

Community Engagement and
Preserving the "Legacy" of London
2012:
Case Study of the British Olympic
Association Archive at UEL

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Focus of the Talk

- ▶ This talk will be jointly presented by the University of East London Archives Team of Monna Matharu and Paul Dudman.
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Legacy and London 2012



Conflicting Narratives – Official & Community

- ▶ The concept of “legacy” especially as it related to the impact of the London 2012 Olympic Games on all aspects of society and economics within East London is inevitably “contested.”
- ▶ There is a polarisation of views between the “official” narrative “modernisation” and the “community” narrative “regeneration”

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UEL and the Archive

- ▶ The University of East London (UEL) presented itself as the Local University for London 2012 Olympic Games.
- ▶ Both Team USA and the TeamGB Medical Team used the UEL Docklands Campus as a base for the 2012 Games.
 - ▶ Equipment for our UEL Sports Dock Gym was funded through Team USA and has only just been replaced after a decade, with the existing gym equipment being offered to community organisations.
 - ▶ Newham community access to the Gym has been seen as one of the legacy outcomes of the Olympics.
- ▶ Several UEL students participated in London 2012 and UEL's commitment to supporting sports scholars has been a major selling point for the UEL post 2012.
- ▶ Given UEL's proximity to the Olympic Park, this was one of the key drivers for the University being awarded the British Olympic Association Archive and Library awarded in 2010 after a tendering process.

Representation of “ Legacy” in the BOA Archives

- ▶ In terms of how the British Olympic Association has represented London 2012 and its “ legacy” , this has very much been to focus on the positive success of the British Olympic Team that competed in London 2012.
- ▶ Given the role of the British Olympic Association as the National Olympic Committee (NOC) for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, it is perhaps inevitable that the Archive should have this focus, with an emphasis on documenting the work of the BOA as an organisation and highlighting the successes of the British Teams at the Olympic Games.
- ▶ Records to date which document London 2012 in particular, these include the preparation of the London 2012 Olympic Team and related documentation linked to LOCAG for the preparation of the Olympic Village.
- ▶ A recent deposit also includes extensive plans and information on the development and construction of the Olympic Village in Stratford.
- ▶ Post the London 2012 Games, there is a strong focus on collecting the celebratory aspects of TeamGB’s success, including extensive press cuttings and the collection of physical artefacts belonging to Team GB members.

Archives as Legacy of London 2012 1

- ▶ What is perhaps less evident in the BOA Archives and the LOCAG Archives, both of which err towards the provision of the official narratives of London 2012, are the community voices of those who were either involved with the London 2012 Olympics in some capacity (volunteers, Games Makers, etc) or whose lived experience was directly impacted by the London 2012 Olympics.
- ▶ A few community organisations like Eastside Community Heritage have attempted to bridge this gap by undertaking community-focused oral history









Participatory Community Focused Engagement



Tate Lives – Listening to the Community – What Stories Do They Want To Tell?

- ▶ “Neighbourhoods

Contact Details

- ▶ UEL Archives
 - ▶ Link: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/study/student-life/library-archives-learning-services/library-archive>
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Bibliography

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