

# THE COMPANY OF PROPRIETORS OF WHITCHURCH BRIDGE

(Established under the Whitchurch Bridge Acts of 1792 and 1988)

## Bridge Card Pack User Guide

Thank you for purchasing this Bridge Card Pack, which contains:

1. A uniquely-numbered Bridge Card
2. This Bridge Card Pack User Guide, with a short history of Whitchurch Bridge overleaf
3. A Bridge Card Registration Form
4. An addressed envelope which you can use to return your completed Bridge Card Registration Form

### **1. Your Bridge Card**

Your Bridge Card contains an electronic chip which gives it a unique identification which can be “read” by a Card Reader. The £20 you paid for this Pack includes a £10 returnable deposit for your Bridge Card and £10 worth of crossings at the current discounted rate. It is ready to use immediately, and your first crossing was debited when you were handed your Bridge Card Pack by the Toll Collector.

### **2. Bridge Card User Guide**

#### **2.1 Using your Bridge Card**

Drive up to the Toll Booth and stop by the Card Reader under the window sill. Hold your Bridge Card against the Card Reader, just to the right of the LED's. When the Card Reader has read your Bridge Card, it beeps and the LED's turn from red to green.

The Bridge Card computer checks the credit on your Bridge Card, and shows how many uses you have left on the Display. If you have some crossings left, the computer raises the barrier and you can drive away.

#### **2.2 Topping up your Bridge Card**

You can top up your Bridge Card when you have 40 crossings or less remaining. The top-up amount is £10 (no other amount can be accepted), which instantly credits you with £10-worth of crossings at the current discounted rate.

Simply hold your Bridge Card close to the Card Reader, hand the Toll Collector £10, and you will see the extra crossings being added to your Bridge Card on the Display.

Please check that the correct number of crossings has been added on before you drive off, as it is not easy to deal with queries or disputes later.

#### **2.3 Registration and Bridge Card deposits**

Please complete and return the enclosed Registration Form. By doing so it will enable us to:

- return your Bridge Card deposit to you should you return your Bridge Card (in good condition) for any reason
- stop your Bridge Card if you tell us it has been lost

#### **2.4 Letting others use your Bridge Card**

Your Bridge Card is not user or vehicle specific, so you may lend it to others to use and/or top up if you wish.

#### **2.5 More Information**

There is more information about Bridge Cards on our website at [www.whitchurchbridge.com](http://www.whitchurchbridge.com). You may also write to us at the address below, or email us at [secretary@whitchurchbridge.com](mailto:secretary@whitchurchbridge.com).

Amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016

## History of Whitchurch Bridge

Our website at [www.whitchurchbridge.com](http://www.whitchurchbridge.com) contains information about The Company of Proprietors of Whitchurch Bridge (commonly known as The Whitchurch Bridge Company).

For those who do not have access to the internet, some extracts from our history are reproduced below:

“The Company of Proprietors of Whitchurch Bridge arose from an idea by Robert Micklem, who with Samuel Gardiner and Vanderstegen, father and son, promoted the Act of Parliament in 1792 for the purpose of building a bridge at or near the point of the existing ferry over the river Thames, from Whitchurch in the county of Oxford to the opposite shore, in the parish of Pangbourne, in the county of Berkshire. The original proprietors grew to ten in number by the time the Act was passed to take over the ferry rights and to build at their own costs "a good and substantial bridge" which was described as being "of great utility and advantage to the public". In return for their investment the Proprietors were given the right to charge tolls.

“The traffic volume has considerably increased over the years and the Bridge still remains "of great utility to the public".

“The Company of Proprietors is required by this Act to repair and to re-build the bridge "such that at all times passage was provided for travellers, cattle and carriages". The Bridge is considered under the Act to be extra-parochial, thus not assessable for rates, taxes or duties, and not considered a county bridge subject the counties of Oxfordshire or Berkshire. This was at a time when the Turnpike system was common throughout the country. However, in more recent times laws have been introduced which affect such undertakings as bridges, namely the Transport Charges etc. (Misc Provisions) Act 1954 which gave the Minister of Transport power to regulate tolls etc.

“The first bridge was ..... rather steep, supported on about twenty piers, and just wide enough to take a carriage and is entirely constructed of wood. The balustrade was a sort of two-railed fence, the posts of which bulged out below, probably for elegance or strength, and were fixed to the ends of the transverse beams which supported the roadway. There was an upright ornament on each side near the middle.

“The second wooden bridge was built late 1852 and completed in spring 1853 and was similar to the earlier one but was less steep and had only half the number of piers, the balustrade was perpendicular with a criss cross fence somewhat like the present one but simpler, and with no central ornaments. There was a wide gate across the road from the toll-house porch door. When this bridge showed signs of deterioration in 1902 the present iron bridge was built. Again a ferry was operated during re-building using the same route as 49 years ago.

“The third was designed by Joseph Morris and built by the Cleveland Bridge and Engineering Company Ltd. Construction was started in late 1901 and finished in early 1902. It is gently arched and consists of 4 spans with riveted lattice girders along the 2 outer edges; these act as the main load bearing members and also as parapets. The roadway and footway were supported on transverse beams and steel jack arches. The main piers were pairs of vertical steel columns beneath the lattice girders, and each pair was braced by diagonal steelwork (strengthened in 1921).

The current Bridge was a complete reconstruction in 2013 - 2014, including new piles and load bearing girders under the road. The original lattice girders, piers and pier capitals have been retained as key visual elements, but they do not carry and load. It was designed by Atkins and built by Balfour Beatty.

“The Toll House dates back to 1792 and is built close to the road so that tolls could be collected from the porch door, which at that time faced the road. As recently as 1977 a 'front door' was added to the north facing wall. Both the Toll House and the Bridge itself are designated as Listed Buildings.”

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## Bridge Card Registration Form

1. Please enter the last 5 digits of your Bridge Card Number here: **227** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
(The fifth digit is 4 or 5)

2. Please enter your details here:

Purchaser's name .....

Purchaser's address .....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Contact Details  
(phone or email) .....

*This Form will be securely stored by the Whitchurch Bridge Company, and the information on this Form will be transferred to and stored in a secure computer database.*

*The Whitchurch Bridge Company is registered under the Data Protection Act. We will not pass or disclose information on any registered user, or his/her Bridge Card usage, to any third party for marketing or any other purposes.*

*The Whitchurch Bridge Company will use the information on this Form and in the secure database only for:*

- validating refunds of Bridge Card deposits for Bridge Cards returned in good condition*
- compiling statistical data on Bridge usage.*

Please return this Form by email to [secretary@whitchurchbridge.com](mailto:secretary@whitchurchbridge.com) , or to the Toll Booth or the Company's Registered Office at the address below.

Amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016