

Opening ceremony held for Busway bridge as part of Belfast Transport Hub project

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An opening ceremony has been held for Belfast Grand Central Station's new Busway bridge, which was constructed by civil engineering specialist GRAHAM.

Designed by ARUP and fabricated by Thompson's Project Management, the 51-metre weathered steel bridge will enable buses from Broadway Roundabout to access new facilities at Belfast Grand Central Station by passing over the new rail tracks.

Team members from GRAHAM (which was awarded the contract in 2022), ARUP, and Translink crossed the new bridge on a bus as part of the opening ceremony, celebrating the completion of this key stage in the multi-million-pound Belfast Transport Hub regeneration project.

The 1500-tonne bridge will enable GRAHAM's client, Translink, to deliver the next phase of its transformative project, creating a modern, high-quality integrated transport hub in central Belfast (and at the heart of a new city neighbourhood, 'Weavers Cross').

Once complete, the hub will dramatically improve local and international connectivity, enhancing bus, coach, and rail links across Northern Ireland and beyond.

As well as social and economic benefits, it is expected to have a positive environmental impact, reducing air pollution and congestion by encouraging more people to use public transport in the region.



Commenting on the completion of the Belfast Transport Hub Busway Bridge & Ramps Project, Andrew Henry, GRAHAM's Contracts Director, said: "We're pleased to have completed this package of works, safely and efficiently delivering a sustainable new bridge which provides a gateway to the new station and will facilitate the construction of the wider transport hub.

"Like the other projects we have collaborated on with our valued client, Translink, the hub will have significant social, environmental, and economic benefits for the communities it serves. Our team is proud to have played a part in shaping transport in the region, and to have been among the first passengers to cross the bridge."

Philip Brown, Head of Major Projects, Translink, says around 400 bus services will travel across it on a daily basis when the new hub opens:

"This busway bridge is an integral part of the bus infrastructure planned for the world class Belfast Grand Central Station. Its development has been visible to anyone arriving into Belfast Great Victoria Street Station by train or using the Westlink over the past number of months and we are delighted to officially mark its opening and the return of this bus passenger priority lane through the site.

“From today, passengers will see around ten-minute reductions on journey times when travelling on services that use this direct bus lane and busway bridge to and from Europa Buscentre. We’d like to thank them for their patience and flexibility while we worked to complete this part of the construction programme.

“Its completion also enables wider station construction works to progress efficiently. I would also like to thank and congratulate the entire project and operations teams for their hard work to deliver this milestone and also acknowledge the Department for Infrastructure for their essential funding to deliver this project,” said Philip.

Crossing the newly realigned railway lines, the bridge comprises two 150-tonne steel girders, which were transported to site and lifted into place in October 2022.

It is the first bridge on Northern Ireland’s transport network to be fabricated from weathering steel, a corrosion-resistant material that does not need to be painted. As a result, the sustainable structure has a 120-year design life, while requiring nominal maintenance.

Social value was also a priority for the GRAHAM team, and over 300 weeks of apprenticeships were supported during the project alongside local suppliers and businesses.