

## **Submission to the GLA's Economy, Culture and Sport Committee**

This submission has been prepared by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) in response to Recommendation One of the ECS Committee's report *Park Life: the legacy of London's Olympic venues*. Recommendations Three and Four are addressed in a joint submission from LVRPA and OPLC.

### **Recommendation One**

**The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority should ensure that their venues are open for public access for at least 80 percent of their opening hours. This should be guaranteed in a set of minimum requirements developed by the LVRPA, corresponding to those produced by the OPLC in its Sport and Healthy Living Policy. The LVRPA should respond to this recommendation by the end of March 2012.**

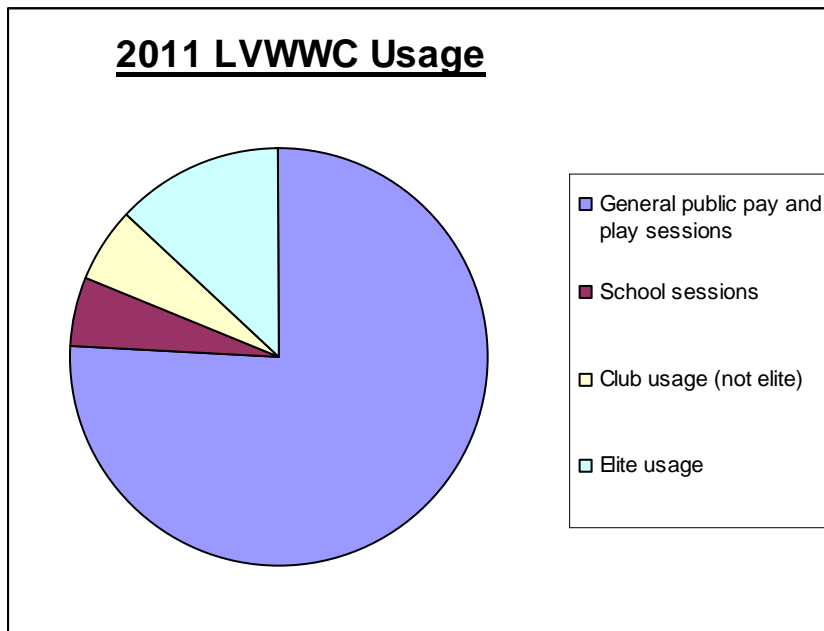
1. We would like to be completely clear – all of our Olympic Park venues will have at least 80 per cent public access and, in practice, considerably more than this.
2. We are able to say this with confidence as this is the way we already run our existing award-winning venues. This is our business approach and our long established track record. Our mode of operation is to run venues which, while having facilities good enough to attract the best athletes in the country, are venues predominantly used by the public and community.
3. Existing LVRPA sports venues – such as Lee Valley White Water Centre and Lee Valley Ice Centre – already well exceed 80 per cent public and community use opening hours.
4. We intend that the public will actually have access to our Olympic Park venues for almost 100 per cent of the time and the public will be able to make use of them for the vast bulk of this.
5. This will be possible because our Olympic Park venues (as well as our existing ones) have been specifically designed to allow different groups to use them at the same time. So, for instance, during UK Athletics' (UKA) usage periods at Lee Valley Athletics Centre, schools and community groups use other sections of the Centre, perhaps the throws area or outdoor track. Our venues have been consciously created from the outset so community and elite use can take place side by side.
6. In addition, members of the public can watch the elite squad. This is part of our contract with UKA, the sport's National Governing Body who, like us, see their athletes inspiring the stars of tomorrow as an important part of the mix. We hear time and again just how inspirational it is for young people to watch their idols train on, for instance, the same track they themselves run on 10 minutes later.
7. Similarly Lee Valley VeloPark has four different cycling activities – track, BMX, mountain and road. The VeloPark has been designed so that if Team

GB is training in the Velodrome, the public will be able to still use the changing rooms, bike hire and other facilities to gain access to BMX, mountain and road circuits.

8. Lee Valley Hockey Centre and Lee Valley Tennis Centre have been designed to accommodate elite and community use side by side, and will mainly attract community use.
9. Below is the usage for Lee Valley White Water Centre's (LV WWC) first eight months of operations which shows that around 13 per cent of time has been for elite use, mainly by Team GB. It is important to note:
  - a. that this is before our main sports development and legacy operations formally begin which will produce additional community activity sessions in line with our Sport England Lottery Funding Agreements. Once these start after the Games, the proportion of elite time will drop further.
  - b. members of the public are free to watch (and be inspired by) the national team during their sessions
10. The Authority's commitment to maximising community access is aimed at a regional audience and not just the local communities. For example the Schools Festival at LV WWC last summer was designed for Boroughs across London, and districts across Essex and Hertfordshire. As a result every London Borough sent a school group for a FREE white water experience on the Olympic course. We shall be holding the second such Schools Festival in March 2012. We intend to roll out similar events across all our legacy venues post Games.
11. From the very start, Lee Valley White Water Centre was designed for legacy. Floodlights have been installed to extend public sessions into the evening and the Legacy Loop – a shorter and less challenging course – was specifically created to improve the skills of canoeists and kayakers so that they can eventually graduate to the more demanding Olympic Standard Competition Course. This will help produce a new generation of champions.

#### Lee Valley White Water Centre Usage

<b>Lee Valley White Water Centre Sports Programmes</b>	<b>Number of hours per week</b>
General public pay and play sessions	88 hours per week
School sessions	6 hours per week
Club usage (not elite)	7 hours per week
Coach Education	Standardised programme developed post 2012
Elite usage	15 hours per week
Community events	2 days per month on average

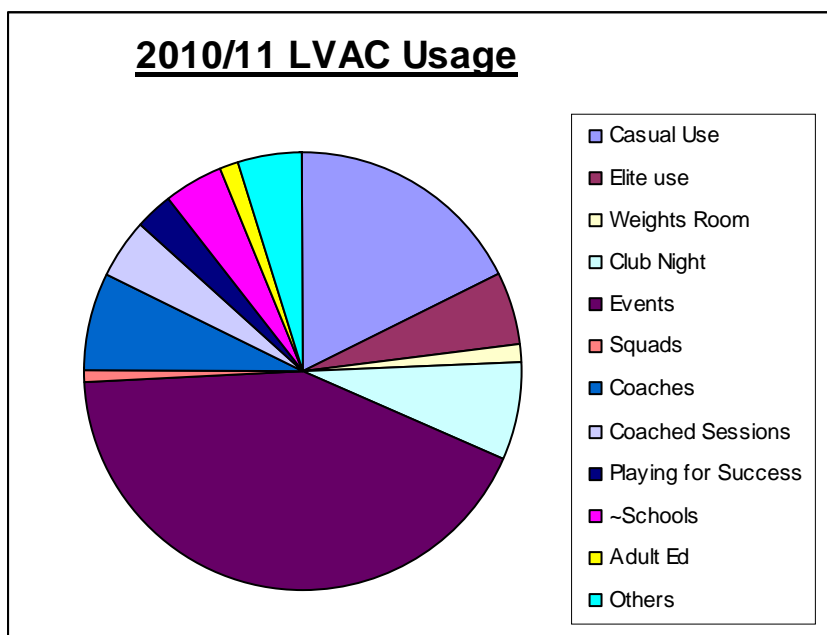


12. It may also be useful to remind the committee of an excerpt from our previous submission on Lee Valley Athletics Centre which deals in detail with usage at this venue. It is particularly pertinent as we are using this as a blueprint for our Olympic Park venues. This is attached at Appendix 1 below.

Appendix 1 – from LVRPA submission to the GLA's Economy, Culture and Sport Committee in September 2011.

#### Lee Valley Athletics Centre in detail

22. Around 80 per cent of the centre's opening hours are for community activity with 20 per cent for elite usage. There is a large variety of events - last year 120 different ones were held from school sports days to international competitions such as the British Masters. 165,000 people used the centre in 2010/11 with the various uses and activities summarised in Table below.



23. The Centre is home to Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club – one of the top five clubs in the country. It is a venue for regional and county athletics Performance Squads, a regional hub for coach education and a regional venue for the English Institute of Sport. It regularly hosts international athletes from a range of sports including fencing, netball and wheelchair rugby.
24. The Athletics Club, in partnership with the local Community Sports Coach, has a thriving regular development programme for disabled athletes.
25. Since opening in January 2007, at least 200,000 children from every London borough and across the South East have enjoyed the facilities at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre including many school sports days. Our pricing structure means that the centre is affordable and accessible for school groups; from as little as £45 an hour for up to 500 school children for a competition event - 9p per child.
26. The Authority has in place Sports Development Plans across all our sports venues helping to ensure we deliver sporting opportunities across the continuum from grass roots community activity through to elite usage. Examples of community sports development programmes at Lee Valley Athletics Centre include:
- Playing for Success – a sports and education learning project, which aims to re-engage local pupils who are finding school difficult, by using athletics to stimulate their interest in numeracy, literacy and ICT. This programme has recently concluded after three successful years.
  - Athletics Academy – 2,800 under 16 year olds attended these sessions last year encouraging eight to 14 year olds to try out athletics and signpost talented youngsters to clubs where they can make the most of their skills
  - Schools Athletics Events – 50 separate events in 2010/11 with an additional 25+ school sports days. The centre also runs a number of school holiday

coaching programmes and organises a highly successful series of “minithons”, grassroots athletics competitions for 8 to 13 year olds

- Volunteer Development – Over 3,000 volunteer hours have been pledged to help support athletics events
- Coach Development – 15 Regional and National Coach Development events took place last year
- Diversifying into other sports to maximise usage – Over 1,600 school students took part in the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships event held at the centre.