

# Hurrah for the Forth Bridge!



The World Heritage Committee has officially announced today in Bonn that The Forth Bridge has been inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The world-famous bridge is Scotland's sixth World Heritage site, joining Edinburgh Old and New Towns, the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, New Lanark, the Antonine Wall and St Kilda.

The bid to have the bridge recognised was put forward by the UK government following a joint project with the Scottish Government, partnering with Network Rail, Transport Scotland and Historic Scotland.

The World Heritage Committee have praised the bridge as 'a masterpiece of creative genius because of its distinctive industrial aesthetic' and 'an extraordinary and impressive milestone in the evolution of bridge design and construction'.

The Forth Bridge is still the world's second longest single cantilever span and was first opened in 1890, clearing the way for a fast rail link between the East of Scotland, Edinburgh and London. 125 years on, the bridge remains an important part of Britain's rail infrastructure carrying thousands of passengers each day.

When it was constructed it was one of the most ambitious projects of its kind ever attempted, and at its peak, more than 4,500 men were employed building it, with construction taking eight years to complete.

The bid for World Heritage Status was taken forward by the Forth Bridges Forum, established by the Scottish Government to promote the three Forth Bridges.

Welcoming UNESCO's decision to inscribe the bridge, First

Minister Nicola Sturgeon said:

“The Forth Bridge is known as one of the industrial wonders of the world, and it is fitting it has been recognised as one of Scotland’s six World Heritage Sites. I congratulate everyone involved in this bid.

“The Forth Bridge’s Inscription as a World Heritage Site is an honour, and true recognition of the Bridge’s unique place in Scotland’s history.

“Spanning two and a half kilometres and comprising 53,000 tonnes of mild steel, the Forth Bridge is a monument to innovative industry and engineering. Its giant double-cantilever towers, with their powerful yet graceful design, are recognised the world over.

“The Forth Bridge is an outstanding example of Scotland’s built heritage and its endurance is testament not only to the ingenuity of those who designed and built it but also to the generations of painters, engineers and maintenance crews who have looked after it through the years.

“The Scottish Government, its agencies, individuals and organisations across the country work together to ensure our diverse historic environment – from the industrial heritage of the Forth Bridge and New Lanark to the Neolithic Heart of Orkney – is understood, valued, cared for and protected now, and for future generations.”

City of Edinburgh Council Leader Andrew Burns said: “I’m delighted that the Forth Bridge has been accepted by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. It’s an internationally recognised symbol of the achievements of late 19th Century engineering –

and remains one of the best known bridges in world. Having a second World Heritage Site within our city boundaries is a real coup for Edinburgh – and, indeed, for Scotland.”