

Celebrating the Bicentenary Year of the World's Oldest Vehicular Suspension Bridge

A View from the Bridge

for the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge

Restoration Progress Supplement – No 2 – November 2020

The Restoration contract has continued apace since our first Progress Supplement a month ago, with much preliminary accommodation work – necessary, vital!, but often not particularly photogenic. However, things changed earlier this week (19th November) when ALM, the French ski-lift engineers, began erecting the Scottish tower gantry, which provided some spectacular photo-opportunities which we reproduce below.

All our own photographs are taken from outside the “contract envelope” but we are very grateful to one of the Spencer engineers for sending us his own photographs from within the contract site, some of which we have included in this supplement. The images below represent only a small proportion of the photographs we have taken over the past two months, all of which will be kept in a database in the Friends’ archives. One of the more frustrating aspects of the Bridge’s history is the lack of photographic material. Although of course the Bridge was built some 6 years before the first camera photograph was taken, even the repair and restoration of the 1970s and 1980s produced little in the way of photo records.

Below left: **Steel framework being off-loaded and below right, assembled on hardcore on the tollhouse footprint at the base of the English-tower, to support concrete blocks forming the foundations and support for the English-side cable gantry .**





Above: Starting to remove the decking plywood to reveal the sleepers beneath; and, with the aid of an ecologist, to look for signs of bat habitation.



Left: Filling a concrete drum, arrowed, on the English side, which will be used as an anchor for BT cables from beneath the Bridge, relocated for the duration of the works. And below, later in the day, a similar operation on the Scottish side.





This concrete base with six steel rods protruding is the anchor for the cables on the English side, on land just above the English tower. Another view below. Note the steps leading down from the field above. A hedgehog is incorporated.



25 Nov Erection of the English-side gantry continues, left and below

