



WHITCHURCH BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the April edition of the Whitchurch Bridge Reconstruction Project newsletter.

The end of March saw a return to work after the winter flooding and operations are now back in full swing, with good progress made this month.

You may have noticed that we have brought an additional large floating crane to site. This will enable us to continue with lifting operations on the north side of the river following the re-opening of the river on 1 April.

In the last four weeks we have removed the remaining edge girders and pier bracings from the bridge and have demolished the two bridge supports on the Whitchurch and Pangbourne banks.

Once the old girders were removed, the tops of the pier supports (called capitals) were exposed for the first time in 112 years. The original intention was to carefully remove these and take them off site for refurbishment. However, it was immediately apparent that the capitals had been filled with concrete. Despite careful attempts, it was not possible to free them without the risk of damaging them, possibly beyond repair.

Contingency plans were put into place to strip back the paint and mechanically repair the capitals on site. This work is currently on-going and is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

On Monday 28 April the specialist piling equipment was delivered to site. This piece of equipment will drill a total of nine new piles at depths of up to 30m down into the bedrock to provide the support to the new bridge.

Whilst we are busy on site preparing the foundations there is also plenty happening off-site. The new bridge steelwork has all been fabricated and is currently being painted. This will be delivered to site in early June.

The existing edge girders that give the bridge its distinctive character are currently being refurbished off-site. Due to the age of these girders we have found that a number of small sections have had to be cut out and replaced. The fabricators are currently working seven days a week to help get them completed in time.

We are still on course to re-open the bridge in September. For the latest information and a chance to ask questions on the reconstruction works, why not visit us at our Community Exhibition which is being held at Adventure Dolphin in Pangbourne on 8 May 2014? Please visit www.whitchurchbridge.com for details nearer the time.

If we can be of any assistance regarding our works, please telephone our site office on 01189 844816.

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