

# The Telephone Box

The famous British red telephone box has been around now for nearly a century. It is a well-known symbol for tourists to Great Britain, similar to black London taxis or red double-decker buses.

Before the invention of the mobile phone, and even before it became common to have a telephone in the house, the public telephone box was a valuable facility for making calls to friends and family. Nowadays with most people owning mobile phones, there is far less demand for the public telephone box. Consequently, tens of thousands have been removed.

## History

There have been a number of different designs for the public telephone box in Britain. Known as kiosks, the first standard version was introduced in 1921 and many slightly redesigned models have appeared since.

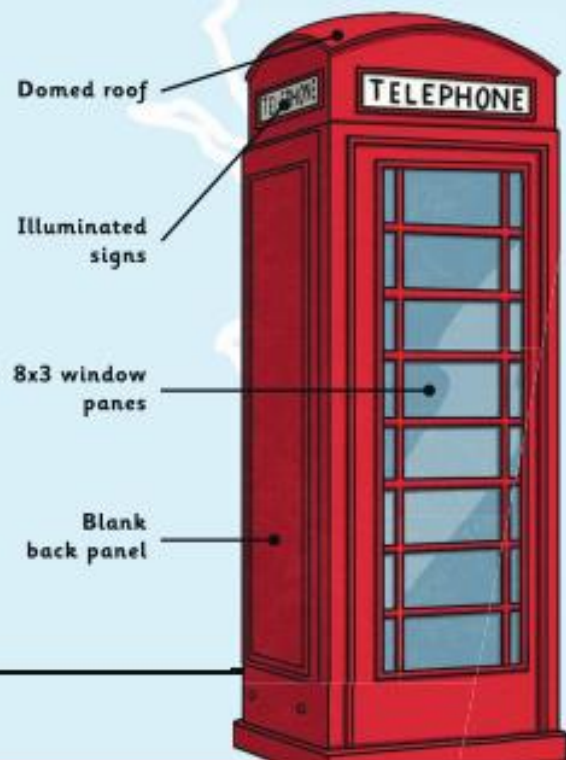
Versions K2 and K3 were designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, who also worked on famous landmarks such as Liverpool Cathedral, Waterloo Bridge and Battersea Power Station. Other models which followed directly after were also modelled on this design, though credited to the Engineering Department of the General Post Office.

The K6 design (Kiosk Number 6) is the most recognised version of the red telephone box. It has a concrete base and cast-iron sections bolted together with a domed roof. At the back is a 'blank' panel, whilst on other sides are an array of 3x8 window panes. Above each side is an illuminated 'Telephone' sign. It was first introduced in 1936 and continued production until 1968 with around 60,000 kiosks installed around the country. This made it the first version to be extensively used outside London. Although now in decline, thousands still remain in place.

The Kiosk No.6 (K6) design featured 8 x 3 window panes with a domed roof, illuminated signs at the top and a 'blank' back panel.

## A Modern Redesign

Thankfully, in 2009, an 'adopt-a-kiosk' scheme was introduced where rarely used telephone boxes could be adopted for other uses. This idea has happily helped to preserve the famous phone boxes – even if some of them have begun to look a little different now! More than one has been converted into a tiny library; a London phone box has become a coffee shop; another in North Yorkshire became an art gallery whilst some have even been used to install life-saving defibrillator equipment to treat heart failures.



Questions 1 to 12 are about 'The Telephone Box'

1. Which **two** other tourist symbols of Great Britain is the red telephone box compared to?

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1 mark

2. Why is the public telephone box not as useful to people anymore?

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1 mark

3. Name **one** of the famous landmarks worked on by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.

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1 mark

4. Order the events, showing some of the major events in the history of the telephone box.  
The first one has been done for you.

Production of K6 design ended

Famous K6 design first introduced

Some phone boxes turned into libraries and other uses

First standard kiosk introduced

Adopt a Kiosk scheme introduced

1 mark

total for this page

question	answer	marks	notes
<b>1.</b>	Which <b>two</b> other tourist symbols of Great Britain is the red telephone box compared to?		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black London taxis</li> <li>Red double-decker buses</li> </ul>	1	<p><b>Content domain:</b> 2b - retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.</p> <p><b>Award 1 mark</b> for both correct answers indicated.</p>
<b>2.</b>	Why is the public telephone box not as useful to people anymore?		
	People have mobile phones.	1	<p><b>Content domain:</b> 2d - make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text.</p> <p><b>Award 1 mark</b> for an answer indicating the advent or emergence of either mobile phones or home telephones.</p>
<b>3.</b>	Name <b>one</b> of the famous landmarks worked on by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liverpool Cathedral</li> <li>Waterloo Bridge</li> <li>Battersea Power Station</li> </ul>	1	<p><b>Content domain:</b> 2b - retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.</p> <p><b>Award 1 mark</b> for any one of the correct answers indicated.</p>
<b>4.</b>	Order the events, showing some of the major events in the history of the telephone box. The first one has been done for you.		
	Production of K6 design ended. - 3 Famous K6 design first introduced. - 2 Some phone boxes turned into libraries and other uses. - 5 First standard kiosk introduced. - 1 Adopt a Kiosk scheme introduced. - 4	1	<p><b>Content domain:</b> 2b - retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.</p> <p><b>Award 1 mark</b> for the correct sequence indicated.</p>