

Postcode Publicity – Postal Code Leaflets

In the 1960s a publicity campaign to advertise the coming of the postcode began. Croydon was the first area to be allocated postcodes after Norwich and this publicity leaflet was issued in 1966:

<p>Typical coded addresses in neighbouring areas</p> <table border="1"><tr><td data-bbox="274 1653 497 2000"><p><i>Miss K. White</i> 100 South Street PURLEY, Surrey CR2 4TJ</p></td><td data-bbox="274 1285 497 1632"><p><i>Mr. J. Green</i> 501 East Street MITCHAM, Surrey CR4 4RS</p></td></tr></table> <p>GPO – going further ahead with mechanisation</p>	<p><i>Miss K. White</i> 100 South Street PURLEY, Surrey CR2 4TJ</p>	<p><i>Mr. J. Green</i> 501 East Street MITCHAM, Surrey CR4 4RS</p>	<p>The Postal CODE</p> <p>comes to</p> <p>Croydon</p> <p>GPO</p>
<p><i>Miss K. White</i> 100 South Street PURLEY, Surrey CR2 4TJ</p>	<p><i>Mr. J. Green</i> 501 East Street MITCHAM, Surrey CR4 4RS</p>		
			

Postcode Publicity Leaflet

Between 1968 and 1974, as postcodes were rolled out in each area, a postcode publicity leaflet was issued by the Post Office and sent to every household in the UK:

Note that the postcode symbol  is made up of the letters 'C', 'O', 'D' and 'E', spelling the word 'CODE'.

An important announcement from **The Post Office**

POSTCODE is coming to your district

Your Postcode will be an important part of your address



Postcode Publicity Leaflet

Your postcode- the vital link



1

Postcodes are really quite simple.

Each code is just a simplified address and each part of it focuses on a progressively smaller geographical area.

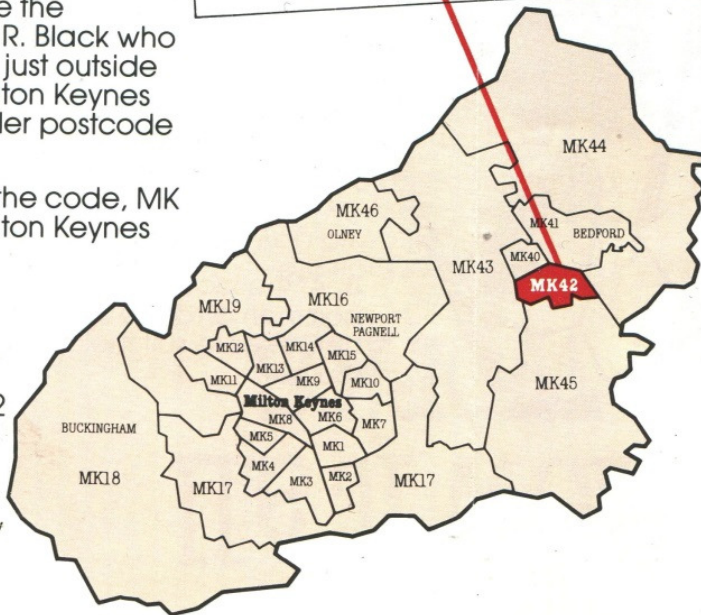
The United Kingdom is divided into 120 areas, each being identified by the first two letters of the code.

For example, take the postcode of Miss R. Black who lives in Kempston just outside Bedford in the Milton Keynes postcode area. Her postcode is MK42 8LA.

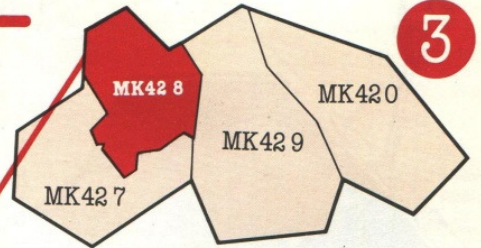
In the first part of the code, MK represents the Milton Keynes area.

2

Next, the figure 42 stands for the district within the Milton Keynes area immediately south of Bedford.



The second part of the postcode indicates the exact location. Figure 8 is the sector within district 42 that embraces Kempston.

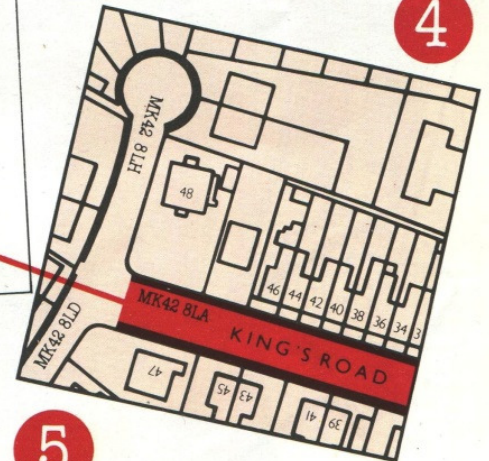


3

And finally, LA is Kings Road.

The postcode is used to help the sorting process at each stage of a letter's journey.

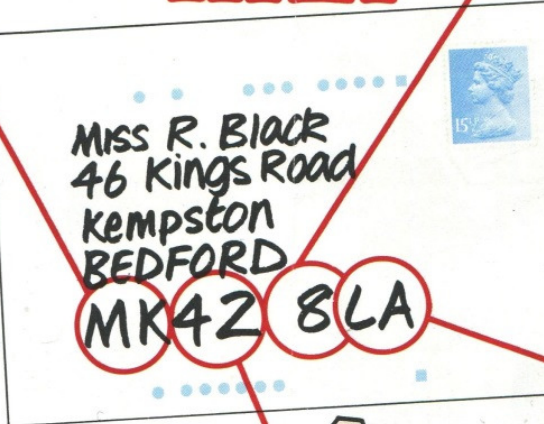
4



5

To enable the various sorting machines to "read" the postcode, it is converted into two rows of blue dots. The bottom row of dots represents the first part of a postcode and the top row represents the second part.

Whenever you see the blue dots on your letters, you know they've been through one of the most sophisticated mechanised postal systems in the world.



The National Postcode System explained

The creation of the national postcode system in the mid-1960s (and which is now in common use in our everyday lives) has been the vital link for the successful introduction of postal mechanisation over the last 50 years.

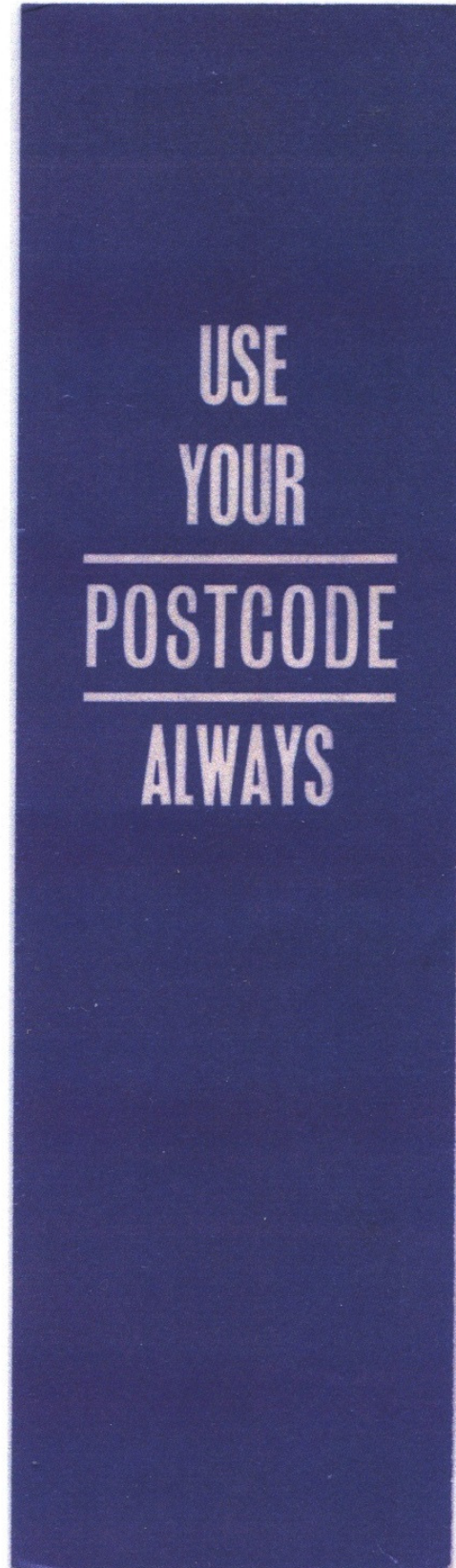
The national system is of the form 'RG45 6JA' and comprises the following five separate elements:

- 1) A two-letter identifier allocated to each of the 121 geographic postcode areas across the country (e.g. 'RG' for Reading or 'MK' for Milton Keynes). Some large cities are allocated a single letter identifier – e.g. 'L' for Liverpool or 'S' for Sheffield.
- 2) A number (in the range 0 - 99) to identify the **district** within the main postcode area.
- 3) A space separator.
- 4) A number (in the range 0 – 9) that identifies the **sector** within the postcode district.
- 5) A two-letter code that identifies the street within that sector. Residential houses in the same street share the same postcode but large businesses are given their own unique postcode. Note that only 20 letters of the alphabet are used in the street code – the letters 'C', 'I', 'K', 'M', 'O' and 'V' are not used.

The first half of the postcode (i.e. the characters before the space separator) is known as the 'Outward code' and the second half is referred to as the 'Inward code'.

Post Office Publicity - Bookmark

This Post Office bookmark probably dates from the early 1970s and reminds users that Postcodes form part of your address.



Postcode Publicity

Below are just a couple of examples from a vast array of publicity material produced by Royal Mail to promote the use of the postcode.



Royal Mail

**“Don’t get that sinking feeling-
Use the Postcode!”**

Community Action Team
Royal Mail,
Military Road,
CANTERBURY,
Kent,
CT1 1AA.

Non-Geographic Postcodes

Most postcodes apply to a geographic area but some are used only for routing and cannot be used for navigation or distance-finding. They are often used for direct marketing and PO boxes. The following are examples of non-geographic postcodes that have been assigned to newspapers:

E98 1**TT** – The Times

SW1W 0**DT** – Daily Telegraph

E98 1**ST** – The Sunday Times

N1 9**GU** – The Guardian

E98 1**SN** – The Sun

ME4 4**TT** – The Telegraph

