

# MEETING REPORTS

## PLANNING TRANSPORT FOR SUMMER 2012

by **Graham Stephens, TfL Games Coordination Manager**

**A report of the LURS meeting at All Saints Clubhouse on 13 April 2010**

The speaker is responsible for planning and coordinating Transport for London's (TfL's) response to the many challenges presented by the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (collectively referred to as just "the Games") as well as other planned events during summer 2012. He oversees all TfL modes of transport (including roads).

Transport was a cornerstone of London's successful bid. After the transport elements of London's initial submission were criticised by an International Olympic Committee expert, a thorough review took place, and significant increases in transport investment were included in the final bid. These now form the backbone of TfL's current five-year, £13.5 billion investment programme. Much of the transport investment currently being delivered in London is as a direct result of the successful bid – which is already giving the city a lasting transport legacy from the Games.

While TfL's normal activities are carried out on behalf of the Greater London Authority and the Mayor of London, transport for the Games is a little different. One of the Mayor's priorities for TfL for its current Business Plan is to deliver for London 2012 Games and secure a lasting legacy. The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) is responsible not just for building the Olympic Park and the new venues, but also for investing in facilities to transport spectators and the "Games Family" (athletes, officials, the media, and sponsors). The ODA pays TfL, National Rail and other transport providers for the additional services throughout the UK that are needed by Games spectators and workforce during 'Games Time'. TfL and the ODA work closely together to deliver the ODA's transport plan – available online at [ODA Transport Plan](#) – as well as working with various other London agencies on the city-wide challenge that 2012 presents.

### **A SNAPSHOT OF LONDON TODAY**

The City of London is the centre of the financial and insurance sectors, and also the centre of the judiciary. Contributing 2% of the UK's total GDP, it employs 340,000 mainly professional workers. Canary Wharf has emerged as a rival to the City of London, and itself now employs 93,000 workers (mostly in the corporate, financial and newspaper sectors).

The West End employs 285,000 workers (17,000 of them in the entertainment industry). It is the world's top shopping destination, with 6.6m square feet of retail space spread over 600 shops. The three primary shopping streets (Oxford, Regent and Bond Streets) alone attract a combined retail spend of over £5.5 billion per year – more than Manchester and Birmingham combined. The West End also contains 40 renowned theatres, 30 museums and galleries, 17 Michelin-starred restaurants, and seven tranquil green spaces. It gets over 200m visitors a year (25 per cent from overseas, and a further 21 per cent from outside London).

The movement of people is not London's only transport consideration – freight movements (such as deliveries to shopping areas, and the supply of fresh food to restaurants) are also vital. London is a 24-hour city, and places such as Smithfield and New Covent Garden markets can be surprisingly busy at 03.00, with fresh food moving in by lorry and out by van.

All of this economic activity must continue while the Games are underway. There will also be many foreign and day visitors, potentially making London busier than it is on a normal summer day. These visitors will create additional opportunities for London's businesses, but will also put more pressure on the city's transport network. Things will have to operate differently. As the Mayor is fond of saying, it will be 'business as unusual'.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

London usually sees about 4,000 events each year. These include a wide variety of sporting fixtures, parades, music concerts, and the like. In summer 2012, London will be in “full celebration mode” – in addition to the normal range of events, the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee will be celebrated in June, with the Olympic and Paralympic Games taking place between July and September.

The Olympic Games is the world’s largest logistical event (with 203 participating countries, 17,800 athletes and team officials, and 22,000 media representatives). The Paralympic Games is the world’s *second* largest logistical event (with 170 participating countries, 4,000 athletes and team officials, and 4,000 media representatives). Although smaller than the Olympics, the Paralympics is still a substantial event one that is likely to be especially well-supported in the UK.

The Games will be supported by a workforce (including volunteers) of 140,000, and will be watched by a global television audience of around 4 billion. It was originally intended to sell 7.7m tickets to Olympic events and 1.4m tickets to Paralympic events. However, in response to criticism that not enough tickets would be made available to Londoners, this has recently been increased – there will now be 10m tickets available for Olympic events, and 2m for Paralympic events.

The Games venues and the Media Centre open on 27 June (half-way through Wimbledon fortnight). The Olympic Village is officially opened on 13 July, and the Olympic Torch relay tours other parts of the UK before returning to the London boroughs for the week preceding the Olympic opening ceremony on 27 July. The Olympic Games itself takes place between 28 July and 12 August during which other planned events occur like the Carnival Del Pueblo at Burgess Park on 5 August. After a two-week interval (the Notting Hill Carnival 26/27 August), the Paralympic opening ceremony is on 29 August. The Paralympic Games takes place between 30 August and 9 September. Before the Paralympic Games finishes, children will have gone back to school and the new football season will have begun. In transport terms, the Games require 100 days of sustained effort, and we need to pace ourselves properly – this is a marathon, not a sprint!

Many events will take place at the specially-built venues in the Olympic Park at Stratford, which will be the focus of the Games. About the size of Hyde Park, it includes the Olympic Stadium (for athletics), the Velodrome (for cycling), the Aqua Centre (for swimming and diving), various other sports facilities, and the Olympic Village. Stratford is also the home of the new £1.5 billion Stratford City shopping centre, located between Stratford and Stratford International stations. With 1.9m square feet of retail space and 300 shops and restaurants, it is expected to attract about 100,000 shoppers a day. Due to open in late 2011, it will be East London’s premier shopping destination. Developer Westfield brought forward this planned development by 20 years, as a direct result of the Games and the catchment of 1m potential shoppers – hence, it is part of the substantial Games legacy.

But there are also events taking place outside the Olympic Park. Other Games venues include ExCeL, the dome at North Greenwich, the Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich, Greenwich Park, Horse Guards Parade, Hyde Park, Earl’s Court, the All England Tennis Club at Wimbledon, Lord’s Cricket Ground, Wembley Stadium, and Wembley Arena. A few events (such as the sailing at Portland) take place at venues outside Greater London. There are also a number of “road events” (long-distance running and cycling races) being held on London’s streets.

More than 800,000 spectators are expected to make their way to and from the Games each day – these additional 1.6m daily journeys present a special challenge to London and its transport network.

## INVESTING FOR THE CHALLENGE

London’s successful bid included a number of transport requirements. Safe, secure and reliable transport must be provided for the Games Family and for spectators, and London (and the wider UK) must be kept moving. Transport investment should achieve maximum value for minimum cost, and leave a lasting legacy that helps to facilitate the regeneration of East London. The strategy adopted to meet these requirements involves recognising the Games Family needs to be given priority (by temporarily restricting access to a handful of roads), with every spectator who can using public transport (or in some cases walking or cycling) to and from their venue. Games transport should be accessible to all, and environmentally sustainable.

London will have the best-connected Olympic Park in history. Eighty per cent of all visitors will arrive by rail, using the ten lines that feed the three “gateway stations” (West Ham with up to 20,000 passengers/hour taking the 30 minute walk along the Greenway, the upgraded Stratford Regional with up to 55,000 passengers/hour taking the road, new bridge to Stratford City Centre and underpasses as well as the 14 lifts, and Stratford International with up to 16,000 passengers/hour from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet). Between them, these 10 lines will provide a train every 15 seconds to the park. The temporary South-Eastern “Javelin” shuttle service will carry 8,000 passengers an hour from St. Pancras to Stratford International.

Before 2012, the Jubilee Line upgrade will be complete, raising the current 20,000 passengers/hour to 25,000. This additional capacity will be vital for a line that serves so many Games venues across London. With more space than the trains they replace, the new 2009 Stock on the Victoria Line will also increase overall network capacity, as will the new S Stock trains (being phased in from 2010) on the “sub-surface” lines. The first of these lines to benefit is the Metropolitan. Major works are underway at Stratford to increase the capacity of the existing station, and a new bridge is being built at West Ham to link that station to an upgraded “Greenway” walking route to the Olympic Park. Accessibility improvements are taking place at a number of London Underground stations that serve Games venues (including West Ham, Stratford, and Southfields). At Green Park Underground station – which serves the Horse Guards Parade and Hyde Park venues, as well as The Mall (where most of the road events have their start and finish lines) – a challenging £150m project to give step-free access to every platform is currently underway. London Underground’s Network Operations Centre has recently been upgraded, enhancing its ability to cascade real-time information.

The DLR has received substantial investment to increase capacity by 50%. New trains and platform extensions are being provided to allow three-car operation throughout the network (including on the Beckton route, which serves Games venue ExCeL). The new Canning Town to Stratford International route should open later this year. Overall, the DLR is forecast to carry 83 million passengers in 2012 (compared with 68 million in 2010). London Overground provides an orbital route to Stratford from much of North London, avoiding the congested central area. Stations have been upgraded and are now better staffed. Key step free station interchanges will include Richmond, Stratford and Clapham Junction and a new fleet of air-conditioned trains is now in service. Londoners are already benefiting from the extended and upgraded East London Line, which improves connections into east London.

London’s buses currently carry over 2.2 billion passengers a year. The bus network will remain the only city-wide accessible public transport mode, and the only mode that operates 24-hours a day. To reduce carbon dioxide emissions, 56 diesel-electric hybrid buses are already in service, and 300 more will be in use by 2012. The iconic “New Bus For London” should enter service before the Games. Bus, police, and road traffic control staff working side-by-side in a recently opened TfL centralised facility that controls traffic movements around London and co-ordinates response to road incidents and planned road works. In addition, the ODA are providing further facility enhancements with a Transport Coordination Centre that will link communications with UK-wide transport providers during Games Time. (Network Rail is also expected to base staff here during the Games.)

Thames riverboat services and the Clipper fleet have been enhanced during 2008 (although it is acknowledged that their limited capacity of 7,000 passengers/day means that they can only play a minor role). A number of walking and cycling routes (predominately segregated from other traffic) that feed the Olympic Park and riverside venues are being upgraded. The cycle super highways from Barking to Tower Gateway, Merton to City, Ilford to Aldgate and Wandsworth to Westminster will be operational before the Games. This is a key element in delivering sustainability, and will leave a legacy that encourages a healthier lifestyle.

## **OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW**

While the Olympics and Paralympics are underway, the Olympic Route Network and Paralympic Route Network (ORN/PRN) will operate. This is a temporary network of designated roads linking together all competition venues (as well as some key non-competition sites such as training locations, the IOC accommodation on Park Lane, and the Media accommodation at Russell Square). Mostly, these roads will continue to be open for everyone to use, but there may be some access

restrictions at times, including some Games Lanes. This will ensure that a congestion-free route networks exists between venues and accommodation, for the 55,000-strong Olympic Family and the 15,500-strong Paralympic Family. A recent publication 'On Time' launches the ORN and can be found on –

<http://www.london2012.com/publications/olympic-route-network-and-paralympic-route-network.php>

A dedicated "Games Family Fleet" of around 1500 buses and coaches (separate from the main London bus fleet), together with a few MPVs and multi-occupancy cars, will be provided to transport them. LOCOG is responsible for providing Games Family transport, and has contracted TfL to procure the bus fleet on its behalf. BMW are supplying the other vehicles.

It is expected that average journey times (from accommodation to venue) will be less than 30 minutes – this will ensure that athletes heading for venues can mentally prepare for their events, without having to worry about the journey. Traffic on the ORN should move faster than the average London traffic speed (although it will remain within legal speed limits). The core ORN (which will operate every day during the Games) links Central London with the Olympic Park, ExCeL and Greenwich. Routes to other venues will only operate on days that those venues are hosting Games events. Alternative "back-up" routes are also available but will not have visible interventions.

Spectators and the general public will use the normal public transport network. Rail and Underground services within London will start at normal times, but finish about an hour later than normal. Across these networks, timetables will be enhanced, with certain off-peak and evening services running at close to peak-hour frequencies. Local bus services will be enhanced throughout the day and night, with additional shuttle services between selected venues, and some Park & Ride services between venues and outer-London car parks.

No planned closures of the rail or Underground networks will take place – only critical engineering work will be permitted in engineering hours. Similarly, only emergency roadworks will be allowed, although of course the road events will themselves cause some road closures. Many of the road events will take place at weekends, but some will happen on weekdays

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The final number of additional operational staff required has yet to be confirmed, or agreed with the ODA. The customer communications strategy (to convey travel information to our visitors) is currently being developed.

## **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

Planning for an event on the scale of the Games is challenging. There are lots of issues to balance, and many different parties involved (including the event organisers, the emergency services, and various local authorities and government bodies). We need to spend a lot of time and effort getting it right, as there is a significant risk to London's (and the UK's) reputation should we get it wrong. City Operations led by the Greater London Authority is overseeing the Look and Feel of London with the Cultural Diary, celebrations, live sites, as well as the Public Services that include accessibility for visitors, movement management, wayfinding and signage, operations and the London Events Coordination Calendar.

Every day from 1 June to 10 September (100 days) during Summer 2012 is different. The 17 days of Olympics has sporting events take place simultaneously at different venues, but the overall picture varies greatly from day to day. Some events have simple single all-day sessions (with a flow of spectators to the event in the morning and away in the evening), whereas others have more complex multiple sessions (with additional inward and outward flows taking place simultaneously a number of times during the day – something that has very different movement dynamics when compared with a simple all-day session).

London will need to be responsive to these day-to-day changes. As a result, TfL is has been developing separately a different approach to visualising and modelling people and vehicle movements for each individual day of the summer 2012.

Key Movement Indication (KMI) is a method of recording, interpreting, and presenting person and vehicle demand generated by a range of events within a 100-day time period from 1 June to 10

September 2012. These events include the Games Competition Events, London Events Coordination Calendar (LECC) events, encompassing a comprehensive range of cultural and live events, 'business as usual' activities, including movements generated by residents and commuters, delivery and servicing activities, including key (essential) movements generated by public service organisations and other significant planned events.

KMI will provide consistent event parameter information, enabling key potential pedestrian, vehicle and public transport movements to be identified. The results are then used to review the planned public transport provision (to ensure that it is appropriate), and to identify any major movement conflicts (in case some form of intervention, such as restricting vehicle movements, is deemed necessary). This data is also used to create the scenarios to develop contingency plans and event simulations. "Table-top" multi-agency exercises are carried out to test and evaluate the way that incidents are managed. Live Games-wide event testing will take place during 2011 and 2012.

While a great deal of work has been done, this is still a work in progress not because all of road events are still to be finalised. So, work to on the London day-by-day operational picture will be an ongoing saga.

Although we have built a very strong foundation, there is doubtless a great deal of work to be done over the next two years. There is also no doubt that, regardless of the work done now, and the challenges to be met, London will be the place to be in summer 2012.

**David Connor**