

The Price of Gold

Lessons from London 2012 ticket sales

April 2013



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Ticket sales data

Data sets on ticket sales for the sports featured in this report can be accessed on the London Assembly website via: <http://www.london.gov.uk/who-runs-london/the-london-assembly/publications/2012-games> (xlsx format)

The full data release from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games can be found at: <http://www.london2012.com/about-us/publications/publication=december-ticketing-report/> (pdf format)

Previous reports

Three previous reports from the London Assembly on ticketing arrangements for the 2012 Games can be found via: <http://www.london.gov.uk/publication/sold-out>

Chair's foreword



Last year London staged the world's greatest sporting spectacle, when we welcomed the Olympic and Paralympic Games to the city. Hosting the Games was a once-in-a-lifetime event, and many Londoners were desperate to get tickets to attend.

Over the past four years the London Assembly has scrutinised the ticketing arrangements devised by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), the body responsible for staging the Games and selling tickets. Our reports welcomed efforts to make the Games inclusive, such as using a ballot for ticket sales and offering reduced prices to children and older people.

However, we have been critical of the secrecy surrounding the ticketing arrangements. LOCOG refused to publish details of how many tickets would be available at different prices before the Games, even after the vast majority of tickets had already been sold. The lack of transparency put public trust at risk, encouraging a sense among many Londoners that the opportunity to attend the Games was outside their reach.

It is only now that we have the chance to assess whether LOCOG met its pledges to make the Games affordable. Our findings are sobering. While the organisation of the Games was highly successful and we gave visitors from across the world a fantastic welcome, the cost of attending the Games was clearly prohibitive for many Londoners. There were many affordable tickets on sale, but we found these were extremely limited for the most popular sports and sessions.

This matters. The Games were meant to inspire a generation of people to become enthusiastic about taking part in sport. That objective helped justify the £9 billion of taxpayers' money spent on hosting the Games. Being able to watch the world's best athletes perform live on their doorstep – not just on television – was essential to achieving this change.

Of course, we know the Games had to be paid for, and ticket sales were a key source of income. But with LOCOG exceeding its revenue target for ticket sales by over 30 per cent, we have to question whether the right balance was found between generating income and making the Games inclusive.

This is a forward-looking report that highlights important lessons that the Mayor, government and sporting associations need to learn. Although the Olympics may not return in the foreseeable future, London is set to stage many other major events in the coming years, in particular in the sports of athletics, cycling, swimming and hockey.

Most of these will take place in venues built for the Games and are a direct legacy of the money taxpayers invested before 2012. We need to ensure that more Londoners have the opportunity to attend. Implementing the recommendations we make in this report will help to achieve this goal.

Andrew Dismore AM
Chair of the Economy Committee

Key findings

The London Assembly began discussing the ticketing strategy for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games several years ahead of the Games. Since 2009, we have engaged with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), seeking to shape the ticketing strategy. The then Economy, Culture and Sport Committee launched a public consultation on the topic, considered good practice from other events, and published several reports before the Games with recommendations aimed at LOCOG, the Mayor and government.

Our key priority for Games ticketing was for tickets to be available and affordable for ordinary Londoners, while providing a significant source of the revenue needed to stage the Games. We also wanted London 2012 to avoid the 'empty seat' problem that had been evident at previous Games, to make sure disadvantaged groups were able to attend, and to ensure that the ticketing process was seen as fair and transparent.

The findings of our analysis present a mixed picture. There was huge demand for tickets from the public, and the Games were a virtual sell-out. Just under 11 million tickets were sold, including 8.2 million for the Olympics (97 per cent of available tickets), and 2.8 million for the Paralympics (98 per cent).

The enthusiasm of the crowds throughout the Games was clear, and contributed to a fantastic spectacle. There was a problem with seats in accredited areas being unoccupied, especially at the start of the Games, but this was managed effectively by better planning and redistribution of available seats by LOCOG. Disabled people, older people and children were given special consideration by LOCOG, for instance through the Ticketcare scheme the Assembly pressed for.

However, there were many disappointed people who were unable to see the most popular events or even to attend the Games. Our analysis suggests that this unmet demand was due to a combination of factors, including the relatively small proportion of public tickets for some sessions and the extremely high prices. The ticketing process itself is also likely to have excluded some people. Furthermore, we are concerned that the lack of transparency in the ticketing arrangements affected public trust in the Games.

The ticketing strategy was successful in generating a large amount of revenue for the Games. LOCOG set itself a target to raise £500 million from ticket sales, and ultimately raised £657 million, exceeding the target by 32 per cent. This is a significant achievement, although in hindsight it might be considered a missed opportunity: LOCOG could have made many more affordable tickets available and still met its revenue target.

LOCOG provided the Assembly with data on ticket sales several months after the Games, and this follow-up report presents our analysis of the data. We focus on the sports where London will hold comparable events in the near future, and highlight what lessons can be learned from the 2012 experience.

Transparency

In previous reports the Assembly has found that the ticketing arrangements for London 2012 lacked transparency. This reduced public confidence in the process.¹ In particular, LOCOG refused to confirm ahead of the Games how many tickets were being sold in different price categories. This information would have allowed Londoners to see whether LOCOG was meeting its own pledges, and to make informed judgements about which tickets to apply for.

LOCOG continued to withhold this information even after the vast majority of tickets had been sold, ignoring the precedent set at Sydney 2000 when a full breakdown of ticket sales was released shortly before the Games. The Assembly found that the reasons given by LOCOG – accuracy, data protection and commercial confidentiality – did not justify this level of secrecy.

LOCOG published the requested data on ticket sales over three months after the Games ended. However, key pieces of information are still not in the public domain. LOCOG has not confirmed whether it met the pledges that two-thirds of Olympic tickets would cost £50 or less, and that 3.5 million tickets would cost £30 or less. LOCOG has not confirmed whether it delivered on the commitment to sell no more than eight per cent of tickets to sponsors.

In addition, LOCOG published data in PDF format only, in a single 976-page document. The Committee made repeated requests for the original spreadsheet, but LOCOG refused these. This meant the data could not be analysed as fully as we wished. We have analysed 12 sports in depth after by transferring the ticket sales data manually into a spreadsheet, focusing mainly on sports where London is planning to stage international championships in the future.

We recommend that ticketing arrangements for future major sporting events in London are much more transparent. Ahead of the sales commencing, organisers should publish the number of tickets for sale in each price category for each session, in a format that enables further analysis. Following the event, organisers should also publish a clear, comprehensive account of how and whether they have met their pledges on ticket prices and availability. (Recommendation 1)

Ticket prices

LOCOG made a number of general pledges about the cost of Olympic tickets to the UK public.² These are set out in Table 1 overleaf, alongside our analysis of LOCOG's performance. Our analysis reveals a mixed performance in relation to pricing pledges. In particular, it shows how some of the most popular sports offered a much lower proportion of affordable tickets.

LOCOG made a further pledge about the spread of ticket prices for each session of the Games. Most sessions at the Olympics had four or five price categories, and LOCOG stated that the number of tickets available in each category would be 'broadly equal'. LOCOG did fulfil this pledge. For almost all sessions we have analysed, there was an even spread of ticket sales across the categories.

¹ *Sold Out?*, Economy, Culture and Sport Committee, London Assembly, February 2012

² See Appendix 1 to see direct statements from LOCOG confirming all pledges cited in this report.

Table 1: LOCOG pledges on Olympic ticket prices

Pledge	Performance	Further analysis
90% of tickets would be £100 or under.	LOCOG met this target.	Of the 11 Olympic sports assessed by the Committee, four achieved 90%: hockey, triathlon, road cycling and synchronised swimming. ³ The worst performers were athletics (55%), track cycling (59%) and gymnastics (62%).
Two-thirds of tickets would be £50 or under.	LOCOG has not confirmed whether it met this target. ⁴	Of the 11 Olympic sports assessed by the Committee, four achieved two-thirds (as above). The worst performers were athletics (28%), gymnastics (34%) and track cycling (35%).
3.5 million tickets would be £30 or under (about 40%)	LOCOG has not confirmed whether it met this target.	Of the 11 Olympic sports assessed by the Committee, three achieved 40%: synchronised swimming, triathlon and road cycling. The worst performers were track cycling (10%), athletics (11%) and swimming (14%).
2.5 million tickets would be £20 or under (about 30%).	LOCOG narrowly missed this target: 2.496 million tickets cost £20 or under.	Of the 11 Olympic sports assessed by the Committee, only triathlon and road cycling achieved 30%. The worst performers were diving (5%), track cycling (10%) and athletics (11%). Over half of £20 or less tickets were for one sport: football.

However, our analysis shows how the pledge to spread tickets evenly between categories masked the reality of ticket prices. The price categories varied between sport, and between different sessions within a sport. For a large number of sessions, prices were skewed toward the high end. For instance, Table 2 below shows the price categories for a selection of the most expensive sessions at the Games. Although there was an even spread among the A-E price categories for these sessions, the majority of tickets were unaffordable to ordinary Londoners.

Table 2: Price categories in selected sessions, Olympic Games

Sport	Sessions ⁵	Price categories				
		A	B	C	D	E
Athletics	5, 14, 15	£725	£420	£295	£125	£50
	2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13	£450	£295	£150	£95	£50
Diving	2, 3, 13, 16	£450	£295	£185	£95	£50
Artistic gymnastics	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13	£450	£295	£185	£95	£50
Track cycling	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9	£325	£225	£150	£95	£50

³ The sports assessed by the Committee were Olympic athletics, swimming, diving, synchronised swimming, boxing, hockey, gymnastics, equestrianism, track cycling, road cycling, triathlon and Paralympic athletics.

⁴ It is impractical for the Committee to confirm performance against the £50 or £30 targets for the Games as a whole because of the format used by LOCOG to publish the ticket sales data.

⁵ Examples of session contents: In athletics, session 5 included the finals of the men's 100m, 3000m steeplechase and hammer and the women's 400m and triple jump. In diving, session 13 was the women's 10m platform. In artistic gymnastics, session 9 was the men's individual all-around competition. In cycling, session 9 included the finals of the men's keirin and the women's omnium and sprint.

In most sports, we found a significant disparity between prices for medal and non-medal sessions. For instance, in swimming, for non-medal sessions only 14 per cent of tickets cost over £100, and the average ticket price was £67.⁶ In swimming medal sessions, 47 per cent of tickets cost over £100, and the average price was £167. Not a single ticket was sold for a swimming medal session for less than £50; the same was true for Olympic athletics and track cycling.⁷

We recommend that future major sporting events in London use a more consistent approach to pricing, in order to avoid affordable tickets being concentrated in particular sports and sessions. While we accept that medal sessions may be more expensive to attend, there should be a specific pledge about the minimum number of affordable tickets that will be available. All pledges should be based on specific price bands – for instance, the number of tickets below £100, or below £50 – rather than abstract price categories that vary between sessions. (Recommendation 2)

As well as these pledges on ticket prices, LOCOG took a number of specific steps to make London 2012 tickets affordable, especially for disadvantaged groups. The Assembly welcomed these ahead of the Games:

- The ‘Pay Your Age’ scheme, in which tickets could be bought for children for the same price as their age, for some Olympic sessions. Those aged 60 and over could also buy tickets for £16. For the Paralympics, the concessionary price was £5.
- The provision of free companion seats for spectators in wheelchairs, and the Ticketcare scheme, in which disabled spectators not in wheelchairs could be accompanied by a carer for no extra charge.
- The decision not to charge customers a booking fee on top of their ticket price.

These measures allowed many people the chance to watch the Games. Almost 640,000 Pay Your Age tickets were sold for the Olympics and over 800,000 for the Paralympics. Approximately 35,000 free tickets for carers accompanying a disabled person were provided.

We recommend that future major sporting events in London implement similar steps to make affordable tickets available for children and older people, and that disabled spectators are able to attend without paying twice. Furthermore, no event relying on public funding should charge customers a booking fee. (Recommendation 3)

⁶ Throughout this report, average prices are based on the total revenue from public ticket sales divided by the number of tickets sold. ‘Special’ tickets are excluded from these calculations due to the format LOCOG used to publish the data, which made it impractical to include them. In the Olympics, special tickets costing £1-£16 for children and £16 for seniors were available for some non-medal sessions, and free tickets for carers accompanying disabled spectators were available for all sessions. In the Paralympics, special tickets for children and seniors cost £5, and for some sessions there were free ‘group organiser’ tickets for groups of 20 or more spectators. Including these special tickets would lower the average price in sessions where these tickets were available.

⁷ A small number of tickets were provided free to carers accompanying disabled spectators.

Public availability

As at all Olympic and Paralympic Games, many tickets for London 2012 were set aside for officials, the media, sponsors, VIP packages, and for sale to members of the public overseas. LOCOG made a pledge that at least 75 per cent of all Games tickets would be sold directly to the UK public. The remainder were allocated to the assorted 'client groups', including:

- 12 per cent to other countries' national Olympic committees: these tickets were mainly sold to the public overseas.
- 8 per cent for purchase by sponsors and stakeholders.⁸
- 5 per cent to other members of the 'Olympic family', including the International Olympic Committee, international sport federations, media, athletes and their families, and for VIP/premium ticket packages.

We are pleased to note that LOCOG did meet its pledge on this issue: 76 per cent of Olympic tickets and 91 per cent of Paralympic tickets were sold to the UK public. However, there was huge variation between different sports and sessions at the Games. For track cycling, only 47 per cent of tickets were sold to the public, and for one session the allocation was only 39 per cent. In most of the sports the Committee has analysed there was a disparity between medal and non-medal sessions: for Olympic athletics, 76 per cent of tickets for non-medal sessions were public, but only 63 per cent for medal sessions.⁹

We recommend future major sporting events allocate a minimum proportion of public tickets for each session, as well as an overall target for the entire competition. For instance, organisers could pledge that all sessions have a minimum 75 per cent public allocation. (Recommendation 4)

The Assembly asked LOCOG to specify how many tickets were allocated to sponsors, in order to assess whether the eight per cent pledge had been met. In a response to the Assembly before the Games, LOCOG made a specific promise to do this.¹⁰ However, LOCOG has not provided any data on this, either for individual sessions or the Games as a whole. The data provided by LOCOG collates all of the client groups in one figure, so it is impossible to tell how many tickets went to sponsors, officials, athletes, the media or members of the public overseas.

We recommend that organisers of future major sporting events publish a detailed breakdown of tickets purchased by specific client groups, including sponsors, public bodies, athletes, officials and the media. (Recommendation 5)

⁸ The stakeholders included central government, Greater London Authority and London boroughs. The Assembly published the allocations to each in 2011: www.london.gov.uk/publication/just-ticket Following the Games the government has published further details here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/olympic-and-paralympic-games-tickets. The Mayor has published further details here: <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/london-2012/role-mayor>

⁹ It is impractical for the Committee to confirm the medal/non-medal disparity for the Games as a whole, because of the format used by LOCOG to publish the ticket sales data.

¹⁰ LOCOG's response to the Economy, Culture and Sport Committee report, *Sold Out?*, February 2012. Available at: www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LOCOG%20response%20to%20ECS%20Committee%20on%20Sold%20Out.pdf

Ticketing process

LOCOG sold tickets for the Games in several stages, using different procedures at each stage. In the initial round of sales for the Olympics, a ballot was used to allocate tickets for over-subscribed events. Subsequently tickets were sold on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority in later rounds given to those who had previously been unsuccessful. There were no limits on the number of tickets a customer could buy until the final round of pre-Games sales in May 2012, when customers were limited to a maximum of four tickets for one session.

The Assembly welcomed the decision to use a ballot in the initial round of sales, as the fairest way to manage demand. However, LOCOG used an unfamiliar process for ticket applications, which may have disadvantaged many applicants. Customers could apply for any number of tickets, and had to buy all the tickets they applied for if successful in the ballot.

This meant that applicants could buy themselves a much greater chance of success if they were able to commit significant amounts of money. We know from anecdotal evidence that some customers received huge allocations: one customer was able to buy £11,000 of Olympic tickets after making an application to the value of £36,000.¹¹ Most customers would not have been able to apply for the same range of tickets, because of the financial risk involved.

We do not have a full breakdown of how many people applied for Olympic tickets throughout the entire process, but we do know that there were 1.9 million applicants in the first round of sales. By the end of the second round – by which time the majority of tickets had been sold – fewer than half this number had successfully bought tickets (850,000).¹² Many of the remaining applicants would have been able to buy tickets in the final round, or attend with tickets bought by friends and family. However, it is also likely many potential customers were dissuaded from applying because of the rules used for the initial ballot, and were therefore excluded from the final round.

We recommend that for future major sporting events in London where demand is expected to exceed supply, organisers should use a ballot to allocate tickets. Unlike in the early rounds of Olympic ticket sales, customers should initially be limited to buying a maximum number of tickets each, for instance six or eight. (Recommendation 6)

¹¹ 'London 2012: Olympic ticket dreams and nightmares', BBC News, 1 June 2011. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-13618837>

¹² LOCOG Fact Pack, LOCOG, May 2012. Available at: http://www.london2012.com/mm/Document/Publications/StategiesPolicy/01/24/75/49/FactpackMay2012_Neutral.pdf?t=1336753281382

Legacy

Building on the legacy of the Games, London is hosting or bidding to host several major sporting events over the next five years, as shown in Table 3 below.¹³ These events will not be of the same scale as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and it is likely that demand for tickets will be lower. However, the principles of accessibility and affordability should still apply, backed up with meaningful commitments.

Table 3: *Upcoming major championships in London*

Year	Event	Venue	Status
2014	Tour de France road cycling	Road race (ends in The Mall)	Confirmed
2015	European swimming championships	Olympic aquatics centre	Bidding
	European field hockey championships	Lee Valley hockey centre	Confirmed
2016	Track cycling world championships	Lee Valley velodrome	Bidding
2017	Paralympic athletics world championships	Olympic stadium	Confirmed
	Athletics world championships	Olympic stadium	Confirmed

The Mayor, government and sport governing bodies should ensure that the recommendations we have made based on the London 2012 experience should be implemented when organising these events. The Committee is writing to all relevant bodies, including UK Athletics, British Cycling, British Swimming, British Paralympic Association, UK Sport and the London Legacy Development Corporation, inviting them to respond to our report and make this commitment. We will also share our findings with the organisers of other major sporting events elsewhere, in particular the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio.

¹³ Discussions are also underway about the possibility of London staging the Commonwealth Games in 2022, but there is no confirmed bid at this stage.

Athletics

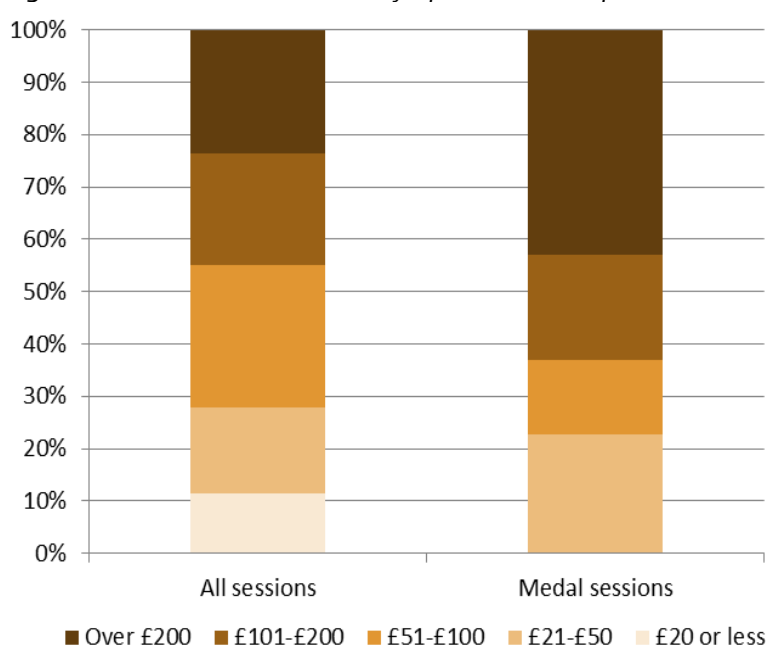
Athletics was the most high-profile sport at the Games. Events were held across 15 sessions at the Olympics and 18 at the Paralympics, both at the Olympic Stadium.

Table 3: Public ticket availability of athletics tickets

	Olympic athletics		Paralympic athletics
	All	Medal	
Total sold	944,345	562,164	1,185,977
Public	68.3%	63.0%	95.5%
Client group	31.7%	37.0%	4.5%

All Paralympics athletics sessions were medal sessions.

Figure 1: Price breakdown for Olympic athletics – public tickets



In 2017 London's Olympic Stadium is staging both the athletics world championships and Paralympic athletics world championships.



Table 4: Price breakdown for athletics – public tickets

	Olympic athletics		Paralympic athletics
	All	Medal	
£20 or less	11.4%	0.0%	68.8%
£21-£50	16.5%	22.7%	31.2%
£51-£100	27.1%	14.3%	0.0%
£101-£200	21.5%	20.1%	0.0%
Over £200	23.5%	42.8%	0.0%
Average price	£171.55	£231.88	£22.66

Average prices exclude special tickets.

The majority of Olympic athletics sessions included medal events. For these sessions, 22% of tickets cost more than £400, and 7% cost more than £700. No tickets were sold for less than £50 for any medal session.

Aquatics

Aquatic events took place at the Aquatics Centre on the Olympic Park. There were five synchronised swimming sessions, 16 diving sessions and 15 swimming sessions.

London has launched a bid to host the 2015 European swimming championships at the Olympic Aquatics Centre, an event which also includes diving and synchronised swimming. The capacity of the venue is being reduced from 17,500 to 2,500 seats.

Figure 2: Price breakdown for Olympic swimming – public tickets

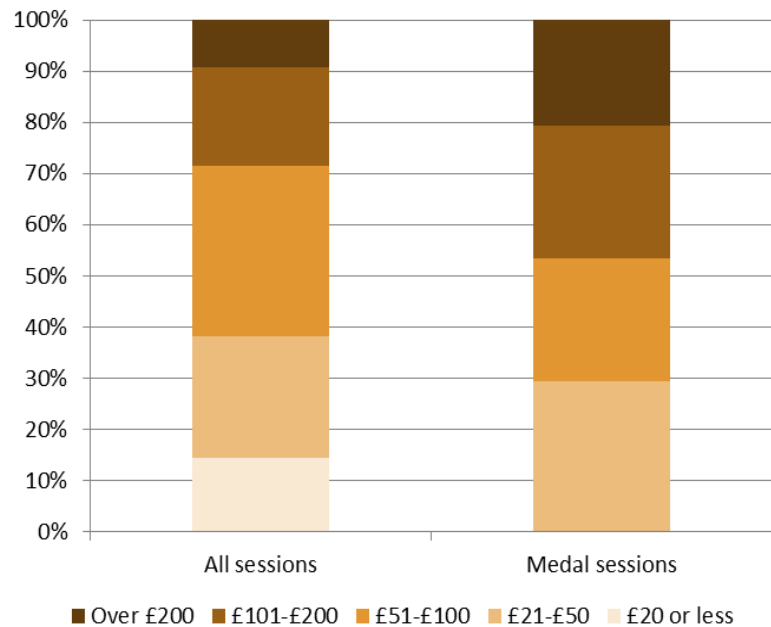
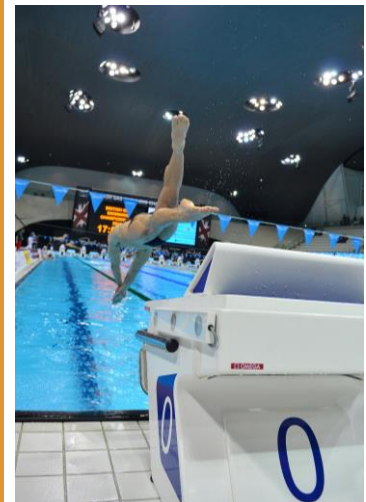


Table 5: Public ticket availability for Olympic aquatic sports

	Swimming		Diving		Synchronised	
	All	Medal	All	Medal	All	Medal
Total sold	171,939	89,109	113,987	52,821	63,176	25,206
Public	53.0%	45.3%	69.0%	64.2%	78.6%	75.7%
Client group	47.0%	54.7%	31.0%	35.8%	21.4%	24.3%



Tom Daley's semi-final session in the 10 metre platform diving had an average ticket price of £91. Later the same day, the average price to see him win a bronze medal in the final had more than doubled to £203.

Table 6: Price breakdown for Olympic aquatic sports – public tickets

	Swimming		Diving		Synchronised	
	All	Medal	All	Medal	All	Medal
£20 or less	14.5%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	23.1%	0.0%
£21-£50	23.7%	29.3%	31.9%	31.6%	49.1%	53.9%
£51-£100	33.2%	24.1%	27.1%	23.2%	19.8%	25.1%
£101-£200	19.4%	25.8%	22.9%	20.3%	8.1%	20.9%
Over £200	9.2%	20.7%	13.0%	24.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Average price	£111.98	£167.43	£113.71	£145.92	£57.54	£71.55

Average prices exclude special tickets.

Hockey



Table 7: Public ticket availability for Olympic hockey

	All	Medal
Total sold	586,625	56,364
Public	78.0%	65.1%
Client group	22.0%	34.9%

Olympic hockey took place across 42 sessions at the Riverbank Arena on the Olympic Park. The majority were at the preliminary stage, where fans could see two matches in one session.

The Riverbank Arena is being moved across the Olympic Park to become the Lee Valley Hockey Centre, with a reduced capacity of 3,000 seats. London is hosting the European field hockey championships at the venue in 2015.

Figure 3: Price breakdown for Olympic hockey – public tickets

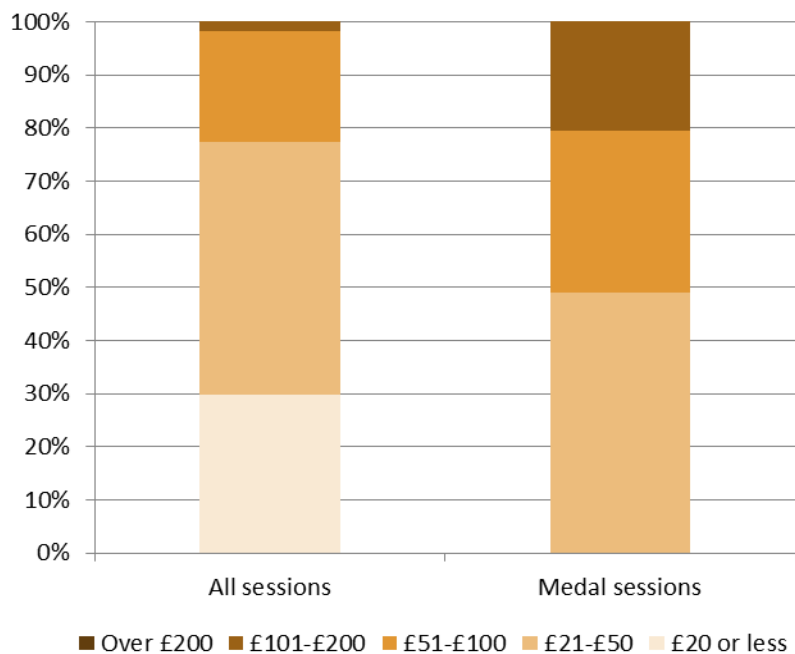


Table 8: Price breakdown for Olympic hockey – public tickets

	All	Medal
£20 or less	29.9%	0.0%
£21-£50	47.5%	49.1%
£51-£100	20.9%	30.3%
£101-£200	1.7%	20.6%
Over £200	0.0%	0.0%
Average price	£43.22	£69.04

Average prices exclude special tickets.

For hockey sessions at the Olympics, 78% of tickets were included in the UK public sale. At the two gold medal matches this was decreased significantly. For the women's final between the Netherlands and Argentina only 56% of tickets were sold to the public. For the men's final between the Netherlands and Germany, only 50% were sold to the public.

Cycling

Table 9: Public availability for Olympic cycling

	Track cycling		Road cycling	
	All	Medal	All	Medal
Total sold	37,966	25,138	35,542	9,424
Public	47.0%	46.0%	90.7%	67.5%
Client group	53.0%	54.0%	9.3%	32.5%

Road cycling also had free viewing areas.

The Olympic track cycling competition took place across nine sessions in the velodrome on the Olympic Park. Road cycling had ticketed viewing areas at Hampton Court Palace, The Mall and Box Hill.



London is bidding to host the 2016 track cycling world championships at the Olympic velodrome, and will host an early stage of the 2014 Tour de France road cycling race.

Figure 4: Price breakdown for Olympic track cycling – public tickets

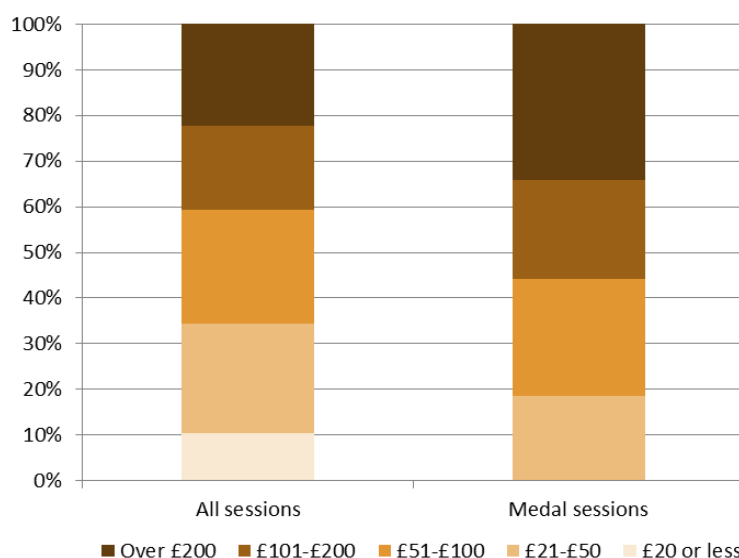


Table 10: Price breakdown for Olympic cycling – public tickets

	Track cycling		Road cycling	
	All	Medal	All	Medal
£20 or less	10.4%	0.0%	94.4%	71.7%
£21-£50	24.1%	18.5%	1.6%	8.2%
£51-£100	24.8%	25.7%	4.0%	20.1%
£101-£200	18.5%	21.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Over £200	22.2%	34.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Average price	£134.75	£164.54	£15.69	£27.67

Average prices exclude special tickets.

Fewer than half of tickets for Olympic track cycling were allocated to the UK public. In the average session, 47% of tickets were sold to the public, the lowest of any sport we analysed. This fell as low as 39.5% for one session, which included Jason Kenny's gold medal victory in the men's sprint.

Team GB Olympic gold sessions



Table 11: Public availability for Team GB Olympic gold sessions

	All	London
Total sold	353,047	248,754
Public	66.1%	63.5%
Client group	33.9%	36.5%

Road cycling and triathlon also had free viewing areas.

British athletes won 29 Olympic gold medals across 13 sports. We have analysed ticket prices and availability for all gold medal sessions, both within London and at venues outside the city.

3,234 tickets (1.4%) were sold to see a British athlete win Olympic gold for £20 or less. These were restricted to just two sports: triathlon and road cycling. In contrast, 19,817 tickets (8.4%) costing over £400 were sold for Team GB gold sessions.

Figure 5: Price breakdown for Team GB Olympic gold sessions – public tickets

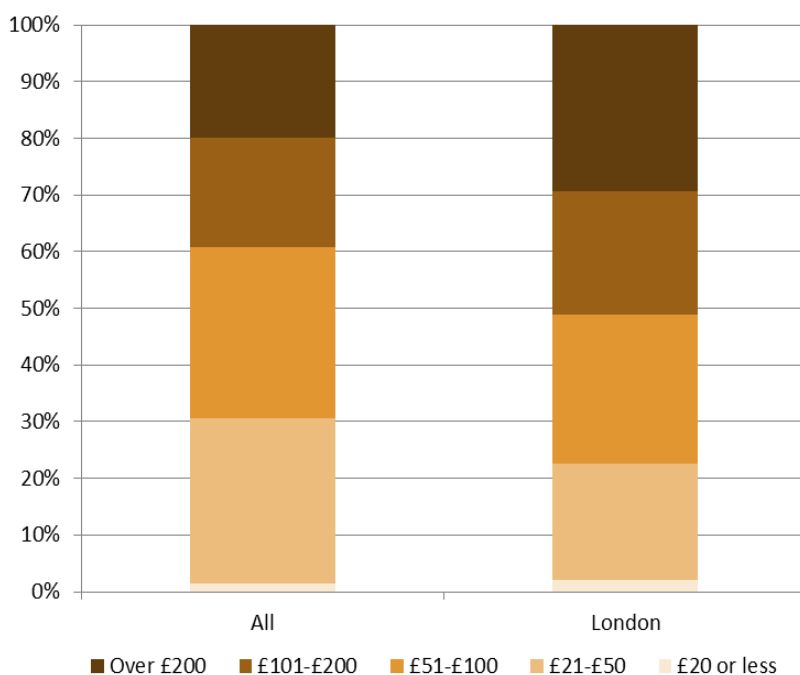


Table 12: Price breakdown for Team GB Olympic gold sessions – public tickets

	All	London
£20 or less	1.4%	2.0%
£21-£50	29.3%	20.6%
£51-£100	30.0%	26.2%
£101-£200	19.4%	21.9%
Over £200	19.9%	29.3%
Average price	£146.25	£183.68

Average prices exclude special tickets.

The average price of a ticket to see Mo Farah win gold in the men's 5,000 metres was £333. The average price to see Anthony Joshua win the men's super heavyweight boxing gold was £202.



Recommendations

We ask that the Mayor, Government and relevant sporting bodies respond to these recommendations by the end of July 2013, outlining how they intend to implement them for future major events.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that ticketing arrangements for future major sporting events in London are much more transparent. Ahead of the sales commencing, organisers should publish the number of tickets for sale in each price category for each session, in a format that enables further analysis. Following the event, organisers should also publish a clear, comprehensive account of how and whether they have met their pledges on ticket prices and availability.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that future major sporting events in London use a more consistent approach to pricing, in order to avoid affordable tickets being concentrated in particular sports and sessions. While we accept that medal sessions may be more expensive to attend, there should be a specific pledge about the minimum number of affordable tickets that will be available. All pledges should be based on specific price bands – for instance, the number of tickets below £100, or below £50 – rather than abstract price categories that vary between sessions.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that future major sporting events in London implement similar steps to make affordable tickets available for children and older people, and that disabled spectators are able to attend without paying twice. Furthermore, no event relying on public funding should charge customers a booking fee.

Recommendation 4

We recommend future major sporting events allocate a minimum proportion of public tickets for each session, as well as an overall target for the entire competition. For instance, organisers could pledge that all sessions have a minimum 75 per cent public allocation.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that organisers of future major sporting events publish a detailed breakdown of tickets purchased by specific client groups, including sponsors, public bodies, athletes, officials and the media.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that for future major sporting events in London where demand is expected to exceed supply, organisers should use a ballot to allocate tickets. Unlike in the early rounds of Olympic ticket sales, customers should initially be limited to buying a maximum number of tickets each, for instance six or eight.

Appendix 1: LOCOG pledges

LOCOG made the following statements before the Games about the price and availability of tickets, and the publication of ticket data.

Transparency

“I can confirm that LOCOG will publish a comprehensive breakdown of our ticket sales. This will be when all our tickets have been sold, and when we are confident that the number of tickets we are publishing is accurate. This will cover all tickets, at all price points, and Pay Your Age discounts.”

Letter from Paul Deighton (Chief Executive, LOCOG) to the Economy, Culture and Sport Committee, 17 January 2012. <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Doocey%20Dee%2020120117.PDF>

Ticket prices

“More than 9 million tickets will be on sale across both Games with over 4 million tickets at £20 or less, over 6 million at £30 or less and over 7.5 million at £50 or less (2004 prices).”

Written evidence from LOCOG to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee, September 2005.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmcmds/552/5101802.htm>

“In addition to the 2.5 million tickets at £20 and less, we have got a further one million tickets at £30 and less. Those are, we think, pretty affordable for the world’s greatest sports event. Two-thirds of our tickets cost £50 and less, 90% of tickets cost £100 and less, so we have driven as many tickets as we can towards the lower end.”

Oral evidence from Paul Williamson (Director of Ticketing, LOCOG) to the Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee, 9 December 2010.

<http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=4186&T=11>

“the number of tickets per price point is roughly equal. So in most four price sessions, there will be around a quarter of tickets at each price.”

Letter from Paul Williamson (Director of Ticketing, LOCOG) to the Economy, Culture and Sport Committee, 3 December 2010. <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LOCOG%20Evidence.pdf>

Public availability

“75% of Olympic tickets (and 75% of Paralympic tickets) are available to the public through the UK application process. This is higher than FA Cup or Champions League Finals. Of the rest:

- 12% are for purchase through National Olympic Committees, primarily by international sports fans (around 1 million tickets)
- 13% are for purchase by sponsors, stakeholders, Broadcast Rights Holders, the IOC, International Federations, Prestige Ticketing partners and Thomas Cook.”

LOCOG Fact Pack, May 2012

http://www.london2012.com/mm/Document/Publications/StrategiesPolicy/01/24/75/49/FactpackMay2012_Neutral.pdf?t=1336753281382

“LOCOG is making 8% of the 8.8 million Olympic tickets available for sponsors and stakeholders to purchase, separate from the 75% of tickets available through the UK application process to the public.”

Letter from Paul Deighton (Chief Executive, LOCOG) to the Economy, Culture and Sport Committee, 18 October 2011.

http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Locog%20response%20to%20Just%20the%20Ticket_0.pdf

Appendix 2: Further information

The Economy Committee

Andrew Dismore, Labour (Chair)
Stephen Knight, Liberal Democrat (Deputy Chair)
Tony Arbour, Conservative
Gareth Bacon, Conservative
John Biggs, Labour
Andrew Boff, Conservative
Tom Copley, Labour
Jenny Jones, Green
Joanne McCartney, Labour

Committee contacts

Richard Berry, Scrutiny Manager
richard.berry@london.gov.uk
020 7983 4199

Media enquiries: Lisa Moore and Julie Wheldon
lisa.moore@london.gov.uk / julie.wheldon@london.gov.uk
020 7983 4283

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For further information on this report or to order a copy, please contact Richard Berry at richard.berry@london.gov.uk or 020 7983 4199.

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enquiries 020 7983 4100 / minicom 020 7983 4458