



Showing our strength in managed transport

The challenge

Following on from previous successful contracts, the organisers of the Stafford Ironman 2019 once again approached First Travel Solutions (FTS) for transport and logistical expertise and operations.

FTS were asked to provide transport over the weekend of the 8th and 9th June, providing buses to carry spectators, athletes and race equipment including top of the range racing bikes.

The Stafford Ironman is the first race of the UK Ironman season and consists of swimming, cycling and running over a course of 70.3 km. It attracts more than 2,500 competitors and thousands of spectators and fans.

The course starts with the swimming leg at Chasewater Lake, before competitors cycle to Stafford where they finish off an adrenaline packed day with a half marathon around the town centre.



Transport for 1500 athletes and over 1000 spectators

The solution

The Saturday operation was mainly concerned with assisting athletes with their preparation for the next day's big race.

A nine-hour shuttle service was implemented with the assistance of First Midlands (Potteries) who provided single decker buses to transport competitors and their bikes from Holland Park to Chasewater Lake, a journey of around 20 miles.

Significant planning always goes into these pre-race shuttles to ensure that routes are as quick and accessible as possible so as to avoid any un-necessary added tension and worry for the athletes.





Sunday 9th June was a much more complex operation with the Saturday shuttle being repeated to get all the ironmen and women to the starting point on time and the implementation of two park and ride offerings between Doxey Road, the Stafford Showground and the town centre.



The athlete shuttles were obviously time critical and again significant pre-planning was undertaken by FTS to understand issues such as road closures and route alternations.

FTS sourced well over 20 double decker buses, managed co-ordination and boarding and were present in event control to ensure the best transport solution was provided.



The result

The operation was a tremendous success and all athletes got to the start line on time.

Spectator shuttle buses worked to perfection allowing fans to witness the superhuman efforts at various points on the course, whilst the impact of the event on background users and residents was reduced as traffic and parking was kept away from the main routes.

The Saturday shuttle service ran from early in the morning to 17:15 to allow athletes as much choice as possible and nearly 600 competitors and their bikes opted for the service. This was completed in 45 trips.

On Sunday, FTS successfully transported 1500 athletes and nearly 1000 spectators via 70 bus trips.

The service on both days went without any issues and the organisers stressed how efficient and effective the service was and have already confirmed FTS as the transport provider for the 2020 race.

