



COMMISSION FOR A
SUSTAINABLE LONDON 2012

Swimming upstream Sustainable in challenging times?

Commission for a Sustainable London 2012
Annual Review 2008
Executive Summary
April 2009



Executive Summary

The annual report of the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012¹ provides an independent detailed insight into the sustainability of all aspects of the London 2012 programme. It is drawn from our work throughout 2008 including our governance review, detailed thematic reviews, input from our commissioners and wider stakeholders.

Good news in difficult times

The bid was won in better economic times but we are pleased to report that the sustainability standards set at the time are being maintained. We have seen no evidence to date that cost reduction has led to any compromise of the published sustainability standards. Although we have some concerns to deal with, the focus of this report is to highlight opportunities to build on a platform of solid achievement and to help the UK to become globally competitive as a leading sustainable nation.

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Governance and Leadership

The success of the ODA to date is a direct result of good governance, embedding sustainability into the heart of the organisation and not treating it as an optional extra. We are seeing a similar organisational approach being developed by LOCOG and have strongly encouraged the parties to the Olympic Park Legacy Company to take these principles on board.

There is an expectation that London 2012 will 'set new standards of sustainability'. This is happening in construction where the ODA is setting an excellent example which should be followed by other public sector construction projects. We expect London 2012 to have a positive influence over other sectors such as event management, transport, catering, property development, education and the general public. We believe the role of LOCOG's commercial partners will be crucial to this agenda and we hope to see these companies becoming investors in a sustainable community in the Lower Lea Valley and beyond. We look forward to sponsor activation programmes that focus on sustainability, such as the EDF campaigns on carbon and energy conservation.

Jobs and skills

We reviewed this aspect of the programme in depth and we were very impressed with the work done to bring together a wide variety of organisations to define resource requirements, prepare work-ready local people and to help them to find jobs on the project. This organisation must be better supported by technology infrastructure and should be developed to support the staging and legacy phases of the programme. We are also impressed with the application of 'CompeteFor' and the work currently being done to improve it and to encourage small businesses to participate in the supply chain.

¹ www.cslondon.org

Healthy living

We believe that a wide variety of factors contribute to healthy living such as income equality, sustainable jobs, pollution, food, biodiversity and access to green space. Whilst we have seen some good initiatives to support this agenda, we expect to see more focus on these health determinants in decision making with respect to staging and legacy. Our work programme in the coming year will focus on aspects such as food, biodiversity and health.

Undeniable impacts

The negative environmental impacts of the Games are inevitable and need to be defined and minimised. We endorse and applaud the decision to carry out ground-breaking work to define the wider carbon footprint of the London 2012 programme. The revelation that more than half of the CO₂ emissions are embodied in the construction process (and not flights) is significant for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and for the UK as a whole. Construction projects do not routinely focus on this issue and tend to concentrate on energy efficiency of the built environment. We believe there is an opportunity to develop the lessons from this work to enable the UK to be globally competitive in the field of reducing the carbon impact of construction.

Use of HFC refrigerants should be eliminated to demonstrate that it is possible to deliver facilities that do not require these potent greenhouse gases. Any market failure in dealing with this should be addressed by government.

The Olympic Park will benefit from substantial investment in trigeneration for heating, cooling and electricity. However, this could be improved if organic waste facilities could be developed in the Lower Lea Valley to provide fuel to the park. This work is progressing slowly and accountabilities are not clear. Given that 2012 is the year of the Earth Summit as well as the London Games, we believe the prospect of showcasing the first zero/low carbon Olympic Park in 2012 is too good to miss and that work should be accelerated to achieve this.

Exemplary standards of waste management have been set for preparation and Games-time. However, a large amount of plastic wraps and sheeting will need to be procured and disposed of after the Games, along with numerous other temporary materials. We have yet to see how the impact of manufacture, use and disposal of temporary materials such as PVC will be mitigated.

A sustainable legacy?

The objective to make the Olympic Park a 'Blueprint for sustainable living' is tough but achievable if the current approach to governance, leadership, reporting and independent assurance is replicated throughout the programme into legacy. The development of the Olympic Park Legacy Company to support legacy will be crucial in the coming years.

Next steps

We have presented our work programme for the next 2 years, which will focus increasingly on staging and legacy, exploring issues such as health, food and socio-economic issues whilst continuing our vigilance on preparation and environmental impacts.

Summary of Recommendations

We have summarised our recommendations into 3 groups, each recommendation has a short context statement, more detailed context can be found in the body of the report:

Most significant recommendations

Whilst we consider all these recommendations to be important, we consider these to be the most significant and should be addressed immediately.

Whilst we have seen improvements in cross-programme leadership, the London 2012 Sustainability Group has not been fully effective in addressing and resolving strategic issues during 2008.

- 1 Sustainability should be a standing item for discussion at Olympic Board Steering Group meetings. The London 2012 Sustainability Group should focus on emerging issues that affect the programme and escalate them as necessary on a timely basis to OBSG.**

The Senior Executives responsible for each Key Stakeholder met in January 2008 to agree areas of priority and potential cross-stakeholder engagement.

- 2 The London 2012 Sustainability Group should ensure that the priorities identified in the Sustainability Leadership meeting are delivered through clear strategies, roles and responsibilities across the Olympic programme.**

The opportunity to promote sustainability through the London 2012 brand in sponsor and Cultural Olympiad events was not fully recognised in 2008.

- 3 All users of the London 2012 Brand should be required to demonstrate how they will contribute to the London 2012 Sustainability Plan and relevant objectives.**

The carbon footprint work is nearing completion but has not been widely publicised. There is a challenge to decide how to mitigate the residual footprint.

- 4 The London 2012 Sustainability Group should reduce carbon at source as much as possible and honour the commitment to offset flights for competitors and officials with Gold Standard offsets. The remaining footprint should be mitigated by a combination of initiatives to reduce carbon in the community and through wider influencing schemes using the inspirational power of the Games to change behaviour. Legacy standards should address embodied impacts.**

The Olympic Park Legacy Company was announced in January 2009 to manage the Olympic Park Legacy. This new organisation has a significant challenge to deliver the promise to make the Olympic Park 'a blueprint for sustainable living'.

- 5 The GLA and Government should ensure that the Olympic Park Legacy Company currently under development for legacy has the long term sustainable development of the Olympic Park enshrined in its objectives, governance, management capacity, structures, funding and business plan, and will ensure integration with wider Lower Lea Valley initiatives.**

The opportunity to showcase an integrated approach to energy and waste management to deliver zero carbon heat and ultra-low carbon electricity during the Games, in the year of the next Earth Summit and the birth of the successor to the Kyoto Protocol is too great to be missed.

- 6 The LDA should ensure that the Olympic Park infrastructure is able to deliver zero carbon heat and very low carbon energy by 2016 at the latest, but preferably by 2012, utilising a wider waste strategy for the Lower Lea Valley to supply fuel derived from organic waste combined with the renewable energy solutions provided by the ODA.**

The policy for procurement, for use and disposal of temporary materials is not clear and there are inconsistencies between the ODA and LOCOG.

- 7 The ODA and LOCOG should ensure a clear and consistent policy for mitigating the impacts of manufacture, use and disposal of temporary materials.**

3-6 Months

We believe these recommendations need to be implemented within the next 3-6 months and that failure to do so will threaten the achievement of sustainability objectives.

The GLA developed an effective reporting process to track their Olympic Objectives but are currently reviewing this on grounds that all delivery bodies have their own reporting processes

- 8 The GLA should develop a simple process to collect reporting information in order to ensure delivery against the Olympic sub-objectives for which they are responsible.**

The LDA has been operating with two part-time people on secondment from consultants to lead sustainability for legacy and to act as an 'intelligent client' for the ODA. We do not believe this is adequate.

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- 9 The LDA should assess the resources required to embed sustainability into the Legacy Masterplan Framework and to act as an effective client. These resources should be deployed as permanent staff at a senior level where possible.**

Design of the Olympic Village needs to be coordinated with future waste strategies for the Lower Lea Valley.

- 10 The ODA must ensure that the implications of the emerging legacy waste strategy are reflected in the design and build of the Olympic Village and venues where possible.**

We expect to see the ODA set an example and deliver zero HFC for all venues. Government support may be required to address the market failure if additional costs are required.

- 11 The London 2012 Sustainability Group should ensure that substances with high Global Warming Potential such as HFC are eliminated where possible.**

6-12 months

We believe these recommendations need to be implemented within the next 12 months to ensure that sustainability objectives will be met.

The first ODA project to be delivered demonstrates exemplary standards of sustainability but this has not been well communicated internally.

- 12 The ODA should apply lessons from early projects such as Orient Way and communicate them internally to other project teams and externally to the industry.**

The excellent work to develop an infrastructure to encourage local skills and employment needs to be continued through staging and legacy.

- 13 LOCOG and the LDA should ensure that the resources and process to enable local employees and businesses to participate in the programme are developed and continued through staging and legacy phases of the programme.**

The work being carried out by the ODA on biodiversity for venues and parkland is not reflected in the London 2012 Sustainability Plan which does not communicate a wider vision for biodiversity.

- 14 The London 2012 Sustainability Group should ensure that wider aspects of biodiversity are addressed in future updates of the Sustainability Plan. This should include venues outside the Olympic Park, linkages with other habitats in the region and impacts on other themes such as healthy living.**

The future of the Olympic Park as a venue is important for legacy and the skills and material developed by LOCOG could make a major contribution to this.

15 In further developing the programme of leisure, culture and visitor management, the GLA, GOE and LDA should consider use of the experience and intellectual property generated by LOCOG.

Background and Context

When London bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, a promise was made to the International Olympic Commission (IOC) and to the public for the London Games to be the 'most sustainable Games ever' and for the sustainability of the London Games to be independently monitored.

The Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 (the commission) has been established by the Olympic Board to fulfil this promise and provide independent assurance and commentary in order to enable the sustainability objectives of the London 2012 programme to be achieved and to support a sustainable legacy.

The key goals of the commission are:

- to provide the Olympic Board and other stakeholders with commentary supported by objective evidence
- to demonstrate whether Key Stakeholders² (ODA, LOCOG, LDA, GLA, GOE) have:
 - robust plans and processes in place to deliver sustainability objectives
 - objective evidence that sustainability objectives are being achieved, and
 - sustainability plans and performance to support a sustainable legacy.

The commission operates within an agreed Assurance Framework³ which enables it to provide the Olympic Board and wider stakeholders with an independent view on the sustainability status of the Games through this Annual Review, ongoing monitoring and detailed reviews of specific issues and processes. It also acts as a point of reference for all stakeholders with respect to sustainability assurance issues.

2 Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), London Development Agency (LDA), Greater London Authority (GLA), Government Olympic Executive (GOE)

3 <http://www.cslondon.org/programme/framework.aspx>

The commission reports to the Olympic Board and is funded by GOE, the GLA Group, LOCOG and the ODA. It comprises a Chair, eleven Commissioners with expertise in a wide range of topics who commit around 20 days per annum, a register of Co-opted Experts and an operational team of 3 permanent staff.



Shaun McCarthy

Chair of the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012



Purpose of Annual Review and Method

This review aims to:

- Advise the Olympic Board of the progress, plans and resources necessary to deliver the sustainability objectives of the London 2012 Games and legacy,
- Provide commentary on the overarching governance arrangements and sustainability strategy, plans and objectives based on review findings, the informed view of the commission and taking into account the perspective of Wider Stakeholders
- Highlight areas of good practice
- Recommend actions to recover or improve the programme to deliver the sustainability objectives.

In order to do this, we have carried out the following activities:

- Review of key documents that define what objectives have been set, by whom and how they are planned to be satisfied,
- Review the recommendations from the 2007 Governance Review⁴ and subsequent Thematic Reviews⁵ and report on progress with further recommendations if necessary,
- Interviews with key staff from all relevant Key Stakeholders⁶
- Review of external perspectives including media and information gathered from engagement with Wider Stakeholders,
- Examination of evidence to support interview feedback.

We have presented our findings in the following structure:

- **Part 1 – Annual Report**
 - **Section 1 – Governance Review** - Reviews sustainability arrangements for each stage of the programme (preparation, staging and legacy)
 - **Section 2 – Review of the London 2012 Sustainability Plan Update and Key Themes** – Independent review of the document published in November 2009 and commentary on the five sustainability themes across all stages of the programme with a view to identify any gaps or inconsistencies in strategic outcomes
 - **Section 3 – Work Programme** – Sets out the proposed work programme for the commission in the period April 2009 to March 2011
 - **Section 4 – Glossary**
 - **Section 5 – Key Documents** – List of key London 2012 documents
- **Part 2 – Appendices (published as a web only document)**
 - **Section 6 – Information gathering** – List of the people we interviewed and events that we attended
 - **Section 7 – External Perspectives** – Commentary on key issues raised by wider stakeholders during the year

4 http://www.cs london.org/documents/2007_Governance_Review.pdf

5 <http://www.cs london.org/programme/report.aspx>

6 See Section 6

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- o **Section 8 – Progress against Past Recommendations** – Records progress made against recommendations from the 2007 review and the 2008 Reporting Review.
 - o **Section 9 – Letters** – Letters written by the Chair to the Olympic board

This report represents findings from field work carried out in the period October 2008 to January 2009. The report does not reflect any actions taking place after 31 January 2009 but responses from Key Stakeholders may record actions taken since this date.



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