

Buckingham's London Road Bridge

Buckingham's London Road Bridge has been the main route into the town for more than 200 years and was looking its age. Built in 1805 at the expense of George, 1st Marquess of Buckingham to create a pleasant route for the future King George IV on his way to a party at the Marquess's home at Stowe, the bridge was badly in need of cleaning and repair.

Although Buckingham has grown a lot since the days of the Marquess, the Long Bridge, as it was known, is still the main route into the centre of the town. In 1805 it replaced a narrow stone bridge, the Sheriff's Bridge next to the Woolpack pub, that had been the main river crossing for many years but was in a bad state of dereliction and likely to fall down. The Marquess certainly did not want that to happen while his friend George was crossing the river.

While the state of the present bridge was nowhere near as bad as that, it did not present a particularly enticing first view to people coming into the town. Many of the coping stones on the top of the bridge were damaged, it was covered in places by vegetation and many years of traffic and other pollution had left it looking very grimy indeed. In addition, the Marquess's coat of arms on the side of the bridge had been seriously vandalised several years ago and was crying out for repair.



The Buckingham Society recognised the importance of the bridge to the history of the town and also the fact that it is still the main entrance into the town centre. And while the bridge serves a very obvious and practical purpose, it is also an important historical monument as shown by the fact that it is a Grade II listed structure, a rare accolade for a bridge.

Recognising the importance of the bridge, the Buckingham Society has for some time sought to get it cleaned and restored. Eventually, with the help of Councillor Warren Whyte, we were able to convince Buckinghamshire County Council's Bridges Team to undertake the work.

This was completed in March 2016 and now, thanks to the fine work of the craftsmen and women who did the work, the bridge is back to something like its original state. An excellent restoration of this fine edifice.



In view of its importance to the town, the Society sought to have the bridge