

CATCH THE BARGAINS

EARLY BIRD EDITION



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30p

WEST MIDLANDS NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Slow-down as potter balances stocks with production

SHORT-TIME WORKING AT WEDGWOOD

BY DAVID ELKS
DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

POTTERY giant Wedgwood is to scale down production for 10 days amid signs that the imminent merger with Royal Doulton is creating short-term cash-flow problems.

The company, which employs 2,000 in North Staffordshire, confirmed production workers at its Barlaston factory will start a period of short-time working from next Friday until February 28.

The move has been taken to match its stocks with production of its existing and new ranges, as well as absorbing the manufacture of Royal Doulton's brands.

The news comes as a number of Wedgwood's creditors contacted The Sentinel to say they have had payments put on hold.

A spokesman for Wedgwood said the short-time working was the latest phase of its efforts to match



PRODUCTION BASE: the Wedgwood factory at Barlaston

production with demand. He said: "The announcement of a further period of short-time working is part of a continuing process which will assist in balancing established, newly acquired and new

group inventory in line with specific business requirements."

Asked whether there was a cash-flow concern, he added: "Waterford Wedgwood is just finalising a major acquisition and a number of

issues are currently being assessed as we move towards the final completion and acquisition."

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EastEnders is 20 next week. If it was a dog, it might well have been put to sleep. Unfortunately it isn't a dog. Although several of the cast look like alsatians Read Woodhouse on TV in your free magazine inside



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