

# Crowd Management for Major Events



**Commonwealth Games**

**Birmingham - UK 2022**

Johnny Ojeil/ Monika Crouse

Ramboll UK

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# Introduction



- Birmingham has a population of around 1.2 million and the West Midlands is around 3 million in total
- Games took place across the region with a focus on Birmingham being at the centre of activities
- Games cost was around 842 million euros - net profit 120 million euros
- Games were inherited from Durban's withdrawal
- Offer based on a lot of the infrastructure is in place but further facilities were required
- Confidence to deliver was key to award

# Cities & Towns Involved



Birmingham (central focus)

Ceremony, Athletics, Artistic & Rhythmic Gymnastics, Beach Volleyball, Women's Cricket, Basketball, Marathon, Hockey, Squash

Solihull – Weightlifting, Para Powerlifting, Table Tennis, Boxing, Badminton, Netball

Coventry – Rugby, Judo, Wrestling

Sutton – Triathlon

Leamington – Lawn Bowls

Warwick – Cycling road

Wolverhampton – Cycling time trials

Cannock Chase – Mountain biking

Sandwell – Swimming, Diving

London – Track cycling

# Key Players



Games need to consider Key players that entail;

- Athletes
- Games Family
- Spectators
- Security requirements ( overarching factor)
- Plus need to keep the city and region moving – business as usual – non games traffic

# Key Criteria to Consider



- **Athletes** spread over 3 locations and not all accommodated in one place which is the norm 6000+
- **Games Family** spread over several accommodation venues 1000+
- No dedicated transport lanes for Athletes and Games Family like the Olympics
- Certainty on time arrival for Athletes and Games Family key
- Opening and closing ceremony needed a separate plan as objectives are different – all 6000+ in one location

# Challenges

- Drop dead deadlines that could not be missed – opening and closing ceremonies and venue usage
- Planning permissions still rigid – process still needs to be followed
- Consultation processes are lengthy in time and can be seen as difficult
- Differing objectives and conflicting sometimes – for example security requirements that are non-negotiable such as check points verses speed of access and queues and delays. Another is road closures – full or partial
- Late change in Athletes Village location meant spreading them across the region
- Multiple masters – OC/BCC/TfWM/SMBC/CCC



# Differing Strategy Objectives



- **Athletes** needed to get to their locations across the region at differing times well in advance of games time. Buses were used
- **Officials** needed to get to games prior to athletes to be ready for warm up etc
- **Coaches & medics** needed to be in place prior to athletes arriving
- **Press** was not dealt with exclusively as they were mainly set up on site very well in advance and did not need dedicated transport
- **VIPs** needed attention in terms of accessibility and normally run on tight schedules
- **Spectators** – cannot miss Games and connections – 1 hour spill out



# Birmingham City Centre Strategy



- Tickets sold over 1 million most wanting to access Birmingham plus visitors to sample atmosphere plus business-as-usual visitors and workers

## Strategy reflected for spectators:

- Visible assistance – on a volunteer basis
- Rail station key – signage
- Extensive modelling – micro and macro
- Public Realm improvements
- Clear pedestrian paths/ routes
- Two key bus transport mobility hubs in city
- Buses make some use of bus priority measures already in place

## For All:

- Demand management strategy to avoid queues at certain event times by avoiding networks
- Construction halt period

## For Athletes/ Officials

- Key designated routes set for Athlete's and officials etc and adhered to throughout the Games period

# Alexander Stadium Strategy



- Exit from stadium criteria 1 hour max for spectators
- Temporary Bus station to accommodate 100 buses for athletes etc.
- Rail station walk 20 minutes on average for spectators
- No car penetration except for disabled parking and some authorized cars
- Park and Ride strategy for spectators
- A34 Rapid bus transit route for spectators
- Pedestrian routes clearly designated with controlled crossing points
- Temporary traffic management measures for road users
- Limited road access except for locals on Church Rd
- Security check provision and turn around
- No closure of main road A34 that serves a wide conurbation
- Need to keep open facilities nearby the stadium – business as usual

# Edgbaston Stadium Strategy



- One mobility hub from the city centre to serve bulk attendees – spectators
- Athletes bused in
- Blue light access important as key major hospital nearby
- Limited road closure in front of stadium
- No direct rail access
- Walking from city centre was deemed too far
- Off-site private car parking challenge
- Modelling using Aimsun- mixture of macro and micro
- Modelling informed red areas where interventions were required
- Leaned on the cricket traffic management strategy and built it from there
- Extensive TM measures to limit parking

# Legacy

- Key aspect for investment and why should we do it?
- Exam question? How will citizens benefit? Will they?
- Alexander Stadium tenants found so more usage of venue
- Aquatics more community focussed facility
- NEC venue well established and good publicity – ease of access
- Visitor attraction – numbers are up with repeat visitors coming to Birmingham



# Lessons Learnt



- Differing objectives produced challenges
- Maybe one client in one location from day 1
- Pilot runs were very helpful to shape up strategies
- One team in one location for consultants
- Security red lines needed more upfront
- Traffic management detailed design work needed to be earlier