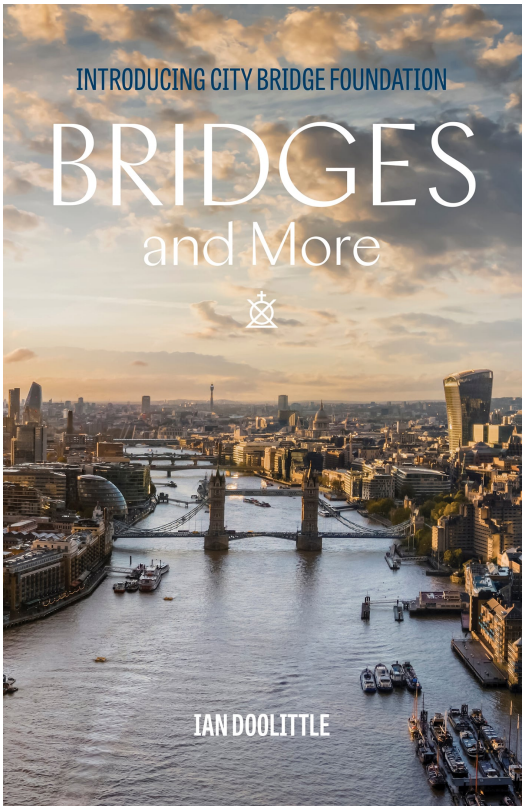
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Bridges and More

How London's Bridges Came to Span a River and a City

Ian Doolittle

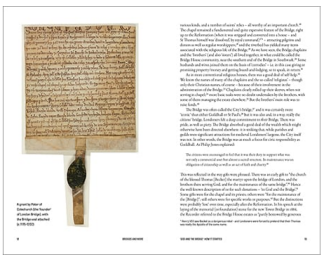
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- First accessible and thematic history of the City Bridge Foundation
- Reveals the fascinating story behind London's best-known bridges
- Rich with archival insight, civic drama, and overlooked history
- Written by leading legal historian Ian Doolittle
- Covers 700+ years of London life, finance, and philanthropy
- A vital read for anyone interested in London's urban or civic history

City Bridge Foundation is the oldest charity in London still operating under its original purpose. Established over 700 years ago to maintain London Bridge, it now cares for five of the Thames's great crossings while distributing surplus income to charities across the capital. Worth £1.5 billion, it remains managed by the City of London Corporation. This lively and original book traces the development of the Foundation from its religious origins as the 'Bridge House,' through political intrigue, civic evolution and remarkable acts of giving. Written by legal historian Ian Doolittle, it introduces a little-known but extraordinary organization whose assets were built from the donations of ordinary Londoners. The Foundation's story spans medieval craftsmanship, royal interference, and the complexities of modern governance, all while helping shape the physical and civic landscape of London. It is a story of bridges, certainly, but also of money, power, and purpose.

Ian Doolittle is a legal historian and former academic barrister with a long-standing interest in London's civic and charitable institutions. He has written extensively on property law, urban governance, and historical legal structures, and is a former editor of the *Journal of Legal History*. This is his first book for a general readership.







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