

# THE WHITCHURCH BRIDGE COMPANY

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The purpose of the Company is set out in The Whitchurch Bridge Act of 1792, as amended by The Whitchurch Bridge Act of 1988. In return for building at the Proprietors' own cost "a good and substantial bridge" which was described as being "of great utility and advantage to the public", the Proprietors were given the right to charge tolls.

The Whitchurch Bridge Company recognises

- Its duties under its Acts, and in particular to keep the Bridge "forever in good and sufficient repair".
- The expectation of Bridge users and other stakeholders that it will operate in an efficient, ethical and responsible manner.
- The important role of its Bridge as a utility for the community.

The Whitchurch Bridge Company therefore adopts the following policies governing its operations:

### Policy Framework

- The Company's policies and operations will at all times be managed within the context of its governing Acts of Parliament – i.e. the Whitchurch Bridge Acts of 1792 and 1988 and the Transport Charges (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1954.
- The Company will operate on a policy of compliance with all other relevant standards and legislation, including Health and Safety, Roads and Transport, Planning and Environment, etc.
- The Company's sole mission is to maintain a bridge crossing over the River Thames between Whitchurch and Pangbourne, for the "great utility and advantage to the public".

### Safety Management

- The Company ensures that the Bridge is inspected and maintained in accordance with all relevant highway and engineering standards.
- The Company provides safe working conditions for its employees, and has zero tolerance of verbal or physical abuse towards its employees.
- The Company provides safe passage for all Bridge users.
- The Company supports and assists the Police in any way it can in the investigation of criminal acts.

### Communications and Community Involvement

- The Company operates a policy of open communication with all stakeholders, and will publish all relevant and appropriate information for the public on the Company website.
- The Company will fully engage with, and respond to, the Bridge User Group which Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council is establishing.
- The Company recognises that the Bridge is a prominent feature of the local community, both as a structure and a privately-owned transport infrastructure business.

Registered in England and Wales No. ZC000184

Registered Office: The Toll House, Whitchurch Bridge, Pangbourne, Reading RG8 7DF

Company Secretary: G R Weir BSc CEng MIMechE Website: [www.whitchurchbridge.com](http://www.whitchurchbridge.com)

- The Company supports community organisations financially and by providing promotional space for local events and activities.
- The Company is an employer of 16 local residents – 2 as Directors, 1 as Bridge Manager, and 13 as part-time Toll collectors.

### **Environmental Protection**

- The Company values the status of the Bridge as a Grade II listed structure.
- The Company recognises the environmentally-sensitive position of the Bridge over the River Thames, and uses only environmentally-friendly products for Bridge maintenance, cleaning and other purposes.
- The Company enforces the 7.5 tonnes mgw environmental weight limit on the Bridge to deter heavy vehicles from passing through Whitchurch-on-Thames.
- The Company monitors and minimises energy usage.

### **Toll Collection**

- Tolls may be collected from all vehicles, but are not currently collected from motorcycles, bicycles, emergency vehicles and disabled drivers who have registered with the Company. Toll opening hours will be at the sole discretion of the Company. At all times outside these hours vehicles may cross without charge, but must comply with all other constraints – eg. Environmental weight limits, speed limits etc.
- The Company will operate a policy of discounted tolls for regular users. It has given an undertaking that the discounted toll will not exceed 45p unless and until a Toll Application is submitted and approved.
- The Company will not operate toll charging policies which favour a particular geographic location.

### **Funds Management**

- The Company will at all times set aside appropriate sums from operating income for the repair and replacement of the Bridge and its appurtenances. Such sums, once set aside, cannot be distributed to shareholders.
- The Company will seek to provide a reasonable return on investment to its shareholders, as defined in the Acts, provided that any dividends must be paid prudently out of normal operating income.

### **Employment Rights and Opportunities**

- The Company offers flexible employment opportunities for local people irrespective of age, gender and ethnic group.
- The Company adheres to all employment legislation including minimum pay rates, holiday pay entitlements and grievance/discipline procedures.
- The Company offers promotion opportunities on the basis of aptitude and ability.

*Amended 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015*

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