

## Bringing the Commonwealth Games to Birmingham

# Transport for West Midlands

### The Challenge

- Enable multiple partners to access and use the most up-to-date data sets

### The Benefits

- Better collaboration, with one version of the truth
- Effective planning for a major event
- Reliable information to support emergency services
- Inclusive approach to sharing data

During planning for one of the largest sporting events ever staged in the UK, Transport for West Midlands used ArcGIS Hub to work collaboratively with partners. New operational information became available on an almost daily basis, and ArcGIS Hub gave over 50 partners instant access to the most up-to-date versions of 62 data sets, on demand, ensuring all decisions were made based on a single version of the truth.

### The Challenge

As the transport arm of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Transport for West Midlands was – from the outset – heavily involved in planning for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. This high-profiled, international competition was the largest multi-sport event ever to take place in the West Midlands and was due to attract over a million spectators from outside the region, as well as world-leading sportspeople, trainers, media and visiting dignitaries.

Early in the planning process, Transport for West Midlands discovered that three of its partner organisations were using slightly different versions of the Games Route Network, a map showing all the priority routes that athletes would be taking from their accommodation to various venues around the city. The Games Route Network was, however, just one of over fifty maps showing operational data relating to the event, and there were about thirty initial stakeholders. Transport for West Midlands was concerned that if all of the partners had different versions of all the maps, people in these organisations could inadvertently make decisions based on obsolete information.

### The Solution

Transport for West Midlands is a long-standing user of Esri geographic information system (GIS) technology so it immediately explored Esri's ArcGIS suite for a solution to this challenge. It discovered ArcGIS Hub and quickly set about using this easy-to-configure, cloud-based collaboration platform to enable it to share up-to-date data securely with all of the organisations involved in the planning of the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

In the lead-up to the event, Transport for West Midlands shared 62 different data sets via ArcGIS Hub on everything from sporting venues and marathon routes to the locations of emergency facilities and public transport diversions. Partners could, for example, log in to view or download the most accurate map of the Games Route Network, as well as maps showing traffic management plans around key venues. Eventually, over 50 organisations signed up to use ArcGIS Hub, including local authorities, utilities, transportation companies, logistics providers and emergency services.

Partners found the ArcGIS Hub very simple and straightforward to use. Any organisations that did not have in-house GIS expertise could access and view data, documents, apps and maps from within the hub. Meanwhile, other organisations could download the data they needed, in the format of their choice, directly into their internal GIS systems, and more than 7,500 downloads were made in total. An application programming interface (API) embedded in the hub automatically sent out alerts to partners when revised versions of datasets became available to ensure they were always using current data.

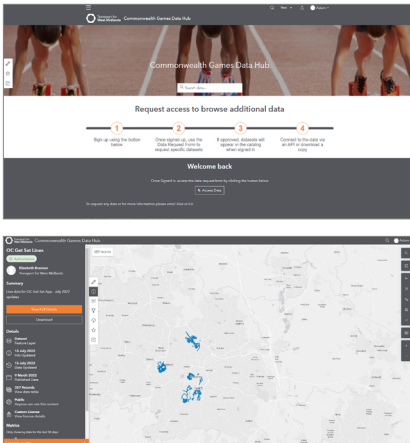
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“ ArcGIS Hub broke the barrier between GIS users and those who don’t work with GIS every day, enabling all of our partners to access quality data on demand. ”

Liz Brannan, Mapping Analyst, Transport for West Midlands



The Commonwealth Games Data Hub, built using ArcGIS Hub

### The Benefits

#### **Better collaboration, with one version of the truth**

Using ArcGIS Hub, Transport for West Midlands was able to provide a single source of data that all partners in the region could use to make sure that their planning was based on the most up-to-date information. This undoubtedly improved collaboration between the dozens of public and private-sector organisations involved in coordinating what was a large-scale and complex, international event. “During planning for the Commonwealth Games, things changed frequently,” recalls Liz Brannan, Mapping Analyst at Transport for West Midlands. “Despite the fast-evolving situation, ArcGIS Hub ensured everyone was working from the same version of the truth, all the time.”

#### **Effective planning for a major event**

By making information about the 2022 Commonwealth Games more easily accessible, the ArcGIS Hub supported the planning processes of around 50 organisations. Utilities companies used data from ArcGIS Hub to plan emergency works to avoid unnecessary traffic disruption in the build-up to the games, while courier companies used ArcGIS Hub to notify customers in advance of potential delays in areas where cycling time-trials and running events were due to take place on local roads. “The number of organisations that signed up to use the ArcGIS Hub showed just how valuable it was,” Brannan says. “ArcGIS Hub allowed everyone to view the same data, at the same time, and make their plans without duplicating effort.”

#### **Reliable information to support emergency services**

Critically, ArcGIS Hub provided reliable information that could be depended upon by emergency services, including the ambulance service, fire service and police in the West Midlands. As a result, these organisations could plan ahead and put measures in place to help them respond effectively to incidents when they needed to. They could see in advance, for example, which roads were going to be closed for marathon events, identify the locations of check points and find alternative routes to avoid areas that might be crowded with spectators walking to or from venues.

#### **Inclusive approach to sharing data**

The ArcGIS Hub proved particularly successful in making data accessible to GIS experts and non-GIS users alike. It was used by large organisations including the water utility and the University of Birmingham, as well as small local charities. “Our ArcGIS Hub for the Commonwealth Games enabled us to bring partners of all kinds and all sizes together to share the best quality data,” explains Brannan. “ArcGIS Hub broke the barrier between GIS users and those who don’t work with GIS every day, enabling all of our partners to access quality data on demand.”

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