

BRUNEL'S OTHER BRIDGE NEWS

AUGUST 2025

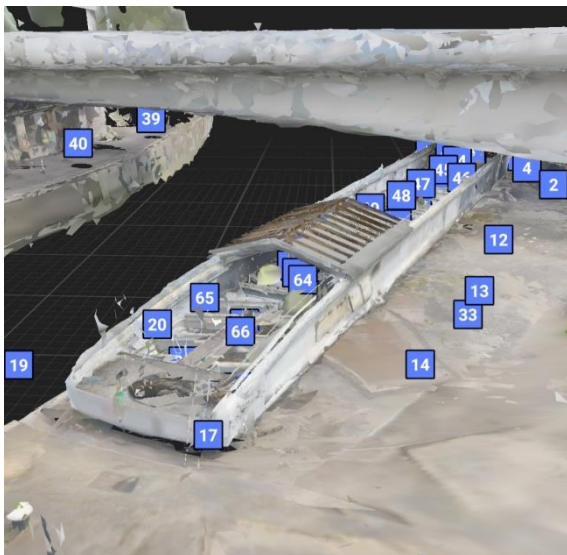
CURTINS CHARITY WORK DAY



Ten years ago a young graduate Tom Aylott (photo left) joined a BOB work-party. He brought with him equipment from his employer, Curtins Engineers, to survey levels, and helped our volunteer Bob Watkins produce the first ever digital drawings of the Swivel Bridge.

Tom is now Principal Engineer of Curtins, and recently arranged for ten of his colleagues to spend a hot July day volunteering on BOB. The day started with an interesting two-hour walking tour of Cumberland Basin and the Knuckle looking at historic features, including lifting plates to view the Swivel Bridge hydraulic jiggers.

Tom and Bob Watkins teamed up again to use Curtin's new Matterport Lidar scanner to



record the entire Swivel Bridge. This was the first time Tom had used the equipment but quickly had it wirelessly connected to his phone where hundreds of points were recorded, and from where the scanner was controlled. The automatically-generated survey stations are illustrated in the photo to the left.



Two volunteers swept out under the bridge and greased the turntable bearings, a difficult and messy job.

A team removed vegetation from under the Bridge and around the site so that the area looked its best for the Harbour Festival later that week.

Another team cleaned down and painted the tail end of the Bridge, and applied a final coat to Brunel Lock capstan.



Curtins offices are in Hotwell Road, a few minutes walk from the Swivel Bridge, pictured here with the MV Balmoral moored alongside.



Established over 60 years ago, Curtins specialises in civil and structural engineering projects from fourteen offices nation-wide. See <https://www.curtins.com> Interestingly they are an employee-owned trust which encourages its staff to do charity projects on two days a year as part of the Company's social responsibility policy. The 'Knuckle' now looks exceptionally tidy, and we look forward to seeing the results of the Lidar survey. THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING.

HERITAGE SECTOR RESILIENCE PLAN 2025-35

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Historic
Environment
Forum



This has recently been created by The Historic Environment Forum (HEF) to update an earlier one. The Forum is a collaboration between Historic England and senior representatives from 24 heritage organisations in England.

The Plan aims to focus on four 'cornerstones': relevance, physical resilience, workforce, organizational

resilience, and financial resilience.

The Resilience Plan helpfully and briefly summaries some challenges and sets out visions for improving resilience over the next decade. To read its 16 packed pages , please click [HERE](#)

BRUNEL LOCK and CAPSTAN



Photo C 1970 courtesy of Historic England Archive

Brunel's Lock was closed by large floating 'caisson' gates rotating on giant hinges. It was opened and closed by manual capstans, one of which survives, and is being restored. Here Ian is cleaning and painting the capstan, before he was knocked over by an e-bicycle and sustained serious injuries from which he is recovering well. Ian, we wish you a full and fast recovery.



Pete Dunn and his team are using oak from the National Trust's Tyntesfield Estate and elsewhere to make new strakes. Here the Trust's Head Ranger Stuart Smith demonstrates his strength lifting enormous logs effortlessly and loading them into our transport! Thank you Stuart.



A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT

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