

LIVE SITES: BRINGING PLACES TO PEOPLE

› Legacy area: **HEALTH & COMMUNITIES**

› Policy focus: **IMPACTS**

› **THE EVIDENCE:**

Live Sites can bring national festivals alive in local communities and promote community wellbeing

› **THE BIG THREE DEBATES:**

1.

How can Live Sites help promote an inclusive 'family model' of community?

2.

What strategies can bring places to people through Live Sites to promote community wellbeing?

3.

How can local partners ensure Live Sites are seen as benefitting communities rather than commercial interests?

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› WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SAY?

The provision of 'Live Sites' (permanent city centre big screens), is one of the national legacy initiatives of London 2012's [Cultural Olympiad](#). There are screens in 20 towns and cities that are funded by the National Lottery and run in partnership with local organisations and the [BBC](#). Evidence shows that events that become large national projects, such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, generate a Festival Effect where people come together to celebrate their community being part of something that is significant to the whole nation. Live Sites can harness and enhance this Festival Effect to provide for communal collective experiences that can develop stronger communities and promote community wellbeing. Evidence suggests that 'Live Sites' can help promote a family model of community that encourages the celebration of, and respect for, a diverse range of community interests and activities that can be a source of pride to all members of the community. Live Sites have the potential to develop two specific outcomes:

- Bring national festivals alive in local communities by bringing 'places to people' through the Live Site, which should be customised according to the occasion.
- Develop community cohesion and pride through collective social experiences and the celebration of community diversity.

› HOW WAS THE EVIDENCE GATHERED?

SPEAR identified the phenomenon of a Festival Effect from a [worldwide review of evidence about developing physical activity and health legacies from the Olympic and Paralympic Games and other sport events](#). The systematic review explored a range of economic, social, cultural and health legacies by examining the best 53 studies on major events around the world since 1990. Evidence for a Festival Effect was found across countries and cultural contexts and across different types of events.

The worldwide evidence review identified the potential of the Festival Effect to generate physical activity outcomes, but there was also emergent evidence that the effect might be harnessed to develop wider community benefits. As there was considerable interest in the impacts that Live Sites might generate, SPEAR was commissioned to conduct a further [systematic review of evidence for the potential of Live Sites to generate community and public health outcomes](#), focusing particularly on the potential to harness the Festival Effect. This review located and analysed the best 48 studies from around the world that could inform the way in which Live Sites might be used to generate positive benefits for local communities.

› WHO WAS THE AUDIENCE?

The worldwide evidence review of physical activity and health legacies was commissioned by the [Department of Health](#) because it wanted to know what the potential health and wellbeing legacies of the Olympic and Paralympic Games might be, and whether it would be worth investing government resources to support the development of these legacies. In August 2009, [Andy Burnham MP, who was the Minister for Health, made a speech](#) telling people about the Festival Effect, and how it could contribute to health and wellbeing legacies.

The systematic review of evidence on the potential of Live Sites was commissioned by the [National Health Service \(NHS\)](#), who are local partners for many of the 20 Live Sites around the country. The NHS wanted to know how Live Sites and the Festival Effect could be used to develop stronger local communities, to enhance community wellbeing, and therefore contribute to public health. The link between the Festival Effect and public health is now recognised in the government's [Plans for the Legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games](#), which were revised in December 2010, which note the role the Festival Effect can play in encouraging healthy lifestyles.

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› THE BIG THREE DEBATES

Although the evidence shows that Live Sites can bring national events to life in local communities and in doing so contribute to developing stronger communities, community wellbeing and pride, these benefits are not automatic. In order to develop community outcomes, all parts of the local community must feel ownership of the Live Site, and that the events and activities that it supports are positive for the community. If Live Sites carry too much advertising, or promote companies or events that are not seen as being in the best interests of the community, the evidence suggests that communities will come to see Live Sites as having commercial goals rather than existing to benefit the community. If this happens, then communities will not engage with and support Live Sites, and the potential for community wellbeing outcomes will be lost.

THE BIG THREE DEBATES ABOUT LIVE SITES...

- 1 How can Live Sites help to promote a 'family model' of community that includes the full range of diverse community interests?
- 2 What strategies can use Live Sites to bring places to people and in doing so harness the Festival Effect to promote community wellbeing?
- 3 How can local Live Site partners ensure that live sites are seen as benefitting local communities rather than as promoting commercial interests?

› FURTHER RESOURCES AND READING

- Weed, M., Dowse, S., Chatziefstathiou, D., Lovell, J. Mansfield, L. and Wellard, I. (2010) A systematic review of the evidence for the potential of live sites to generate community and public health outcomes. Dover: National Health Service. <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/Research/Centres/SPEAR/ResearchProjects/SportPhysicalActivity/LiveSites.aspx>
- Weed M, Coren E, Fiore J, et al. (2009) A Systematic Review of the Evidence Base for Developing a Physical Activity and Health Legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/Research/Centres/SPEAR/ResearchProjects/OlympicAndParalympic/OlympicPhysicalActivity.aspx>
- London 2012 Live Sites project: <http://www.london2012.com/live-sites>
- London 2012 Cultural Olympiad: <http://www.london2012.com/cultural-olympiad>
- BBC Big Screens: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bigscreens/>
- DCMS (2010). Plans for the Legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/201210_Legacy_Publication.pdf
- NHS: <http://www.nhs.uk/>
- The Department of Health: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/>

CREDITS

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