

## Birmingham celebrates Invictus Games win and calls on FM industry for support

11 months ago



The city of Birmingham celebrated last month as it was announced that it had clinched the coveted title of [Invictus Games](#) host 2027.

Fighting off fierce competition from around the world to host the 2027 games, the final two in the running were Birmingham and Washington D.C, with Birmingham pipping the American city to the post in July.

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, the Invictus Games represents the growing awareness of the sacrifices made by service men and women around the world in their selfless efforts to protect society.

Back in May, FM Director met up with [ISG Live](#) strategic partnerships lead John Carpenter, whose company supported the Government bid team for Birmingham to host the Invictus Games 2027 at the official launch of the IWFM Veterans in FM Networking Group that took place at the RAF Club in London's Piccadilly.

Speaking exclusively to FM Director after the event, John talked about the huge support for the UK's bid to host the Games: "We know that we have major competition from Washington DC in the US, but we're confident we have a compelling bid which can deliver a world class Invictus Games in 2027 and that our bid will be chosen.

"The city has long-established links with the armed services and support for the veteran community, which is the reason it was chosen as the next potential host after the Canadian games next year."

Victory

The result was announced on July 22<sup>nd</sup> at an unveiling event with Invictus Games Foundation CEO Dominic Reid OBE, Defence Veterans Minister Al Carns, and the Invictus Games bid 2027 CEO Helen Helliwell at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham.

Competing against bids from six cities around the world, Birmingham won the bid through its strong commitment to the welfare and recovery of serving personnel and veterans.

Following presentations from both Birmingham and Washington D.C. earlier this year, the Birmingham bid was awarded the Games, highlighting the venue choice of the National Exhibition Centre, the innovative new sports and the demonstration by the bidding team of their commitment to the welfare and recovery of the international cohort of wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans.

Commenting on the result, Lord Allen, Chair of the Invictus Games Foundation, said: "Congratulations to Birmingham! The Trustees were very taken by the depth of passion in the bidding team, the experience they brought to the planning and preparations and to the concept of the NEC as a one-site Games. Our thanks go to the team behind the Washington DC bid who were able to demonstrate the city could be a fantastic location for the future. As the Foundation looks to the next ten years, we're excited about the Games pipeline we are building, and for the next ten years of Invictus!"

In addition, The Duke of Sussex, Patron of the Invictus Games Foundation, said: "Congratulations to Birmingham, UK, on winning the bid to host the Invictus Games 2027. Your city's strong ties to the Armed Forces community made it a formidable contender from the very start. Over the years, we've seen each city bring a unique spirit and vision to life for competitors, their families, and spectators. We have no doubt the people of Birmingham will join in celebrating the unwavering respect and admiration we have for our veteran and service community, showing the world how their courage ignites hope and unites us all—something your city knows well."

What next?

Following on from the win, FM Director caught up with John Carpenter again to find out how he was feeling after the victory and what the FM industry can do to help Birmingham get ready for its next big sporting moment.

"It was unbelievably exciting to win the bid," John said. "Especially given the competition of Washington D.C. which is renowned for hosting big events with big budgets.

"However, we were fairly confident we'd win because we had such a compelling pitch. Everyone involved is committed to delivering a world class event and we're so excited because we have lots of plans surrounding legacy programmes and the impact we'll have on the wider community. We want to make the region proud. Birmingham does a lot for wounded service men and women – it has The Queen Elizabeth Hospital which treats nearly all injured service men and women coming in from warzones such as Afghanistan and Iraq, and there's also Fisher House, which provides accommodation for the families of injured service members while they are receiving treatment at the hospital. The area does so much for the armed forces, we really wanted to give something back, and we're thrilled to have won."

Call to arms for the FM industry

Now that Birmingham has won the bid, and the Invictus Games are coming back to the UK for the second

time, the hard work really begins. We asked John what's next on his to-do list.

"We now need commercial support to be able to deliver the games as we want to," John explained.

"As part of our bid we had to prove we have commercial support because it's a big risk for the Games Foundation to present the games to a host nation if there's a potential for it to not be financially viable for them or if there's a risk of financial disruption.

"To that end, we set up a business briefing event at the NEC in March of this year, where we hoped to get around 60 to 80 businesses who were interested in investing. We ended up with around 200 which was wonderful. We had a really warm response, and it was a very clear indication of the level of support we had."

But now's the time to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. John explained that his main task now is to get businesses to sign up to offer their financial support in return for being associated with this prestigious event, and he's looking at FM companies in particular.

The FM sector is a big employer of ex-service personnel and a huge supporter in a variety of other ways too. There is a growing awareness of the advantages of engaging with organisations, government departments and armed services to offer employment to the thousands of people that leave the forces each year to return to civilian life. In addition to this, there are also many and varied social activities of FM clients and their service provider partners, including charitable activities of all types.

"I didn't realise quite how big the FM sector was for employing veterans, but there's a huge link and a clear synergy between the two worlds, John explained. "People seem to just find themselves in FM after leaving the forces, and we'd like to call on the industry now to help us with the 2027 Invictus Games."

He added: "We're now looking to initiate some conversations within FM to engage further with the industry and work on which companies would like to become a part of it and how."

John and his team have put together a tiered system for the structure of commercial support for the Games. He explained how it's a little like the Champions League or the UEFA World Cup, with eight founding partners, followed by gold, silver and bronze level supporters. This type of system will allow FM businesses of all sizes – and all budgets – to be involved to some extent.

"It will enable companies who want to support us to leave a legacy, as well as giving them the pride of being an official partner, no matter how big or small the organisation is," John said. "Plus, the partnerships will be in place as soon as people are ready to become involved, and the sooner they come on board, the more of the three years of build-up they'll be associated with us for. It's great exposure and given the FM industry's support in employing ex-servicemen and women it felt like it felt like an obvious move to reach out and get some support from the industry."

For more information about becoming a commercial partner of the Invictus Games 2027, please visit <https://www.invictusgamesfoundation.org/>