

15/11/2011 - Workington (Calva) Bridge restoration wins engineering national award



Pictured are, left to right, Paul Morrell (Chief Construction Advisor to the Government, who presented the award), Andy Dean (Regional Manager, Connect Roads); Keith Bowman (Contracts Director, Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering); Scott Ritchie (Site Agent, Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering); and Kevin Walsh (Contract Manager, Cumbria County Council).

An ambitious project which saw the repair and restoration of Workington's Calva bridge after the 2009 floods has scooped a national design and engineering award, beating off competition including improvements on the M25 and M4 motorways.

The historic grade II listed bridge reopened to traffic in March 2011 after a 16-month recovery operation which saw the rebirth of a structure which had initially been condemned as certain to collapse and beyond repair and then only given a 50/50 chance of being able to be repaired. No such repair had ever been attempted before.

Judges at the 3R (Refurb, Rethink, Retrofit) Awards, held in London at the Kensington Garden Hotel on November 10th, recognised the technical and logistical challenges overcome by the project team including Connect Roads and its contractor Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering.

The project was named the winner of the Transport Infrastructure category in the prestigious awards, which are sponsored by The Architects' Journal, Construction News and New Civil Engineer. The awards celebrate design, engineering and construction excellence that prolongs the active life of buildings and infrastructure.

Other projects shortlisted in the category included some very significant national projects:

- Carillion Construction, M25 Controlled Motorways J7 to J10 (Phase 2)
- Gifford, Birmingham Box Managed Motorways Phase 2
- Mott MacDonald, The M4 Agricultural Bridges Strengthening Programme

The success of the project allowed Workington (Calva) Bridge to reopen to traffic more than a year sooner than it would have taken to rebuild the bridge from scratch. It also preserved a landmark structure for the town of Workington - the bridge was built around 1840 and is recognised as one of the top 300 historic bridges in the UK.

Repairing the vital crossing over the River Derwent involved overcoming severe winter weather and considerable technical difficulties, including redesigning the piling works several times. The repaired structure is far stronger and more resilient than the original one, helping to 'future proof' the bridge for flooding events in the future.

Cllr Tony Markley, Cumbria County Council's Cabinet member responsible for highways, said:

"I'm delighted that the ambition and bravery of the team that saved Calva Bridge has been recognised nationally. It would have been far easier to walk away from this challenge, knock the bridge down and build a new one. But the engineers stuck to their guns, overcame the challenges and delivered the goods.

When you consider that the restored Calva Bridge will be living alongside the new iconic Nawies Bridge and the new Northside Bridge currently being built, we should all be very proud of our achievements in reconnecting the town of Workington and making it more resilient for the future."

Andy Dean, Regional Manager, Connect Roads, said:

"I am delighted that the project team has been recognised at these prestigious awards for their significant achievement. Despite a repair of this scale on a masonry arch bridge never being attempted in the UK before, and the chance of the bridge failing beyond repair whilst the works were being carried out, Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering took the opportunity to carry out this very complex project. Their engineering expertise resulted in this grade II listed structure and vital road bridge being saved. It would have taken at least another year of construction works to build a new bridge."

Notes for editors

1. Connect Roads works in partnership with Cumbria County Council as part of Cumbria Highways.
2. Connect Roads, a Balfour Beatty concession company, became responsible for the operation and maintenance of 150 kilometres of A-roads in west Cumbria, including the A596 across Workington (Calva) Bridge, on 1 October 2009 as part of the Carlisle Northern Development Route (CNDR) public private partnership (PPP) between Connect Roads and Cumbria County Council. Connect Roads' PPP portfolio consists of five road schemes and four street lighting projects in the UK.
3. Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering, a key business within the UK's leading civil engineering company, is currently working on many projects throughout the UK including the Forth Bridge refurbishment. It is also responsible for the design and construction of a sewage screening station, located in an isolated cove on the outskirts of Polperro. It recently completed work on the M74 extension which completed the "missing link" in Glasgow's motorway network.
4. Balfour Beatty (www.balfourbeatty.com) is a world-class infrastructure group operating in construction services, professional services, support services and infrastructure investments.

It works in partnership with its customers principally in the UK, the US, South-East Asia and the Middle-East.

Its key infrastructure markets include transportation (roads, rail and airports); social infrastructure (education, specialist healthcare, and various types of accommodation); utilities (water, gas and power transmission and generation) and commercial (offices, leisure and retail). It delivers services essential to the development, creation and care of these infrastructure assets including investment, project design, financing and management, engineering and construction, and facilities management services.

Balfour Beatty employs more than 50,000 people around the world.