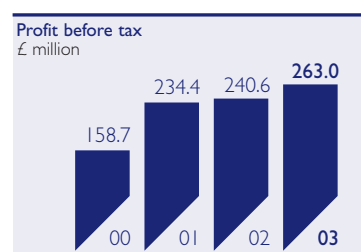
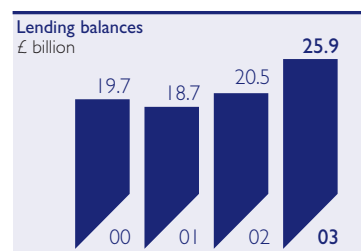


# Operating highlights

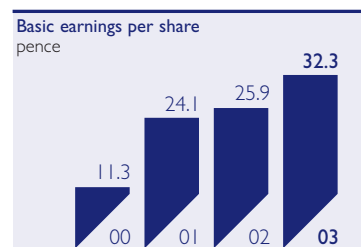
– Profit before tax up 9%  
to £263.0 million



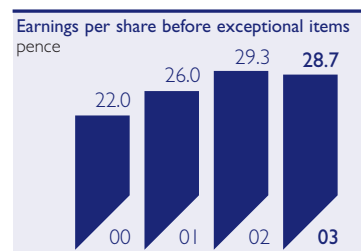
– Lending balances increased by 26% to  
£25.9 billion



– Basic earnings per share up 25% to  
32.3 pence



– Earnings per share before exceptional  
items down 2% to 28.7 pence



– Full-year dividend up 11%  
to 16.5 pence

