

# POSTAL DECIMALISATION BULLETIN N°3



## **CONTENTS**

Decimal Coinage And giving Change  
The Low-Value Stamps  
Decimal Stock And £sd Stock  
Office Machines  
Publicity Plans  
Recent Decimalisation Developments  
Timetable For Conversion To Decimals

**FRONT COVER:**

*The "bridging" postal orders which will be used  
before and after D-Day are shown with £sd stamps before D-Day.*

Bulletin No 1 outlined the reasons for the change to decimal currency, how the new system will work and, broadly, how the postal business has planned the change-over.

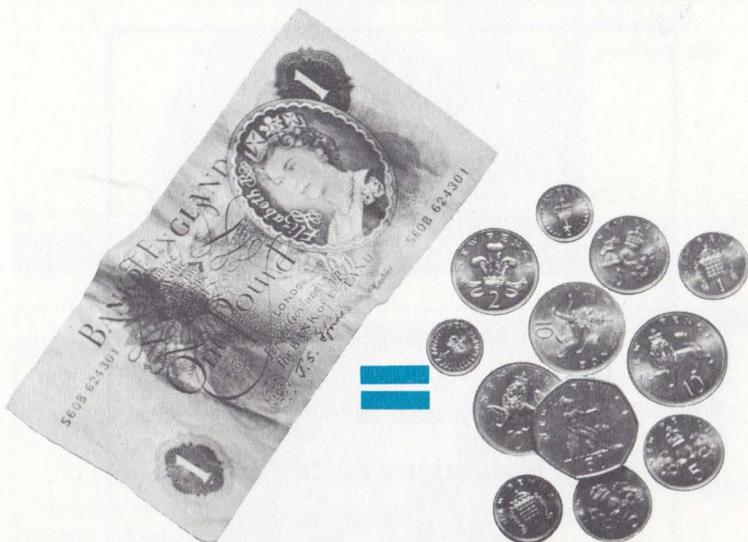
Bulletin No 2 provided more detailed information on the banking systems' changeover to decimals, the effect on the high-value postage stamps and franking machines, decimal instructions and training plans.

This Bulletin gives information on decimal coinage, the new low-value stamps, stock distribution arrangements, machines and publicity plans.

## DECIMAL COINAGE AND GIVING CHANGE

The new decimal system will be based on the pound sterling and the present £1, £5 and £10 notes will remain the same in value, colour size and design. A £20 note has already been introduced this year.

From D-Day the pound will be divided into 100 new pence instead of 20 shillings each of 12 pence.



There will be six decimal coins ( $\frac{1}{2}$ p, 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and 50p). The 5p, 10p and 50p coins are already in circulation; but because they have no exact £sd equivalent the  $\frac{1}{2}$ p, 1p and 2p coins will not be introduced until D-Day.

Because £sd coins will continue to be legal tender during the changeover period our customers will still be able to pay for goods at the counter with £sd coins after D-Day. The 6d, 1s and 2s coins have exact decimal equivalents (2½p, 5p and 10p), but the 1d and 3d coins do not and therefore can be accepted only in multiples of 6d.



Any 1d and 3d coins received over the counter in multiples of 6d will be kept apart from decimal coins and withdrawn. They will not be given out again in change.

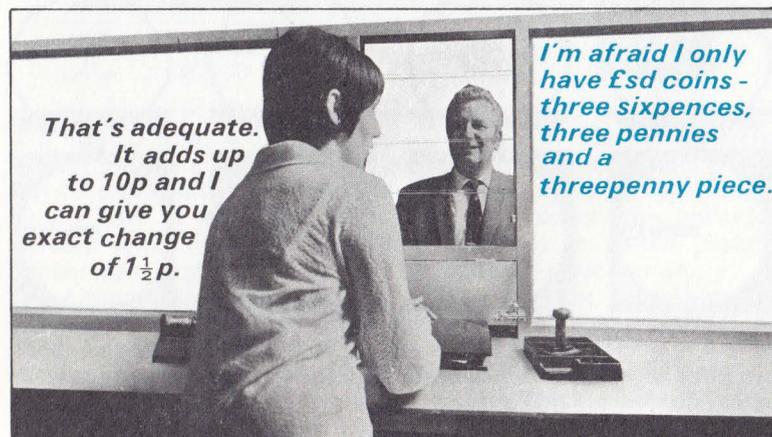
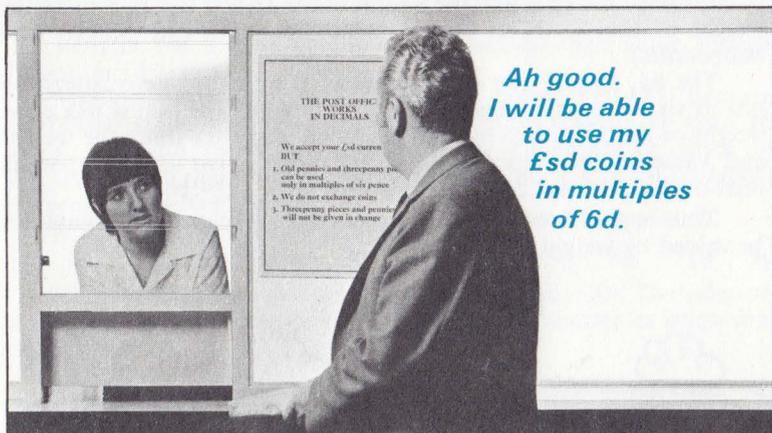
Posters summarising these arrangements will be on display in all Post Offices. The posters will look something like this:

### THE POST OFFICE WORKS IN DECIMALS

**We accept your £sd currency  
BUT**

- 1. Old pennies and threepenny pieces  
can be used  
only in multiples of six pence**
- 2. We do not exchange coins**
- 3. Threepenny pieces and pennies  
will not be given in change**

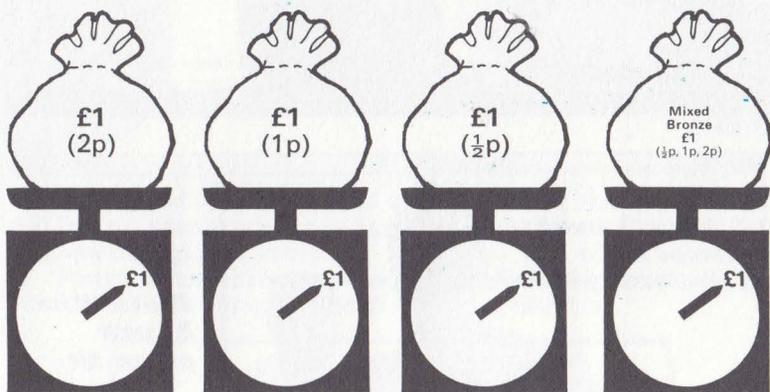
**This may be a typical situation on D-Day:**



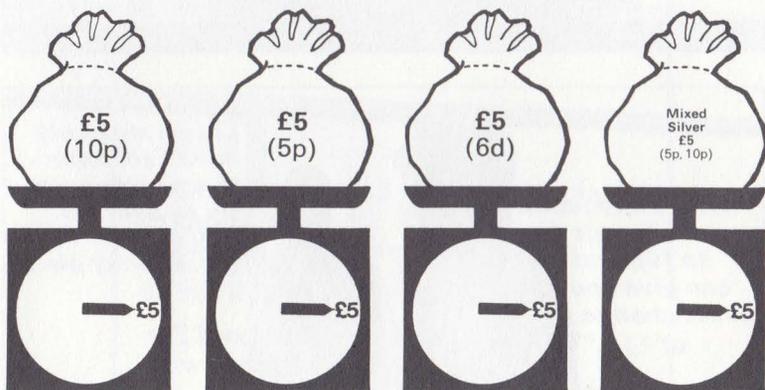
The new bronze (coppers), the  $\frac{1}{2}$ p, 1p and 2p are in weight/value relationship: the  $\frac{1}{2}$ p is half the weight of the 1p and the 2p is twice the weight of the 1p. (This was not the case with £sd pennies and halfpennies).

The 6d, 5p and 10p coins are also in weight/value relationship just as sixpences, shillings and florins are now. The 10p is twice the weight of the 5p as well as twice its value, and four times the weight and value of the sixpence. (The 50p coin is *not* in weight/value relationship with the 5p and 10p coins).

Thus bags of bronze or silver coins (but not bags of 50p coins) can be valued by weight.



(356gms or 12.6 ozs)



(565gms or 1lb 3.9 ozs)

# THE LOW-VALUE STAMPS

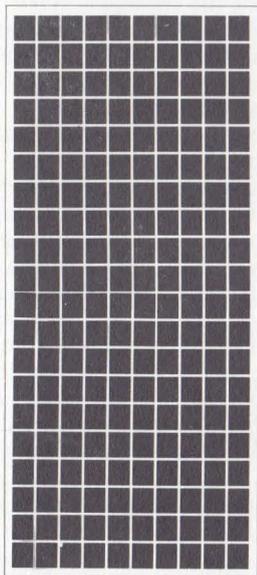
Bulletin No 2 gave details of the decimal high value stamps issued on 17 June.

The low-value range cannot be issued earlier than 1971 because only three of the new stamps have exact £sd equivalents. In order to avoid confusion, therefore, all the new low-values will be issued on D-Day, though there will be a limited sale of the stamps for philatelic purposes from 10 February.

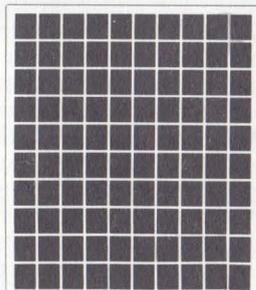
The decimal range has 12 denominations:

**½p 1p 1½p 2p 2½p 3p 3½p 4p 5p 6p 7½p 9p**

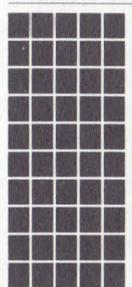
The stamps will be printed in sheets of 200 (10×20). The value of a sheet or part-sheet can be easily obtained. The examples below are of 3p stamps.



Sheet value = £(2 × stamp value)  
= £(2 × 3) = £6



Half Sheet value = £(stamp value)  
= £3



Quarter Sheet  
value =  
 $\frac{\text{£(stamp value)}}{2}$   
=  $\frac{\text{£}3}{2}$  = £1.50

To reduce philatelic pressure at counters on D-Day, the stamps will be sold from Wednesday, 10 February, 1971, at the Philatelic Bureau and all special philatelic counters in minimum quantities of quarter sheets (all of which have exact £sd equivalents). They will also be available at all Head Offices and other offices with philatelic posting boxes from the same date, but only in special packets containing at least one of each of the new low-value stamps.

Although the decimal stamps will be valid for prepayment of postage before D-Day it will be discouraged. Philatelic first day of issue cancellation will be available only on D-Day.

Great care has been taken to ensure that the colours will be a positive aid in identifying the different values. This has not been easy:

12 really distinct colours would not be easy to find even if there were no restraints on choice. There are in fact a number of such restraints and the most important of these are:

The need to ensure as far as possible that the colours chosen are artistically attractive;

Machine considerations; and

Manual sorting requirements.

Dark shades are the most pleasing to the eye partly because of the design of the present range of definitive stamps and partly because dark stamps look best against white and light-coloured envelopes.

But these artistic considerations are in some respects opposed to machine considerations, which in the last two or three years have become a vital aspect of stamp design. More and more of the facing and segregating of first and second class mail is now being done by machine, and the ALFs distinguish the two classes of mail by "reading" the phosphor signals emitted by the stamps.

These signals vary in strength according to the background colour against which the phosphor appears on the stamps and in general the phosphor used on our stamps does not show up well against dark shades, or against certain colours such as yellow or orange.

The first task was therefore to consult the mechanisation experts on a very wide range of colours which were treated with phosphor and tested by Post Office engineers.

As a result of these tests the Post Office's physiological consultant conducted a series of "confusability" tests on 25 colours at the Applied Psychology Research Unit at Cambridge. Housewives who had volunteered to take part in the tests were shown one stamp, mounted on a white card, for a couple of seconds and then either another stamp or the same again. They had to say whether the two stamps shown were the same or different, and to indicate the degree of confidence (on a five-point scale) with which they made their decision. The lighting was poor in a deliberate attempt to make the test harder. The tables compiled as a result of the tests showed which colours were the most distinctive.

After further tests at Cambridge, on two sets of 14 stamps each, and in which postmen as well as housewives took part, it was possible to begin to put together the new decimal series of definitive stamps. Consultation with people in Regions and Head Offices about the proposed new colour scheme was also carried out at this stage.

In the end some compromise has been necessary between artistic, phosphorisation and manual sorting requirements but the new colour scheme will, it is believed, be of real use in helping both staff and customers to distinguish easily between stamps of different value. The value figures themselves will be bolder than those now in use.

## **DECIMAL STOCK & £sd STOCK**

The distribution of decimal stock (such as postage stamps, rolls,

books, stamped stationery, National Insurance stamps and final decimal forms) will be the largest distribution ever made by the Purchasing and Supplies Department, and will pose special problems.

Some offices with limited storage facilities will have difficulty in accommodating double stocks for any length of time, especially over the Christmas period; others with staffing difficulties need decimal stock as early as possible so that it can be broken down well before D-Day into sub-office remittances. It is hoped that the distribution programme will be sufficiently flexible to meet both needs. But detailed plans cannot be made until decimal postage rates are known. As soon as they are, PHQ Circulars and PO Gazette notices will give details of when to requisition, the quantities and distribution dates.

All stocks of purely £sd items will become obsolete on 15 February, 1971. For security reasons National Insurance stamps will be the first items returned to P & SD. Because of the quantities involved for other items there will be a phased return on a territorial basis, arranged so that offices with severe accommodation difficulties will be among the first to return stock.

## OFFICE MACHINES

The Post Office uses more than 11,000 office machines designed to operate in £sd. They include the familiar Plus Adder, Add-Listing machines, coin handling equipment, cash registers and accounting machines. All these machines must be capable of working in decimals from D-Day.

In 1968 we discussed with the machine manufacturers our general requirements. They were advised that all new machines purchased before D-Day must be capable of working in both £sd and decimals and of being switched to £sd and decimals by the operator.

Some machines now in use have many years of useful life. It would be bad business to simply replace them and many where economical will be modified to work in decimals.

A survey of all machines in the Post Office was made and manufacturers advised of the probable size of the orders. Manufacturers' books were steadily filling up and it was decided that, to save time, each office would determine its own needs for the less-complicated machines, thus enabling orders to be placed more quickly with the machine companies and offices to be supplied direct from the manufacturers. The time saved meant that we could be certain that our orders would be met and that we should not find ourselves at the end of the queue.

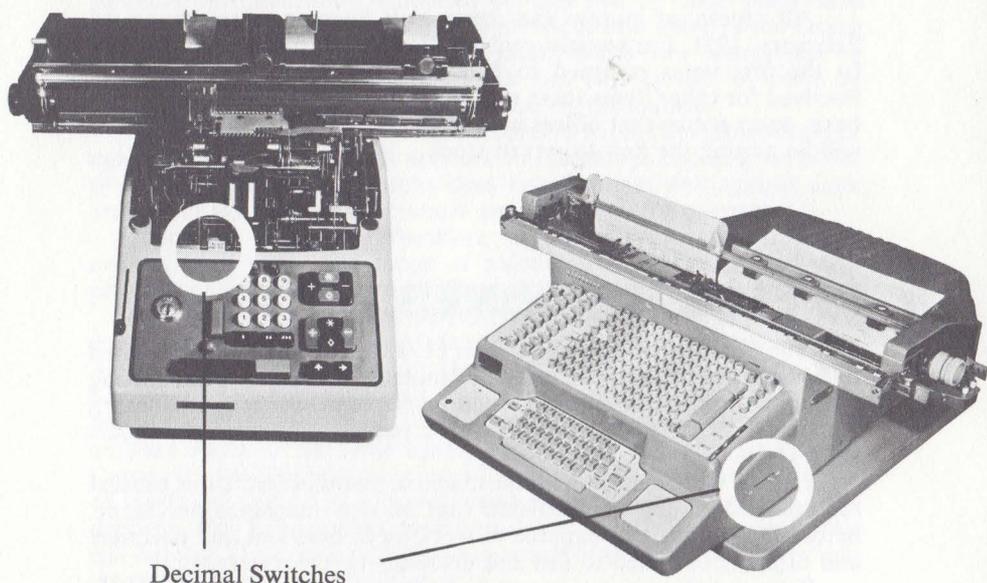
Payroll machines were another story. To ensure that all offices would be equipped either with a computer or decimal payroll system it was decided to underwrite the computer programme by placing a special contract with NCR Ltd which allowed the Post Office to cancel orders at low cost.

A schedule was drawn up to co-ordinate the computer pro-

gramme, the machine replacement programme and the machine modification programme. Any machines needing modification will be rebuilt to work in £sd and decimals and a standby machine provided until the original machine is returned. A visit to our offices by a technician to carry out a further minor modification just before D-Day is all that will be needed to complete the changeover.

Smaller offices have recently been re-equipped with Olivetti Payroll machines which can be switched from £sd to decimals.

After November, 1970, two types of payroll machine will be in use. The first type will be capable of being switched by the operator and examples of these are illustrated.



Decimal Switches

A word of warning however, before any machine is switched to decimals, or, back to £sd: all the machine registers must be cleared twice. If this is not done, the machine's accuracy may be affected.

The second type will need a further modification, carried out "on site" by the manufacturer. Once these machines are modified they can no longer work in £sd. The manufacturer has contracted to carry out this work in the two weeks prior to D-Day and our staff associations have agreed that staff in offices equipped with this type of machine will receive two weeks pay in advance of D-Day to enable the machines to be taken out of service.

Some manufacturers, mainly those producing coin-issuing and coin-counting equipment, could not produce a complete range of machines that could be switched from £sd to decimals by our operator and these will be modified in our offices by a company mechanic. Because these machines are used mainly to count call



The Post Office has been in close contact with the DCB to co-ordinate the publicity effort and avoid any overlapping or duplication of effort which could irritate and confuse the public.

Firms planning their own changeover obviously want details of how tariffs and services are affected as early as possible and a Business Guide will be widely distributed by Head Postmasters.

This publication, covering both the postal and telecomms businesses, will reduce the number of enquiries at Post Offices and instil confidence that Post Office plans for conversion are well in hand.



A similar but simpler booklet will be provided for the general public in January 1971 and will also be issued to Post Office staff. It will be accompanied just before D-Day by posters on vans and in offices and newspaper advertisements to tell the public of the closure of Post Offices before 15 February 1971, that the Post Office goes decimal on D-Day, about the change-giving principle (multiples of 6d), and a poster in each office of the whole new penny conversion table.

A decimal version of the Post Office Guide will be available shortly before D-Day. In this way the Post Office is confident that its customers will be fully conversant with the changes on D-Day.

## **RECENT DECIMALISATION DEVELOPMENTS**

### **POSTAL ORDERS**

The "bridging" version postal orders described in Bulletin No 2 have now begun to be introduced at offices, beginning with the 8s denomination. All postal orders will be of this type soon and they will continue to be sold after D-Day until stocks are exhausted and they are replaced by final decimal orders. 1s 6d, 2s 6d, 3s 6d, and 4s 6d orders are being withdrawn.

As a result of representations from some of our largest customers it has now been decided to allow  $\frac{1}{2}$ p stamps on postal orders from

D-Day. At the same time orders will be introduced in 7½p, 12½p, 17½p and 22½p denominations.

## RETENTION OF 6D

The Government has decided to retain the 6d for at least two years after D-Day. After this period its use will again be examined. As a result of the decision the Postal Decimalisation Instructions and training programmes will be amended. The 6d will, in effect, be treated after D-Day as a working coin of 2½p. It will now be given out in change in the normal way instead of being kept on one side for payment into banks as originally intended.

## THE HALF CROWN

Although the halfcrown was demonetised on 1 January 1970 the Post Office continued to accept it for postal services. This period of grace ended on 30 June and the halfcrown is no longer generally acceptable at Post Offices.

## POSTAL FORMS

Nearly 4,000 national postal forms have been examined in the last year to decide whether any amendment was necessary for decimalisation. Approximately 700 which fell into this category have now been amended and are being printed. The vast majority will be "Bridging Decimal" forms that can be used before and after D-Day and the first of them should have begun to appear in offices by now. The rest will be "Final Decimal" and introduced on D-Day to replace existing £sd forms. This is how the various layouts should be used:

<b>Old</b>	<b>Bridging Decimal</b>		<b>Final Decimal</b>																																												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>£</th> <th>s</th> <th>d</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>68</td> <td>18</td> <td>—</td> </tr> <tr> <td>105</td> <td>12</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>174</td> <td>10</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	£	s	d	68	18	—	105	12	6	174	10	6	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>68</td> <td>18</td> <td>—</td> </tr> <tr> <td>105</td> <td>12</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>174</td> <td>10</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	£			68	18	—	105	12	6	174	10	6	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>68</td> <td>90</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>105</td> <td>62</td> <td>½</td> </tr> <tr> <td>174</td> <td>52</td> <td>½</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	£			68	90		105	62	½	174	52	½	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>68</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>105</td> <td>62½</td> </tr> <tr> <td>174</td> <td>52½</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	£		68	90	105	62½	174	52½
£	s	d																																													
68	18	—																																													
105	12	6																																													
174	10	6																																													
£																																															
68	18	—																																													
105	12	6																																													
174	10	6																																													
£																																															
68	90																																														
105	62	½																																													
174	52	½																																													
£																																															
68	90																																														
105	62½																																														
174	52½																																														
<b>Before D-Day</b>		<b>After D-Day</b>																																													

Local variants of national forms have not been covered in this exercise; they will have to be redesigned by the people responsible.

## POSTAL DECIMALISATION INSTRUCTIONS

Postal Decimalisation Instructions described in Bulletin No 2 have already been issued to Head Postmasters and local decimalisation officers so that detailed planning could begin in each office. The general distribution to counter and writing staff will begin in the autumn shortly before training begins.

# TIMETABLE FOR CONVERSION TO DECIMALS

<b>1. POSTAL DECIMALISATION INSTRUCTIONS;</b>	To HPMS, Local Decimalisation officers and staff associations To all staff	May 1970 September 1970
<b>2. FORMS</b>	Bridging Decimal introduced Final Decimal introduced	February 1970– 15 February 1971 15 February 1971
<b>3. POSTAL DECIMALISATION BULLETINS;</b>	No 1 General Introduction No 2 Banking, Training No 3 Stamps, Machines, Publicity No 4 Stamped Stationery, G roll machines Run down for D Day	September 1969 May 1970 September 1970 November 1970
<b>4. HIGH VALUE STAMPS</b>	(10p, 20p, 50p) issued High Value 'To Pay' labels issued	17 June 1970 17 June 1970
<b>5. BRIDGING POSTAL ORDERS</b>	introduced	Summer 1970
<b>6. BRIDGING NATIONAL SAVINGS STAMPS</b>	introduced	October– December 1970
<b>7. DECIMAL COINS</b>	( $\frac{1}{2}$ p, 1p, 2p) received: For training For counter stocks	September 1970 Jan–Feb 1971
<b>8. TRAINING</b>	For Instructors For P & TOs, Sub Pmrs and Sub-Office Assistants: Session 1: Programme 1 & 2 Session 2: Programme 3 Writing Staff Postal Staff (Booklet)	September 1970 Oct–Nov 1970 January 1971 Jan–Feb 1971 January 1971
<b>9. PUBLICITY</b>	<b>Booklets;</b> Business Guide (and press campaign) Public's Guide  <b>Posters;</b> PO closure	October 1970 January 1971  Jan–Feb 1971

	PO Works in Decimals (change giving)	February 1971
	Whole penny conversion tabl:	February 1971
	<b>Press campaign on above subjects</b>	Jan-Feb 1971
<b>10. STOCKS</b>	Distribution of Decimal Stock - 1st Phase	Sep-Nov 1970
	- 2nd Phase	Jan-Feb 1971
	Return of £sd Stock	February-May 1971
<b>11. MACHINES</b>	Office (either a. replaced by switchable decimal or b. ready for simple conversion)	by November 1970
	Automatic letter scales (4A and 4B) - converted	from 1 Feb 1971
	Parcel scales - converted	13 Feb 1971
	Franking Machines - replaced by decimal type	1969-15 Feb 1971
	G Roll Machines - introduced	Feb 1970 onwards
<b>12. PO GUIDE IN DECIMAL FORM (No July 1970 edition)</b>	To Offices (sale copies)	January 1971
	All Staff	January 1971
<b>13. WAGES AND SALARIES</b>	Main Offices - Computer pay roll conversion to decimals	by 13 Feb 1971
	Machines switchable to decimals - conversion	13 February 1971
	Machines requiring on site modification	1-15 February 1971
<b>14. TELEPHONE BILLS</b>	- in dual currency	December 1970- 19 February 1971
	- in decimal currency	from 19 Feb 1971
<b>15. CONVERSION OF TELEPHONE KIOSKS</b>	(Priority to those in and near POs)	17 February 1971- 30 April 1971
<b>16. RULE BOOKS</b>	Amendment to final decimal working	By end of changeover period
<b>17. DEMONETISATION OF £sd POSTAGE STAMPS</b>		At end of changeover period
<b>18. DEMONETISATION OF £sd COINS</b>	1d and 3d	At end of changeover period

This timetable is tentative only, to give a broad outline of what will happen and when. In practice it may be altered to meet particular needs.

# NEW HALFPENNY CONVERSION TABLE (SHOPPERS' TABLE)

Old f/sd	New f/p																		
1	1 1/2	2/-	10	4/-	20	6/-	30	8/-	40	10/-	50	12/-	60	14/-	70	16/-	80	18/-	90
2	1	2/1	10 1/2	4/1	20 1/2	6/1	30 1/2	8/1	40 1/2	10/1	50 1/2	12/1	60 1/2	14/1	70 1/2	16/1	80 1/2	18/1	90 1/2
3	1	2/2	11	4/2	21	6/2	31	8/2	41	10/2	51	12/2	61	14/2	71	16/2	81	18/2	91
4	1 1/4	2/3	11 1/4	4/3	21 1/4	6/3	31 1/4	8/3	41 1/4	10/3	51 1/4	12/3	61 1/4	14/3	71 1/4	16/3	81 1/4	18/3	91 1/4
5	2	2/4	12	4/4	22	6/4	32	8/4	42	10/4	52	12/4	62	14/4	72	16/4	82	18/4	92
		2/5	12 1/5	4/5	22 1/5	6/5	32 1/5	8/5	42 1/5	10/5	52 1/5	12/5	62 1/5	14/5	72 1/5	16/5	82 1/5	18/5	92 1/5
6	2 1/2	2/6	12 1/2	4/6	22 1/2	6/6	32 1/2	8/6	42 1/2	10/6	52 1/2	12/6	62 1/2	14/6	72 1/2	16/6	82 1/2	18/6	92 1/2
7	3	2/7	13	4/7	23	6/7	33	8/7	43	10/7	53	12/7	63	14/7	73	16/7	83	18/7	93
8	3 1/2	2/8	13 1/2	4/8	23 1/2	6/8	33 1/2	8/8	43 1/2	10/8	53 1/2	12/8	63 1/2	14/8	73 1/2	16/8	83 1/2	18/8	93 1/2
9	4	2/9	14	4/9	24	6/9	34	8/9	44	10/9	54	12/9	64	14/9	74	16/9	84	18/9	94
10	4	2/10	14 1/10	4/10	24 1/10	6/10	34 1/10	8/10	44 1/10	10/10	54 1/10	12/10	64 1/10	14/10	74 1/10	16/10	84 1/10	18/10	94 1/10
11	4 1/2	2/11	14 1/2	4/11	24 1/2	6/11	34 1/2	8/11	44 1/2	10/11	54 1/2	12/11	64 1/2	14/11	74 1/2	16/11	84 1/2	18/11	94 1/2
1/-	5	3/-	15	5/-	25	7/-	35	9/-	45	11/-	55	13/-	65	15/-	75	17/-	85	19/-	95
1/1	5 1/2	3/1	15 1/2	5/1	25 1/2	7/1	35 1/2	9/1	45 1/2	11/1	55 1/2	13/1	65 1/2	15/1	75 1/2	17/1	85 1/2	19/1	95 1/2
1/2	6	3/2	16	5/2	26	7/2	36	9/2	46	11/2	56	13/2	66	15/2	76	17/2	86	19/2	96
1/3	6	3/3	16 1/3	5/3	26 1/3	7/3	36 1/3	9/3	46 1/3	11/3	56 1/3	13/3	66 1/3	15/3	76 1/3	17/3	86 1/3	19/3	96 1/3
1/4	6 1/4	3/4	16 1/4	5/4	26 1/4	7/4	36 1/4	9/4	46 1/4	11/4	56 1/4	13/4	66 1/4	15/4	76 1/4	17/4	86 1/4	19/4	96 1/4
1/5	7	3/5	17	5/5	27	7/5	37	9/5	47	11/5	57	13/5	67	15/5	77	17/5	87	19/5	97
1/6	7 1/2	3/6	17 1/2	5/6	27 1/2	7/6	37 1/2	9/6	47 1/2	11/6	57 1/2	13/6	67 1/2	15/6	77 1/2	17/6	87 1/2	19/6	97 1/2
1/7	8	3/7	18	5/7	28	7/7	38	9/7	48	11/7	58	13/7	68	15/7	78	17/7	88	19/7	98
1/8	8 1/2	3/8	18 1/2	5/8	28 1/2	7/8	38 1/2	9/8	48 1/2	11/8	58 1/2	13/8	68 1/2	15/8	78 1/2	17/8	88 1/2	19/8	98 1/2
1/9	9	3/9	19	5/9	29	7/9	39	9/9	49	11/9	59	13/9	69	15/9	79	17/9	89	19/9	99
1/10	9	3/10	19 1/10	5/10	29 1/10	7/10	39 1/10	9/10	49 1/10	11/10	59 1/10	13/10	69 1/10	15/10	79 1/10	17/10	89 1/10	19/10	99 1/10
1/11	9 1/2	3/11	19 1/2	5/11	29 1/2	7/11	39 1/2	9/11	49 1/2	11/11	59 1/2	13/11	69 1/2	15/11	79 1/2	17/11	89 1/2	19/11	99 1/2