

Christmas stamps Five new self-adhesives



Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Size 32 × 30mm

Sheets 50

Perforation 14.5 × 14 die-cut

Phosphor 2nd class one band, others two bands

Gum Self-adhesive

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinders and colours

All values 1B greenish yellow
 ● 1C bright carmine ● 1D new blue ● 1E black ●

Cylinder 1A printed lilac for the 2nd class, greenish grey 1st, dull mauve E, silver 47p, and light blue 68p. Except for the 47p, the 1A cylinders combine the listed colour plus silver.

Phosphor P25 2nd class, P24 other values

Stamp books

2nd 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 1F (blue)
 P23 phosphor

1st 1A 2B 1C 1D 1E 2F (gold)
 P22 phosphor

1F and 2F cylinders are for the book heading panels

THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps go on sale at Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 5 November. All five stamps feature Christmas flora: 2nd class Spruce star, 1st class Holly, E (European rate) Ivy, 47p Mistletoe, and 68p Pine cone. The Queen's head and value/service indicator are printed at top left in metallic ink.

These Christmas stamps are all printed, as last year, on self-adhesive paper; the stamps have die-cut perforations and can be removed from sheets by rouletting which surrounds the 'perforations'. The stamps are slightly smaller in size than last year's issue. They were designed by Rose Design using photography by Carol Sharp.

Owing to the method of production, the sheets are printed in units of three instead of the usual two, so three sets of cylinders exist – no dot, dot and double dot (: as colon).

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 5 November, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or Bethlehem must reach Tallents House by the date of issue. Price £2.74 UK (including VAT) or £2.34 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO223' or 'FDO224'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Bethlehem postmark. Details of sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House.

STAMP BOOKS Two Christmas stamp books (folded sheetlets) will be available from 5 November: 12 × 1st class stamps (£3.24) and 24 × 2nd class stamps (£4.56). The books have been printed by De La Rue. Both books carry a message 'Find the One Ring and Win £1 Million' – referring to this year's Christmas promotion. The books have blue and gold headed panels, matching the new stamp books. Barcodes are positioned right of the Royal Mail logo. Last year, readers will recall, there was a 'Find the £1 Million Stamp' promotion.

feature seasonal flora to celebrate Christmas



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

These stamp designs will be reproduced on Christmas cards, sold in boxes of 15 (three of each design). Price £6.95 from Talents House.

The 2002 Year Book and Year Pack will be available from 5 November. Year Book £32.50 (£75 deluxe edition), Year Pack £26.95.



CHRISTMAS AIRLETTERS Two airletters (aerogrammes) will be available from 5 November. As last year there will be a national and a bilingual (Welsh/English) version. The bilingual version will be available only from Post Office branches in Wales, Talents House and Post Office philatelic outlets. Price 49p each. The colourful design, spread over the front, central and back portions of the airletter features people at a party pulling crackers. The airletter was designed by Silk Pearce, using an illustration by George Hardie, and printed by BONG UK Limited. It bears the usual 'stamp' comprising the Machin head of The Queen and 'Postage Paid' indicator. The airletter does not qualify for 'first day of issue' postmarking •

A well-illustrated Christmas pack (above, price £2.35) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets.

12 x 1st class (above left) and 24 x 2nd class stamp books will be available.