

Sport Triumphs In Wake Of Magical Olympics / Paralympics

Contributed by JGFR
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With so many magic moments to treasure at this summer's™ enthralling Olympics and Paralympics it is no surprise to see the nation's™ feeling of togetherness and happiness soar.

The Team GB effect has been enormous – creating a very strong socially cohesive national brand.

The JGFR / GfK Olympics Barometer of post-London 2012 attitudes finds almost 7 out of 10 adults believe the Olympics/Paralympics have brought the country together and made us feel happier. This compares with 47% in June and a survey average of 52%.

Expectations jump in leaving a sporting legacy and sports participation

Attitudes to sport have soared following the events. Such public support will help enhance the standing of sport as focus turns to the impact on sports participation and on creating a lasting sporting legacy.

Two-thirds of adults expect the London Olympics to boost sports participation, up from 60% in June and above the Barometer average of 63%. A similar proportion of the public believe the Games will leave a lasting sporting legacy with a massive leap higher – up from 50% in June and a Barometer average of 57%.

London Olympics exceeds expectations as greatest lifetime sporting event and acts as an inspiration to millions

For millions of people London 2012 exceeded expectations. Over the 7 years of the Olympics Barometer around 27% of adults expected the London Olympics to be the greatest sporting event of their life. Post the Olympics 47% of adults felt this to be true.

With inspiration a key theme of the Games many more people (37%) than in June (27%) felt the summer of sporting and cultural events inspired and motivated them to become more active.

A quarter of adults line the streets to see Olympic torch and free Olympics events; 17% watch ticketed events

Where the Games succeeded brilliantly is to foster a sense of social cohesion with strong support from all socio-demographic groups, particularly among older, non-working and low income groups with millions taking to the streets to support torch bearers and competitors and others attending live big-screen events around the country

Around a quarter of the adult population (some 13 million) watched the Torch Relay and / or attended one of the free Olympic events, while 17% of adults (some 8.6 million) obtained tickets to watch the Olympics/Paralympics. Interestingly despite great criticism of the ticketing process and of empty seats in the early events, the proportion of adults who obtained tickets was identical to the number who intended to purchase tickets prior to them going on sale*

Londoners whose confidence has bounced around this year, managed to achieve close to their purchase intentions – 3 out of 10 obtained tickets slightly below the one third who sought tickets, but will have benefited from living close to the events following the late sales of tickets.

Games Makers likely to have inspired a surge in sports volunteers

The reassuring and friendly attitudes of the 70,000 volunteer Games Makers who greatly helped the spectator experience, may have inspired more people to become a volunteer. 16% of adults intend to volunteer in sporting and community activities as a result of the Olympics/Paralympics with around a quarter of under-40s so inclined. For sports charities this influx of new helpers should be welcome news – and add to the legacy impact of the Games. In the build-up to the Games around 8% of adults intended to help in events / activities at or surrounding the Olympics.

Health legacy an important part of overall Games legacy

Almost 7 out of 10 adults believe that sport as shown in London 2012 can change people's™ lives, with the over 65s particular believers in its life-changing power (78%). This may reflect health messages.

In this regard 64% of the public agree that a major role for the NHS is to promote the benefits of sport and exercise, up from 60% in June. More people are set to be active as a result of the Games.

Sponsors played a major role in success of Games and have a key role in delivering the legacy

Funding the Olympics has needed considerable support from corporate sponsors who have had a mixed relationship with the media and consumers. Relatively few adults (9-16%) in Barometers prior to the Games were likely to switch to / purchase from or regularly use a brand sponsoring the Olympics. Of these many were hoping to obtain sponsor's™ tickets. However post the Olympics / Paralympics a majority of consumers (54%) do believe the sponsors played a major role in

the success of the Games.

For the legacy to succeed there is a strong belief among consumers (61%) that corporate sponsors need to understand more the role that sport plays in the lives of their customers, employees and communities

More people intending watching sport should help in delivering vital sports sponsorship revenues
For sponsors and communications organisations spectator engagement and media consumption figures are vital. The Olympics and Paralympics were watched by millions of people across a growing number of media formats and channels, captivated by the events and the success of Team GB.

As a result 31% of adults expect to watch more sport in the future creating further marketing opportunities for sports programming with demand fairly uniform across age-groups.

And finally – has the Olympics boosted economic prospects?

In June 2005 before the bid was won 35% of adults indicated that winning the bid would boost their confidence in prospects for the UK economy. Since then fewer people have on average expected an Olympics economic boost, with a low of 19% and a high of 40% in August 2011. Post the Games 35% of people believe that staging the Games has boosted their confidence about economic prospects – the same as before the bid was won – and unlike other gauges of sentiment towards the Games always a minority belief.

Commented JGFR Chief Executive John Gilbert:

“The results of this Barometer show that the Olympics / Paralympics have harnessed a new mood in the country of success and achievement in and around sport. Team GB will act as an inspirational, socially inclusive brand for the whole country which is the biggest legacy of this summer’s events.”

Interviews were undertaken by GfK NOP among 1,003 adults aged 16+, representative of the UK population between September 7-9 by telephone

Consumers were asked whether any of 14 statements about the Olympics / Paralympics applied to them

*in statements before tickets were on sale respondents were asked solely about London Olympics tickets and not Paralympics. Post the event we asked about attending both Olympics and Paralympics. More people may have attended Paralympic events because they did not get Olympics tickets

Previous Olympic Barometers were undertaken in June 2005, March 2007, March 2008, December 2008, December 2009, September 2010, March, August, December 2011, March, June 2012

A report – Consumer attitudes to the Olympics / Paralympics – will be published in late October/early November

About JGFR

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