

New partnership announced to help secure the future of Brunel's swing bridge in Bristol

10 September 2019 - - The long-term future of Brunel's swing bridge – the Grade II* Listed bridge at the entrance to Bristol docks – has taken a step forward thanks to a new partnership that will build upon the valuable work being undertaken by volunteers working with the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (AIBT), supported by the Bristol Industrial Archaeology Society and the Clifton and Hotwells Improvements Society.

The AIBT has taken the lead in caring for Brunel's first wrought iron opening bridge single-handedly in recent years. Now, a new partnership between AIBT and the SS Great Britain Trust will explore ambitions for the bridge's further conservation and restoration to full working order; and whether a long-term home can be found.

Matthew Tanner, Chief Executive of the SS Great Britain Trust said:

“The Trust is delighted to announce this partnership with AIBT. This is a great opportunity to support the invaluable commitment of AIBT volunteers, without whose work we would not have a bridge to save. The Trust brings additional conservation expertise and – as a museum and heritage charity which preserves Brunel's legacy and cares for an accredited national collection – wider visibility and support.”

“First steps in this new partnership will explore, in conjunction with key stakeholders Bristol City Council and Historic England, options for its viable, long-term preservation, with a new study investigating whether an eventual home for the bridge could see it serve as a crossing over the entrance of the Albion Dry Dock, beside the *SS Great Britain*. The careful relocation would form part of a major capital development by the SS Great Britain Trust, and a collaboration with AIBT to move, preserve and restore operation to the bridge. With this new partnership, we are bringing all the right people together to save Brunel's swing bridge and give it the visibility it deserves as a significant engineering marvel.”

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About the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (AIBT)

The Avon Industrial Buildings Trust is a charity that has been working on the preservation of the area's industrial infrastructure since 1980. It normally works with partners, such as local councils and other heritage organisations, on its projects, and aims to hand over the long term running of the sites to local groups. Past projects include the restoration of the Midford Aqueduct; and its current ones include the conservation of the buildings at the Brandy

Bottom Colliery near Pucklechurch (a Scheduled Ancient Monument), and the restoration of Brunel's Grade II*-listed swing bridge at the entrance to Bristol docks, aka "BoB" (Brunel's other bridge).

About the SS Great Britain Trust

The SS Great Britain Trust is the charity that manages and maintains Brunel's SS Great Britain.

Brunel's SS Great Britain is Bristol's number one visitor attraction (TripAdvisor 2019). It is home to the world's first great ocean liner, the *SS Great Britain*, Being Brunel, and the Brunel Institute, which houses one of the world's finest maritime and Brunel collections.

Brunel's SS Great Britain has won over 30 major awards and was recently presented with the Portimão Museum Prize – Europe's Most Welcoming Museum 2019 – by the European Museum of the Year Awards in May 2019.

For further information, please contact:

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