

Olympic Delivery Authority 2006-2014

The Olympic Delivery Authority came into existence in April 2006. Created by the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act, the ODA was given the task of preparing for London 2012, building a new Olympic Park with venues to make Britain proud, a place to welcome the world just six years later. The ODA had to devise a transport plan to get spectators to their events and was made responsible for enforcing legislation about advertising and trading during the Games.

Each year we published 10 key milestones, to make sure construction of the Olympic Park was driven forward relentlessly in the following 12 months, and always in a transparent and accountable way. In six priority areas, we set ourselves the target of raising standards: design and accessibility; employment and skills; equality and inclusion; health, safety and security; legacy, and sustainability.

We recruited staff from the private and public sectors with experience of major construction schemes or past Olympic and Paralympic Games, hired the CLM consortium as a delivery partner, to use their global know-how to project manage the building programme, and were supported by a board that brought to the ODA a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge. We built our team, then we got to work.

1. We built the stage on which the world's best athletes could perform at London in 2012: globally-acclaimed venues, essential supporting infrastructure like roads, bridges and accommodation, and a stunning new Olympic Park.

We led and co-ordinated the planning, design, clearing, cleaning and construction of the Olympic Park, with eight new venues, including the Olympic Stadium and legacy facilities for swimming and cycling, a media centre complex, the Olympic and Paralympic athletes' village, 250 acres of parklands, and new bridges, roads and energy infrastructure, as well as building one new permanent sports facility outside London and making improvements to two existing ones.

We completed construction of the last major venue on the Olympic Park, the Aquatics Centre, a year before London 2012 began, and test events started in summer 2011. These were critically important in ensuring that the stadiums, arenas and facilities were ready for the public, and in identifying any fine-tuning that needed to be done. Operating against an immovable deadline, we delivered the Olympic Park on time, and spent substantially less than the budget we were allocated in 2007.

The International Olympic Committee said that the ODA's 'early and consistent momentum underpinned the whole project' and our 'record of construction and delivery on time and budget' was impressive, particularly in light of the challenges we faced as a result of the global economic crisis in 2007-08.

[Read the International Olympic Committee's official report on London 2012](#)

[Find out why London 2012 was the top moment in the Paralympic movement's history](#)

2. We cleared the site and planned its use, tackled pollution, subjected the plans to thorough scrutiny, created an inter-connected Park and linked it to the surrounding area, recycling and reusing materials wherever possible.

We took over a neglected, post-industrial landscape riddled with contaminants like oil, tar, arsenic and lead; suffocated by invasive plant species like Japanese Knotweed; scarred by dumped shopping trolleys, cars and tyres, broken fridges and domestic waste; broken up by rivers, roads and railways, and dominated by giant overhead electricity pylons. This dramatic transformation might have taken decades; we did it in six years, from clearing and cleaning to completing and commissioning.

Our planning application, one of Europe's largest, was scrutinised by an independent planning authority which actively sought the views of local people. We turned the vision laid out in the London 2012 Masterplan into a reality, transforming a brownfield site into an urban green space, with lush meadows, lawns, wetlands, woodlands and wildlife habitat alongside sports venues, housing, and supporting infrastructure and buildings. Disused buildings were demolished, rivers dredged, and power cables buried in new tunnels, while above ground new roads and bridges linked the different parts of the Olympic Park, and to neighbouring communities. Two million tonnes of soil were cleaned to create the new landscape, 80 per cent reused, with enough waste excavated from tunnels and shafts to fill Wembley Stadium.

[Find out how London's Olympic Park site was transformed](#)

[Read the 'Eastside Story' account of how the Olympic Park became a reality](#)

3. We attached great importance to the highest standards of design, building flexible venues for the Games and beyond, creating inclusive facilities accessible for all, and promoting maximum sustainability.

We combined excellence and innovation in creating buildings designed both for the world's top sporting event, and long-term use afterwards. Permanent facilities were only built when they had a clear long-term future. Olympic Park buildings have won 12 major design awards, and the London Aquatics Centre was hailed as beautiful, sensual, and 'a great building of our times' by the 2014 Stirling Prize judges.

We created the most accessible Olympic Park yet, helping those with disabilities, young families and older people watch the action and use the venues, with gentle gradients, wider corridors and aisles, tactile surfaces and 250 benches at maximum 50 metres apart. Eton Manor (wheelchair tennis) was the first arena ever built solely for the Paralympic Games. We made venues sustainable, reusing or recycling materials, and reducing energy use and water consumption – with 88 rooftop pipes, for instance, cutting the need for artificial light in the Copper Box multi-sports arena. We invested millions to make the transport network serving the Olympic Park more accessible, with 100,000 Games-time journeys on shuttle buses for people with disabilities or mobility needs, and 27,000 Blue Badge parking spaces.

[Read how the London 2012 venues and Games facilities were designed for legacy](#)

[Find out about how sustainability was at the heart of Olympic Park construction](#)

4. We directly provided work for more than 1,600 companies, overwhelmingly British, in difficult economic times, at the head of a huge supply chain running into tens of thousands of businesses, with over 46,000 workers overall on the Park.

We used an online market place, CompeteFor, to open up competition for work on the London 2012 programme, and required the contractors we employed to adopt it to make businesses of all types, and wherever they were based, aware of the tens of thousands of opportunities across the supply chain. Of £7 billion worth of ODA contracts, 98 per cent were won by UK-registered businesses, almost a third by small and medium-sized enterprises.

The contribution of British businesses has been huge, and the Olympic Park a superb advertisement for UK plc, enhancing the reputation of our country, and reminding everyone that we can deliver big projects. Since the Games, almost 800 contractors have joined the British Olympic Association's Supplier Recognition Scheme, giving them greater freedom to publicise their involvement in the Games. Almost two-thirds said their role in London 2012 had helped them to secure new contracts.

More than 12,000 people were working on the Olympic Park and Olympic Village at the peak of construction, over a quarter coming from the neighbouring boroughs and one in eight previously unemployed. After the Games finished, a workforce totalling 15,000 transformed the athletes' accommodation into the new East Village, converting 2,818 apartments and townhouses.

[Read ODA Chairman Sir John Armitt's report about London 2012 business benefits](#)

[See UK Trade & Investment's analysis of the economic legacy of the London Games](#)

5. We put health and safety at the heart of our work, delivering the safest project of this size on record in the UK, and one that stood comparison with all workplaces, not just the construction industry.

London 2012's safety record has attracted global acclaim, with over 86 million hours worked, and no work-related fatalities, even despite the pressure of an immovable deadline. The ODA set new standards and received a special Diamond Jubilee award from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents to recognise an outstanding health and safety achievement during the Queen's reign.

The key to creating a positive health and safety culture – eliminating injuries, preventable illnesses, business losses and environmental harm - has been leadership and engagement with the workforce, and their representatives. We negotiated agreements with the TUC and its unions. Our 'Health and Safety Standard' set out how we would build the new venues safely and without risk to health, and how we would raise the bar within the construction industry. It acted as a constant reminder to contractors of their responsibilities for the safety of their workers. We worked with companies, and their employees, to embed this culture into the construction of the Olympic Park and transformation of the new East Village, rewarding best practice, and enhancing staff well-being at our innovative on-site medical centres.

[Read the Health and Safety Executive's verdict on the London 2012 Games](#)

[Find out why RoSPA awarded the ODA a special Diamond Jubilee award](#)

6. We strove to secure value-for-money at all times, making huge savings that helped keep London 2012 within its budget, and subjected our plans to constant scrutiny to ensure they represented the best use of public money.

We made savings of almost £1.2 billion, without compromising the quality or safety of the facilities for London 2012, or the long-term benefits for generations to come. These savings enabled the ODA to avoid calling on £1 billion of available funding, helping overall spending for the Games come in significantly under budget, in spite of rising security costs elsewhere. And, in addition, the ODA took on more work than originally anticipated, because of the decision to publicly fund the Olympic Village due to the impact of the economic crisis in 2007-08, as well as taking on responsibility for some Games-time operations on the Olympic Park. So we actually delivered more for less.

We worked closely with the National Audit Office, and we were determined that our spending was a prudent and effective use of public money, always transparent and accountable. We were honoured to receive a special award from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee for what MPs called 'outstanding service delivery and value for money'. The same priorities have been applied in our work

managing billions of pounds worth of contracts, and in the last two years closing them out to conclude our liabilities as client and employer, unusually swiftly for a big construction project.

[Find out what MPs on the Public Accounts Committee had to say about the ODA](#)

[Read the National Audit Office's report on the ODA's work in December 2011](#)

7. We created and co-ordinated a complex set of working relationships with government, the public sector, Games organisers, and private contractors, ensuring London 2012 overcame challenges to become a model for the future.

This has been a team effort, requiring flexibility and a capacity to manage multiple, contrasting programmes of work at the same time. We attached the highest importance to forming positive relationships with scores of public and private sector bodies, and with boroughs and communities bordering the Olympic Park, whilst striving at all times for quality, and were determined to complete our task on time and within budget. We employed the CLM consortium to project manage our construction activity, and incentivised them to seek savings. We were co-located and closely co-operated with LOCOG, the London 2012 organising committee, seconding employees to work on the staging of the Games and sharing knowledge. For a major event so demanding, there was a remarkably low turnover of staff.

We have strived at all times to be a model public body: transparent, accountable, collaborative, securing value for money, delivering new standards in our partnership with government. When outside events had an impact, we worked with our stakeholders, public and private, Olympic and Paralympic, to find solutions, as in 2007-08 when the financial crisis forced a change in our plans, giving the ODA a larger role after the decision to publicly fund the Olympic Village and London 2012 media centres. And when circumstances changed and it made sense to transfer work to other better-placed bodies, we did it.

[Read the Institute for Government's independent report on 'making the Games'](#)

[Check out the BBC's verdict on London 2012, the Games, the venues, and their legacy](#)

8. We provided critical behind-the-scenes maintenance, cleaning, security and logistics services during the Games, keeping the Olympic Park, venues and the Olympic and Paralympic Village, in top condition throughout.

Our role did not end when the venues and infrastructure were complete. The work of our teams on the Olympic Park was critical to the success of the Games. More than 2,000 staff from the ODA and its contractors ensured that sports facilities and parklands stayed in the best condition possible throughout London 2012. They were responsible for vital but unglamorous tasks like weeding, pruning and mowing the grass, ensuring that PA and fire alarm systems always functioned, and that swimming pool water remained of the highest quality – working round-the-clock so the sport never stopped.

We ran an extensive and complex technology network, with 10 major control rooms, 2,100 CCTV cameras, and over 17 kilometres of fencing, as well as the operation of a fibre optic network transmitting security and other data to and from the Olympic Park.

The ODA was responsible for implementing advertising and trading regulations that are the norm at major sports events and vital to their commercial success, ensuring spectators could easily get to their events, and preserving a common, celebratory appearance around the venues.

[Find out about the ODA's role during the Games in our annual report for 2012-13](#)

[Get the facts about the London 2012 facilities in the ODA's venues guide](#)

9. We devised, funded and helped deliver London 2012's transport strategy, investing £400m in new facilities, so as to keep the capital moving during the Games, and ensure smooth access to venues across the country.

Spectators' enjoyment was enhanced because transport worked: sport, not delays, dominated the headlines. That was thanks to Transport for London and rail, bus, and road partners working with us to deliver the ODA's strategic plan for a public transport Games. This set out how fans and athletes would get to and from venues, whilst keeping London and the rest of the UK moving. We spent £419 million on infrastructure improvements in pursuit of our aim that all ticket-holders should travel by public transport, on foot or by cycling, and from all parts of the country. This investment made the Olympic Park one of the best connected parts of London, served by 10 different rail routes.

During the Games, campaigns devised and funded by the ODA helped persuade three-quarters of London travellers to change their journey plans, and avoid the risk of severe over-crowding. We worked with businesses to schedule freight deliveries at less busy times. And the plans worked, with, for example, 101 million Games-time London Underground journeys (up a quarter on the same period in 2011), over 2.4 million trips by Javelin train (in seven minutes to and from central London), 360,000 journeys to the Eton Dorney rowing venue using park and ride and rail shuttle buses, and 86 per cent of spectators at the Olympic Stadium rating as extremely good their experience of getting home after an event.

[Read about how London 2012 spectators gave Games transport the thumbs-up](#)

[Discover how the ODA delivered transport for the Olympic and Paralympic Games](#)

10. We built the athletes' accommodation and have transformed it into the thriving new East Village, with 2,818 homes, almost half affordable, all close to the Olympic Park, and shops, a school and health centre, and public transport.

Just 18 months after full-scale work began on the former Olympic Village site, its transformation was complete, with brand-new designer kitchens installed, and 15,000 rooms adapted, with Games-time features removed, new flooring fitted, and painting, plumbing, and electrical work carried out. It was a huge task for the ODA and its contractors, and a workforce peaking at 2,400, to achieve in such a short time, and seeking to deliver the same high standards as on the Olympic Park. The first homes were handed over to the new owners of East Village, Get Living London and Triathlon Homes, so residents could move in during autumn 2013, and eventually it will be home to more than 8,000 people. Just over half of the apartments and townhouses (1,439) are available for rent at market prices, with the remaining 1,379 affordable properties for rent, or purchase through shared ownership schemes.

But our work at East Village went beyond the new homes. Even before the first residents moved in, the new Chobham Academy was open, with the Sir Ludwig Guttmann Health and Wellbeing Centre starting GP services soon after. The Academy has places for 2,000 students of all ages, serving the wider community as well as East Village residents. The finishing touches came in the form of 25 acres of new parklands, play space and wetlands, flowering and picnic lawns, and hundreds of benches.

[Find out why East Village was voted the best new place to live in London in 2014.](#)

[View a day in the life of East Village on the housing development's own website.](#)

11. We ensured there were no 'white elephants' so the Olympic Park would become a popular visitor destination with much-used sports facilities, in demand for use by global stars and the local community alike.

We were committed to building an Olympic Park that would thrive and grow in the decades after London 2012, and gave it the flexibility to make sure that happened. Of every pound spent by the ODA, 75p has helped secure the long-term regeneration of the area. One venue, the Lee Valley White Water Centre in Hertfordshire, even opened for public use 15 months before the Games, with well over 500,000 visitors since. The first part of the new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park was opened by the London Legacy Development Corporation a year after the Games, with the rest in spring 2014.

Three million people had visited within two years of the Games, and the London Aquatics Centre, Lee Valley VeloPark, Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre, and the Copper Box multi-sports arena have become firm favourites. These are now popular venues for international events, resident teams, and community use, with gyms, cafés and crèches. The Olympic Stadium, now being renovated for use as a

football ground by West Ham from 2016, will also host Rugby World Cup matches in 2015. It will become a competition centre for athletics too, staging the sport's IAAF and IPC world championships in 2017. But our investment went beyond London, with the ODA improving facilities at two existing venues, Dorney Lake (rowing) and Weymouth and Portland (sailing).

Over 20,000 jobs are being created on Queen Elizabeth Park by 2019, including 7,500 as a result of the 'Here East' business campus. BT's Sports Channels are broadcasting from the former London 2012 media centre and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is now a magnet for visitors, and an invaluable, sustainable facility – and opportunity - for people in east London.

[Visit LLDC's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park website to find out what's on](#)
[Discover the vision for the Here East creative and digital cluster, formerly iCity](#)

12. We are leaving behind unique skills and knowledge benefitting individuals, employers and the UK, with training and apprenticeships, and a 'learning legacy' website, to preserve the know-how from London 2012.

We made sure the benefits from hosting the London Games would last for generations – and not just through the bricks and mortar of the Olympic Park and East Village. We were committed to giving businesses and workers new skills to improve their future prospects, helping them win contracts or get jobs. Innovative initiatives saw the number of apprentices exceed our target, hundreds of women given the training to secure building industry jobs, a skills academy providing 3,500 places and a 'digger school' instructing workers in how to operate construction machinery.

We created a 'learning legacy' website to pass on the knowledge we acquired to the public and private sectors, students, cities hosting major sports events, at home and abroad. This store of knowledge has so far been consulted by over 100,000 users – a third from outside the United Kingdom. This is a powerful ambassador for the ODA's work, as are our former staff. From graduates in first jobs to senior directors, they are using what they learned on London 2012 to benefit themselves, new employers and the country, contributing their skills and know-how to major infrastructure projects, for government, the public and private sectors, in education, in sport and for charities.

[Find out about the knowledge from London 2012 on the Learning Legacy website](#)
[Discover what former ODA staff did next - and the lessons they took to new jobs](#)