

<b>Institution: University of East London (UEL)</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 23</b>
<b>Title of case study: Influencing Local and National Government planning, assessment, and evaluation of the legacy of the 2012 Olympics</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Interdisciplinary research at UEL has contributed to understanding and debate about urban regeneration among policy-making, professional and public audiences. More specifically, it has stimulated and informed discussion and debate about the potential legacies of the London 2012 Olympic games and similar “mega-events”. Between 2008 and 2013 the research informed analysis, planning and evaluation of urban regeneration policy and practice relating to the Olympic legacy at international (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), national (UK Government Department for Communities and Local Government, House of Lords), city-wide and local government (London Assembly) levels. UEL Research and its impact have evolved in tandem over the exciting period since the announcement of the award of the Olympics to East London in July 2005, and will continue as the Olympic legacy unfolds in this part of the city and more widely.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Interdisciplinary research in sociology, urban studies, geo-information studies, social policy and cultural studies conducted within UEL’s London East Research Institute (LERI), Centre for Geo-information Systems, and Sustainability Research Institute has, for many years, focussed on the urban regeneration of East London. Research undertaken within LERI since 1993 has drawn on UEL’s regional context within the changing landscape of East London to investigate the cultural, social and economic dimensions of contemporary urbanism. LERI’s work has focused particularly on the delivery and implications of large-scale regeneration projects, and recently on the impacts of the financial crisis (beginning in 2007-8). Its staff have analysed major public interventions in urban regeneration and, in particular, in the Thames Gateway Development Zone [1].</p> <p>Since the announcement of the award of the Olympics to East London in July 2005, work within LERI by Poynter, MacRury (UEL to 2012), Rustin and Brimicombe has especially stimulated and supported contemporary debate about and conceptual understanding of urban regeneration in the context of potential legacies of the 2012 games and similar “mega-events”. UEL responded rapidly to that announcement with a new strand of interdisciplinary work allowing it to take the lead in critical analysis of the potential legacies of the forthcoming “Mega-event” through their consideration in a number of thought pieces such as Poynter’s 2006 working paper “From Beijing to Bow Bells: Measuring the Olympics Effect”. Although they happen within short-term frameworks, mega-events have long-term implications for the urban spaces they remake. They are ‘temporal hubs’ that initiate complex processes of social change. LERI research has elucidated these processes by adopting and developing narratives of commodity and gift [3, 4]; re-conceptualizing the forms of institutional innovation required to deliver social transformation [2]; re-thinking the potential provided by public investment in urban infrastructure to include not only its creation but also the policy mechanisms required to enhance its more equitable social distribution [1, 5, 6]; and grounded these contributions to sociological enquiry by basing them on the close scrutiny of socio-economic, cultural and environmental data [5, 6].</p> <p>Along with LERI’s long-standing reputation for expertise in urban regeneration in the ‘Thames Gateway’ [1], this post-announcement research provided the academic credibility catalyzing a commission in 2006/7 by the (local government) London Assembly for UEL to produce an interdisciplinary research report reviewing the Olympic legacy for four previous Olympic cities, and reporting on key legacy indicators [2]. That report made policy recommendations based on the evaluation of London’s five legacy commitments (published in January 2008) to: increase opportunities for Londoners to become involved in sport; ensure Londoners benefit from new jobs, business and volunteering opportunities; transform the heart of East London; deliver a sustainable Games and develop sustainable communities; and showcase London as a diverse, inclusive, creative and welcoming city. It concluded that a mega event’s success lies in its capacity achieve a ‘legacy momentum’ via its use to initiate further, publicly-supported programmes of renewal and regeneration. These and related findings were reported in, journal articles [e.g. 3,4] and a major</p>

book [5] edited by Poynter and MacRury with notable contributions from Poynter, MacRury and Rustin.

In April 2008 the ESRC was formally contracted by the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) as the London 2012 Games Impact Study Research Partner. Following a competitive tender process by the ESRC, UEL was commissioned by the ESRC to undertake the 2012 Games Impact Study [6]; the contract for a pre-Games Report was awarded to UEL and TGI&S in July 2009 and work commenced on that project in November 2009 [5]. The two phases of this longitudinal study reported data on 11 environmental, 23 socio-cultural and 22 economic indicators, focusing on indicators of impact and providing evidence of underlying trends. These studies, which were the first set up to evaluate the impacts of a summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, provided:

- (i) new theoretical approaches to understanding mega events, especially the concept of 'legacy' and its implications for local communities, social equality and urban development;
- (ii) new insights into the exploration of cross-country, comparative research on the 'legacies' achieved by Olympic host cities;
- (iii) evaluations and analysis designed to inform the process of review and development of public policy-making in domestic and international contexts; and
- (iv) analysis and assessment of the economic models informing contemporary urban development and the social implications of public investments and interventions in regions with high concentrations of social disadvantage.

This work fed into LERI's production in 2009 of a think piece report commissioned by the London Assembly to guide its investigation into the future role of the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) [7]. Since 2009, research within LERI into mega event cities more widely, in an attempt to contribute to better defining and explaining 'legacy' as a social and cultural ambition complementing economic benefits in the city and beyond.

### 3. References to the research

1. Cohen, P. and M. Rustin (eds.) (2008) *London's Turning – The Making of Thames Gateway*, London: Ashgate. <http://doi.org/fsn6z9>
2. May 2007: A Commissioned Research review by the *London Assembly*: A Lasting Legacy for London? Assessing the legacy of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games <http://bit.ly/1h2qgLB>
3. MacRury, I. (2008) 'Re-thinking the Legacy 2012: the Olympics as commodity and gift, 21st Century Society': *Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences* Vol. 3, No. 3, 295–310, November 2008. <http://doi.org/cqm6wr>
4. MacRury, I., & Poynter, G. (2008). The Regeneration Games: Commodities, Gifts and the Economics of London 2012\*. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25(14), 2072-2090. <http://doi.org/fq3h9h>
5. Poynter, G., & MacRury, I., (Eds.). (2009). *Olympic cities: 2012 and the remaking of London*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. <http://doi.org/d2gfwc>
6. University of East London and Thames Gateway Institute for Sustainability for Economic & Social Research Council on behalf of LOCOG, (2010) 'Olympic Games Impact Study - London 2012 Pre-Games Report' <http://bit.ly/1jmctot>
7. MacRury, I. & Poynter, G., (2009) 'London's Olympic Legacy, a 'Thinkpiece': <http://bit.ly/HZ5h64>

The international quality of [5] and [6] is indicated by the award to Dr Viehoff, a LERI Early Career Researcher, of a 2013 International Olympic Committee Post-Graduate research award (in collaboration with H. Kretschmer, University of Cologne), one of only nine successful applications of 41 submitted by early career researchers in 25 countries.

### 4. Details of the impact

The research outlined above has stimulated and informed discussion and debate about the potential legacies of the London 2012 Olympic games and helped to define the dynamics of Olympic legacy, including the notion of 'legacy momentum'. It has informed the analysis, planning and evaluation of urban regeneration policy and practice relating to that legacy by the Organisation

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for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UK Government Department for Communities and Local Government, and Greater London Assembly (GLA).

Some of these impacts have been delivered via LERI's use of the research to establish a broad network of collaborative links with external partners in UK universities (University College London, Queen Mary College) and in universities in Brazil (the Architectural and Urban Technology Research Nucleus of the University of São Paulo and Gama Filho University, Rio de Janeiro) and Spain (Centre d'Estudis Olímpics i de l'Esport at the Autonomous University of Barcelona). In September 2013 UEL hosted the International Conference on '*Olympic Legacies – impacts of mega-events on cities*', at which papers were presented by over 120 academics, professionals and policy makers from across the world.

**Shaping and influencing Local Government policy (London Assembly) on the assessment and delivery of Olympic Legacy.**

The UEL/London Assembly commissioned research review of Olympic Legacy published in 2007 [2] was presented in autumn 2007 to the then-Major of London, Ken Livingstone. It was used between 2008-2012 to brief London Assembly members, and metrics reported in it were used by Assembly members to press the Olympic Delivery bodies on outcome measures [a]. It was also referenced in the Written Evidence presented in January 2010 by the London Assembly EDCST Committee to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee [b]. In addition, evidence from the report was reproduced in the London Assembly's own 2009 policy document, '*Toward a Lasting Legacy*' [c], many sections of which drew directly on conclusions from [2]. The findings of the report are, for example, described (and the report itself referenced) in paragraphs 1.5 (p.8); 3.1 (p.13); 4.1 (p. 21); and 6.1 and 6.2 (p. 28).

The subsequent ESRC-funded evaluation of key indicators of legacy [6] provided a longitudinal evaluation of the initial impact of the London 2012 Games on the UK, London and local boroughs. The studies conducted as part of that evaluation enabled LERI to engage with local and UK government and LOCOG to fulfill its commitments to the IOC, and to evaluate government policy performance and the value of investment in the Games. This provided an evidence-base to inform public investment decisions and interventions required to achieve positive outcomes in the post-games legacy phase.

**Working with the Department for Communities and Local Government and OECD to a review of the UK approach to Legacy.**

The international Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) programme on Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) has advised government and communities across many countries since 1982 on how to respond to economic change and tackle complex problems. Through its Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the UK Government invited the OECD LEED Programme to carry out a peer review of the Olympic legacy arrangements put in place by the Department and local/London stakeholders. LERI's 2009 background thinkpiece report, "London's Olympic Legacy" [7] was produced as part of this process.

That report for the OECD and Department for Communities and Local Government [7] recommended that the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) broadened its remit to include the delivery of socio-economic benefits by working closely with local authorities and city-wide government, and that it be given long term assurances about its future funding. This informed policy recommendations subsequently made in the London Assembly 2010 document '*Legacy Limited: a review of the Olympic Park Legacy Company Role*' [d]. Its influence is evident, for example, in the inclusion in that policy document of key risks and challenges faced by the OPLC in the run-up to and aftermath of the 2012 Games (pp.10-12). This draws particularly on the risk analysis in [7, esp. pp.88-89] in relation to the attainment of the five Olympic legacy commitments. UEL work published in [2] and [6] is explicitly referenced under recommendation 2 (pp. 27 and 28), which raises concerns about the relationship between local and national government. '*Legacy Limited*' also refers to LERI's research on Olympic cities: it includes, for example, comments made by Baroness Ford, the Chair of the Olympic Park Legacy Company, referring to [5] in stating that the Company would learn from the experience of previous residential developments in east London

(paragraph 5.3, p. 38).

The UEL report also helped to identify and share ‘best practice’ guidelines for OECD member/non-member countries and specified areas for improvement to ensure a strong legacy for East London. Poynter worked closely with DCLG analysts and policymakers and was involved in high-level discussions with DCLG senior officials, including the responsible Director General, and the OECD LEED reviewers [e]. In combination with other LERI’s research [1-5], the report fed into the evidence base for the department’s approach to London 2012 legacy and its governance. Thus, for example, it is referred to directly in the OECD peer review report [f], and contributed to a positive response from OECD on London’s preparations, highlighting the huge range of potential local benefits of large-scale regeneration activity. The recommendations made in the LERI Report (pp. 6-11) included establishing an economic framework or plan for the area to encourage the development of business clusters, inward investment and long term job creation and recommended an enhanced role for city-wide government to assume leadership in collaboration with local authorities and the (then) Legacy Company in creating such a plan. These recommendations were reflected in the OECD publication ‘Local Development Benefits from Staging Global Events’ and acknowledged by the OECD authors (p.18).

Government officials and the relevant Minister commented on the OECD report via a press release (18 October 2010) that referred explicitly to specific recommendations made [7]. Local Government Minister Bob Neill (Department for Communities and Local Government) commented:

*“ It’s clear that the OECD share the Government’s view that communities know best how to meet their area’s needs and ambitions. We’ve already begun to put control of Legacy decisions back into local authorities’ and the Mayor of London’s hands...” [g].*

Subsequently, MacRury and Brimicombe were invited to become members of the academic panel for the consortium led by Grant Thornton that undertook the UK Government *Department for Culture Media and Sport* meta-evaluation work (London 2012). The UEL ESRC-funded evaluation [6] was one of only 19 key publications referenced in the first Meta Analysis report produced by the consortium [h]. Brimicombe was also subsequently been appointed as an adviser to the House of Lords London 2012 legacy committee [i].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- a. Letter from the London Assembly affirming their use of LERI research to develop long-term thinking on the legacy of the 2012 Games. Available on request.
- b. For reference to [2] in the Written Evidence presented to the Media and Sport Committee: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmcmds/416/416we07.htm> para. 4
- c. For reference to [2] in the London Assembly (2009) policy document ‘Toward a Lasting Legacy’: <http://bit.ly/17MjSrZ> pp. 8, 13, 21, 28.
- d. London Assembly (2010) report ‘Legacy Limited: a review of the Olympic Park Legacy Company Role’: [http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL\\_EDCST\\_Legacy%20Limited.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL_EDCST_Legacy%20Limited.pdf)
- e. Statement from Principal Research Officer, Local Governance Research Unit, Department of Communities and Local Government about Poynter’s contribution to the work of DCLG analysts and policymakers and in high-level discussions with DCLG senior officials. Available on request.
- f. For discussion of [7] in the 2012 OECD peer review document, Local Development Benefits from Staging Global Events: Achieving the Local Development Legacy: <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/46207013.pdf> pp. 18-19
- g. Press release responding to the OECD report and referencing explicitly to the contribution of [7] <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/london-2012-sets-new-world-standard-on-olympic-legacy>
- h. For MacRury’s contribution to the Department for Culture Media and Sport, Meta analysis scoping report: <http://bit.ly/18848Wf> p. 24 (n.18). See also p. 16 for reference to use of [6] to inform Disability Evaluation Strategy.
- i. For Brimicombe’s appointment as an Olympic Legacy Expert: <http://bit.ly/1c28xa5>