

# **North Bridge – work may finish by this winter**

**The contractor, Balfour Beatty, continues to work on the multi million pound project to refurbish North Bridge on behalf of The City of Edinburgh Council.**

The main deck has reopened to two way traffic and pedestrian access has also been maintained throughout the project.

Two and a half years ago an update on progress on the major project reported that it had been initiated as a response to cast iron, concrete and masonry falling onto the railway lines and the street below.

Although emergency works were undertaken, a temporary netting was then placed around large sections for safety reasons. The original works began in 2018 under a £22.290million contract. By 2022 the budget had crept up to £62.182million and the completion date was said to be June 2025 (although on the council website that has lapsed to “winter 2025”).

It became clear to contractors as the work progressed that more repairs and work was required. The paint on the bridge designed and constructed by Sir William Arrol, who created Forth Bridge and Tower Bridge, has been grit blasted and repainted – a job which has not been done since 1933. The memorial to the King’s Own Scottish Borderers has been restored and every aspect of the bridge has been refurbished in some way.

There are 6,300 steel sections under the bridge many of which were corroded, but now behind the extensive scaffolding have been repaired or replaced.

The bridge is a vital link and although the work has been more difficult and challenging than anticipated the council say the 19th century structure will be fit for the 21st century. And it is the [most likely route](#) and a key part of the north-south extension to the tram route which might eventually run from Granton to Bioquarter. The consultation on at least a part of the [proposed tram extension](#) will begin at the end of the summer holidays, having been delayed from its original date last year.

It was one of the first projects which the Transport Convener visited when he took up his position in September last year.

Transport and Environment Convener, Cllr Stephen Jenkinson said: "The refurbishment of the cast iron façade is one of the key elements of the North Bridge project. These images show the hand finished coating of the façade and give a glimpse into the level of skill and complexity required for this type of work.

"We're now in the final phase of the project and, while I acknowledge that it's taken longer than we first anticipated, we're preserving this majestic and hugely complex structure for future generations, and we owe it to them to make sure the job is completed to a high standard."

The decorative facings are the latest parts which have been receiving attention from Balfour Beatty who provided the images below.













