

# Tintagel Castle Bridge and Landscape Project



The ambition of the project was to re-interpret the site in a new, exciting and imaginative way and the concept of a new bridge relinking a divided landscape perfectly answered this brief. However, it was clear from the start that the project had to deliver more than a structure; the bridge would have to be of the highest design quality and imagination in order to harmonise with the extraordinary setting and landscape of Tintagel.

- **Date of completion: Aug 2019**
- **Cost: £5m**
- **Location: Tintagel, Cornwall**

## Challenges and solutions

Tintagel Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Special Area of Conservation. Consequently, the development, design and delivery of the project required nearly six years of meticulous planning to ensure the project would not impact the site. Archaeological assessment and careful geotechnical design ensured the foundations of the bridge had no archaeological impact. The new footpath network was designed to overlay existing trampled paths minimising the loss of protected grassland and nationally scarce plants, while also providing long term protection to the fragile archaeology below.

The engineering of the bridge was pushed to the limit to create an extremely lightweight and slender design that sits in the landscape with minimal landscape and visual impact. The bridge was constructed off-site and installed with the use of an innovative cable crane. The design is relatively simple – two cantilevers which reach out from each abutment and don't quite meet in the middle. The central gap serves two functions; technically it allows each bridge half to expand and contract; and poetically it creates a threshold between the mainland and the island.



## Benefits and achievements

Since opening the outcomes for the project are all positive and are confirmed by independent research. A third of visitors cited the new bridge as the reason for their visit; Tintagel Castle became the English Heritage site with highest 'Visitor Experience Score'; more visitors rated the site as excellent for the different ways the story of the site is told; and over 70% of visitors believe the site offers 'a unique experience compared to other attractions'.

The project has improved the access to and understanding of Tintagel Castle, opening up the site to more people. As one of Cornwall's most popular visitor attractions, this project will bring more people to the north of Cornwall providing economic benefit to the wider community.

In addition, English Heritage offers free education visits and as part of English Heritage's Myths and Legends programme last year, children from the nearby Camelford Primary School worked with a professional writer over several sessions, both at the castle and in school.



## Fascinating facts

- The bridge replaces a land bridge that collapsed into the sea over 500 years ago.
- Weighing just 50 tonnes, the structure is extremely lightweight.
- The 40mm gap in the middle of the bridge represents the transition from the mainland to the island and the present to past.

## People who made it happen:

- Senior National Project Manager: English Heritage
- Lead Consultant/Engineer: Ney & Partners
- Lead Consultant/Architect: William Matthews Associates
- Quantity Surveyor: Faithful & Gould
- Landscape Architect: Nicholas Pearson Associates

## More about this project:

[english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/tintagel-castle/tintagel-bridge/](https://english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/tintagel-castle/tintagel-bridge/)