

Belfast City Marathon Traffic Management

On your marks, get set, smooth traffic flow



Confidential 2015

/ Contract value

2015

/ The contract commenced

Ongoing

/ Scheduled completion

Widely regarded as the largest mass participation event on the roads of Northern Ireland, the Belfast City Marathon hosts over 17,000 runners, relay participants and wheelchair competitors every May Day (*as of 2019 the first Sunday in May). Since 2015, we have ensured the smooth operation of the flagship event through the provision of traffic management services. Working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, including Belfast City Marathon, Athletics NI and PSNI, we plan and manage the 26.2-mile route to guarantee the safety of competitors while minimising disruption to traffic/road users. We also deliver traffic management for the annual Belfast City Half Marathon in September. Now in its fifth year, the 13.1-mile event facilitates approximately 4,000 participants.

The Brief

Belfast City Marathon organisers require us to undertake pre-event planning, the coordination of all race day traffic management activities, and logistics, and post-event evaluation. Our directly employed team ensures the whole or partial closure of roads, and efficiently manages their reopening once all runners have passed specific points along the route.



“Our team has been working closely with GRAHAM for a number of years now and we are confident with the support of GRAHAM that we can continue to deliver a safe event for years to come,”

Stephen Burns
Belfast City Marathon Events Manager

“Belfast City Marathon has been one of the largest events held on the roads of Northern Ireland for the last 37 years. The requirements for Traffic Management have changed significantly over those years and, as we move forward into a new era of legislative oversight, the importance of good traffic management has become more critical to event management than ever before,”

Stephen Burns
Belfast City Marathon Events Manager

The challenges

The sheer scale of the 26.2-mile route, which traverses across a busy city network, naturally presents challenges, particularly around road closures/diversions. Our experience in managing events of this nature, with operations driven by a bespoke Traffic Management Plan, ensures the safety of all participants, spectators and road users, minimal disruption and the continuous flow of traffic.

GRAHAM's solution

Our traffic management programme begins long before the 17,000+ competitors toe the start line, with pre-event planning occurring months in advance. Our experienced team liaises with all stakeholders, including the PSNI, and is central to the production of a Traffic Management Plan which features detailed information regarding the proposed temporary traffic management layout for the event, together with project timelines and contingency arrangements. On the ground, our personnel utilising a fleet of high-visibility vehicles, implement all traffic management operations such as the setup of traffic controls, on-site management of the traffic controls and removal of traffic controls post event. We also provide, erect and remove all necessary traffic management infrastructure, inclusive of cones and advanced warning signs while we supply and operate 'Variable Message Signs' (VMS) that have the capacity to be remotely controlled. Upon completion of the event, we provide a comprehensive evaluation report, outlining any incidents, together with recommendations for improving traffic management at future races.

Outputs & Benefits

- Legislation:** It is our responsibility to advise the organisers on all aspects of legislation, particularly following the inclusion of 'specific special events provisions' to the 'Roads Act 2010', which came into force in September 2017
- Partnership:** For the first time in its history, the Belfast City Marathon is taking place on a Sunday in 2019 while the course has also been radically transformed. We have been fully engaged with the organisers throughout this transition
- Flexibility:** Following a fire at Primark in late August 2018, sections of Belfast City Centre were inaccessible for H&S reasons. These road closures impacted the Belfast City Half Marathon route. Working in partnership with stakeholders, we identified a 'contingency route' that enabled only a minor change to the original Half Marathon course
- Collaboration:** We work closely with Belfast City Marathon, PSNI, Department of Infrastructure and other relevant stakeholders



For more information on how we're delivering lasting impact:

+44 (0) 845 6006 300 fminfo@graham.co.uk graham.co.uk

GRAHAM