

Did the potential benefits justify the high cost of holding the Olympics in London in 2012?



It was announced in 2005 that the Summer Olympics would be held in London from July 27th to August 12th 2012. This article will discuss some of the arguments for and against that important decision. The Games embraced 26 sports in 34 venues across the country, involving more than 16,000 athletes watched by 11 million spectators and billions of people around the world.

Cost and Investment

The British Olympic Association faced a funding gap of up to £2 million ahead of the start of the London 2012 Games. That being said, it was hoped that the London Olympics would provide a £200 million boost for the county's tourism industry. The cost of the opening ceremony is estimated at around £27 million. Critics said that the money should have been spent on local schools and health care, not on the lavish ceremonies that were staged.



Development

The worst job needed in preparation for the 2012 Games would have been to clean up the landfill and industrial rubbish. In fact a run down part of east London has been transformed into the new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Half the newly built housing will be affordable housing with plenty of facilities such as a school and a health center. New sporting facilities have also been built in other locations around England.

Employment

It was hoped that the Olympics would provide employment for a significant number of unemployed people in the UK. However, volunteers carried out most of the jobs, ranging from cleaners to



translators. They were the force of the Olympics. Generally speaking there hasn't been a long-term improvement in the employment figures.

Tourism

London welcomed ten million visitors from all over the world for the 2012 Olympics. It was hoped that this would have a huge impact on Great Britain. However hotel prices dropped very low as an unexpected surge in bookings failed to materialise. This resulted in hotels cutting their prices to as little as £10 a night the weekend after the Olympics party came to a close. Nevertheless, I feel that the games will increase the number of tourists coming to Great Britain. It is hoped that this will boost Britain's economy by £13 billion over the next four years.



Security

Security was Great Britain's main priority. Security firm G4S, which provided staff for the London Olympics 2012 ended up losing around £50 million after not putting in sufficient staff. Over 7,500 soldiers were bought in for the 2012 Olympics. Grey metal makeshift barracks accommodated 3,000 Armed Forces personnel while the games were being played.



Transport/Accessibility

It was predicted that transport would be extremely difficult around Stratford and other places near London. There was no spectator parking at the Olympics venues, except for a limited number of Blue Badge spaces, which had to be booked in advance. Many people who live and work in London expressed serious concerns about how they would travel to work and carry on with their lives. However there were many extra buses and trains running with more staff availability to offer advice and information to tourists and people wishing to go about their business. Tourists found that getting around London was easier than predicted.



Sporting Coverage

With the games other sporting coverage was stopped and the BBC and other big TV channels showed only the Olympics. This was not a problem and the whole country seemed to be caught up with the progress of the games.

Verdict

In my opinion the games were a huge success and will leave a great legacy for the future. The greatest show on earth has definitely earned its title. The biggest fears for Great Britain were the cost and security but as we all know there was nothing to worry about. The armed forces performed their duty excellently and the cost (the big C) provides not to be the problem that was anticipated. Overall I think Britain has earned the Great in its name.



By GeorgeKingdon