

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee River Based Leisure Facilities

Tanya Gray, Sports Specialist Advisor, One North East

Tanya Gray's role is to consider and advise upon the economic impact of sport for the North East region of England, and she is the key officer in terms of linking with regional preparations for the Olympics.

Tanya will be in a position to advise Members on how Stockton Borough can make best use of its river-based sporting assets in terms of their wider economic impact, and provide an overview of opportunities in relation to the Olympics.

London 2012 Olympics

The Regional Development Agency, One NorthEast (ONE), and Sport England are the lead regional organisations in relation to maximising opportunities arising from the London 2012 Olympics. ONE's website states that:

'It was clear the benefits would be far reaching and highly prestigious for regions involved in the London 2012 Games. It is expected that the event has the potential to provide a multi-million boost to business in the North East, particularly with the region's expertise in a number of sectors. It is also expected to raise aspirations among the region's sportsmen and sportswomen.

The massive influx of visitors for the London 2012 Games to the UK gives the North East an ideal promotional opportunity to attract more tourists to the region. And there are also huge benefits to be gained from showcasing the region's cultural assets to the international visitors.

But the passion, excitement and interest generated from winning the bid for the 2012 Games is also expected to act as a catalyst to encourage ordinary people in the North East to get fit and take part in sport or physical activity.

As well as promoting elite sport, the Games will:

- Encourage wider participation in sport
- Increase physical activity (among the healthy population, those with risk factors and those with long-term conditions)
- Promote access for disabled people

The London 2012 Games will kick-start the region into getting fitter and in the long-term improve lives just by reducing the common health risks caused by low physical activity.'

Regional Involvement with London 2012

North East England engages with the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games through the Nations and Regions Group. This group feeds directly into the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG), and aims to ensure that the benefits associated with the Games reach all parts of the UK. The Chair of the Regional Sports Board is this NE's representative on the Nations and Regions Group.

A regional forum has been established to develop and deliver a regional plan for the London 2012 Games. The regional plan will focus on themed areas and specific actions will be led by Sport England and One NorthEast:

One NorthEast:

Business: to ensure that regional businesses are best placed to access the range of contracts associated with the 2012 Games and to build regional capacity in relation to other major sporting contracts.

Tourism/Image: to ensure that North East England attracts a share of the overseas visitors expected to visit London before, during and after the 2012 Games.

Culture: to ensure full engagement and representation of North East England communities, individuals and talent in the cultural celebrations associated with the 2012 Games.

Skills and Volunteering: to ensure that regional communities and individuals are given the opportunity to develop talent and skills.

Sport England (the key organisation in terms of increasing participation):

Facilities: to ensure that the North East maximises on the world-class regional facilities that exist and creates propositions capable of attracting visiting teams and events both in the lead up to and following on from the 2012 Games.

Performance Sport: to ensure that the region's talented performers have every opportunity and are given appropriate support to participate in the 2012 Games.

Children and Young People: to ensure that the educational and inspirational spirit of the 2012 Games inspires and informs the region's children and young people.

Health: to ensure that the 2012 Games acts to inspire regional communities and individuals to make positive improvements to their general health and well being through sport and physical activity.

Other web-based sources of information:

www.onenortheast.co.uk/page/london2012.cfm

www.london2012.com/in-your-area/north-east/index.php

www.london2012.com/about/the-people-delivering-the-games/the-nations-and-regions-group/north-east.php

Opportunities for Stockton-on-Tees

The River Tees provides the greatest opportunity for the Borough to gain from the sport event element of 2012, specifically the potential for hosting pre-games training camps of national teams or preliminary competitive events for elite athletes. Alongside the rowing and canoeing opportunities provided by the river itself, the proposals for the White Water Course at the Barrage will further increase its potential in this regard. Looking ahead, the upgrading to a pumped course suitable for the whole range of abilities will increase the attractiveness of the site and the economic benefits that may follow, irrespective of the Olympic opportunities.

Julia Frater, Head of visit Tees Valley

- **Tourism Network North East**

Since 2003, One NorthEast has assumed responsibility for the strategic leadership of the tourism industry in the North East. In 2004, it took over the Northumbria Tourist Board and created One NorthEast Tourism. The first Regional Tourism Strategy proposed the creation of 4 Area Tourism Partnerships. These Partnerships are public-private partnerships with an independent board on which the private sector is on the majority. Funding comes from the Local Authorities, private sector contribution and Single Programme support, as agreed through the relevant Sub-Regional Partnership. 'visitTees Valley' is the ATP for the Tees Valley area.

Area Tourism Partnerships focus on bringing businesses and other organisations together to improve the visitor experience in their area. They work with businesses and public agencies to agree what is important, who does what, and who funds it. The ATPs encourage organisations to work together to get maximum benefit from available resources and part of their role is to develop relationships with key stakeholders in their area. The Area Tourism Partnerships are the 'local face of the Network' for tourism businesses and the first port of call for advice, guidance and support. They have a major role in representing their area's interests, regionally and nationally.

One of the key documents produced by the ATP is the Area Tourism Management Plan or ATMaP. This document sets out the priorities for future actions in each area and identifies the lead body for each activity, which in some cases will be the ATP.

Tourism Network North East is the collective name for One North East Tourism and the four ATPs. The Network is explained in more detail in the brochure separately provided to Members.

visitTees Valley

visitTeesvalley is a formal partnership and Board members must act in terms of public interest rather than as representatives of any particular organisation.

The Chair of visitTeesvalley is David Kelly, formerly Managing Director of Newsquest Ltd/Northern Echo. The Chair and Board members have been joined by Head of visitTeesvalley, Julia Frater. Julia was formerly Head of Tourism with the Tees Valley Tourism Bureau.

Board members include representatives from Stockton, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Councils, restaurants, hotels, and visitor attractions.

Much of the responsibility for promoting the area now rests with visitTees Valley, although individual guides to local areas are still produced – this is sometimes a joint process as with the SMi¹ which produced a visitor 'Guide to Stockton/Middlesbrough 2006-07'.

However, such publications will be produced in consultation with visitTees Valley which has the lead role in sub-regional promotion and targeted campaigns. Local Authorities support the work of the ATP and are crucial to the success of the present arrangements, but the Network allows for Authorities to concentrate on managing infrastructure, attractions, town centres, festivals and major events.

¹ StocktonMiddlesbrough Initiative

As with all members of the Network, visitTees Valley plays its part in 'destination management'. This means that it aims to deliver:

- Marketing and branding
- Information provision to visitors
- Product development and encouraging investment
- Raising quality and improving the visitor experience
- Tourism business support and growth
- Identifying workforce development and training needs of the sector

Web-based sources of information:

www.visitteesvalley.co.uk/ - Official visitor guide for the Tees Valley area. Type in 'watersports' in the search box as a starting point for investigating related activities.

www.visitnortheastengland.com/ - Official visitor guide website for the North East.

www.northeastengland.co.uk - Official tourist market website of the 'Passionate People, Passionate Places' North East promotional campaign.