

Christmas stamps Playful robins feature on



Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Processes Gravure

Size 37 x 35mm

Sheets 50

Perforation 14.5 die-cut

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum Self-adhesive

Gutter pairs Vertical

THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps go on sale at post offices, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 6 November. All five feature playful robins drawn, appropriately, by Arthur Robins. The 2nd class stamp features robins with snowman, 1st class robins with snow-covered feeding table, E robins skating on frozen bird bath, 45p robins feeding on Christmas pudding, and 65p parent robin and baby robins in paper-chain nest.

These Christmas stamps are all printed, for the first time, on self-adhesive paper, the stamps having die-cut perforations, and can be removed from sheets by rouletting which surrounds the 'perforations'.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 6 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 £2.69 UK (including VAT) or £2.29 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 'FDO121' or 'FDO122'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Bethlehem postmark. A non-pictorial Bethlehem postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre; request 'FDO122NP'.

STAMP BOOKS Two Christmas stamp books (folded sheetlets) will be available from 6 November: £3.24 containing twelve 1st class, and £4.56 containing twenty-four 2nd class stamps. The books have been printed by De La Rue. Cylinders are: 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 1F 1G *phosphor* P6 (2nd) or P5 (1st).

AIRLETTER Two versions of the Christmas airletter (aerogramme) will be issued on 6 November – one inscribed in English, one bilingually in Welsh and English for sale at post offices in Wales. Priced 49p each, both will be available from Tallents House and philatelic outlets. Although issued on the same day as the Christmas stamps, they do not qualify for the Tallents House or Bethlehem 'first day of issue' postmarks.



Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£10 UK and Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

For a sample copy write to:
The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

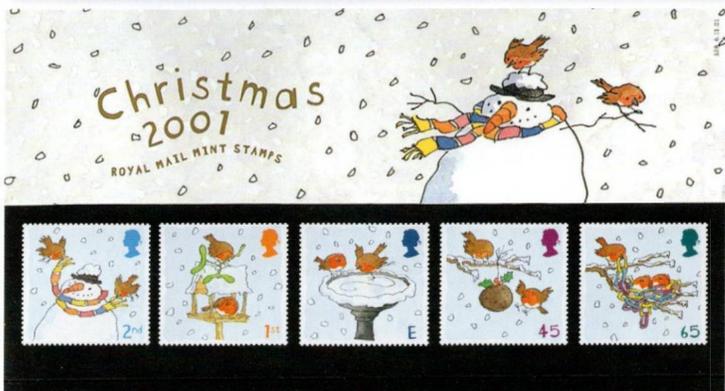
Royal Mail's first self-adhesive Christmas set



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



An illustrated Christmas pack (below left, price £2.30) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets.



Cylinders and colours

2nd 1A new blue ● 1B blue ● 1C greenish yellow ● 1D bright magenta ● 1E vermilion ● 1F black

1st 1A red-orange ● 1B blue ● 1C greenish yellow ● 1D bright magenta ● 1E new blue ● 1F black

E 1A indigo ● 1B azure ● 1C greenish yellow ● 1D bright magenta ● 1E new blue ● 1F vermilion ● 1G black

45p 1A bright purple ● 1B blue ● 1C greenish yellow ● 1D bright magenta ● 1E new blue ● 1F vermilion ● 1G black

65p 1A greenish blue ● 1B blue ● 1C greenish yellow ● 1D bright magenta ● 1E new blue ● 1F vermilion ● 1G black

The phosphor cylinders are P8 2nd class, P7 others.

YEARBOOK & YEARPACK The 2001 Yearbook and Yearpack will be available from 6 November, price £27.95 and £20.90 respectively. A leather-bound version of the Yearbook will be available exclusively from Tallents House, price £75.

WITHDRAWAL OF 2000 CHRISTMAS STAMPS The 2000 Christmas airmailer will be withdrawn on 2 October and the Christmas (Spirit and Faith) stamps, pack, stamp cards and stamp books on 6 November ●