

UK Bridges Board Minutes 15 September 2022

Attendance

Hazel McDonald (Chair),	Transport Scotland (TS)
Andy Featherby	Canal & Rivers Trust (CRT)
Donald MacPherson	SCOTS
Colin Ferris	Department for Infrastructure Northern Ireland (DII)
Richard Fish	Bridge Owners Forum (BOF)
Gary Kemp	Department for Transport (DfT)
Satbir Gill	TAG
Nicola Head	Transport for London (TfL)
Jason Hibbert	Welsh Government
Keith Harwood	ADEPT
Kevin Dentith.	ADEPT
Stuart Molyneux	Salford City Council, representing Metropolitan Councils
Philip Wildbore	Network Rail (NR)
Bob Humphreys	CSS Wales, Gwynedd Council
Neil Loudon	National Highways (NH)
Matt Eglinton (Part meeting)	Department for Transport (DfT)
Kyle Fairbairn	CIHT

1. Welcome, introduction, apologies

Hazel McDonald welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were recorded for Nick Burgess and Hugh Brooman.

Introductions around the table were made. Hazel welcomed the news that Nicola Head is now the UKBB vice chair.

2. Cost sharing protocol & Network Rail parapet protocol updates

Keith Harwood outlined that as an adept member he was invited to a Historical Railways group meeting and found that problems with bridges appear to be the same across areas i.e., Network rail, canal and river trust, and historical railways – but solutions were different. Keith wanted to see if cost sharing protocol could be updated and applied across all groups.

Keith also noted that ADEPT has set up a working group with Network Rail (Stuart Molyneux and Colin Hall) to discuss outstanding issues around the Bridgeguard 3 programme.

Matt Eglinton outlined DfT perspective, saying that DfT are happy to support updating the CSS/NR cost sharing protocol and can provide a budget for updating. Matt added that he would facilitate liaison with DfT rail colleagues and Network

Rail. Just need names etc to move forward. Said that it is good to know where the responsibility lies in terms of cost.

Hazel outlined that while the document can be updated, Network Rail are still bound by BE4 and that the rest of the industry does not work to this standard. Hazel asked Matt how this should go forward, as it's unlikely legislation would be changed quickly, and suggested this might be progressed on a case -by -case basis.

Andy Featherby outlined his interest to be on the list to attend the meeting with Matt (DfT), and Keith suggested Historical Railways Estate (Helene Rossiter) and CRT should be on the list for a meeting with DfT.

Hazel said that she would follow up on the doodle poll for a date/time to arrange a meeting with relevant stakeholders with DfT.

Sabtir Gill asked Matt Eglinton for an update on the carbon reduction toolkit, and where it was with procurement. Matt outlined that these toolkits lie with the Energy Saving Trust and cut right across the highways and transport sector. UKRLG are a principle stakeholder and UKBB can input. Hazel outlined that the standardisation of carbon reduction toolkits would be most welcomed. Matt agreed to send Hazel a link for sharing.

Hazel said that here have been recommended updates to the NR parapet cost-sharing protocol. It is close to publication and Colin Hall (NR) was reviewing the final comments.

Matt noted that Stephen Fidler had received the letter from the Board requesting support for BICS. Matt and Hazel to discuss outside the meeting and report back.

Finally, Matt mentioned BridgeCat and how the National Adaptation Plan may help. He requested ideas of how BridgeCat could be used and confirmation of whether it fills a need for UKBB members. Is there a market for it?

Action: Hazel to send a copy of letter to Philip Wildbore to circulate internally

Action: Hazel to circulate dates and agenda for meeting on Railtrack/CSS cost sharing protocol

Action: Hazel to send Matt a summary of the issues to be addressed

Action: Matt to share link to carbon toolkit work with Energy Saving Trust.

Action: Colin Hall to comment on NR parapet cost-sharing protocol

Action: Hazel and Matt to discuss the BICS support letter to DfT and report back to the next meeting

Action: Board to feedback comments on BridgeCat, is there a market for it and does it fill a need.

3. Research – UKRLG/DfT, emerging research and BOF collation of research.

Hazel reminded the Board that it had put forward its preferred research areas for consideration. There had been no decision from UKRLG/DfT on how this was to be appraised against other board submissions yet. Hazel outlined that the HGV overloading research proposal was being looked at separately by TS, Welsh Government and NH.

Hazel asked the group about any research on climate change and heat and had there been any notable issues in the recent heat wave. Neil Loudon said that National Highways appeared to have no major incidents, only ones on pavements and safety fencing buckling. Neil said that research is ongoing looking at the ambient temperatures in the last period with a view to updating standards for design, assessment and the setting of joints. Neil was happy to collate any issues or incidents from Board members. He also noted that NH was conducting wider work into all climate change issues (wind, flooding, scour, heat etc) and their impact on standards and would be interested in any particular issues from members.

Keith Dentith noted timber footbridge deck warping in the heat that caused trip hazards.

Andy Featherby said that on the canals there were some slight issues with swing bridges seizing, but nothing major.

Philip Wildbore said that there was a major failure of a footbridge trestle that resulted in one of the footbridge planks failing. Also, desiccation of ground support caused movement. This is currently under investigation.

Neil said that there had previously been research on this, but the prolonged temperatures triggered a need for further research into the effects of climate change i.e., severe weather – subject to funding, however. Hazel asked if the piece of work will look at a change in the parameters of temperature tolerance. Neil will keep the board posted once the project has been procured.

Hazel asked Neil to briefly mention the various DfT proposals for increasing vehicle loading and trials that may be undertaken. Neil updated the group saying that there is discussion going on currently along with Heavy Transport Association (HTA) and RHA. Neil said that HTA have proposed some changes to C&U Regulations, such as increased loading of crane support vehicles. These will be considered by NH in relation to the structure design and assessment loading curves..

Arrangements to be made to invite Hideo Takano to give an update at the next meeting.

Andy Featherby said that there is a project on pressurised flood flow/scour risk at structures undertaken by Exeter University that CRT have provided a letter of support for. He also updated the group on research around the use of AI to detect cracking on structures. Neil said that he has noticed that a lot of universities are doing a lot of research on scour. Neil updated that he is aware of research on digital image correlation on cracking, but currently the software and algorithms are being honed.

Neil outlined the need for this work to be joined up, and this is something that the board can facilitate in doing.

Richard Fish gave a brief update on BOF and how at the last meeting it was opted to have a pro forma issued to collate research each of the members was undertaking or aware of. However, not many replies had been received. Richard outlined that making sure any research undertaken is joined up was important.

Action: Group to submit their research projects or known activity to BOF to make sure that there is a master list, to assist with ensuring any subsequent research proposals received are relevant and joined up.

4. COP Survey

A link to the CoP survey was circulated previously, with a couple of comments received from the group. A last check was to be conducted before it was issued to the Board and Hazel requested that it be circulated to key contacts.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/57ZTJYL>

5. BICS update

The BICS manager has changed from Emma Baskerville to Danny Croton. There is a report from BICS giving an update that is awaiting some additional information to be circulated to the Board.

Neil Loudon said that National Highways have started to run a webinar series to help get colleagues through certification. Neil will look to see if these webinars can be circulated more widely, something that was welcomed by the Board.

Hazel updated the group that she has contacted DfT on behalf of BICS – an action from last meeting.

Action: Hazel to circulate updated BICS report, including Danny Croton's email address, to the Board.

Action: Hazel to send ADEPT survey, collated by Kevin Dentith, to Lantra.

Action: Hazel/Neil to confirm if previous Welsh complaints have been addressed.

6. Bridge Guidance Update

Keith Harwood noted that there had been no further suggestions to be added to the list he circulated. Keith said he has updated the list with all available standards currently (180 documents including NR standards).

A lot of old guidance that is currently still being used and there is an issue with research/funding not facilitating these guidance updates. It was noted that CIRIA are looking at a refresh of the Bridge Detailing Guide, which was welcomed by the Board. It was suggested the BOF could review the useful CIRIA guides and collate a list that require updating and send to CIRIA.

Hazel updated the group that there was positive response for an update to BCI guidance but said to the group that there is still currently a few missing. Was part of the research submission to DfT.

Action: Keith Harwood to circulate list of guidance for any last-minute additions.

Action: Richard to add refresh of useful CIRIA guides to next BOF agenda.

7. Net Zero

Hazel updated that the Net Zero Bridges Group gave a good presentation at the Concrete Bridge Development Group conference in June. There was also a very informative IABSE Henderson Colloquium meeting held in Cambridge in July. A paper from this event will be developed and probably a presentation at IStructE later in the year by Ian Firth.

PAS 2080 consultation is now closed. Hazel asked the group if anyone from the group had responded. Only CRT had responded. There has been no update on the proposed publication date.

National Highways are having to deal with a lot of proposals currently on carbon and there is pressure to adopt new materials that are unproven for durability or adverse long-term effects. NH is aiming to produce a roadmap for carbon of different materials. Focus is not just on new structures, but the maintenance of current ones.

8. BOF Update

Minutes from last meeting had been circulated with the agenda. BOF looking to relaunch grand challenges with a Grand Challenge 0 for Net Zero at the Bridges Conference in March.

9. Surety Clauses for National Highways Schemes

Kevin outlined that this issue came through the ADEPT engineering board but asked the group if anyone had come across this in their areas. However, no one had done. Agreed to be left with ADEPT engineering board.

10. Asset Management Board Update

Keith updated that the new chair Neil Bennet was in place, and that there has been focus on their business plan and collaboration with UKRLG Boards. CIPFA Whole of Government Accounts rule of thumb tables for asset depreciation had disappeared. This was being investigated.

11. Sub-Group Updates

ADEPT

ADEPT – Keith noted that there had been several presentations, around AI use for bridges. Keith to circulate presentations to those who are interested.

SCOTS

Donald MacPherson updated that the next meeting is the 27th of October, will focus on general business and work bank prioritisation for repair and longer-term investment planning.

UKRLG

Hazel said that there will be a strategic planning meeting in October and that there had been no meetings since the last UKBB.

12. Temporary Bridges

Gary Kemp detailed that DfT have had a meeting with preferred developers, with project plan in place including a budget. Meeting to be scheduled with Justin Ward (CIHT) to discuss CIHT hosting the website for temporary bridges. Project should take around 6 weeks to develop the current website, with compatibility issues to be checked. DfT will be looking to host other guidance through CIHT. Website is around 95% developed, but discussion need to be had with CIHT around hosting this and temporary bridge suppliers' info.

13. Any Other Business (AOB),

Boundary Issues

Neil Loudon updated on the boundary issues guidance doc. Final editorials are underway and an implementation document for NH being prepared. A meeting was held with the Chief Highway Engineer who was supportive. The final guidance will be published on the CIHT website.

BridgeCat

BridgeCat – Gary Kemp said that Matt Eglinton asked if board members can provide detail on use of BridgeCat and how this can be updated and improved. Basically, is there a market for it?

Access Planning Subgroup

The group should provide a formal report to the Bridges Board. Neil will request this to be sent in advance of the next UKBB meeting. Access Planning Group (APG) to be added to the agenda.

Bridge Inspectors Manual

Bridge Inspectors Manual - Neil Loudon gave a brief presentation on the bridge inspectors manual, and the need for update that is being progressed by WSP. Neil asked the Board if they can respond to the survey that has been developed by WSP including defect images and, indeed, if these are correct. If anyone wishes to be involved, then please contact those relevant (details in presentation) at WSP. Project is currently underway, with workshops of key stakeholders being set up.

Action: Dates of meeting will be circulated by CIHT.

Action: Justin Ward to work with Richard on TP magazine articles for Rochester Bridges carbon work and Grand Challenges.

Next Meeting Date: 2nd February 2023