Clifton Suspension Bridge to go ‘card only’

Friday 31 March, 2023

Clifton Suspension Bridge is taking the next step forward in its journey to embrace the latest technology by introducing card only payments from July 2023.

The toll will remain at £1 which going forward can be paid by debit or credit card, bridge card or by Samsung, Google or Apple Pay.

Since Covid there has been a reduction in cash payments. In 2022 almost 90% of bridge users paid the toll using either contactless or a bridge card, with just over 10% of bridge users paying by cash. This, coupled with the end of the current tolling contract, reduced support for the maintenance of coin baskets and the phasing out of coin sorters has led to the decision to go card only.

Trish Johnson, Bridge Master, said: “Bridge users are increasingly preferring to pay by card. It’s quicker for the driver, and if using a bridge card, saves them money.

“The change to card only will also make our processes more efficient by removing cash and reducing the amount of downtime for maintenance of what is now outdated machinery.

If users are unable to pay by card, a bridge card can be purchased from Clifton Suspension Bridge at www.cliftonbridge.org.uk/crossing-the-bridge/bridge-cards. This can be topped up online or by phone.

The toll payment collected by Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust, custodians of the iconic 160 year-old iron bridge, is the sole source of income used to maintain the structure in perpetuity. The Trust receives no other funding and over the last few years a major programme of repairs and maintenance to the bridge have been required to make sure it remains fit for the future. This has included new toll booths, refurbishment of the hangers that carry the deck, and strengthening works to the rock face supporting the Clifton Tower.

The Trust will soon need to carry out a full repaint of the chains and parapets – and in conjunction with this proposals for a new, sustainable lighting system are currently being considered by Bristol City and North Somerset Councils.

Trish concluded: “Every year, over 2.5 million cars and motorbikes cross Clifton Suspension Bridge and some of these use the bridge every day. Therefore, it is important that we invest in the bridge to make it is an easy and efficient way to cross the River Avon and maintain it as a key part of the Bristol transport network.”

More information, including frequently asked questions, can be found on the website at www.cliftonbridge.org.uk/crossing-the-bridge

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