Many of them run savings schemes which involve teachers in keeping records of transactions and which take the teacher away from general duties, or alternatively eat into their own free time. In order to help them we set up a Schools Savings Scheme in the 403

area, which is linked directly to our branch in Solihull.

We now find that once logged into our office it is pupils who are making use of the service under the supervision of their teachers.

As a result, teachers have been relieved of an administrative burden while the pupils are gaining valuable experience in dealing with inter-active computer programmes as well as being encouraged to save."

### Learning

Abbey National has also become involved in setting up an early learning programme through Club 403, which generated significant interest amongst parents and teachers in the development of educational facilities for young children at home.

But Abbey National's use of Prestel is not just restricted to providing information for children. Also available are information pages, which give details of the Society's savings accounts, the latest information on house prices and its unique Property Service.

Abbey National is already firmly com-



## Backing a couple of winners

During the last year Club 403 has been involved in the World of Sport.

Timed to coincide with the start the Witton Sunday and Aston Manor Darts league matches, the club sponsored the Woodman team and it backed a winner, for the men of the Woodman won both leagues, losing only three matches out of the thirty played in the two leagues and they are on course to win again this year. The stars are shown above (left) receiving their official team shirts from Roy Grant club 403.

In August 1984 club 403 backed its second winner when it joined forces in an experiment aimed at promoting Club 403 amongst Aston Villa's business clients.

White Villa were installing a closed circuit T.V. system in its executive boxes, directors and press areas. Club 403 facility enabled a 25 page carousel of information to be fed into the system during each match day afternoon, interspaced by match highlights.

Commenting on the association Villa Chairman, Doug Ellis, said "Aston Villa are one of Europe's progressive football clubs and as such must be constantly seeking new ways of enhancing facilities at the ground. The Club 403 system has proved informative, flexible and has been well received by our large contingent of executive supporters."

## Learn to drive

On page 3039301 users will find details about the Association of Driving Instructors who are currently offering Birmingham Prestel users a free assessment lesson.

Open to all drivers, beginners may opt for a free classroom lesson or learn off a Video tape.

ADL is a personal service. It does not operate a fixed teaching system, believing instead that clients should enjoy their lessons.

This is a successful approach for A.D.I. say "We believe that the public now have the best opportunity of learning to drive for the amount of our service is aimed at teaching a client up to their appropriate level of capability."

## Research by the experts

Many Club 403 members have been contacted by Research Bureau Limited (RBL) during the last 2 years and in response to members enquiries we felt it would be of interest to write a short article about this major research company.

Established in 1962 RBL occupies a prime position within the market research industry, not only as the leading ad hoc MR

agency in the UK but also in the international field, as the principal member of Research International, the world's largest full service market research supplier.

RBL offers a High Quality Service, for its name has become synonymous with executive skills and consultancy of the highest calibre. Innovation and Development, and a High Standard.

RBL can also offer the expertise of some 80 highly trained executives, who have a two year apprenticeship, in market research and the principles of marketing.

Finally RBL offer the full gambit of market research services, across diversified product areas. Its extensive knowledge includes the application of established techniques

along with innovations and it has a wide range of experience which includes; national field force; advertising testing; tracking/monitoring; market feasibility studies; usage and attitude studies. We hope that this brief description answers some of the many questions. If you would like to learn about them in greater detail, please contact: Michel Olszewski on 01-488 1366

# FREE FOR YOU

**Littlewoods**

Littlewoods bring the convenience of catalogue shopping to your Prestel screen; making catalogue shopping even more convenient because you can order through the Prestel system.

And, with your first order from the catalogue there's a free gift immediately that order is accepted.

Littlewoods will send you the catalogue free, deliver anything you order free and even spread the cash price of whatever you buy equally over 20 or 38 weeks depending on price.

As well as the extensive range of fashions and household goods in the catalogue we regularly bring to Club 403, exclusive special offers for catalogue agents.

If you'd like to enjoy a better way of shopping simply call up Club 403 page 4037812 for details of the Littlewoods catalogue and how you can obtain your free gift.

**NEW! JUST OUT!**

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## Your leading Midlands newspapers

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## Sunday Mercury

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## QUESTION OF MICRO'S

Prestel has many faces and one of them is Microcomputing, the information service for Microcomputer users that adds, say Prestel, a new dimension to home computing.

The Microcomputing service is available to around 95% of the UK population on a local call basis and is made up of Micronet, the 32,000 page home computer service, Club Spot and Viewfax 25% an independent database.

Joining Prestel Microcomputing gives you access to all these:

Viewfax, Micronet and Clubspot databases and a whole host of services.

### Services

These services are in addition to those provided by Prestel Microcomputing which, alone, occupies around 50,000 frames.

Viewfax 258 specialises in the Acorn range of micros and supports them with a wide range of telesoftware and special features including Tubelink... which is a specialist section for owners of second

processors. Besides Tubelink, there are numerous other sections of Viewfax for the dedicated BBC owner including the MicroGnome section.

In addition, there is an ever changing range of programs from well known software houses that you can download into your Beeb at any time.

Individuals can submit programs to be sold and Viewfax normally pays a royalty rate.



## Award for the Gun Barrels

Outside Birmingham University stands the Gun Barrels, one of Mitchell and Butlers newest public houses. Boasting a first class restaurant, the pub which is run by Christopher and Helen Jordan, recently won the Club 403 Pub of the Month award for its excellent beers, good food and comfortable atmosphere.

The Gun Barrels, which was recommended by a Club 403 member, attracts academics, students and local businessmen. In the photograph (left), Helen and Christopher Jordan "show off" their Club 403 "Pub of the Month" framed certificate.

## Focus on Viewtel

The publisher of Club 403 is Viewtel Services Ltd., a leading Information Provider on Prestel, the viewdata service of British Telecom. Viewtel was launched in December 1975 by The Birmingham Post & Mail Ltd. when Viewtel 202 the world's first electronic newspaper was born. In November 1979, Prestel was made a public service and was officially launched to the public in March 1980.

By this time Viewtel, a pioneer in the new medium, had firmly established itself as a leader, consistently holding a position in the top five Information Providers.

A winner of numerous Prestel awards (listed below) Viewtel was the first I.P. to reach a total of ten million accesses to its pages.

### Excess

Now a separate company, Viewtel Services Ltd. is a sister company of The Birmingham Post & Mail Ltd. It continues to publish a free, fast updated news service to all Prestel users, achieving usage figures far in excess of its rivals both as a "news" database and as an "umbrella" service provider.

A large number of "blue chip" clients are to be found under Viewtel's umbrella including major banks, companies, Banks, Building Societies and Insurance Companies.

### Reputation

Since its inception Viewtel has established an international reputation for its skills in "database discipline," the all important art of database structure and routing. The use of these skills, together with regular monitoring of user reaction by frame interrogation and market research, has ensured a package of information with high user acceptance and usage.

Viewtel's unrivalled experience in videotex publishing has also been applied to other areas such as "Closed User Groups" and consultancy services in database design, management and marketing both in the UK and abroad.

Constantly seeking new markets and applications for the new medium Viewtel is always "in pursuit of Viewdata excellence" and it aims to carry this ideal into the whole of the Club 403 system.



By  
ROY GRANT

## Coming of age...

It is with a mixture of sadness and excitement that I review the history of Club 403. As project manager since October 1982 until the completion of the test market in December 1984 it was satisfying to see this exciting domestic service moving to stand on its own feet.

When I was assigned to manage this viewdata experiment the team involved with me was armed with nothing more than an idea, an ailing technological invention and some Government and industry support.

The television industry in particular, was anxious to discover if a "two-way" system might provide sufficient domestic applications to warrant more than just a passing interest.

The first six months (October 1982 to March 1983), before launching the "idea" in the Midlands was spent putting down roots, calling in the support of interested industries and organisations and creating the Club 403 database.

By launch date on March 21, 1983, the service was ready to roll with a comprehensive regional information package and some interesting interactive shopping and messaging applications.

Launch day went with a roar and the selected market areas around Birmingham were saturated with leaflets, but

hardly a ripple of response was heard. It seemed nobody, except the bravest technology pioneers, was ready for Club 403, and within months the test market seemed destined for the scrap yard.

But constant re-appraisal by the project team revealed limiting factors. One was that the service lacked a key consumer benefit and that the majority of the equipment being offered to receive the Club 403 service was unsuitable.

Our response was to launch the first Armchair Grocer service, commit our resources to the simple viewdata adaptor and modems for home micros and employ our own sales team. This worked for we finally struck a winning combination, and the last three months of 1983 and the first few of 1984 gave us sufficient members for a quality test market to take place.

During this period the stereotyped indexing structure of the database was replaced with a more dynamic, informative front page. More

active services were added including the Armchair Butcher and Greengrocer services, culminating in the first ever Grocer system with Carrefour.

Now our customers can sit back in the comfort of their armchairs at home and with the touch of a few buttons can rid themselves of the drudgery element of shopping.

The emotions that I mentioned at the beginning with which I write this "signing off" review have been aroused by the experiences of the last two and a bit years.

Sadness because my direct involvement in Club 403 has come to an end.

But excitement because Club 403 has heralded in the new age of home based information technology. There is a long way to go yet but the idea has borne a reality and although still fragile the rewards beckon.

### JOIN THE MICRO SET

If you wish to join more than 50,000 Prestel users who are part of the micro set, just message Club 403 for further details.

### THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

YOU CAN USE CLUB 403 FOR... SHOPPING FROM HOME... CHECKING TRAVEL TIMES... NEWS... SPORT... MESSAGES... EDUCATION... LEISURE... COMPETITIONS... FINANCE... GAMES... COUNCIL NEWS... WHERE TO GO... AND LOTS MORE...

Joining 403 is simplicity in itself! You simply clip the coupon at the bottom of this page and the 403 subscriber team will take care of the rest.

They will organise a BT engineer to install the necessary socket in your home, arrange for your personal identity to be issued and your name and address to be registered on the two computers that serve the area (incidentally, they have the names Dickens and Kents, after the original telephone exchanges in the Birmingham area).

The team will also arrange to supply the equipment you will need to access the service.

This can be one of the following: Rent or purchase of a purpose-built TV set; rent or purchase of a console that will convert your existing TV monitor; or purchase of a console that will convert your existing TV monitor; or the purchase of a modem that will connect

your home micro computer into the system.

There are a number of special offers available, and the team will be more than happy to discuss your best option.

The rest is just plain sailing, but should you encounter any problems 403 is there to help again... this time at the end of a telephone on 021-236 8277 — Helpline.

### The costs

Club 403 is not expensive either, membership of the service, including the use of the whole Prestel system, will cost you just £6.50 per quarter as a residential user.

The installation of your telephone socket will cost £15 (FREE if you are having your telephones changed to the new BT socket system).

If you should wish to use the service outside of the normal residential hours, i.e. between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday to Friday or 9 a.m. to 12 noon Saturday, they you will incur a time based charge of 5p per minute. Otherwise you will pay just the cost of a local telephone call.

All other membership charges have been waived by Club 403 during 1985.

I am interested in joining Club 40. Please send me an application form.

Mr./Mrs. ....

Address ....

Tel. No. ....

I am particularly interested in:

☐ Home Shopping

☐ Microcomputing

☐ Home Banking

☐ All aspects

And would like to

☐ Purchase

☐ Rent

either a

☐ Terminal

☐ Adaptor

☐ Modem.

Tick appropriate boxes

### THE PURSUIT OF VIEWDATA EXCELLENCE

Prestel Bronze Keypad Award  
1,000,000 frame accesses

Prestel Award (voted by users)  
'Best Value for Money'

Prestel Awards (voted by users)  
'Best Value for Money'  
'Best Presented Database'  
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Prestel Awards (voted by users)  
'Most Informative Database'  
'Most Entertaining Database'  
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First Information Provider to reach a total of  
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World's First Armchair Grocer Service

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