

Press release

07 1421

The Millennium Bridge Opens

The Millennium Bridge officially opens to the public on Saturday 10 June 2000 with a sponsored walk in aid of Save the Children beginning at 9 am. Members of the public not taking part in the walk will have access to the bridge from 12 noon. The public opening follows Her Majesty The Queen's inauguration of the bridge, which took place after a service in St Paul's Cathedral on 9 May 2000.

The new footbridge is the capital's first dedicated pedestrian bridge and the first new river crossing in central London for more than 100 years, since the opening of Tower Bridge in 1894. It links St Paul's Cathedral and the City of London on the north bank with the new Tate Modern and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in Southwark on the south.

The Millennium Bridge is designed as a result of a unique collaboration between the architect, Lord Foster, Foster and Partners, the leading British sculptor, Sir Anthony Caro, and the engineers, Arup. The structure with its lateral, rather than vertical, suspension system is reliant on the latest design technology. The lack of vertical supports gives the bridge a dramatic appearance, and in combination with the steel structure, stainless steel handrails and aluminium decking, the effect is of a fine metal ribbon by day, and a blade of light by night.

A supremely elegant landmark for London and a milestone in 21st century engineering, the Millennium Bridge will offer those who cross it the opportunity to enjoy spectacular new views of London, undisturbed by traffic and pollution. It is estimated that 4 million people each year will walk across the bridge, including those who live and work in the surrounding area, as well as tourists and visitors.

The bridge has received 7.1m funding from The Millennium Commission, and is also generously funded by the Corporation of London through the Bridge House Estates Trust, HSBC, the Cross River Partnership and a number of private donors. Southwark Council has managed its construction in association with the Millennium Bridge Trust.

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