

The Legacy: A community first approach for London 2012



The Olympics & the Legacy

History: background & aspiration

Tension between elite performance (medals) and mass participation (active lifestyles/sports for all)

This tension heightened as government / political interventions have increased - this is a contested arena

Closed access to bureaucracy of delivery

No Olympic / Paralympic Games has yet been able to deliver a tangible Legacy (Sydney, Athens, Beijing)

The Olympics & the Legacy



Facilities are not Legacy

The Olympics & the Legacy

Reasons for this include:

- Inevitable emphasis upon Olympic sports (e.g. football = mass participation)
- Legacy planning 'bolted on' to the demands of staging the Olympic Games
- Lack of joined up thinking across Government about Legacy e.g. Health (DH) want active lifestyles, Media, Culture & Sport (DMCS) emphasise sporting success, Transport (DT) want efficient movement...
- Government departments are target driven.

The Olympics & the Legacy

Other reasons:

- Some Olympic sports do not match with DH requirements for active lifestyles (e.g. shooting, archery) whilst others have resource implications exclusive to mass participation (e.g. sailing, equestrian sports)
- LOCOG failure to focus upon and drive the Legacy by adequate consultation with partners empowered to enact or contribute to the Legacy...
- ...In Bedford: BBC, Sport Bedford, University

Tensions

- The 'significant others' (Olympic heroes / heroines) factor - What happens after the Kelly Holmes' motivation session?
- Removing environmental barriers: cycle/footpath maintenance (cycling, walking), street/area lighting (personal security), clean up recreation areas
- Appropriate facilities – indoor and outdoor (e.g. aerobic/dance spaces – basketball/tennis) or improved access
- Specifically trained personnel to develop and deliver programmes (e.g. community leaders, coaches, teaching assistants, dance tutors)

Tensions

Part of the problem is:

- DH / CMO targets are measurement specific (e.g. adult = 30 mins. raised heart-rate 5 times week – threshold of achievement!)
- Messages about ideal body shape & size (e.g. despite rhetoric one can be fat and fit, thin and unfit)
- Environmental dominance of car
- Lazy is not the same as sedentary (latter is created by the environment)
- Sport (esp. Olympic sport) is only part of the answer

Physical Activity and Sport

- Sport appeals to some groups more than others
- Sport is significantly repelling to some
- Sport has an ideological and national dimension because of the values embedded in it (discipline, control, focus, effort, responsibility and 'deferred gratification')
- The idea of activity thresholds does not appeal to everyone, & is not comprehensible by some
- ...yet sport (+ its funding) is threshold and target driven

Sport or Physical Activity

Department Health calculate:

- £8.3 billion per year = cost of inactivity to the nation
- - only 40% males reach activity threshold
- - only 28% females reach activity threshold
- - male and female activity declines with age
- - 27 million adults are not active enough to meet the CMO's recommendations for activity
- - activity rates are significantly lower in certain groups

Sport or Physical Activity

- Department Health just launched new policy:

Change4life www.nhs.uk/change4life to get across messages about nutrition, health and activity e.g. 5 a day; adult 30 minutes can be made up of 3 x 10; gardening and walking....

-thus distinction between PA and Sport...

....but clearly there is overlap

Sport England

- 16th December 2008: - £480m investment in grassroots sport
- - aim to get 1 million additional people into sport
- - target is 46 sports including all 2012 Olympic and Paralympic sports *“Responsibility for delivery has been placed in the hands of each governing body with clear targets agreed on a sport by sport basis”*

...so, 1 million of the 2 million ‘active people’ target for 2012 are to be provided by sport...

Sport and Community Leadership (SACL)

- University of Bedfordshire (pro) active in supporting Legacy
- Recognise the importance of Physical Education (Bedford history & strength - 'inertia')
- Recognise need for more than PE to get communities active
- Recognise that not all communities are active (e.g. some ethnic minorities, disabled, women, the aging)
- Recognise that the easy bit is getting more activity out of those already doing it (males, middle classes – deferred gratification, work ethic)
- Recognise the hard bit is going from '*zero to some*' rather than from '*some to more*' – culture change

Sport and Community Leadership (SACL)

BA(Hons) Sport and Community Leadership will prepare students through a generic sport programme together with specifically focussed strands of study:

- Sports Leaders UK Level 3 Award in Higher Sports Leadership
- Working creatively with diversity
- Intellectual critique through the study of community cohesion, sport equity and sustainability

Sport and Community Leadership (SACL)

How will SACL contribute to the Legacy:

- Community partnerships (e.g. Sport Bedford, BOOST)
- Students as the 'flux' between University and local communities (e.g. work placements & graduates, guest speakers come in)
- Targeting of hitherto inactive or poorly activated groups (e.g. ethnic, rehab, age)
- Research informed teaching (e.g. link to the Bedford Charity and synthesis with HAPPY project, & Busy Bodies)
- Links with commercial enterprise (e.g. BAY)

Closing Thoughts

- UofB at Bedford aware of issues:
- SACL validated for September 2009 start – first graduates 2012
- Complexity of political agendas informing the Legacy
- Re-active8 Gold: sport for over 50s
- UofB Student Union emphasis on traditional sports
- Current information gathering, consultation, research projects all embryonic at present...
- ... but we feel excited by the possibilities and we can make a contribution.