

Press Release



**BANK OF
SCOTLAND**

BANK OF SCOTLAND UNVEILS NEW £50 POLYMER NOTE DESIGN

- **New £50 polymer note features much-loved mythical Kelpies sculpture, reflecting their place in Scottish folklore.**
- **Catherine Topley, CEO of Scottish Canals, says the note ‘pays homage’ to the canals’ transformation**
- **Sought after AA pre-fix notes will be auctioned in summer for Mental Health UK**

Bank of Scotland has today unveiled the design of its new polymer £50 note which will enter circulation on the 1st of July 2021.

Keen-eyed note holders will first notice the change in colour from traditional green to red. Evolving the existing “Bridge Series”, a new image of the world’s first and only rotating boat lift, the Falkirk Wheel, will be visible on the reverse.

For the first time, the famous Falkirk structure will be joined by an image of the shape-shifting water spirits, The Kelpies. The two 300-tonne horses’ heads have been added to the £50 note in celebration of the contribution of horses to the history of Scotland. Furthermore, a new UV feature depicts a horse pulling a canal barge, one of the ways horses shaped the geographical layout of the Falkirk area.

Bank of Scotland’s new £50 notes feature the poem ‘Steam Barge’, by William Muir. It was written after he saw the newly-invented steam boat passing through Scotland’s Grand Canal.

The front of the new note portrays the Scottish novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott, alongside the image of The Mound in Edinburgh, as the current £50 note does today.

The note has important security features which include an anti-counterfeit ‘window effect’ – transparent windows within The Mound frontage and a transparent vertical stripe – on the front of the note. Inside the vertical stripe is a holographic foil strip which displays the ‘Prosperity’ statue on top of The Mound, the bank’s logo, and ‘£50.’ The foil also displays a ‘Northern Lights’ effect, with stars and colours resembling the phenomena appearing, when the note is tilted.

In addition, as with the £10 and £20 polymer notes, the £50 note will have a tactile emboss feature, to aid the visually impaired.



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Philip Grant, Chairman of the Scottish Executive Committee, Bank of Scotland, said: *“Bank of Scotland has issued bank notes showcasing our country’s rich history for more than 320 years. Our new £50 note, with its images of the majestic Kelpies, the Falkirk Wheel and a poem by William Muir, celebrates the greatness of Scottish culture and engineering achievement. I am very proud to be a signatory on the note, in my role as Treasurer of Bank of Scotland.”*



Catherine Topley, CEO of Scottish Canals, said: *“I am delighted one of Scottish Canals’ most iconic attractions will be showcased on the Bank of Scotland’s new £50 note. This decision by the Bank of Scotland pays homage to Scottish Canals’ transformation in central Scotland over the last 20 years. From abandoned backwaters, to Scotland’s most vibrant city-to-city and sea-to-sea canal corridor, with our incredible destinations The Falkirk Wheel and The Kelpies at the heart of the canal renaissance. The note also complements the appearance of The Falkirk Wheel in the United Kingdom’s passports, recognising its significance to the nation’s infrastructure.”*

On June 30th, Bank of Scotland will auction 92 notes containing the most sought after serial numbers, those with the AA pre-fix. A further two notes will be auctioned with the offer for a personalised serial number. All proceeds will be going to Mental Health UK.



*THE KELPIES: DID YOU KNOW

- Inspired by working horses of industry, and mythical horses which had to be tamed to offer safe passage across water, **The Kelpies** were born.
- Scottish Canals commissioned artist **Andy Scott**, already well-known for his signature sculptures of working horses, to develop ideas and sketches to take the original two-dimensional Kelpie concept into a new dimension.
- The Kelpies were officially opened by **HRH Princess Anne** on the 8th July 2015, having been open to the public since April 2014.
- It took **3285 days** to develop The Kelpies and build them from conception to opening
- At 30 metres tall they are the **world’s largest horse statues**. A full horse sculpture built to the same scale would be more than 213m tall!



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- The Kelpies stand guard over **1km** of Scotland's newest canal, linking the Forth & Clyde Canal's eastern end, with the sea.



****THE FALKIRK WHEEL: DID YOU KNOW**

- The final design is claimed to have been inspired by a **Celtic double headed spear**, a vast turning propeller of a Clydebank built ship, the ribcage of a whale and the spine of a fish.
- **1,200 tonnes** of steel was used to create The Wheel and over **1,000 construction staff** helped to build it.
- The Wheel was opened by Her Majesty The Queen on the **24th May 2002**.
- Standing at **35m tall** it is equivalent in height to 8 double-decker buses stacked on top of each other.
- The Wheel only uses **1.5kWh** of energy for one rotation, about the same amount of energy as boiling 8 household kettles

End

Notes to editor

*Source: [The Story of The Kelpies - Scottish Canals](#)

**Source: [About The Falkirk Wheel - Scottish Canals](#)

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