

Army works all night to put bridge across A37

by JOHN COE

The Army worked through the night to throw a 110 foot-long Bailey Bridge across the 90ft. gap in the A37 Bristol-Wells road over the swirling River Chew at Pensford.

And Brig. M. E. Tickell, arriving in the stricken village at breakfast time by helicopter from Barton Stacey, near Andover, said he was "well satisfied" with progress to date.

But there is a lot to be done before the road can be re-opened to traffic tomorrow.

The 125 men of the 60 Field Squadron of the 36 Engineer Regiment from Maidstone, Kent, have another eight hours' work on the bridge.

Then the Somerset County Council will move in to build a ramp on each side of the bridge.

Maj. Ian Graham, commanding the squadron, said: "A fairly short ramp, which we had planned, is not, I understand, acceptable to the county.

"They want a less steep ramp of rubble and tarmac to lessen the climb in view of the heavy holiday traffic expected."

REST

Maj. Graham said his men had worked steadily since 6 o'clock last evening, when the bridge arrived in sections on 22 trucks from Swndon.

He explained the men had worked in shifts and had broken off for two hours each in the early hours for rest and refreshment.

The major was full of praise for farmer Fred Stickley who had placed two water tight barns on a hill just outside the village at his disposal.