

NEW INFORMATION BOARDS TELL THE STORY OF OXFORD'S HISTORIC GASWORKS PIPE BRIDGE

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Following the recent restoration of the gasworks pipe bridge in St Ebbe's, Oxford City Council has put up two new history information boards which tell the fascinating story of the bridge itself and of the gasworks which it was once part of.

The bridge was built in 1927 to connect the two parts of Oxford's gasworks, which occupied 19 acres either side of the Thames south-west of the city. The bridge allowed workers to cross between the North Works and the newly-built South Works. It also carried two large gas pipes, and hence it became known as 'the pipe bridge'.

Local historian Liz Woolley, who carried out the research for the information boards, said: "The gasworks were a major industrial site, very close to housing in St Ebbe's and Grandpont, and the noise and the pungent smell of gas were inescapable features of everyday life for residents here. But there were compensations: it was a particularly good spot for fishing, as pipes from the gasworks' cooling condensers discharged hot water into the river, and fish congregated around these warmer spots!"

The Oxford gasworks closed in the 1960s and the bridge was made into a public footbridge in the early 1970s. It is still an important crossing point, used daily by Friars Wharf families going to St Ebbe's School, and by Grandpont residents going into town.

City Councillor for Hinksey Park Ward, Anna Railton, said: "This bridge, and the former railway bridge further along the river, are all that's left of the once extensive gasworks site, and they're an important reminder of Oxford's industrial past. We wanted to highlight that with these illustrated information boards, which we hope will be of interest to both local residents and to visitors using the Thames towpath."

Both bridges are on the [City Council's Heritage Asset Register](#).

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For further information on the history of Oxford's gasworks see the [South Oxford History website](#).

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