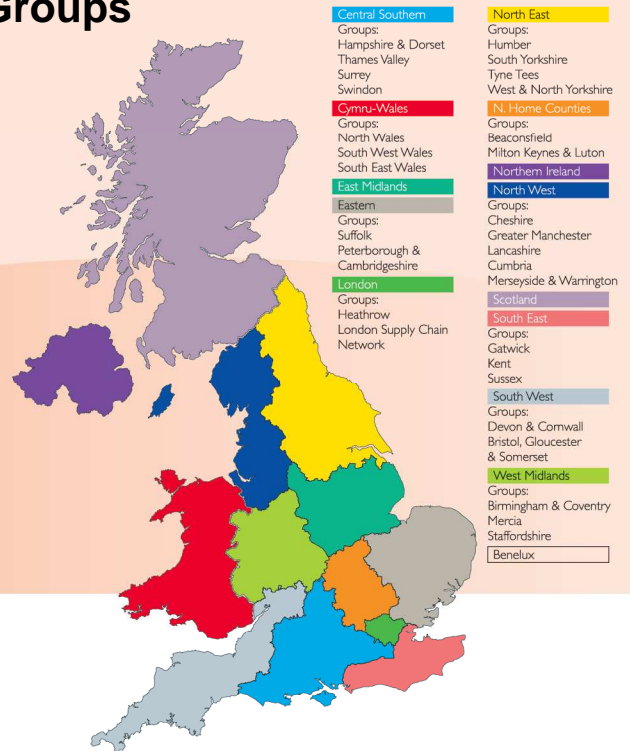


News from the Nations, Regions & Groups

CILT(UK) London Region

16th March 2011

Transport and the 2012 Games



London Metropolitan University was the venue for the region's March meeting, at which Hugh Sumner, Director of Transport for the Olympic Delivery Authority, addressed a large audience with a presentation on the transport requirements of the 2012 events.

Hugh reminded us that there was not just one Olympic site: although most events will take place around the site at Stratford, East London, there are sailing events at Weymouth and Portland, canoe and rowing events at Eton/Dorney and canoe slalom in the Lea Valley; football is scheduled for various towns in England and Scotland, and mountain biking at Hadleigh (Essex).

55,000 people will be directly involved in the Olympic Games: athletes, their families, officials, judges and referees, and reporters. After the main Games are over, the Paralympic Games follow: a smaller affair but still involving 16,500 people.

All of these will require their own transport to and from the various sites. A core network of routes comprising 2% of London's roads has been designated as primary moving routes: these will vary day to day depending on the times and venues of that day's events. Secondary and lesser routes have been identified should any of the primary routes be blocked. Olympic traffic will be given priority on these routes.

First Group won the bid to provide road transport for the Games and the organising committee has already acquired some 15,000 coaches and buses for this purpose; each of these fleets will have their own depots

Spectators will be expected to travel to the events by public transport, on foot and by cycle. There will be park-and-ride sites however and around 900 buses and coaches will be required for shuttle services between these sites and the various venues. A further 90 vehicles will be used to connect park-and-ride sites on the edge of the M25 with the Olympic Park and Ebbfleet, whence spectators will take the high-speed Javelin trains to the Olympic Park. Although the numbers will vary each day, it is estimated that there could be upwards of two million spectators a day travelling to and from some form of event, in addition to the usual movement of people through London during working days.

The challenge will be to keep London and the other venues moving. The Olympic Games in Atlanta had shown that that city's transport arrangements had not been able to cope fully with the requirements, and we hoped not to repeat that scenario. Discussions were taking place with railway operators to see if people with Apex tickets whose event finished later than expected could catch a later train than the one booked, without penalty. Road works will be prohibited for the duration of the Games, and the Underground is expected to finish operations later than usual.

It is a vast task. As Hugh pointed out, hosting the Olympic Games is probably the biggest thing any country does in peacetime.

An animated question and answer session followed, the only negative aspect raised being the apparent lost opportunity to replace the double track on the line to Weymouth as the single track section prevents an increased service. Coaches might make up the deficiency here. Other topics covered were the use of the London Olympic site after the Games, as one objective was to create a lasting legacy in this part of East London in the form of increased transport links, employment and housing.

The formal presentation concluded with a vote of thanks to High Sumner, but discussion continued over drinks and nibbles.

Michael Peacock FCILT