



Meet Our Trustees



Christopher Arthur Booy OBE BSc DEng (honoris causa) FRICS FFB, Chairman

Chris began his career in Quantity Surveying. A renowned figure in the construction industry, he built the Symonds Group into one of the most successful construction consultancy businesses in the UK, selling it to the Capita Group in early 2004. Chris was awarded the OBE for services to the Ministry of Defense in 1996. He is currently Chairman of Bristol Rugby Club, a Trustee of the Bristol Zoological Society and a member of the Society of Merchant Venturers and has done substantial terms as a governor of the University of the West of England and a Trustee of SS Great Britain. He is also involved in a number of charitable organisations and supports a variety of community projects.

"I believe the Bridge to be an important and iconic symbol, both at home and overseas, of what can be achieved through innovation and perseverance. Its ongoing preservation and development is of the utmost importance, particularly as one of the great City of Bristol's key tourism destinations. I am pleased and proud to continue my support of the Bridge, aided by some excellent Trustees, Employees and loyal Volunteers."



David Walker BSc (Hons) C.Eng FCIBSE MinstE (TPI), Vice-Chairman

Born and educated in Bristol, David gained an Honours Degree in Building Engineering Services from Bath University. His entire working career of 37 years was spent with a national firm of consulting engineers, Hoare Lea and Partners, where he rose to the position of Senior Partner. A highlight of his career was working as part of a design team with extensive computer modelling to produce fully integrated, energy efficient buildings, such as the Bristol Children's Hospital and the Faculty of Engineering for Bristol University. In the latter years of his career, David managed a team of talented engineers who sought to be at the leading edge of building design. He also established a professionally recognized graduate training scheme.

"As a proud Bristolian and Engineer, I have a very personal sense of pride and responsibility for contributing towards the preservation of The Iconic Symbol of Bristol and helping to raise the profile of the Bridge nationally and in the local community. I particularly enjoy the engineering challenges generated by the preservation requirements of such an historic engineering masterpiece."



Margaret Cooke BSc (Hons) CEng MIStructE Conservation Accredited Engineer

Margaret started her career as a structural and civil engineer in London working for Alan Baxter and Price and Myers, becoming a Director with Integral Engineering Design in Bath in 2002. On the Conservation Accreditation Register of Engineers (CARE), Margaret has considerable experience of working on projects within sensitive historic areas and she thrives on the particular design challenges of working on projects involving listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Recent projects include repairing the roof at Dyrham Park with the National Trust and major repairs at Middleport Pottery in Stoke on Trent. Margaret is the structural engineer for Wells Cathedral.

“All my work on historic structures is a lesson in the importance of craftsmanship. The men and women who built the bridge did not have the knowledge of materials science that we have now, but they had a feel and understanding that is often lost on modern building sites. The fabulous team who run, look after and love this bridge now are an extension of that original team - conserving not just the fabric but the ethos of the bridge for the next generation.”



Will Mather MA, FIA

After a degree in Mathematics, Will qualified as an actuary and then spent most of his career being responsible for the investments of a large pension fund. He retired from this role in 2011 but retains a keen interest in business, economics and the investment markets. Will was recruited as a Trustee in 2007 and since then has chaired the Investment Committee. This is responsible, acting through professional managers, for looking after the Trust's reserve fund the main purpose of which is to provide for any large and unexpected repair and maintenance bills on the Bridge.

“My parents moved to Bristol when I was 5 and we lived on the edge of the gorge which had a view of the Bridge. So I have grown up with the image of the Bridge, remembering in particular the excitement when it was first illuminated for the centenary in 1964! I was therefore thrilled to become a Trustee and to be able to help preserve this wonderful structure for generations to come. It is rare that a really important piece of architectural heritage is also a key part of a city's transport system: therein lies the challenge for the management team.”



Ann Metherall BSc CEng FICE

Ann is a Partner at Burges Salmon and part of its Dispute Resolution team. She also heads its Health and Safety practice. For 11 years prior to her legal career she worked as a Civil Engineer in the rail industry. Ann lives in Bristol and regularly uses the Bridge to get to Leigh Woods and Ashton Court to run and mountain bike.

"It is a great privilege to be a Trustee of the Clifton Suspension Bridge and to be part of the team that provides a key part of Bristol's transport communications whilst preserving a fascinating and beautiful structure."



Professor Colin Taylor BSc PhD CEng FICE

Colin is Professor of Earthquake Engineering in the Department of Civil Engineering, University of Bristol. At the age of 8 he visited the Forth Road Bridge whilst it was under construction in the early 1960s. Awed by the scale of it and the bustle of activity, he marvelled: How could people build something so elegant across such a vast expanse of water? Following this childhood inspiration, he studied engineering at Leeds University, before joining the consulting engineers, Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners. They sponsored Colin on a PhD at Bristol to look at the design of dams for earthquakes, including the 120m high Victoria Dam in Sri Lanka. Settling in Bristol, Colin became a lecturer at the University in 1983, a Professor in 2004 and was Head of Department for 5 years from 2006. His research and practice has covered dams, long span bridges, nuclear power plants, utilities, buildings, geotechnical engineering and the design of major research laboratories around the world, including the unique earthquake shaking table in Bristol.

"I hope that young people will be inspired by Clifton Suspension Bridge as I was by the Forth Road Bridge. The Bridge is still at the cutting edge of technology in that it is one of the first to reach its age – we still have a lot to learn about it. Bristol University is working with the Trust using the bridge as a national research and teaching test bed as part of the UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure and Cities initiative. This £138 million research programme will enable us to learn how to manage the performance of infrastructure into the far future."



Ian Jenkins BSc (Hons), BArch (Hons) Bath, RIBA, ARB, SPAB

Director & Architect, AWW inspired environments

Ian is a Chartered Architect with 34 years' experience. As an equity shareholder and owner in AWW, he has been responsible for the design, planning and building of office, education, mixed use and charitable buildings ranging in value from £0.25m to £50m. He has a keen interest in protecting the heritage structures that have shaped our city of Bristol and its landscape to ensure that they live on into the future.

"It is a privilege to be involved with the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Brunel, a man who needed such vision and belief to overcome huge hurdles that threatened to stop the creation of his landmarks has always inspired me."



Dr Steve Denton MA PhD FEng, FICE, FStructE

Steve Denton is Head of Civil, Bridge and Ground Engineering at WSP, leading a unit of over 600 staff in UK, and is a Visiting Professor at the University of Bath. His experience spans many facets of engineering and strategic consultancy, research and construction. In addition to his business and project leadership responsibilities, he retains a high degree of technical involvement in projects. He has particular expertise in the development of Standards, R&D in numerous fields of structural engineering and the development of refined analysis and assessment techniques. Steve sits on numerous national and international committees and steering groups. He is the Chairman of CEN/TC 250, the committee with overall responsibility for the rules for structural and geotechnical design used across Europe.

"As a bridge engineer, born and brought up in Bristol, it is huge honour to be a Trustee for Clifton Suspension Bridge. Not only does the bridge serve an important transport function, it is probably the most iconic structure in Bristol and is recognised around the world. As a Trustee I have been able to learn more about the Bridge and the engineering challenges of maintaining it in perpetuity – and share some of my experience to help shape the decisions taken to look after this fantastic structure."



John Benson BSc MRICS

John is Chartered Surveyor and Partner of Alder King LLP and has been active in the commercial property investment and development market for 30 years. He is a former Senior Partner of Alder King LLP and Past President of Bristol Property Agents Association. He has been a Trustee since 2013 and Chairs the Property Committee and sits on the Investment Committee.

"It is great privilege to be part of the diverse group of Trustees who are the current custodians of one of Bristol's and Brunel's most iconic structures, which is recognised the world over."



Valerie Harland MInstF

Valerie is a professional fundraiser with over 30 years' voluntary sector experience. She started her career in London, working for national charities including the NSPCC and Mind. In 2001 she moved to New Zealand, joining an international fundraising consultancy and working on projects such as capital campaigns for clients including Ronald McDonald House Auckland. Valerie came to Bristol in 2007, working on interim roles for national charities including TreeAid and Women's Aid before taking up her current role as Head of Development at Bristol Culture in 2011.

"I first walked across Clifton Suspension Bridge in the mid-1980s, while visiting a friend. I didn't know much about the Bridge, but what I did know - from the moment I stood and looked out at the vastness of the Avon Gorge - was that one day Bristol would become my home. Today, having lived here for over a decade and discovered much of the city's history, I realise how fundamental the story of the Bridge is to every Bristolian's understanding of their city. As a Trustee I'm hoping that I will use the knowledge that I gain about the Bridge to inspire young people to get involved in engineering in whatever form."



Representative Trustee for North Somerset Council:



Councillor Charles Cave

Representative Trustee for Bristol City Council:



Councillor Tom Brook MEng (Hons) AMIMechE

Tom is a Bristol City Councillor, representing the ward of Bishopston & Ashley Down. He was first elected in 2016, and in that time has served on Scrutiny and Development Control committees. He is currently the Vice Chair of the Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission. Tom's professional background is in mechanical engineering consultancy, within the low carbon electricity generation sector.

"The Clifton Suspension Bridge is one of, if not the, symbols of Bristol. When I first came to live here I was struck by its scale and elegance, something which still strikes me whenever I pass over it, be it to visit Ashton Court or on the way into Somerset. As an adopted Bristolian, and as an engineer, it is a privilege to be able to serve as a Trustee to help preserve and maintain this iconic structure into the future."