

A New Telephone Kiosk—Kiosk No. 8

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Existing kiosks which were designed over 30 years ago do not always match their contemporary surroundings and a new design was commissioned, which would not only be unobtrusive in both modern cities and rural surroundings, but would also take advantage of new materials and manufacturing techniques.

INTRODUCTION

The first telephone kiosk used by the Post Office was the Kiosk No. 1, which was introduced in 1922. This kiosk (Fig. 1(a)) was made of unreinforced concrete and had an all wood door. Four years later the Kiosk No. 2, (Fig. 1(b)), was brought into service. This kiosk was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made of cast iron with a wood-framed door.

In 1928, two more of Sir Giles's designs were introduced—the Kiosk No. 3 (Fig. 1(c)), which was made of concrete with a wood-framed door, and the Kiosk No. 4 (Fig. 1(d)). The Kiosk No. 4 was similar to the Kiosk No. 2, but had a letter box and two stamp-selling machines in addition to telephone facilities. Only 50 of this type were made, and most of these have by now been withdrawn from service. All the first four designs of kiosk are now obsolete.

In 1936 the Post Office celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the reign of the late King George V by introducing the Kiosk No. 6 (Fig. 2). This was made of cast iron with a wood-framed door and was also designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.

The Kiosk No. 6 has been the standard kiosk for Post

Office use since its introduction, and although it has served well, it does not always harmonize with contemporary architecture.

In 1960 Neville Conder designed the Kiosk No. 7, shown in Fig. 3. Twelve of these were made and put on trial—six were made in cast-iron and six in aluminium alloy. The design was not proceeded with beyond these 12. A useful by-product of this trial was experience with the effect of the atmosphere and weathering on untreated aluminium. The surface of a kiosk, which was installed near the Royal Exchange in the City of London, turned a streaky grey-black with white blisters.

Untreated aluminium is now regarded as quite unsuitable for street furniture use by the Post Office, since the only way to maintain a bright finish is by frequent and regular washing with copious quantities of clean water. This would be too costly, and clean water even in modest quantities is difficult to obtain at most kiosk sites.

In 1965 two designers, Douglas Scott and Bruce Martin, were commissioned to produce designs for a new telephone kiosk. The Post Office design requirements called for the new kiosk to incorporate the best features of previous kiosk designs and to be suitable for both urban and rural surroundings. Glazing and fittings were to be robust and

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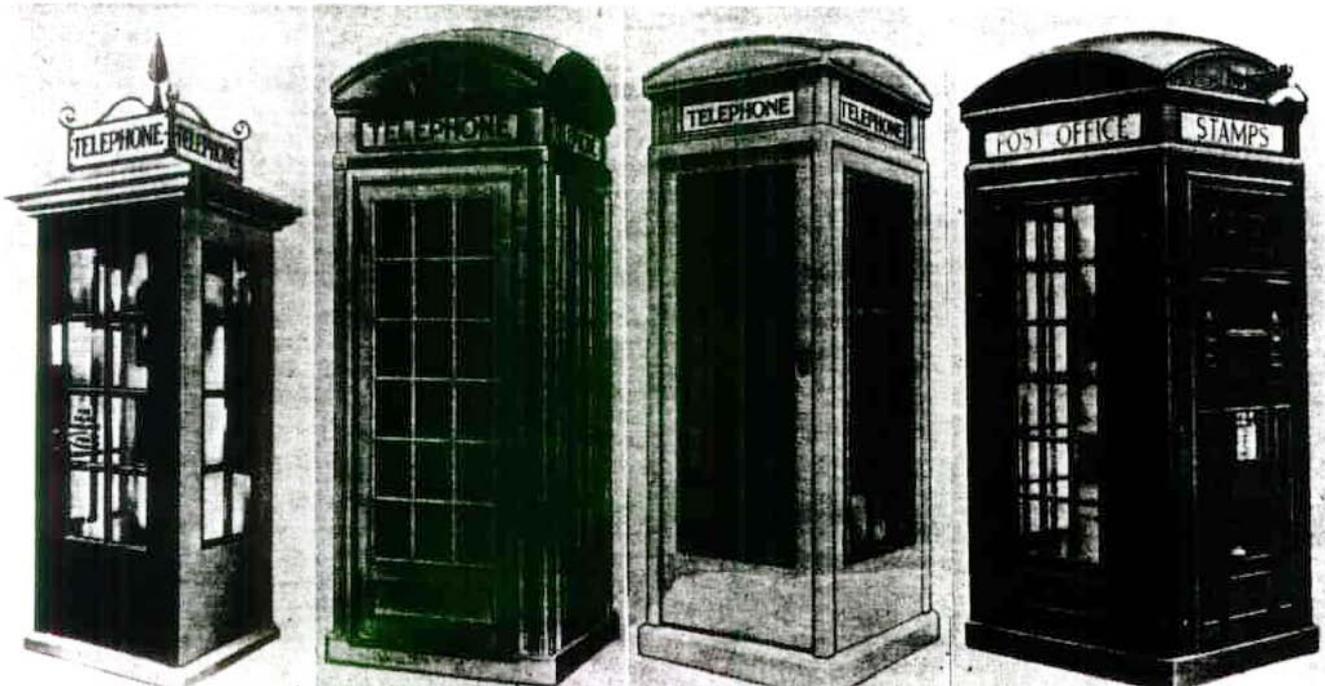


FIG. 1—Early designs of Kiosks

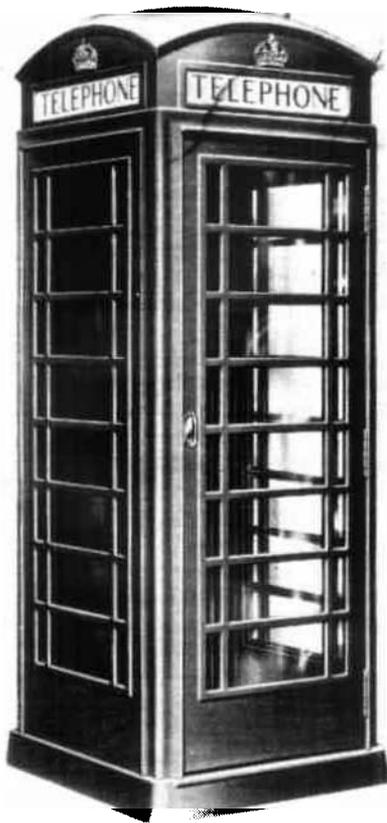


FIG. 2—Kiosk No. 6

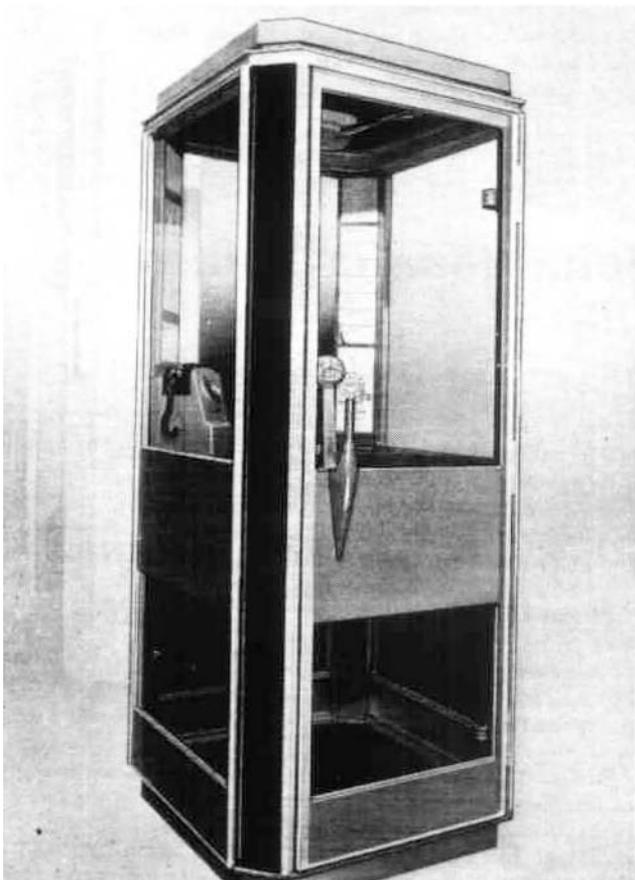


FIG. 3—Kiosk No. 7

crevices, into which levers and jemmys could be inserted, avoided. It was to be possible to see easily into the kiosk from outside as a deterrent for miscreants who might attack and rob the fittings and coin box.

Full-size appearance models of each design were made, and Bruce Martin's was selected for development and eventual quantity production. It is known as the Kiosk No. 8, and will now succeed the Kiosk No. 6 for all replacements and new installations.

DESIGN DETAILS

The new kiosk (Fig. 4) is of sectional construction and consists essentially of seven principal components designed to assemble in a number of alternative ways to give a left-hand or right-hand opening door on any of the three sides not filled by the back panel. The structure, fittings, fixings

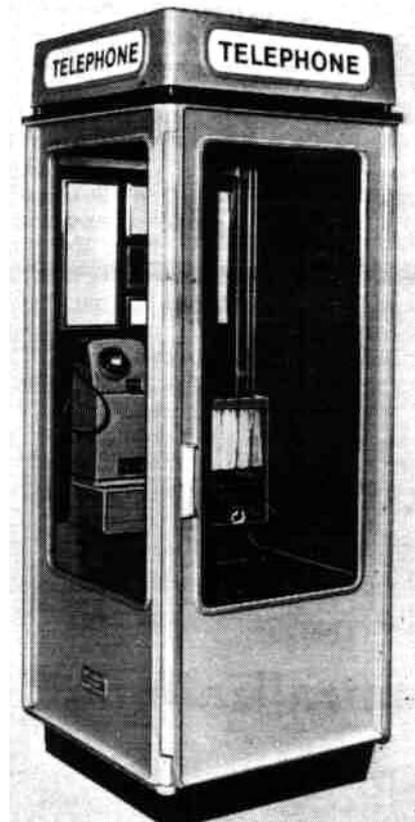


FIG. 4—Kiosk No. 8

and glazing of the kiosk have been designed to be as robust as possible, with full regard to the threat of vandalism and theft.

Basic Components

The sill ring is situated at floor level in the kiosk and acts as a location jig. It is of a strong structural form and provides junctions between itself and the side and back panels as well as positions for the fixings. The fixings are hidden to resist vandals and to give a clean appearance. The sill ring also acts as permanent shuttering for the concrete floor, which is trowelled to an 0.5 in fall towards the door, so that the floor will drain. A ventilation gap is provided under the door for air intake and to prevent jamming of the door by pebbles.

The back panel provides secure fixing for electrical and telephone equipment into bosses, with hidden fixings, for security. The side panels each have a toughened glass pane

and are simply fixed through four bosses to the head and sill rings, and are removable for replacement if required.

The head ring is of a strong structural form to act as a location jig, and to provide junctions between itself and the side and back panels with provision of bosses for the fixings of the panels and roof. It provides strong fixing positions for the door closer and electric-light fitting, which is placed to illuminate the white ceiling, notices and telephone equipment and to give general illumination. It incorporates a gutter to collect water from the roof, to prevent dripping over the door, and to prevent weathering of the panels. The gutter is accessible and easy to clean.

The roof is designed to resist weather and has illuminated lettering to assist recognition. The fixings are concealed for a clean appearance and resistance to vandals, and the roof laps over the head ring to provide slots for ventilation. Initially, the roof was to have been made of a glass-reinforced plastic; the lightness of this material making it attractive. But when a model was viewed by transmitted light the inherent unevenness of the texture of glass reinforced plastic gave an appearance which was unacceptable. Other plastic materials were considered but rejected on grounds of cost and fire risk, and the final design has reverted to a cast-iron roof.

The wallboards are fixed, together with the telephone and electrical equipment, to bosses cast onto the back panel to resist damage by vandals and theft of the coin box. The wallboards can be changed should new ones be designed, or new telephone or electrical equipment installed. Both pre-pay-on-answer and pay-on-answer coinboxes can be fitted.

The door is easy to open and close being made of aluminium. It is fitted with a toughened glass pane, and a polished aluminium handle is cast integrally with the door to resist vandals and to give easy recognition. The door is closed automatically by a mechanism mounted on the head ring.

Except for the door, all the main parts of the kiosk are of cast iron. The inside of the roof is painted white, to improve the illumination by acting as a reflector. The sill and head rings are painted black and all other surfaces are painted red. All glazing is carried out at the manufacturers works.

Construction

Since the Kiosk No. 8 is a completely new item it is dimensioned in metric units and uses metric screws and bolts. Existing standard equipment, such as wallboards and directory holders, is used. The kiosk back is ready drilled for mounting a steel cash compartment.

Fluorescent lighting is fitted as standard equipment, and is switched on all day. This has been found to be a cheaper arrangement than the time-switch controlled tungsten lamp hitherto used for kiosk lighting. The lighting in Kiosks No. 6 is to be converted during the next five to seven years to this fluorescent system. A moulded cover is provided to protect the electricity supply cable termination and the consumer's fuse.

Each Kiosk No. 6 was assembled at the manufacturers to ensure a good fit of all parts and then dismantled for transportation. These sets of associated parts were sent out to Post Office depots, as required, for reassembly, but, if separated for any reason, kiosks have to be assembled from parts which have not been matched at the manufacturers. This has led to wasted effort in correcting parts which fit badly.

The Kiosk No. 8 has seven main parts compared with 14 for the Kiosk No. 6. Consequently some of the Kiosk No. 8 parts are very heavy; for example the back panel weighs over 3 cwt. This could lead to the need for as many as five men to erect a Kiosk No. 8. For these reasons, and because painting is more easily and cheaply carried out in a factory than on site, the Kiosk No. 8 will be completely assembled and painted at the manufacturers works, and transported to depots ready for equipping with lighting and telephone apparatus.

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