



*Police Pillars, Posts and Boxes*



*P. M. C. C. Monograph No. 4*

**East Riding of Yorkshire Constabulary**

*August 2024*

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Welcome to the fourth Monograph produced by the [Police Memorabilia Collectors Club – the PMCC](#).

Club members are researching the locations of the hundreds, perhaps thousands of police boxes, police pillars and cabinets which were once common in almost every city, borough, burgh and large town in the UK .

Glasgow is said to have had more than 300 boxes in 1939.

Almost everyone would recognise a Dr. Who Box, but there were many other designs.

Police Pillars came in just three designs.

Using every available resource, we have tried to locate where these items of street furniture are now or were once located.



The East Riding of Yorkshire Constabulary was formed on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1857.

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1968 the force amalgamated with the North Riding Constabulary and the York City Police to form the York and North East Yorkshire Police.

Extensive records of the county constabulary exist but there is little about the police boxes and pillars.

No known former Bridlington pillars exist. However a preserved Hull City Police PA1 pillar (the same type) is in the entrance to the Humberside Police Command Centre complex at Melton.



December 1967 – the first “Panda Cars” sounded the death knell of police pillars and boxes.



From the formation of the force until amalgamation in 1968, the divisional structure was based on the “petty Sessional” areas.

The English “Petty Session” Courts were established in 1730.

The Petty Sessions were based on local county divisions known as “hundreds” or “wapentakes”, both medieval terms.

These local courts, with local Justices of the Peace, sat regularly whereas the Quarter Session, in the case of the East Riding, at Beverley, dispensed justice once a quarter, as the name suggests.

The “Petty Sessional Courts” became known as “Magistrates Courts”, but retained their individual local character until the Courts Act 2003, which renamed Petty Sessional Areas to “Local Justice Areas” and abolished distinct local Magistrates Courts.

The Bridlington police division was always known as the “Dickering Division”, after the Petty Sessional area.

It included rural stations at Burton Agnes, Filey, Flamborough, Hunmanby and North Burton.

The police were using this map until 2003, because up to the change in the law, an arrested person or someone reported for summons had to appear first at the Magistrates Court in the area where the offence had taken place.

In the summer, even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Bridlington was busy with visitors.

In the winter, the town reverted to its hardy local fishermen and local people.

For 100 years up to 1974, policemen were posted to Bridlington, for the summer season of June, July and August, living in “digs”.

So with an influx of visitors came extra policemen.



Using 1:1,250 scale Ordnance Survey maps, Google Maps and Google StreetView, we show you the original location and what is there now.

Only two issues of the 25" maps are available at the [NLS website](#).

The latest being the 1928 issue

Issues from the 1930's and 1940's are missing, so we do not know when the police box and pillars were installed

The 1928 issues do not show them being in place.

If you can help with more information, especially photographs, please email the project.

[mailto: policepillars@pmcc-club.co.uk](mailto:policepillars@pmcc-club.co.uk)



The locations of the 14 known police pillars and the single police box, superimposed on a current map of Bridlington.

Map source: OpenStreetMap

# *Help wanted*

There is just a single photograph of a police pillar in Bridlington.

Located on the pavement outside what is now “Top Banana”, this building has had many uses over the years. In the 1920’s it was the EYMS bus depot.

**Have you a photograph of a  
Bridlington pillar or the police box  
which was near the HM Coastguard  
Station?**

**Have you a copy of the Bridlington  
Police Beat Book?**

If you have, the authors would like to hear from you:

[mailto: policepillars@pmcc-club.co.uk](mailto:policepillars@pmcc-club.co.uk)



## List of the KNOWN East Riding Constabulary pillars in Bridlington

- |    |  |    |  |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1  | South Marin2 Drive /<br>Kingston Road  | 11 | Kirkgate / St. John's Street   |
| 2  | South Cliff Road /<br>Pembroke Terrace | 12 | Easton Road / Bessingby Hill   |
| 3  | Kent Square / Bessingby<br>Gate        | 13 | Marton Road / Bempton Lane   |
| 4  | Cross Street / Cliff Street            | 14 | Scarborough Road / Market<br>Place   |
| 5  | Wellington Gardens                     | 15 | Lime Kiln Lane / North Marine<br>Drive / Second Avenue <b>Police<br/>Box</b> |
| 6  | St. Hilda Street / Windsor<br>Crescent |    |  |
| 7  | Bessingby Road / St. John's<br>Avenue  |    |  |
| 8  | Trinity Road / Promenade               |    |  |
| 9  | Trinity Road / Tennyson<br>Avenue      |    |  |
| 10 | Queensgate / St. Mary's<br>Walk        |    |  |



# *The hidden lives of Police Pillars*

People who can remember the street scenes of the 1960's or who look at the photographs of the time will see huge changes when compared to today.

The street furniture was very different, with a lot more of it on pavements.

In most urban areas police boxes, like the Mackenzie-Trench design immortalised by Dr. Who, were present.

But in addition, where space for a 3 metre square box was limited, police pillars were installed.

Records of when the Bridlington pillars were installed do not exist, but we know they were in place by 1951.

But what were they for?

This was a kinder, gentler time, when the pace of life was slower and most policemen (police women did not patrol) were on foot or used a bicycle.

There were no personal radios, so the only means of communication with patrolling Constables was by telephone.

Each town would have a "beat book" which showed the boundaries of each beat together with a list of "Points".

A "Point" was where a policeman had to be, at a certain time every hour or half hour, where he could be contacted.

Points were public telephones, police boxes or police pillars.

The system of beat working had begun in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but in the early 1920's several forces experimented with police boxes, with a direct line to a police station, and a flashing lamp which could be used to signal to an officer he was needed.

The first police pillars were developed by the Ericsson Telephone Company in 1929.

Police pillars were placed throughout a town, at strategic locations.

A Box Key was issued to officers which would open the door of all pillars, boxes and cabinets.

Before WWII many forces added a tag saying there was a reward of 5/- if the box key and tag was found and returned to the police station.

Any member of the public could open the "public" door of a pillar and immediately speak to the police station.

A light on top of the pillar or the box, could be set to flash by the station to attract the patrolling beat officer.

The dome above the amber lamp could also have a bell to audibly draw attention for urgent calls.

Police officers who worked in that era say that a member of the public would sometimes come up to them and tell them the light on a pillar was flashing.

This was a time when officers wore different uniform with black badges at night, so they could blend into the shadows and not be seen by criminals.

Instead of parading on duty at the police stations, Constables on the outer beats would ring-in, on and off duty at a pillar or a box.

This meant that they spent all their time on their beat, rather than cycling or walking to and from the police station.

Constables patrolled alone. The only time they were with another officer was when a newly appointed constable was being shown how to work a beat by an experienced colleague.

By the 1960's crime was increasing and more vehicles were on the road.

The Lancashire Constabulary developed a system called "Unit Beat Policing", where a team of officers including CID and mobile patrols were responsible for a larger area.

The cars were painted black and white and became known as "Panda cars".

Every officer had a personal radio, which meant he no longer had to make points **AND** he could be contacted at any time.

The success of Unit Beat Policing meant that the Home Office recommended it be adopted in all UK forces.

The East Riding Constabulary adopted the system and the first "Panda" cars, Ford Anglia saloons, were seen in the county in December 1967.

This was the death knell of police pillars and boxes.

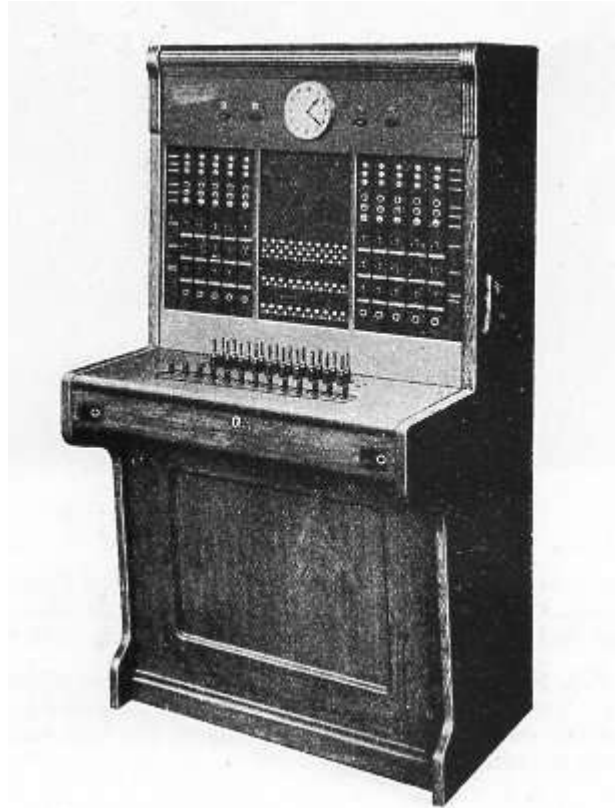
The cost of maintaining private wires to every pillar and box and their maintenance meant that by the early

1970's these iconic pieces of street furniture were being removed.

Just as we don't know when they were installed, we don't know when they were removed in Bridlington.



Police boxes and pillars were controlled from a PBX switchboard, from the police station in Ashville Street



A row of numbered push buttons operated the flashing PA1 amber lamps on the top of the boxes and pillars. The lamps were also mounted on brackets, or suspended above road junctions where they would be easily visible.

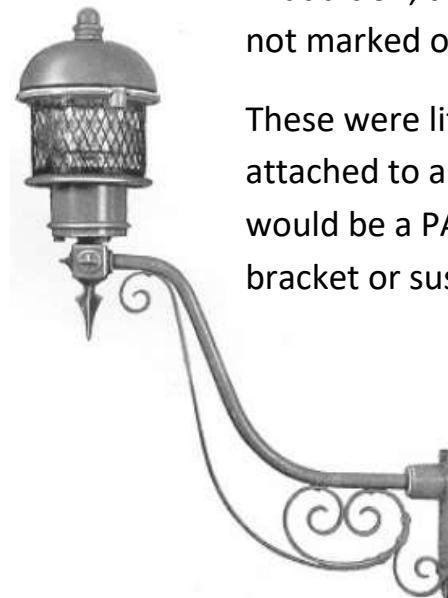


Ordnance Survey maps are a superb resource but are not infallible.

We know from other towns, for reasons unknown, sometimes pillars and boxes are not included on maps. So there may be other pillars in Bridlington which we are unaware of.

In addition, there were “cabinets”, which were not marked on OS maps.

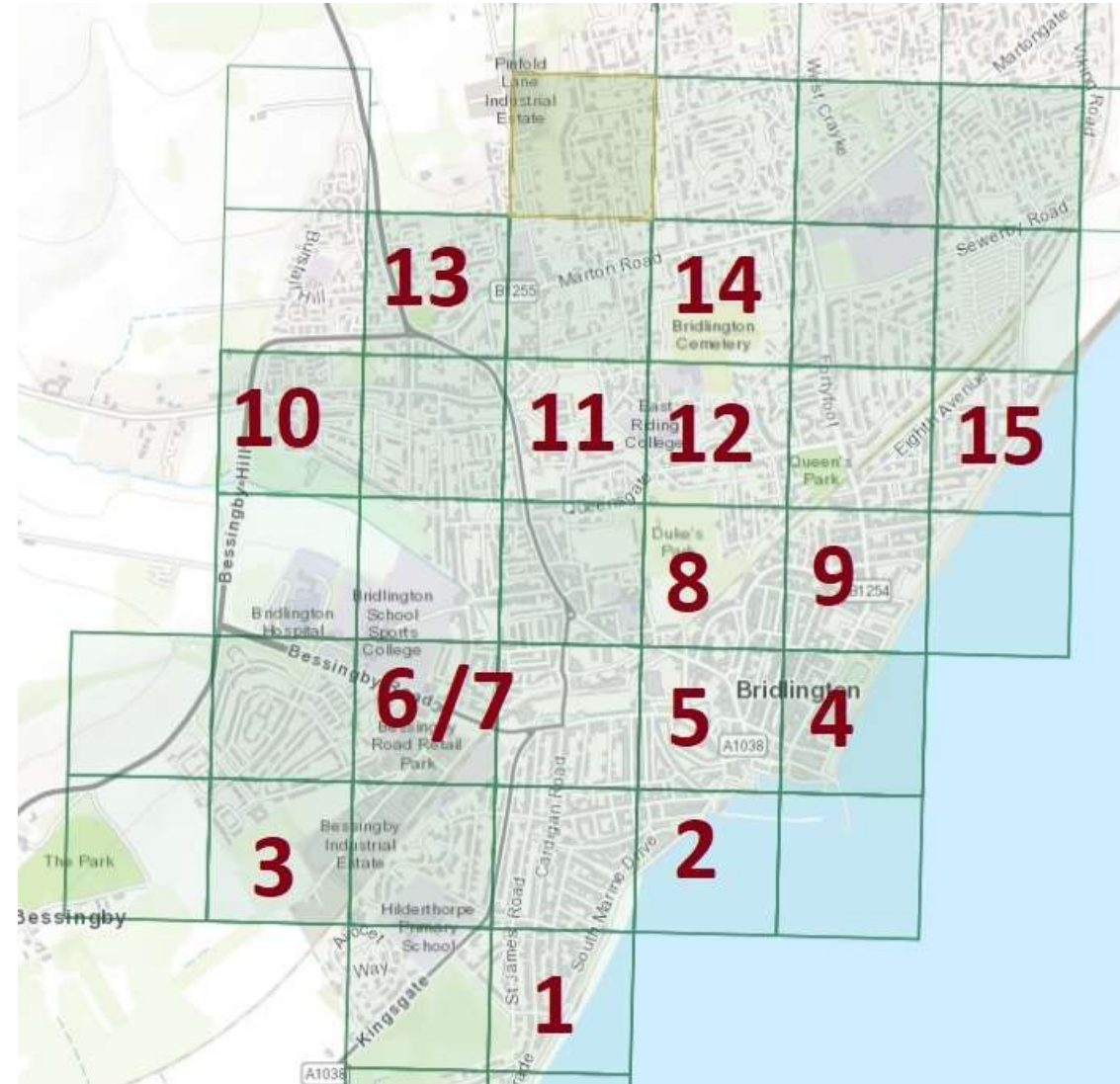
These were literally a hole in a wall or a cabinet attached to a lamp standard. Nearby there would be a PA1 lamp attached to a wall on a bracket or suspended above a road junction.



If you wish to view the source maps we have used, they are listed below. Should you want to see the list of abbreviations that are used on the old Ordnance Survey Maps, this is the link:

<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/find/#zoom=13.7&lat=54.09110&lon=-0.21735&layers=170&b=1&z=0&point=0,0>

Pillar	Date	Map Link
1	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831533">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831533</a>
2	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831641">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831641</a>
3	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831506">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831506</a>
4	1963	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831626">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831626</a>
5	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831632">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831632</a>
6	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831632">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831632</a>
7	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831554">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831554</a>
8	1961	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831656">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831656</a>
9	1963	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831659">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831659</a>
10	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831650">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831650</a>
11	1962	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831572">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831572</a>
12	1963	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831515">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831515</a>
13	1961	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831686">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831686</a>
14	1963	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831614">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831614</a>
15	1963	<a href="https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831692">https://maps.nls.uk/view/144831692</a>



# Pillar No 1 - South Marne Drive / Kingston Road



# Pillar No 2 - South Marine Dr. / Pembroke Terrace

maps.nls.uk/view/144831641

National Library of Scotland  
TA1866SW - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1963  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973

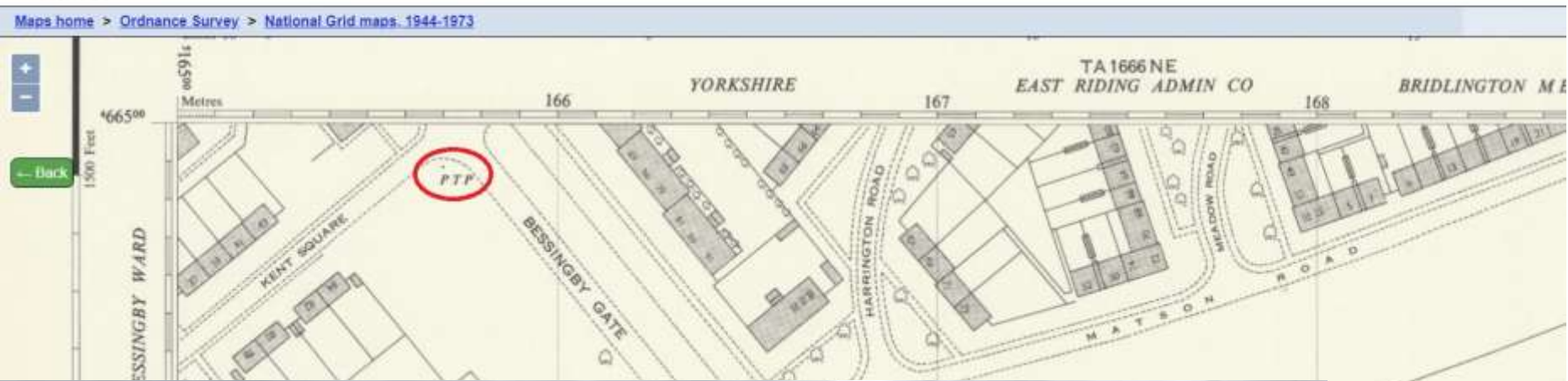


# Pillar No 3 - Kent Sq. / Bessingby Gate

**National Library of Scotland**  
 Leabhrairean Nàiseanta na h-Alba

**TA1666SE - A**  
 Surveyed: 1962, Published: 1963  
 Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Search:



# Pillar No 4 - Cross Street / Cliff Street

maps.nls.uk/view/144831626

**National Library of Scotland**  
Leabhrairinn Nàiseanta na h-Alba

**TA1866NE - A**  
Surveyed: 1962, Published: 1963  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)





The **ONLY** photograph of a Bridlington police pillar we have found!





# Pillar No 5 - Quay Road / Wellington Gardens

maps.nls.uk/view/144831632



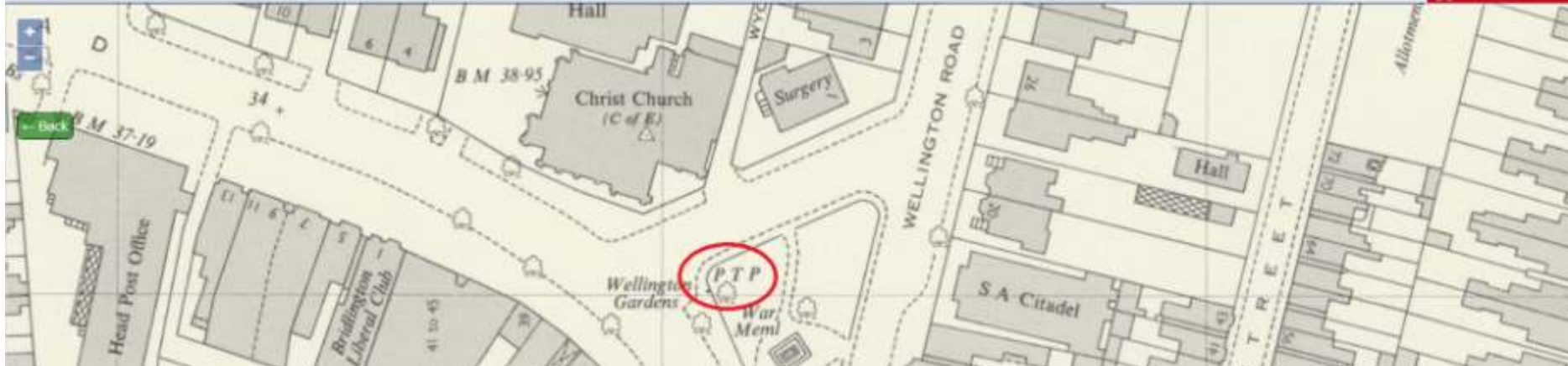
TA1866NW - A  
Surveyed: 1962, Published: 1963  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Search:

Re-use: [CC-BY \(NLS\)](#)

[Maps home](#) > [Ordnance Survey](#) > [National Grid maps, 1944-1973](#)

[Order this map](#)



# Pillar No 6 - St Hilda Street / Windsor Crescent

National Library of Scotland  
Leobharann Nàiseanta  
na h-Alba

TA1866NW - A  
Surveyed: 1962, Published: 1963  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Search:

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973



# Pillar No 7 - Bessingby Road / St. John's

National Library of Scotland  
Lithochrom Nitroprint  
1:10,000

TA1766NW - A  
Surveyed: 1962, Published: 1963  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

search:   
Re-use [CC-BY \(NLS\)](#)

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973

Order this map



# Pillar No 8 - Trinity Road / Promenade

National Library of Scotland  
Leabhra na Nàisean  
inghalas

TA18675E - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1962  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Search:   
Re-use [CC-BY \(NLS\)](#)

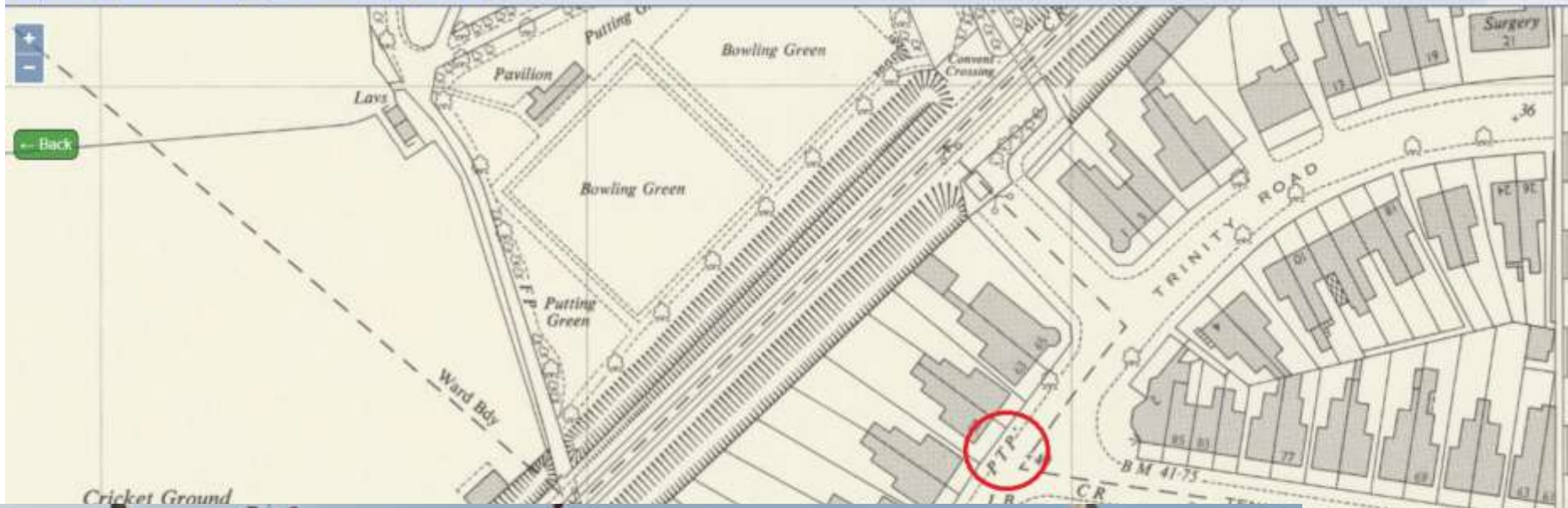


# Pillar No 9 - Trinity Road / Tennyson Avenue

National Library of Scotland  
Leabhrairean Nàiseanta na h-Alba

TA1867SW - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1962  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973







# Pillar No 11 - Kirkgate / St. John's Street

National Library of Scotland  
Leabhraichean Nàiseanta na h-Alba

TA1767NE - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1962  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

maps.home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973





*The road layout has changed considerably since Bessingby Hill was extended*

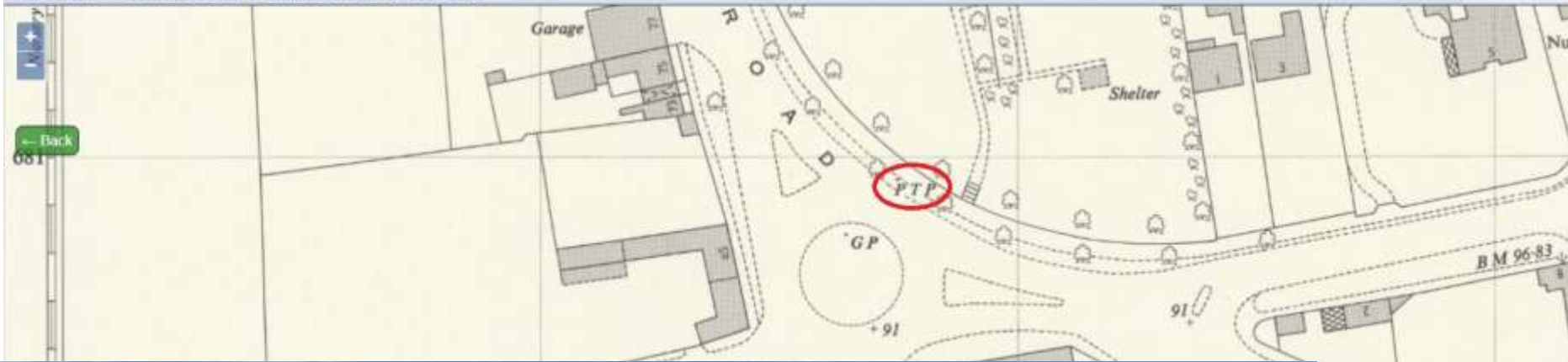
Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973



National Library of Scotland  
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba  
TA1768SW - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1962  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

Search:

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps\_1944-1973



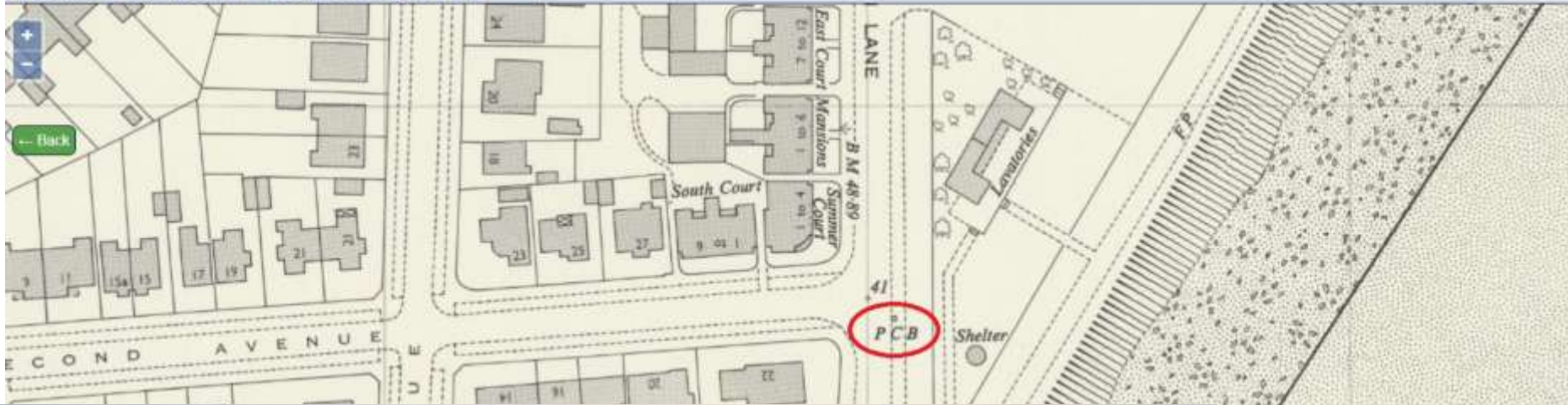
# Box No 1 - North Marine Drive / Second Avenue

National Library of Scotland  
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba

TA1967NW - A  
Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1961  
Size: map 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16 inches), on sheet ca. 56 x 49 cm (ca. 22 x 20 inches)

TA1967NW - A (includes: Bridlington), Surveyed: 1961, Published: 1961

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > National Grid maps, 1944-1973



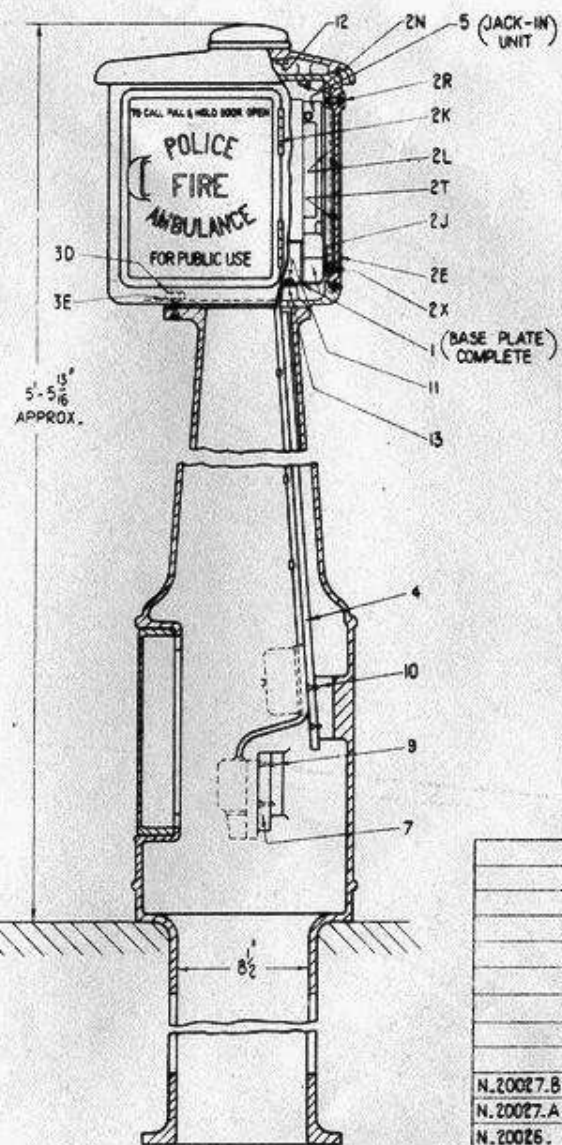
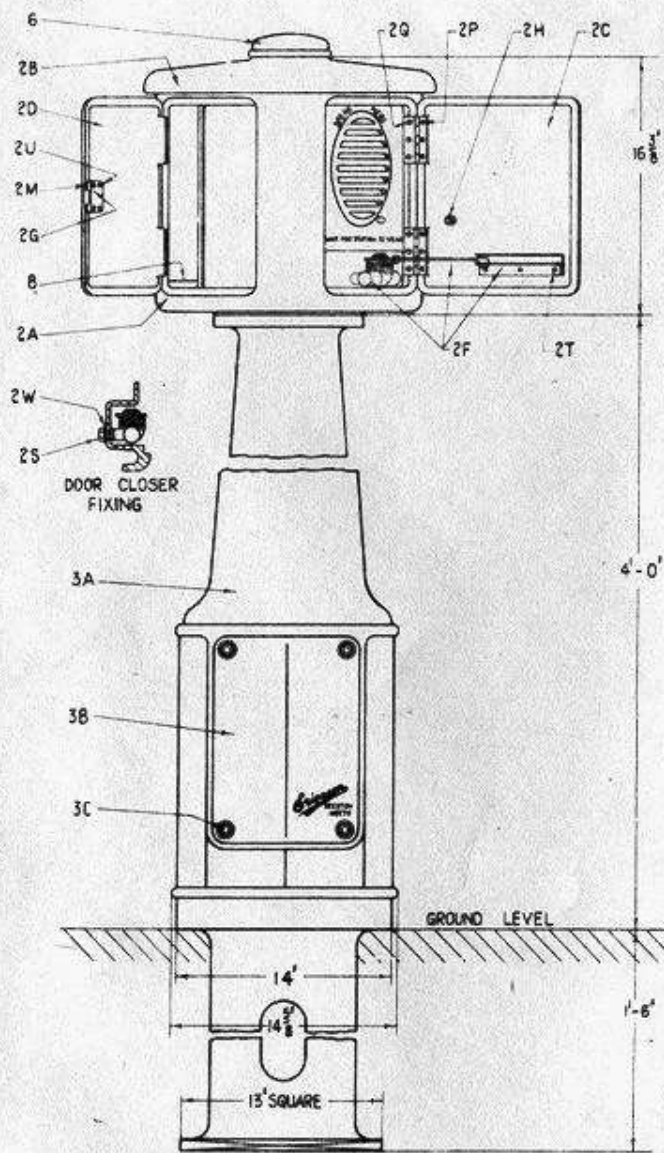
The only police box recorded in Bridlington. But what kind of box was it?



BEESTON  
NOTTINGHAM.

# STREET TELEPHONE.

## N.20026.



STREET TELEPHONE WITH LOUD SPEAKER EQUIPMENT, AND SPECIAL POLICE TELEPHONE FOR MUNICIPALITIES.

TERMINAL POINT IS ARRANGED FOR SIGNALLING OVER THE LOOP.  
'A' POINT OVER 'A' LINE AND EARTH.  
'B' POINT OVER 'B' LINE AND EARTH.

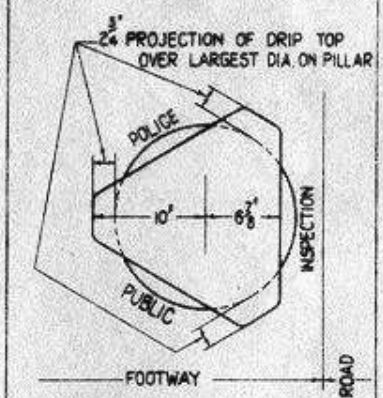
HINGES & CLOSER TO BE LUBRICATED & KEPT FREE FROM PAINT.

TOOL FOR TRIANGULAR FIXING SCREWS IS N.20080.

ELECTRIC SUPPLY CUT-OUT & TELEPHONE PROTECTOR SHOWN DOTTED TO ILLUSTRATE MOUNTING POSITION, ARE SUPPLIED ONLY WHEN ORDERED.

TOP OF PART NO 3A SHOULD BE PERFECTLY LEVEL WHEN ERECTED.

THIN METAL PACKING WASHERS PART 11 ARE PROVIDED FOR INSERTING UNDER PART NO 1 FOR FINAL ADJUSTMENT IF NECESSARY.



NOTE - FOR TROPICAL ADD LETTER 'T' TO THE CODE.

N.20027.B	'B' POINT		
N.20027.A	'A' POINT		
N.20026.	TERMINAL POINT		
CODE	TYPE	FORMERLY	P.O. CODE
APPROX. WEIGHT		4 1/4 CWT.	

ISSUE NO 1 2

Readers comments: