



First ever Paralympic opening night community festival

A network of fourteen churches in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, planned and funded the first community festival for the opening of a Paralympic Games.

The free event took place at the birthplace of the Paralympics, Stoke Mandeville Stadium. The massive enterprise went the

extra mile to be fully inclusive.

Much of the grass was decked with wheelchair-friendly boards. There were opportunities to try Paralympic sport. And a multi-sensory area drew large numbers. Meanwhile, events like the tug of war became open to all, including wheelchair-users.

Churches responded – large and small

The thousands of churches that responded to the Games included large and small, city centre and rural – and right across the denominations.

Holy Trinity Barkingside in Ilford, Essex served 1,000 breakfasts during the Torch Relay; gave out 1,100 cups of water at their local One-year-to-go festival; had 45 children at the Champions Holiday Club; and over 50 children at a 5-day football clinic where they had the help of an international mission team. 'Hard work but rewarding'; was their verdict.

In the village of Neston, Wiltshire, the success of the outreach of **St Philip and St James** church owed much to their cooperation with the school and the pub. One comment afterwards was, 'I didn't know church could be fun like this'.

Leigh Road Baptist Church, in Southend-on-Sea, Essex attracted 200 guests to their Games activities. Delighted with the new relationships that have resulted they plan more family fun days based around big national events, street parties and community action with those that don't attend church.

Shirehampton Methodist Church, Bristol, assessed their outcome as, 'After many years of doing nothing, this has encouraged us to continue to find new ways to reach out to the community and put the church at its heart'.

In the North East, Newcastle upon Tyne's **Killingworth Community Church** was among those welcoming a YWAM team from Norway. Their

programme attracted 2,500 guests and now the new links to their church include eighty adults, six teens and fifteen children.

Also in Newcastle upon Tyne's, **Holy Trinity Church** Jesmond turned their church into Café 2012 with live streaming of events. They were surprised by 'just how easy it was to engage with the community'. Their activities attracted over 2,000 people.

And **Durham Vinyard's** programme attracted 860 from beyond their church including those they had recruited as volunteers. And people were saying, 'This is incredible! When are you doing this again?'

Christ Church Turnham Green, West London, used an international mission team to support their outreach, including a kids holiday club and an Olympic Sports Café. They now plan to expand their toddler

group mornings and keep the café going.

Even one of the UK's smallest churches found a way to engage. **Straightsmouth Christian Gospel Hall**, Greenwich, has but twelve members and meets in a space about the size of a double garage. Finding themselves on the pedestrian route to the Games Equestrian Centre they opened up with a sign 'Welcome to our Comfort Stop. Drinks, Seats, Toilets – all free'.

At the other end of the scale, one of London's largest churches, **All Souls Langham Place**, turned their sanctuary into a hospitality and big screen venue – with music and dance inside and out. 'This is not the way we normally do things here', said the church manager. 'But it has been wonderful with young adults taking the lead. This approach could help the church to see the way forward'.

More Than Gold in numbers



David Willson, CEO of More Than Gold lighting the Olympic flame on Monday 2nd July.

Over **225,000** Olympic and More Than Gold pin badges were given out

Over **30 teams of musicians and creative artists** involving over **350** individuals from over **30** nations performed in **40** venues. They contributed **440** hours of performance, **233** hours of street art and **434** days of exhibitions.

Over **2,100** volunteers from more than **40** countries served on mission and service teams, with about **300** churches.

There were around **700 Sport Quiz evenings**

Twenty agencies together produced and sold more than **500,000** resources

The **Media Centre's daily bulletins** for media personnel were opened **2,800** times with almost **1,000** clicks to specific items

Church-organised events attracted well over **500,000** people

The **More Than Gold Prayer Relay** linked **69** communities with around **2,340** people taking part

The **Athlete Family Homestay** Programme hosted **280** guests from over **20** nations in **160** homes for **2,000** nights of free

5,500 people attended **More Than Gold's vision and equipping events** throughout the UK.

500,000 bottles of free water were given out. Plus **9,100** cups of water during the three marathons and **4,500** cups of water at the mountain bike events

Over **£2 million - \$3.2 million** was raised in gifts and sponsorship for the outreach

The website generated almost **200,000** total visits, including **116,082** unique visitors

Over **180** volunteers, including **30** from overseas, served as official Olympic and Paralympic chaplains in the Olympic village, other official venues and in the International Broadcast centre

A **Praise Bus** travelled **8,500** miles over **65** days with **100** musicians and singers – heard by around **one million** people

Media partner **2K Plus International Sports Media** daily radio programme was heard on **21** stations in **six** countries

300 Games Pastors gave **13,000** hours of voluntary service at **24** locations.

30 000 Traidcraft teas and coffees were served during the Torch Relay

Over **300** people from **15** denominations and **60** agencies helped with **planning and delivery**

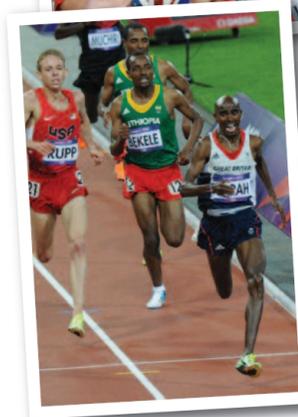
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MORE THAN GOLD

London 2012 the largest ever response from churches to an Olympic and Paralympic Games



The contribution of UK churches to the London 2012 Games was the largest ever to an Olympic and Paralympic Games. It involved thousands of Christians working together to engage with their communities and welcome visitors at a level never seen before.

The scale of involvement included 300 Games Pastors providing over 13,000 hours of voluntary service to travellers. Family members of athletes enjoying more than 2,000 nights of free hospitality. And at least 500 000 bottles of water being given free to visitors.

By far the largest statistic is the estimated 500,000 people attending church-run

events before and during the Games.

An underlying theme was the way churches cooperated with their local authorities to run and support community events. This gave them greater influence and has created a valuable legacy.

David Willson, CEO of More Than Gold says, 'The hard work and prayer of so many has led to churches across the UK being seen in a new light, having a greater sense of confidence, and experiencing more people taking an interest in what they offer'.



Sharing the vision and equipping to deliver it

To help churches and their leaders see how the Games could serve their mission, over xxx public events took place under the theme Your Church and the 2012 Games. These were organised by *More Than Gold* and its supporting denominations.

To help churches put their new vision into practice, over 20

training and equipping days were held UK-wide. Subjects covered Community Festivals, Using Sport to Impact Every Age-group, Games Pastors, Reaching Children and Youth, the Torch Relay, Prayer, Using Mission Teams, Mission through the Paralympics and Games-related Social Justice



Praise Bus – taking worship to the roads

An open top bus, carrying Christian worship, travelled almost the whole of the route taken by the Olympic Torch.

The half-open double-decker hosted over a 100 musicians and singers. They brought worship to the streets as the bus travelled more than 8,500 miles through England, Scotland and Wales.

As a result, Christian-inspired music was heard by around one million people as they lined the streets to welcome the Olympic Torch or came to places where the bus had stopped.

The remarkable initiative was carried out by members of the UK's most westerly Methodist church, Escalls Methodist Chapel, Cornwall.

Supporting the Torch Relay – the churches came out

As the Olympic Torch passed through more than 1,000 communities, hundreds of churches ran events and provided hospitality.

In Cornwall, 1,000 free cream teas were served by the Churches Together in Falmouth. In Glasgow, Scotland, the Salvation Army and Methodist Church teamed up to serve teas, coffees and cakes to the hundreds celebrating the

torch coming to their city. The same was true in hundreds of other locations. Even for the remote town of Stornoway on the Scottish island of Lewis. Here the Salvation Army fed 1,000 school children who came to watch the Torch Relay.

During the Olympic Torch Relay, Salvation Army mobile canteens served 30,000 fair trade teas and coffees.



Games Pastors provided an extra level of care

For the first time, Games visitors had an extra level of care and support. This was through 300 Games Pastors serving at ten major rail stations, two airports, a coach station and key tourist sites.

They offered support, compassion, a listening ear –

where appropriate - prayer. The reaction has been so positive that the Games Pastors programme is set to become the blueprint for major future sporting events.

In just one day a Games Pastors team helped a Korean student who had caught the wrong train, re-directed a lady who was lost, and gave comfort to a man who had been out of work for a number of years and didn't see any point to his life.



Resources galore for churches to use

A consortium of 20 agencies produced over 50 separate resources for churches to use. These included sports-themed Bibles, bunting and banners, DVDs, Games-related books and resources for holiday clubs.

This was the largest set of resources ever made available to help churches respond to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. With the total sales estimated to be over 500,000 items.



Creative and performing arts invade London

Major London Landmarks, as well as a many local churches, played host to musicians and creative artists from over 30 nations.

Those performing included an Indian musician playing a multi-stringed guitar with built in bongo drums, an international folk-rock band, a Hawaiian-based dance troupe and a gymnast.

Visual arts included painters, sculptors, photographers and graffiti artists. A major exhibit was Key of David, a collaborative artwork in 141 canvas lots painted by artists from the US, Hawaii, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

Touching lives through sport

Sports clubs and clinics were used to reach out to children and youth through UK sports ministries and sports mission teams from agencies including Athletes in Action and Youth with a Mission.

This involved 100 churches reaching out to over 4,300 people in their communities through clinics, camps and tournaments.

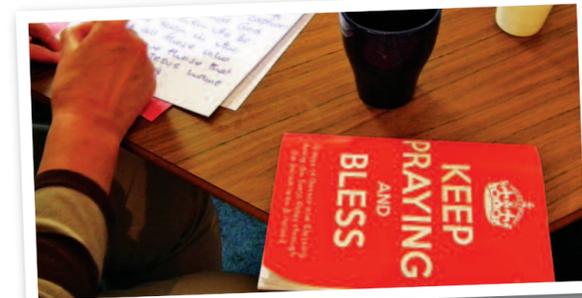
For example, churches in Tooting, South West London, ran a week-long sports clinic for children, young people and young



adults with football, basketball, volleyball, dancing and life skills.

In Northolt, West London, a Brazilian sports mission team led a programme of sports activities for

the community. In East London, Youth with a Mission's Dutch sports team worked with a Baptist church at Frampton Park and their Hawaii based team served a Baptist church in Bow.



Saturating the UK with prayer – A Time to Shine

Prayer was at the heart of *More Than Gold* and made possible in a variety of creative ways and with extensive supporting resources.

More Than Gold's Prayer Relay tracked the route of the official Torch Relay to link 69 communities. In the towns where the Olympic torch stopped

overnight, church leaders from the previous town brought prayers of blessing to share with leaders there. These events saw over 2,300 people take part.

The Prayer Relay was part of a 70 day cascade of prayer as the Olympic Torch Relay passed through over 1,000 communities. Prayer Guides were available for churches and individuals to download and use for their own individual and united response.



Cold water – in Jesus' name

On every day of the Games teams led by the Salvation Army were involved in an extensive programme to show hospitality and care.

This involved visitors receiving over 500,000 bottles of free water at

railway stations and tourist areas. Also, 9,100 cups of water were given to visitors during the Olympic and Paralympic three marathons, and 4,500 cups of water during the mountain bike events.

Youth Cafés – Olympic-themed drop in centres

The Games were a catalyst for an explosion of a new style of drop-in centre for teenagers UK-wide – Youth Cafés. Some 200 of them offered hundreds of teenagers a place to 'turn up – drop in – hang out'.

Typical was the Youth Café based at the modern Aylesbury College, Hertfordshire. Here, young people fluidly moved from pool tables to games consoles, from watching Olympic events on a big screen, to just sitting and chatting.



Meanwhile, the Youth Café in Witham, Essex, saw almost two hundred young people pass through during the week they opened.



Hospitality for family members of athletes

Faced with prohibitive costs of hotel accommodation, family members of athletes were welcomed by the *More Than Gold* Athlete Family Homestay Programme.

As a result, 280 guests from over 20 nations received free accommodation and practical help in 160 homes. The athletes being supported won a total of 43 medals - 8 gold, 19 silver and 16 bronze.

'What might have been a very stressful time became a very happy one – with me enjoying my son's Olympic experience to the fullest', said Fay Robinson, from Australia.

Interviewed on BBC radio one guest said, 'I didn't realise churches did things like this'.

The first More Than Gold Legacy Breakfast honours character

Olympic medal winners Debbie Flood and Bryan Clay were honoured with the first two Eric Liddell Awards at the

inaugural *More Than Gold* Legacy Breakfast. The awards were for Olympians

displaying outstanding character at home, in their community and on the field of competition. They were presented by the daughters of Eric Liddell, famed for both his Olympic achievement and his service as a missionary.

The four hundred present heard the award winners speak of the faith that was at the heart of their achievements.



Community festivals far surpass expectations

Churches throughout the UK ran community festivals and family fun days, particularly to mark the Olympics' opening ceremony. The number of events organised, and the attendance they attracted, far exceeded expectations.

South Buckinghamshire churches expected 2,500 for their Run the Race festival but around 6,500 turned up. London's Isle of Dogs churches planned for 500, with 4,000 attending. Churches in Purley, Surrey, catered for 400 and rushed out for more supplies when almost double came.

The largest opening ceremony festival was in Dagenham in Essex. Hosted by 500 volunteers from 20 churches, it attracted over 10,000 people of all ages- and won the local council's Bringing People Together Award.

Typical activities included races and games, tug-of-war, art and crafts, free food, inflatables, football cage, soft play and ball pool for under 5s, face painting, and strolling clowns.