

Trim



How you can help

Yes, I would like to make a donation £

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Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (AIBT) can claim gift aid on your donation if you meet certain criteria:

- If you are a UK taxpayer (as an individual, a sole trader or member of a partnership;
- If your payments of income tax and/or capital gains tax cover all the gift aid amounts that you give permission for, in the same year.

N.B. Payments of council tax and VAT do not count for this purpose.

AIBT can claim 25p for every £1 donated (the claimable amount depends on the basic rate of tax in force at the time).

If you wish to give **AIBT** permission to claim gift aid on your donation please give the information below:

Your initials and surname:

House number:

Post code:

Date:

The amount you are donating now £

This donation can be a single donation, or a series of donations eg monthly subscriptions.

☐

I agree to AIBT claiming gift aid on this donation, and on any future donations (**please tick**).

☐

I understand that I can cancel this permission at any time (**please tick**).

You can also make a donation by going to **www.brunelsotherbridge.org.uk** and **pressing the donate button**.

or by **sending a cheque** payable to **Avon Industrial Buildings Trust** to: The Treasurer, Thatched Wells, Duckhole, Thornbury, BS35 1LD.

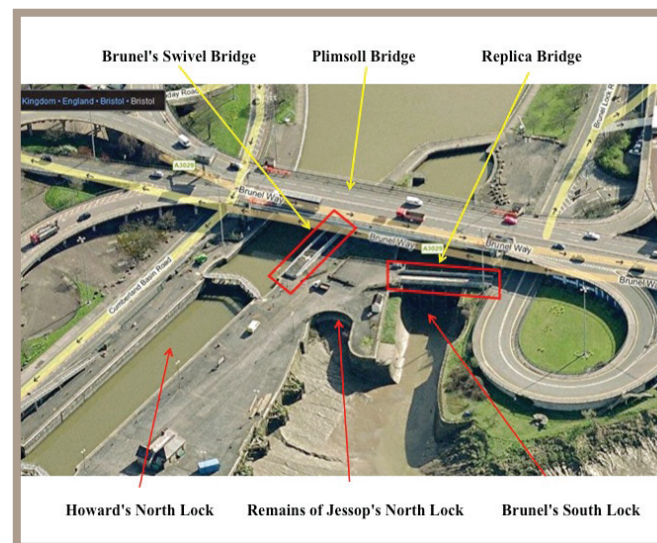
Thank you for your support

**Working together to save
Bristol's heritage**

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How to find Brunel's Swivel Bridge



The Swivel Bridge lies alongside the North Entrance Lock ('Howard's Lock'), located by the Plimsoll swing bridge at the entrance to Bristol's floating harbour. Nearest Post Code BS1 6SE.

On foot: Follow the footpaths alongside the Floating Harbour.

By bike: There are cycle routes throughout the city and the site is linked directly to the Portway Cycle route, Festival Way and River Avon Trail.

By bus: Park and Ride services run from Shirehampton, Brislington and Long Ashton. For information visit www.travelwest.info/parkandride. Buses no. X54 and 55 run from Broadmead; and bus no. 505 from Southmead, Clifton, Redland and Hotwells.

By car: Pay and display parking at Brunel Lock Road and McAdam Way with short term parking on the adjoining highway.

Brunel's swivel bridge is Grade II* listed, and on the English Heritage register of Buildings at Risk.

The Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (AIBT) is working in partnership with the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society (BIAS), and the Clifton and Hotwells Improvement Society (CHIS) on the restoration of Brunel's swivel bridge.



brunelsotherbridge.org.uk

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Brunel's Swivel Bridge

Working together to save Bristol's heritage

**Help us save
Brunel's
oldest
rotating
bridge**

**A unique
restoration
project**



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Brunel's Swivel Bridge

Working together to save Bristol's heritage

Why does the bridge need saving?

The swivel bridge is Grade II* listed, and on the English Heritage register of Buildings at Risk. In May 2013 volunteers carefully chiselled away the rust on the ends of the four main beams that support the 63 tonne weight of the bridge deck. Bucketfuls of rust fell out exposing large holes. These holes, and the thinning away in places of repair plates previously inserted to strengthen the structure have left the bridge in a fragile and weakened state. If this continues and if rescue work doesn't go ahead, the bridge will eventually collapse.

Why is the Swivel Bridge important?

The Swivel Bridge is Brunel's first large rotating wrought iron opening bridge and is older than the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Designed in 1849 by staff in Brunel's Westminster office, it became operational in October the same year. It was designed to carry traffic over the new South Entrance Lock (Brunel's Lock) in the Cumberland Basin which was under construction at the time. In 1872-1873 the bridge was shortened and relocated to its present position over the North Entrance Lock (also known as Howard's Lock).

The bridge was decommissioned in 1968 after construction of the Plimsoll Bridge as part of the new Cumberland Basin road system.



Swivel bridge and docks, 1906

How does the bridge fit into the Brunel story?

In 1832 Brunel was appointed Consulting Engineer for Bristol Docks which had major problems with silting and the increasing size of ships. The locks were so small the ss Great Britain was trapped in the Floating Harbour for eighteen months whilst Brunel sought permission to modify the North Lock to allow it to exit. The ship finally left on its maiden voyage in December 1844.

Despite these works, access to the Floating Harbour was still a problem. In 1845 Brunel's design for a new south lock at Cumberland Basin was accepted with work finally finishing in spring 1849. The Swivel Bridge which spanned the new lock was fabricated at the Great Western Steamship works – the same works where the ss Great Britain had been built. Brunel came down to Bristol several times to inspect the bridge while it was under construction; it was completed in October 1849.

Brunel's South lock now lies disused with access to the Floating Harbour blocked by a concrete wall. The Swivel Bridge lies alongside the North Entrance Lock.



Swivel bridge and docks, present day

Our plan of action

- 1 Understanding the site** – first we need to understand the existing structures, including the hydraulic system, by searching through archives and by a survey of the bridge itself. This will ensure we avoid potential risks to the bridge in carrying out conservation work.
- 2 Halting the corrosion** – we are painting the corroded metalwork to reduce its rate of decay.
- 3 Conserving the mechanisms** – we are raising the west end of the bridge to remove weight from the centre and tail wheels to allow these and the central pintle to be conserved and the undersides of the side beams to be painted.
- 4 Slowing deterioration** – we are erecting a 6 metre long steel sheeted scaffold over the turn table to protect this vulnerable area. We aim to conserve the bridge to restore it to working condition for occasional use as a crossing for pedestrians and cyclists over the North Entrance Lock.
- 5 We are seeking funding and support** to enable this work to go ahead. Please send a donation and sign up to the supporters register on our website.

Photo: Isambard Kingdom Brunel
by Robert Howlett, 1857

Contact us via our website:
brunelsotherbridge.org.uk

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