

## UK Bridges Board Minutes 17 February 2022

Hazel McDonald	(Chair) Transport Scotland
Richard Fish	Bridge Owners Forum
Colin Ferris	Department for Infrastructure, Northern Ireland
Jason Hibbert	Welsh Government
Neil Loudon	Highways England
Keith Harwood	Hertfordshire County Council, ADEPT Bridges Group
Nicola Head	Transport for London
Brian Duguid	Net Zero Bridges Group
Fred Hartley	Canal & River Trust
Bob Humphreys	CSS Wales, Gwynedd Council
Nick Burgess	London Underground
Gary Kemp	Department for Transport
Stuart Molyneux	Salford City Council, representing Metropolitan Councils
Colin Hall	Network Rail
David Castlo	Network Rail
Cameron Archer-Jones	Net Zero Bridges Group
Kyle Fairbairn	CIHT (Secretariat)

### 1. Welcome, introduction, apologies – Chair, Hazel McDonald (10:30-10:35)

Hazel welcomed the group and introduced Cameron Archer-Jones & Brian Duguid from Net Zero Bridges, and David Castlo Network Rail. Apologies were recorded for Kevin Denith.

### 2. Research (10:35-10:45)

#### a. UKRLG/DfT research funding

Gary Updated that there has been no update from UKRLG funding pot He suggested that the funding would be announced soon.

Richard Fish asked about what the process for prioritisation of funding is. Hazel said that the bridges projects had already been prioritised and will share with the group. However, how DfT prioritise funding between boards wasn't yet known. Neil L asked if DfT will have influence over what project is chosen, but Hazel and others said that the group will have control over the pot of funding. There was a discussion on how the projects would be procured and how this needs to be considered in prioritization. Also it is possible that the overloaded vehicles project could be taken forward independent of the DfT funding.

**Action: Hazel to share prioritisation of structures projects.**

**Action: Hazel to find out how the money will be divided up between UKRLG groups.**

**Action: Hazel to arrange meeting with Neil and Jason to discuss the Overloaded Vehicles project.**

**b. Updates on existing, new and emerging projects**

Robert Humphreys discussed that CIRIA Masonry Arch project and noted that publication is expected at the end of March. The EPSRC arch project is progressing 3D rapid analysis model is in development for ashlar masonry. Random rubble analysis may be produced later.

**Action: Robert to circulate link to 3D rapid analysis model for masonry arches.**

**3. Network Rail Asset Protection Customer Experience (10:45-10:55)**

David Castlo from network rail introduce himself and his role at Network Rail and discussed closer working with authorities such as using the Asset Customer Experience (ACE) system. David acknowledged previous poor engagement with Authorities and highlighted improved engagement going forward, all of this forming part of the open for business campaign.

David then gave an overview of the ACE system and how Authorities will be able to use it. He also demonstrated the platform using a video tutorial. The ACE project is now live and that feedback on the system is appreciated.

Neil Loudon asked whether existing cases can be viewed on the system and what will happen with these. David said that existing cases will be dealt with in the previous system unless it is a large project, which would be transferred across as required.

Keith Harwood asked if David could present at the ADEPT group. Keith also mentioned the variation in agreements and cost of inspections. David noted that Network Rail were looking at achieving cost consistency. David was also happy to present to ADEPT.

Hazel McDonald asked if this is live across all of the devolved nations, David confirmed this but there is a slight delay in Scotland in light of training needs before launch. This was expected by end of March. Hazel asked if David could present at SCOTS, David agreed he would. Hazel also asked if it was possible for Authorities to view what their agents were doing in the system. David said he would check if this was possible.

Nicola Head asked if it was possible to share the presentation. David agreed.

**Action: Shalini to share the presentation with the group.**

**4. Asset Management – Keith Harwood (10:55-11:00)**

The last Asset Management (AM) meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 where the case for investing in highways maintenance was the main topic. The submission had been finalized and was presented to DfT. Keith shared the parts most relevant to bridges and noted that the full submission is available on the UKRLG website. The next meeting is still to be arranged.

Keith said that the Asset Management board is looking for a new chair, Hazel said that a new chair may possibly be announced soon.

Link: [https://ukrlg.ciht.org.uk/media/15247/the-case-for-investing-in-highway-maintenance\\_final.pdf](https://ukrlg.ciht.org.uk/media/15247/the-case-for-investing-in-highway-maintenance_final.pdf)

## **5. Bridges Guidance and Governance – Richard Fish (11:00-11:10)**

Richard discussed the importance of guidance such as the bridge inspection manual and code of practice with particular emphasis on the risks and capability of smaller bridge owners not knowing that guidance exists or using the latest version. It was felt that the UKBB needs to take a lead in helping this guidance to be available and understood across the sector.

On governance, Richard asked whether there is a need for a more independent body that looks into maintenance and risk, as the current bodies are possibly too close to policy.

Keith Harwood said that the governance issue would be a hard issue to tackle but that the guidance issue would be one that something could be done about. Hazel discussed the previous actions from UKBB meetings, and the first issue to tackle is the collation of guidance and where to publish it. Keith volunteered to have an initial look at compiling a list of relevant guidance, along with Nicola and Hazel.

**Action: Hazel to arrange a meeting to draw up a list of guidance with Keith and Nicola.**

**Action: Hazel to follow up with Justin around expanding the website to include relevant bridge management guidance and updating it.**

**Action: Keith to report back on BCI guidance discussion following next ADEPT Bridges Group meeting.**

## **6. Boundary issue guidance and update on the temporary bridging website with DfT – Neil Loudon (11:10 -11:20)**

Neil Loudon gave a presentation around temporary bridges forthcoming online guidance. This guidance gives the technical specifications of temporary bridges with sample Approval in Principle and Departures from Standards documents. The online portal is up and running but not yet populated with temporary bridge specification information.

It was felt that this needs to progress timeously as the temporary bridge suppliers have been accommodating so far but risk jeopardising the project if left much longer. The portal also needs to be supported and regularly updated if it is to be of use.

Gary Kemp said that he has chased up his procurement team and they are now on board. He confirmed they have a budget and will be going back out to tender, hopefully with the original supplier.

Fred thanked the group for response to questions around sudden failures of bridges.

Neil gave presentation updating the status of the boundary issues document. Neil reminded the board that this will be a guidance document not a code of practice, that it will hopefully resolve some of the current issues and provide a pragmatic approach to commence discussions. The guidance is ready to go but requires final internal sign off, which is expected in Feb/March. Once complete it will be available on the UKRLG website. A webinar is to be produced and a Transportation Professional article has been jointly authored between National Highways and ADEPT. The next topics to be tackled are motorway services and accommodation bridges.

Bob Humphreys asked if the Welsh Government is adopting this guidance on boundary issues. Jason Hibbert said that they were drafting their guidance and that it referred to the National Highways document.

Hazel noted that SCOTS had agreed their bridges guidance some time ago but awaited agreement on roads and lighting issues before publication.

**Action: Gary to speak to Neil about the progress of procuring the temporary bridge information for the portal.**

#### **7. Net Zero Bridges Group – Brian Duguid & Cameron Archer-Jones (11:20-11:40)**

Brian Duguid and Cameron gave presentation on what the net zero bridges group is and its purpose. He outlined the number and breadth of engineering consultancies and architects signed up and how the meetings allow sharing of the work that is being done in the net zero area and collation and sharing of the data and learning that comes from this. Cameron chairs the Carbon Data sub-group which aims to provide a consistent approach in measuring and reducing carbon in bridges, progressing towards net zero.

Several strands of work include carbon budgets, comparing new build v maintenance of existing assets, capital v operational carbon, why is PAS 2080 not being used more widely, benchmarking, investment in decarbonising materials, pilot projects and becoming “comfortable with the uncomfortable”, i.e. re-use of existing materials.

There was also discussion of the work the DfT is doing such as the shared digital carbon architecture, the need for a common approach and mandatory carbon reporting.

The point was made that the sector needs to be innovative to make up for the embedded carbon in concrete and steel by offsetting in other ways. It was noted that a key focus will be on supporting the continued use of existing assets.

#### **8. BICS, BOF feedback and alternative schemes update – Richard Fish (11:40-11:55)**

##### **BICS to be moved to the agenda for the next meeting.**

Richard gave update on BOF and how Cambridge University were supporting this work and working with the net zero bridges group. At the last BOF there was an update on what is happening in Victoria, Australia (VicTrack) where there are some interesting developments in SHM being undertaken. There was also a presentation from Fiona Smith of National Highways following the negative press coverage due to infilling of some historic rail estate bridges.

Link to BOF site: <https://www.bridgeforum.org/bof/>

#### **9. ADEPT (11:55-12:05)**

Change of leadership with Keith Harwood becoming the new chairman. At last meeting there were a number of interesting presentations, such as the use of CCTV in protecting bridges. Keith joined the HRE stakeholders advisory meeting representing ADEPT with many other stakeholders. He noted that Ministerial approval is now required before any structures are infilled and all projects are currently on hold.

#### **10. UKRLG update (12:05-12:10)**

[ukrlg-2-nov-2021.pdf \(ciht.org.uk\)](#)

Hazel highlighted that there is a survey coming out on reviewing the code of practice and to develop a survey to help with this. She requested volunteers to assist with drafting questions.

**Action: All. Volunteers required to assist with drafting questions for CoP survey**

#### **11. Minutes of last meeting (12:10-12:15)**

[minutes-uk-bridges-board-15-september-2021.pdf \(ciht.org.uk\)](#)

No amendments to minutes. All actions from last meeting covered. TRIB offered to do a presentation at a future meeting for UKBB. Dates for next meeting confirmed.

#### **12. AOB All (12:15-12:30)**

Discussions with other boards on having a potential vice-chair for the UKRLG groups. Hazel asked for volunteers.

The bridges conference is on the 9 & 10 March in Coventry where Keith is hosting the Pecha Kucha session.

Hazel asked Garry about the DfT report on flood resilience and if there had been any progress or updates on BridgeCat.

Richard noted that articles on BOF's Grand Challenges and the Rochester Bridges work had yet appeared in Transportation Professional.

**Action: All. Volunteers requested for vice-chair.**

**Action: Gary to update on BridgeCat.**

**Action: Group to send Keith idea for topics for Pecha Kucha at the conference.**

**Action: Kyle/Justin to clarify what is happening with UKBB content in TPP/magazine.**