

ADDRESS TO THE FOUNDATION FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
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Minister for Olympics and London

Introduction

Earlier this month I visited Vancouver, host city for the 2010 Winter Olympics. I was struck by the passion and the self-confidence of the organisers as they went about preparing their city.

Vancouver bid for the Games because they were unapologetic about their desire to use it to regenerate the docks, to put their city on the map, and to boost the economy of British Columbia.

Of course we had much to talk about because both our cities share an ambition to use the Games to accelerate and enhance physical regeneration plans. But our ambitions for the 2012 Games are even bigger.

Looking back at past host cities, it is easy to understand what the Games meant to them.

For Sydney it was the tourism dividend and the chance to raise their profile.

For Barcelona it was regeneration.

And Beijing's admittance into 'the most exclusive club in the world' confirms China's arrival on the global stage in economic and cultural terms.

It is only a matter of weeks until London takes over the baton from Beijing. So it is the right time to make sure people know what the 2012 Games will mean for us and how we are delivering on these ambitions.

All of us should be looking around our spheres of influence – and there is a great deal of influence in this room - for ways to contribute to the legacy of the London Olympics.

Faster, higher, stronger

Our aim is quite simple. It is inspired by the International Olympic Committee's motto 'faster, higher, stronger'. Faster progress towards a healthier nation. Higher aspirations for young people for their work and their play. A Stronger community bound by self-belief and the knowledge that Britain has hosted the greatest ever Games.

Faster, higher, stronger.

These three words summarise a wealth of ambition. Let me explain why.

Faster: a healthier nation

Every Olympic Games create heroes. Dame Kelly Holmes' double gold at the Athens Games. Daley Thompson's triumph in the decathlon in '80 and '84. And with any luck, this year young British hopefuls such as our diving prodigy Tom Daley will join the pantheon.

That these achievements remind people of the enjoyment and excitement of competitive sport, and inspire them to be more active is not surprising.

But too frequently the memory of these great Olympians' achievements lasts far longer than the man on the street's enthusiasm to take up swimming again.

It is striking that no previous host city has ever been able to demonstrate a sustained increase in the number of people playing more sport.

We are taking a different approach. Put simply, we are giving people more reasons to do sport and be physically active. Improved facilities, more coaching, better information about how to keep healthy.

The Olympics will represent the pinnacle of over a decade of sustained investment in sports facilities, leaving world-class venues for swimming, cycling, athletics venues and many more for elite athletes and local communities alike.

But make no mistake, when I declare our commitment to faster progress towards a healthier 'nation', I'm not just talking about London.

In the light of the 2012 Games we have reviewed the way in which sport in England is delivered at a community level so that everyone can benefit.

At the same time we are challenging local authorities to use the inspiration of 2012 to accelerate their work.

For instance, in Sheffield they are already starting a programme called the 'People's Movement' which will see the council make gyms and pools more accessible and affordable and refurbish local parks and playgrounds.

The message is that anyone can get involved. No excuses. If you run a business, see whether you can sponsor a local charity fun run, or look at how you can encourage your employees to be more active through sports days or cycling to work initiatives.

If you are a parent, it can be as simple as getting the whole family learning a new sport or going for a swim every Sunday.

We've done the 'faster', now the 'higher'.

Higher: aspirations for young people

Back in 2005, we impressed the International Olympic Committee by showing that we understood the unique motivational power that the Olympics, and sport more widely, can have.

One of the reasons why we won the right to host the 2012 Games was our promise to transform the lives of a generation of young people through sport.

Creating higher aspirations for young people in their work and their play is about unlocking talent – creating a legacy of confidence and creativity. This goes right to the heart of this Government's commitment to enterprise and innovation.

For example, in March the Government announced £30 million investment to extend enterprise education in schools. And £1 million is going into the Prince's Trust to work with disadvantaged young people and give them role models who will promote the benefits of enterprise.

So we are using the power of the Olympics in this agenda too. We are working with the organisers of the annual Enterprise Week on ways to use the Games as inspiration for the Make Your Mark enterprise challenge that around 40,000 young people take part in every year.

And we have a 2012 Education Programme, kicking off this September, that will inspire young people in schools around the country through topics such as enterprise and healthy living.

This is our chance to grow the talent and skills of young people throughout the country. This isn't a 'nice to have'. It is an integral part of what our Games are about and what this Government values.

The Prime Minister has referred to the 'Skills Race' that the UK must win if we are to continue to compete with other global economies. That is why we are looking across the entire Olympic programme to identify the skills the Games will need and to match this with investment.

In construction there has been £50 million more investment from the sector; a new National Skills Academy on the Olympic site; 2,000 new training opportunities for local people and more placements targeted at women, ethnic minority groups and disabled people.

For businesses, we have the 2012 Business Network and some very successful 'diversity roadshows' around the country – a completely new way to get a greater spread of individuals and companies engaged in the Games.

These initiatives are all directly inspired by the 2012 Games. When you put them in the context of wider Government measures such as women's business centres and a new

£12.5 million capital fund to invest in women-led businesses, then the potential scale of the Olympic benefits becomes clear.

These are not a series of unrelated add-ons, but a continual drive to develop value-added from the Games.

A generation of young men and women inspired by the Games to simply achieve more, and given the skills and support to fulfil their potential.

And I hope you will all resolve to be part of this. By registering on the 'Compete For' business network, companies are not only putting themselves in the best position to win Olympic work, but also wider government contracts worth around £150 billion each year.

The Olympics are helping us change the way we do business for the better and for the long term.

#### Stronger: community cohesion and national pride

The third pillar of our Games is the drive to bring people together in a celebration of national pride and renewed confidence in our nation.

This means a great Cultural Olympiad launching this autumn.

But it also means something very specific for the people of East London who have not had access to the kinds of facilities, housing, local jobs and transport that we would want to give citizens to enjoy.

And the regeneration of a huge swathe of brownfield land is part of this.

John [Armitt] is going to talk to you about what we are doing to make that great vision a reality.

But I want to be clear that we will only succeed if we listen to local people when they tell us what their community needs from the legacy of the Games. If we make them feel that these are *their* Games. For the people who live in the Olympic Borough's and areas immediately around the park, we will fail if the Olympic juggernaut is imposed on their lives.

This is why we have had 450 students from 17 primary, secondary and special-needs schools from across the 5 Host Boroughs helping turn the site's boundary fence into a riot of colour.

It is why we are inviting local people to act as ambassadors so that they can not only keep their communities up to speed on the latest developments but can themselves get involved.

And it is why the GLA is taking a roadshow to every single one of the 33 London

boroughs. Already over 44,000 people have come to and find out what we are doing.

The 2012 Games are going to be one of those increasingly rare opportunities for people to come together and share an experience.

So we are planning to have 'Live Sites' – giant TV screens in towns around the UK – so that people can enjoy the sporting and cultural spectacle together.

### Conclusion

Hosting the Games is a remarkable opportunity to examine who we are as a nation and how we want to define ourselves when the world comes to visit us in 2012.

The amount we have to achieve in 4 years, and the intensity of the scrutiny is going to make this the biggest challenge – but also the greatest prize – for a generation.

But, after seven years of preparation, the summer of 2012 will be over in a flash.

Which is why we have placed such importance on embedding these aims and values in all our planning.

Our commitment to sport, to young people, to the communities of East London and the whole of the UK is woven into all our preparations.

You can look back to our bid, and forward through our legacy plans to the kind of society that we want the Games to help deliver. But we cannot do this alone. We need your help.

So I turn the question back to you – *what do each of you want the legacy of the 2012 Games to be? How will you engage in making that legacy a reality?*

I look forward to hearing your thoughts shortly, because we need your commitment to go out and help us deliver this if we are to make the most of the opportunity of the 2012 Olympics.

END.