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# Workington temporary bridge opens for use

7 December, 2009 | By Jo Stimpson

The Barker Crossing temporary bridge opened this morning, following Royal Engineers' work through the weekend to complete the structure.

The bridge, named after Pc Bill Barker who died when the Northside Bridge collapsed due to flooding on November 20, opened at 8:00AM this morning at a rain-soaked ceremony attended by Minister of State for the Armed Forces Bill Rammell and local residents and children.

The construction effort ran to schedule with the nose landing on the far bank on Friday afternoon, and street furniture installed over the weekend. Shuttle bus services are running from either end of the bridge, reuniting the north and south sides of the town.

"Everything went to plan. All of the guys are proud of their achievement," said Royal Engineer senior engineer Major Grant Kerr.

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Royal Engineer senior engineer Major Grant Kerr

Royal Engineers worked with the local councils over the weekend to tidy up the area and install street furniture such as ramps and lighting to optimise the Mabey Bridge Compact 200 panel bridge – a military structure – for pedestrian use.

"The local councils, both Cumbria County Council and Allerdale Borough Council, have been absolutely brilliant. Their help has been instrumental," said Kerr.

The bridge was assembled on the bank of the River Derwent. Describing how it was pushed across the water, guided at the front by 12 lightweight truss sections acting as a "nose", Kerr said: "The nose landed and then the bridge was pushed forwards. Then the bridge was jacked down onto its bearings and the deck panels put on."

Locals have welcomed the new bridge. Residents have provided catering for the construction team and local children have been coming up to say thank you, said Kerr. "Everyone has been very pleased with the work."

The Barker Crossing is a temporary replacement for the Calva Bridge, a crucial connection between the two sides of the town, which was condemned after sustaining serious flood damage. The new structure is 300m upstream of the old bridge.

A temporary railway station built after the Cumbrian floods has also opened in Workington.

- A timelapse video of the Barker Crossing's construction can be viewed at the BBC website.

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