

A View from the Bridge

for the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge

Restoration Progress Supplement – No 7– May 2021

View the latest combined drone and timelapse footage on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2txpnZkz5E>



A nesting mallard on the top of the Scottish tower effectively suspended masonry work on the tower and other operations on the Scottish side of the Bridge for almost four weeks at the end of April and beginning of May. After the brood fledged, work resumed on the 10th May.



The English tower behind structural steel access platform - 19th May 2021



The Scottish tower shrouded in scaffolding, with piledriving machine (blue) to the left – 12th May

SEPTEMBER to DECEMBER 2020

Phase 1 - Preparation

JANUARY to APRIL 2021

Phase 2 - Dismantling

The following work was completed during the second phase:

Construction of English-side abutment steel access platform (shown above, left)– to assist in chain removal, anchor installation and masonry restoration

Removing the 1903 cables and their hangers **completed week-ending 22 January**

Removing the entire handrailing and balustrades **completed on 2 March**

Removing the entire timber bridge deck **completed on 2 March**

Removing all the hanger rods **completed on 2 March**

Removing all the suspension chains **completed on 29 March, well ahead of programme**

Secure, logged storage of re-useable components at Honey Farm, awaiting refurbishment.

APRIL to AUGUST 2021

Phase 3 - Restoration

The following work will be undertaken during the restoration phase:

Refurbishment and restoration of Bridge components at the Chain Bridge Honey Farm compound, blasting the lead-coated paint and inspecting for defects and necessary repairs; treating with a new paint system.

Works of restoration to the iconic Rose and Thistle plaques.

Removal and reconstruction of the existing concrete anchorages...

...on the English side, from the top of the structural steel access platform where the top five courses of masonry will be carefully removed prior to cutting out the existing interceptor beam with specialist equipment; then lifting new reinforced steel into position; constructing a new interceptor beam and completing with new rock anchors to secure the beam to the rock face;

...on the Scottish side, after sheet piling operations to secure the site, the old anchorage will be excavated out before a new reinforced anchor block is cast, up to 6m below the road level

Refurbishment of the two towers using, wherever possible, sandstone matching the original geological characteristics and appearance of the stone and the same mortar

Installation of new suspension chain anchors on both sides of the Bridge

Installation of restored Rose and Thistle crests on both towers

AUGUST to DECEMBER 2021

Phase 4 – Reinstatement and Ancillary Works

The following work will be undertaken during the reinstatement ancillary works phase:

Re-installation of the refurbished and restored suspension chains.

Installation of new hanger rods

Installation of a full new timber road and footpath deck with steel substructure

Installation of new railings

Re-modelling of the English and Scottish approach roads with visitor parking

Removal of all temporary infrastructure and general reinstatement



Follow the progress of the works and the Project Partnership Learning and Outreach Team's initiatives, activities, programmes, talks and other events on unionchainbridge.org



A reminder that our planned Bicentenary Celebration Concert by *Concerto Caledonia* in July 2020, cancelled when Covid-19 forced the abandonment of last year's *Music at Paxton* Festival, is taking place at this year's Festival, sponsored by the Friends, on Sunday July 25th. Full details are on the Festival website – www.musicatpaxton.co.uk We have a small number of tickets for the evening Concert, at 7pm, at £22 each. If you are interested, please e-mail us at unionbridgefriends@gmail.com

The Project Team

The Spencer Group Northumberland County Council Scottish Borders Council Museums Northumberland The Friends of the Union Chain Bridge
The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Supported by

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The Friends of the Union Chain Bridge- registered as a Charity 1162867 (England) SC046208 (Scotland) – A Charitable Incorporated Organisation under the
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