

Festival of Sport brings 2012 alive for schools

Youngsters from across Coventry and Warwickshire have been inspired by London 2012 and the Olympic movement through participating in a series of sporting festivals.

As part of our Carnivals and Festivals flagship project the Festival of Sport is a scheme which aims to give school children in Coventry the opportunity to experience a variety of Olympic and Paralympic sports across the academic year until 2012.

The project aims to support the London 2012 bid promise to inspire the youth of the world through sport. As a result the Festival of Sport has been accredited with the prestigious London 2012 Inspire Mark, as recognition of the objectives the project aims to achieve.

The first Festival of Sport was held at the Alan Higgs Centre as a week long event between November 9 and 13, and included the Olympic and Paralympic sports of basketball, handball, volleyball and wheelchair basketball.

A total of 1,200 children from Coventry Schools from across seven secondary schools and four special schools participated in the first Festival of Sport in half-day sessions. The event also enabled some children to participate in a dance activity, bringing

the culture of the Olympic and Paralympic opening and closing ceremonies to life.

Each half day session ended with a dance performance emulating a closing ceremony in front of all their classmates, from a routine the schools had learnt in just two hours.

Funded by NHS Coventry, the first pilot was organised by the Coventry and Warwickshire 2012 Partnership, Coventry School Sports Partnership and Coventry Sports Foundation.

On Friday November 13 at the Festival of Sport, Paul Deighton, chief executive of LOCOG, visited the Alan Higgs Centre to experience the project as part of his tour of the West Midlands.

Upon seeing the enthusiasm from the young people participating he was delighted with the Partnership's efforts. Before taking an energetic part in one of the handball games taking place within the centre he said:

"Coventry and Warwickshire have been frankly one of the most dynamic areas anywhere in involving young people in the 2012 Games.

"This Coventry and Warwickshire partnership really get it. They absolutely understand that it's the power of the Games to inspire young people."



David Moorcroft (back left), Tom Clift (centre) and Paul Deighton (right) at Festival of Sport with participating children from Blue Coat School

Coventry leads the way in the Cultural Olympiad



Alice Davey (left), Paul Kaynes (inside left), Jane Hytch (inside right) and Tom Clift (right) celebrating the announcement of Imagineer Production's selection to represent the West Midlands in the Artists Taking the Lead project

Imagineer Productions has been selected as the West Midlands winner of the £500,000 commission to deliver their ground breaking project **Godiva Awakes**.

Godiva Awakes will see the creation of a ten-metre tall 'living' Lady Godiva that will come to life through the sustainable pedal power of 50 cyclists and will remain as a permanent art feature after 2012.

Imagineer Productions has beaten off competition from thousands of artists to become one of just 12 organisations selected nationally for Arts Council England's Artists Taking the Lead project as the West Midlands' representative project.

Artists Taking the Lead has been developed by Arts Council England in partnership with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the arts councils of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The 12 commissions from across the UK have now been announced and will be developed as part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad involving local communities and organisations in the build up to the London Games.

Upon receiving the news of their success Kathi Leahy, from Imagineer Productions spoke of the project's potential.

She said: "We are honoured and excited to be chosen to represent the West Midlands region at the Olympic and Paralympic Games and to be able to give thousands of people the opportunity to be part of the greatest celebration of humanity."

Ros Robins, from Arts Council England, West Midlands said: "Imagineer's Godiva Awakes is an extraordinary project that will take everyday threads of life in the West Midlands and link them into London 2012.

"Active involvement in this project by people across the West Midlands, including many children and young people, will give a different perspective to the Olympic and Paralympic games."

More than 2,000 dancers, aerialists, musicians, pyrotechnic experts and carnival performers will join the structure in a processional performance before it walks to London to play a part in the 2012 celebrations.

David Moorcroft - Lead Coventry & Warwickshire 2012 Ambassador



The Olympic and Paralympic Games are great festivals of sport and culture, so why not try to bring that atmosphere to Coventry and Warwickshire?

One of the 2012 Partnership's key projects focuses on that word: festivals, and for one week in November, at the Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry, around 1,200 students from 11 local schools tasted the Olympic festive spirit.

One of their sessions was witnessed by the chief executive of London 2012, Paul Deighton, who joined in the fun by giving handball a try. Year seven students from eleven secondary

schools, including four special needs schools, had the opportunity to experience a number of Olympic and Paralympic sports and to perform in a mini Olympic closing ceremony.

The real purpose of the event was to help raise participation levels of young people in sport and activity, but by making it festive and fun, and through creating the link between sport and dance, there was something for everyone.

Throughout the year there will be more opportunities for these students to have other Olympic experiences and hopefully begin a lifetime of activity and enjoyment of sport.

Crucially, the project will monitor the effect of these festivals on participation and retention levels in sport and activity.

Working with the schools and local clubs this will provide opportunities for the students to develop the experiences they have enjoyed, whilst attending the Festival of Sport.

London 2012 can be inspirational in so many ways. In Coventry and Warwickshire we hope it will mean more young people choose sport and physical activity as a habit for life and an opportunity to challenge themselves to be the best they can be by London 2012.

2009

- Roll out of Olympic logo and new 'Inspire Mark' brand
- Big build continues on all four major Olympic Park venues

2010

- London 2012 Volunteer Programme launched
- Torch Relay opportunities identified

2011

- 7.7 million tickets for Olympics go on sale
- 1.5 million tickets for Paralympics go on sale

2012

- July 27 - August 12 Opening and Closing Ceremony Olympic Games
- August 29 - September 9 Opening and Closing Ceremony Paralympic Games

Waves of progress continue to be made as Aquatics Centre roof is lifted into place

The wave-shaped Aquatics Centre roof has been successfully lifted and lowered into place and is on track to be finished for test events in 2011.

During the Games two 50 metre pools will enable 17,500 spectators to watch the swimming, diving, water polo and synchronised swimming. After the Games it will be scaled down to a 2,500-seat venue and provide world-class facilities for the community and also elite competition.

BMW have signed as the latest London 2012 Tier One partner

BMW has been announced as the official automotive partner of the London 2012 Games. This makes BMW the seventh Tier One partner and 24th domestic partner to team up with LOCOG for the 2012 Games.

The company will supply around 4,000 vehicles to transport the 'Games family' during the Olympic and Paralympic Games - including athletes, technical officials, the media and International Sports Federations using low carbon emission transport.

The Queen visits the Olympic Park to plant the first tree

Her Majesty The Queen has visited the Olympic Park to review the progress being made on the venues and infrastructure for the London 2012 Games.

Her Majesty also helped plant the first tree, a 17-year-old English white willow, on the park. This was the first of more than 4,000 trees that will be planted in the parklands across the 2.5sq km site. A total of 300 trees will be located on the Stadium 'island', half of which are due to be planted by the end of 2009.

London 2012 unveils Olympic pictograms after six years of development

The 38 designs are vibrant depictions of each sporting discipline, developed in consultation with each International Sporting Federation.

The Olympic and Paralympic pictograms will be used on signage, tickets and at venues, helping spectators to navigate around during the Games. Two formats of the pictograms have been created, a silhouette version and a 'dynamic' version which has been inspired by the London Underground map and will be used on London 2012 merchandise and posters.

Our Plans... Africa Inspires



Much of the publicity around London 2012 outside of the capital has been focused on where National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and their athletes will be based for Pre-Games Training Camps (PGTC).

In Coventry and Warwickshire, we recognise the press and media benefits of hosting countries in the build up to London 2012, however, we are realistic in the reality of securing these opportunities.

We have used the concept of PGTC's and what we can take from countries wishing to use our facilities and turned it on its head to explore what we can give back to them, so they can benefit and develop with our help.

Through building capacity in people, businesses and sports organisations, Africa Inspires aims to create a partnership to provide mutual benefits and leave a sporting, cultural and sustainable legacy that extends well beyond London 2012.

In delivering this project, we aim to enable more teachers and coaches to develop young people in sport and benefit from organised sporting events and competitions in both their home country and in our sub-region, creating a lasting impact on the structure of sport within all partner countries.

As with the focus of the CW 2012 Partnership as a whole, we will be looking to secure lasting links by working to share and celebrate the wider themes of culture, business and education by working together.

Celebrating this international partnership will be of importance in promoting greater understanding and improved cohesion of the diverse communities across the sub-region.

We will also be working to advocate change in peoples attitudes to their everyday lifestyle to give considerations to issues of sustainability and take measures to improve the impact on the environment and local economy.

Talent shines at regions sports awards



Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Awards winners 2009

The fifth annual Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Awards have celebrated the very best of regional sport.

Led by Coventry University, the event held at the Ricoh Arena and supported by a number of local partners, aims to recognise sporting achievement at all levels across the region.

Among the award winners was Rowena Cole, from Coventry, who won the 2009 Young Sportswoman of the Year award.

The 17-year-old runner, who has her sights firmly set on success at London 2012, said: "This is a very nice feeling, I don't know how to describe it, and I am very honoured."

Other award categories celebrated the region's unsung heroes, team of the year, school sport and the lifetime achievement award, which were presented by event sponsors, local partners and Coventry and Warwickshire Olympic and Paralympic ambassadors.

Olympic Legend



Rita Thompson 1980 and 1984 Paralympic Games

Rita had a successful sporting career as a lawn bowler at the 1980 and 1984 Paralympics. Rita won bronze in the Single and gold in the Pair at Arnhem 1980 and silver and gold in the same competitions at the 1984 Games. Rita's achievement in 1980 made her the first person from Coventry to win a Paralympic Gold medal.

Olympic Hopeful



Rhys Walker Badminton

Rhys currently holds the national ranking of number one and is ranked in the top three in Europe for the under-16 category. He is also the current national champion of both the singles and doubles competition. Rhys has an ultimate goal of competing for Team GB at the Olympics and is now competing and training in Europe to achieve his ambition.

Tom's update



October 31 saw the 2012 Games reach a major milestone as we reached 1,000 days to go until the opening ceremony of the 30 Olympiad in 2012.

More time has now passed since London won the bid back in 2005 (over 1,500 days) than there is to go until we stage the two biggest sporting events in the world.

Despite the worst economic conditions in recent history, support and enthusiasm for London 2012 is growing as we count down to welcoming the world to London and the UK.

2009 has been a great year of action, success and delivery. Locally we have celebrated the 1,000 days to go countdown for both the Olympics and Paralympics, launching 12 milestones of our own that we aim to achieve by 2012 as we continue our journey towards this once in a life time opportunity.

We are delivering our six major projects and through NHS Coventry funding, our Festival of Sport project, was awarded our first London 2012 Inspire Mark accreditation. Over the coming months we aim to support local organisations such as Warwick Arts Centre,

Royal Shakespeare Company and Imagineer Productions with their Cultural Olympiad plans.

Next year is a huge year for international sport as we welcome the Winter Olympics to Vancouver in February, the Football World Cup to South Africa in June and the Commonwealth Games to India in October.

Following that, London 2012 will be just around the corner and the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be eighteen months away. Thanks for your support. Merry Christmas and have a happy new year.