

M3 Lagan Bridge In Belfast, Bearing Replacement

The M3 Lagan Bridge is one of Belfast's busiest transport arteries carrying around 90,000 vehicles daily across the River Lagan. When the original bridge bearings began to fail, urgent replacement was essential to safeguard the structure's integrity and extend its service life. Following on from our previous successful scope of works, EKSPAN were appointed to deliver the replacement of eight critical bearings – executed across two tightly controlled weekend blockades to minimise disruption in the heart of Belfast city centre.

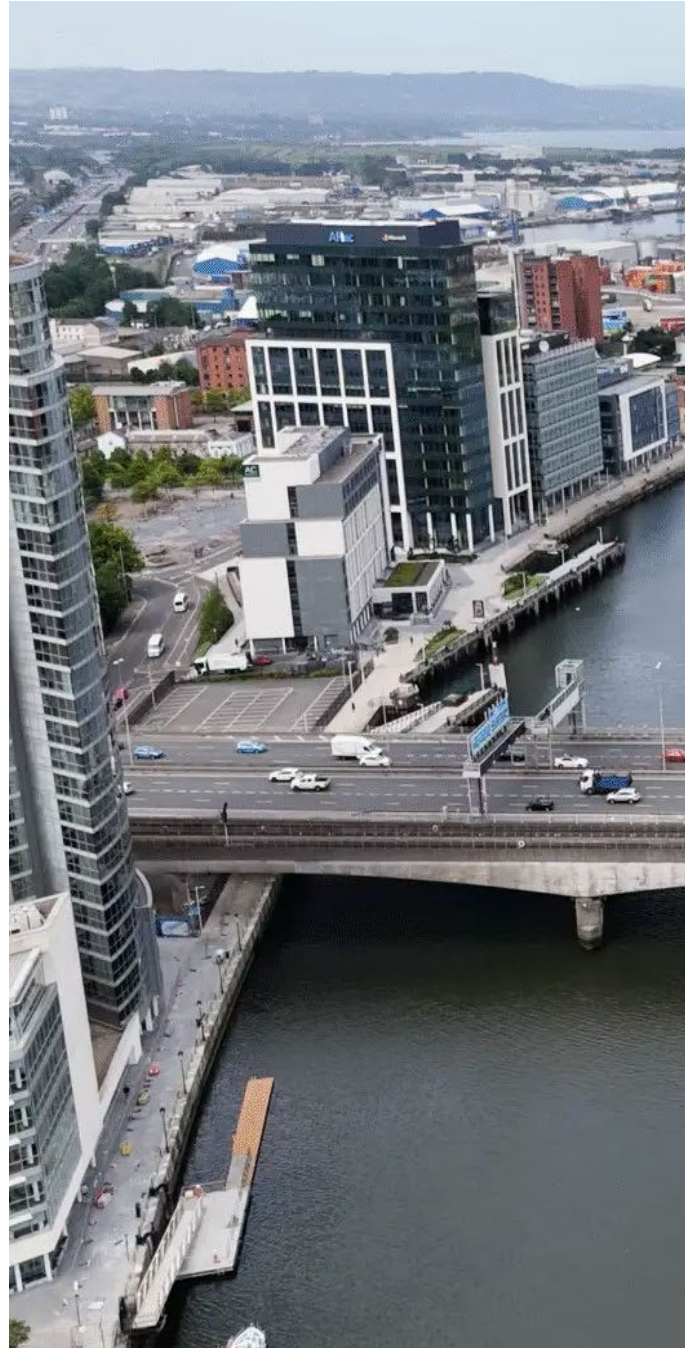
WHAT WE DELIVERED

Our completed scope of works included:

- Controlled removal of failed bearing units under heavy-lift operations
- Supply and installation of new permanent bridge bearings
- Precision alignment to strict tolerances for correct load transfer and articulation
- Full delivery under weekend blockade conditions, coordinating plant, lifting, and logistics around city-centre constraints
- Replacement of defective reinforcement
- Concrete repairs

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- All eight bearing replacements delivered within restricted weekend blockades
- Works executed safely in a live city-centre environment
- Permanent bearings engineered for resilience and long-term bridge performance
- Programme delivered on time, with 100% completion achieved on 22/08/2025
- Installation completed to millimetre precision, ensuring correct load transfer and function



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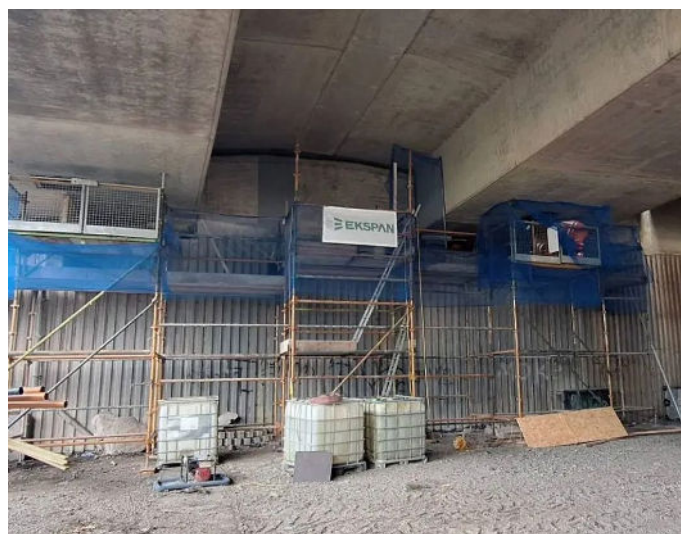
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WHY BRIDGE BEARINGS MATTER

Bridge bearings are critical components in any structure – transferring loads from the deck into the substructure while accommodating movement, rotation, and vibration. Without effective bearings, bridges face accelerated deterioration, uneven load distribution, and compromised safety. EKSPAN design, manufacture, and install a full suite of bearing solutions to meet every structural demand, including:

- **Structural Bearings** – EN1337 Compliant
- **Structural Bearings** – BS5400 Compliant
- **Industrial Bearings** – Bespoke Bearings

Every system is engineered for long-term durability, reduced maintenance, and improved whole-life asset performance.



WHAT THE INDUSTRY SAID

This project was widely reported in the media, underlining its importance to Belfast's transport network: BBC News and ITV News both covered the scheme, noting its significance for a bridge used by tens of thousands daily.

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) commented:

"For safety reasons, the work cannot just be undertaken overnight as the bridge has to be jacked up to replace the bearings and time is required to allow the concrete plinths to strengthen before traffic can be allowed to travel over it again. Delaying the work now could result in further structural damage and longer closures at a later date."

This commentary highlights the urgency of the intervention and the scale of the challenge successfully completed.

SUPPORTING UK INFRASTRUCTURE

From routine maintenance to multi-million-pound upgrades, EKSPAN are the UK's trusted bridge specialists – delivering engineered solutions that extend the performance and reliability of critical infrastructure.

All our bearings, expansion joints, and monitoring systems are designed, manufactured, and installed by our EKSPAN Experts – ensuring technical authority, accountability, and confidence on every project.

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