

**OUR SPORTING LIFE HANDBOOK**

## **A Call to Arms from the Chair**

*I am delighted that 'Our Sporting Life' has moved to the next stage in its development leading up to London 2012. Exactly a year ago we launched the project at Lord's and now we are opening the first of what we are confident will be a large number of similar exhibitions throughout the country.*

*This booklet will enable any museum, library or archive to get a really good idea of what is on offer to them. The members of the Sports Heritage Network, with the support of the MLA, BOA and many others, has put in a huge amount of time and money to bring the project this far. Our pathfinder, OSL – Henley is now open and will, for the next few months, be a showroom for all to see. I am sure that, with the enthusiastic reaction that we have already had from several local and regional museums that have committed funds to their own exhibitions, we will exceed our target of over two hundred exhibitions over the next two and a half years.*

*The third stage is, of course, the 'World's Greatest Exhibition of Sporting History' to be held in London in 2012. We are working hard on the details of that.*

*Finally I would like to thank all those who have supported us thus far and who have worked so hard and with such tight timescales to bring our project from an idea to a reality.*

Paul Mains  
*Chair – Our Sporting Life*  
16 March 2010



Shirley Robertson OBE holding the Olympic Torch

## Our Sporting Life

Our Sporting Life enables communities in Britain to connect with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. At its heart is an exhibition which includes a core display of Britain's Olympic heritage that can be expanded easily to celebrate the sporting life of your community. These community exhibitions are designed to harness the power of objects and personal stories to kindle inspiration, enthusiasm and involvement at a local level.

***The best of these community stories will be included in the world's greatest exhibition of sporting history in London 2012.***

You are invited to take part in this pioneering museum experience that will celebrate a pulsating artery in the life of our communities. **Our Sporting Life**, an initiative of the Sports Heritage Network (SHN), is the first of its kind to tap into the grass roots of sport and elevate it to a central place both culturally and in terms of its relevance to individual communities. The project, which has the support of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), will culminate in the world's greatest exhibition on Britain's Sporting Heritage to be held to mark the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London in 2012.



**Our Sporting Life** is more than just an exhibition, a lecture series, a sporting event: it is a whole process of involving the local community in the cultural life of a region through sport, resulting in a host of opportunities beyond 2012. There are not many sports that the British did not invent, codify or popularise, and their practice has brought communities together in a way that few other activities are able. The heritage of sport and the objects associated with it have the power to inspire and engage audiences, to cross boundaries and to found new partnerships. One of the ambitions of this project is to bring together from all over the country objects of sports heritage that help to tell the rich story of the history of sport in Britain.

**Our Sporting Life** is focused not just on the Olympic sports but all sports practiced regularly throughout Britain. Here is an opportunity to show community material alongside the icons of British sport. And it does not matter whether the sport is a team game or an individual pursuit, whether it has hundreds of followers or millions, if it has a story and a heritage in the context of your community it can be celebrated within Our Sporting Life (OSL).

**MLA and SHN are working together to launch this exciting and ambitious project. Outlined briefly below are the key points of the project.**

## THE EXHIBITION



Central to the OSL project is the exhibition, a pathfinder version of which is on display at the River & Rowing Museum, Henley, until 11 July 2010. The exhibition has a modular core around which any number of variations can be constructed. OSL offers assistance in selecting the right sized exhibition for your venue plus help and advice in how to expand and tailor it to your area. At Henley the experience of working with the local community has been wholly positive and not only have precious objects and memorabilia come to light but also outstanding memories and surprising sporting connections locally.

## BRAND

OSL is supported by the MLA and SHN. MLA is supporting the project including funding the post of full time programme manager who will be in place by spring 2010 for twelve months in the first instance. The programme manager will be working closely with regional Renaissance partners and museums to support the local initiatives in order to ensure the smooth running of development of individual projects.



## DEVELOPMENT TEMPLATE

Exhibitions will have their own individual character shaped by the objects and stories obtained locally that are included with the core of texts and images. How to use the template and structure your own exhibition is explained in the 'Design and Build' leaflet to be found on the OSL website. A great amount can be achieved by encouraging volunteers to become involved and getting all aspects of the community thinking about how they can contribute and benefit from taking part in OSL, whether by loaning sporting treasures or images, adding to the exhibition story with oral history or making local links between groups and individuals. Working creatively with schools, local authorities and private individuals can lead to a wide variety of projects becoming associated with OSL.

## EXHIBITION PACKAGE

OSL will provide, free of charge, help to decide which size of exhibition is best suited to your venue. All copyright cleared material is also free for you to use within the context of the exhibition provided you do not alter or edit it. The cost of the core exhibition and any additional panels, showcases or films/DVDs etc falls to the individual venue, though assistance with funding may be available via Renaissance. The cost matrix outlined in the 'Design and Build' document makes costing the exhibition straightforward.

## SPORT SPECIFIC HERITAGE CONTACTS

OSL has access to an unparalleled list of contacts within the sporting heritage world. Many sports have their own heritage bodies, museums, club archivists or historians. Through association with OSL you will have access to these people who can answer almost any question concerning their own sports. They will be as interested to hear about what you discover in your region as you will be helped by their knowledge of their individual sports.

## THE PEOPLE'S RECORD

OSL aims to work closely with The People's Record and Stories of the World, two projects at the heart of the cultural Olympiad led by MLA. There are opportunities for OSL exhibitions and events to dovetail with these two important projects. The contact at The People's Record is the Project Manager Vanessa Harbar, who is happy to discuss how her project is working in your area and how initiatives can be developed on a community level. Her contact details are [vanessa.harbar@mla.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.harbar@mla.gov.uk) or 0121 345 7331.

## EXHIBITION DESIGN TEMPLATE

OSL is working in conjunction with Richard Fowler Associates (RFA) who have produced a Design and Build template that is flexible and can work in any space and to any budget. You can seek advice as to the best way to incorporate your material into the templates offered by RFA.



John Batty  
[johnbatty@ymail.com](mailto:johnbatty@ymail.com)



## DISPLAY SYSTEMS (RFA)

RFA has devised a modular system using 600mm display cubes that are versatile and can be used as low security showcases, text boxes, audio/visual units or for photographic display, either static or changing. This system can be expanded to meet any requirements and as it is modular, the costings can be worked out in advance and thus to suit individual budgets.

## QUALITY CONTROL

In order to maintain the high standard set by the pathfinder exhibition you have the opportunity to take advice on customising the outward appearance of your own museum cases. If your exhibition requires additional panels ideally these need to come through RFA. Additional cases need to be dressed to suit the rest of the exhibition.



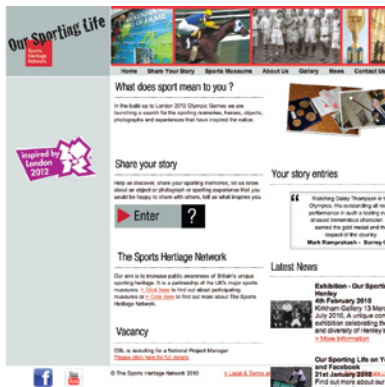
## 'CORE' CONTENT

OSL has worked with the British Olympic Association (BOA), the British Paralympic Association (BPA), the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and SHN members on the contents of the core element of the exhibition. This contains the fore and back stories of the Olympic Games in texts, films and photographs. It is a vibrant and exciting display that captures the heart of British sporting heritage. The core content will form a focus for additional material and help to put local sports into the context of the Olympic Games and thus the London 2012 exhibition.



## TIME LINE

The time line is integral to the exhibition. Key dates and events can be augmented by local key sporting moments. Some of these can be introduced during the development stage of the exhibition, others might be suggested during the exhibition itself. Suggestions for how this can be achieved are on the website [www.oursportinglife.co.uk](http://www.oursportinglife.co.uk).



## OSL ON THE WEB

A dedicated OSL website will have within it a password enabled members' area for our participating partners to access up to date information and news, get in touch with other OSL partners, ask questions of the Sports Heritage experts and request help with anything from questions of design to PR and Inspire By applications. All exhibition and PR templates will be accessible from this site, as will a full PDF version of the OSL exhibition handbook. The website will also provide a forum for sharing experiences about OSL exhibitions and events so that lessons learned are captured for other partners and for the future. [www.oursportinglife.co.uk](http://www.oursportinglife.co.uk).

## FUNDING ADVICE

There are some funding opportunities available for OSL partners. Advice on eligibility can be obtained from regional Renaissance partners.



## PROFILE (LAUNCH, ETC)

Given the extraordinary profile OSL has achieved already, with a launch at Lord's in March 2009 and endorsements from the highest echelons of the sporting world and Olympic organising committee there is a lot of potential for launching your project from a well founded base. The website lists a handful of significant press articles that have appeared about OSL and quotations from a variety of well placed sources that you may use in conjunction with your launch.

## PR

The OSL project coordinator and programme manager will be happy to help you to shape the PR for your OSL projects by providing templates and sample paragraphs. The good news story about OSL has so many different angles and facets that many different aspects of sporting life in your region can be introduced into press and PR. By using the Our Sporting Life logo and design the association with the national project will be obvious without having to be explicitly spelled out. This helps the national project to become recognised locally and vice versa.

## INSPIRE PROGRAMME

OSL is one of the first projects to be awarded the 'Inspire' Mark. Within OSL the Inspire mark has to be applied for individually on a case by case basis. It is not a requirement of taking part in the OSL project and some of you may not feel it is necessary to apply for it as there are terms and conditions that have to be fulfilled. However, if you wish to apply for the Inspire mark the project manager at OSL can help you to set this in motion by giving you a partly filled out template and helping you to negotiate your way through the application system.

## REGIONAL MOBILISATION

### **Funded by MLA Renaissance Regional Grants and Support In Kind**

Although a national project, the role of the regions is of vital importance in the realisation of the full potential of the exhibition and its associated events. MLA works closely with the Arts Council, Sport England and English Heritage. In addition, OSL has excellent links with Visit Britain, which has ambitious programmes for 2012 and beyond. There is no joining fee or contribution required to fund OSL centrally.

## REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTACTS

We at OSL are committed to helping you to realise your project to the best of our ability. Therefore the first point of contact for anyone interested in taking part is the OSL National Programme Coordinator, Cookie Scottorn, at the River & Rowing Museum in Henley (01491 415608). Key to the success of your project is your Renaissance hub and there is a list of contacts for the nine regions to be found on the MLA website

[www.mla.gov.uk/what/programmes/renaissance/regions](http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/programmes/renaissance/regions)

## MANAGE ROLL OUT WITHIN REGION

The successful coordination of the regional programme will do much to determine the success of the OSL exhibitions on both a local and national basis. We have shown how much support and interest there is in this project from key individuals in LOCOG as well as general enthusiasm from a host of national organisations and the press. Making the most of this is up to the individual organisations and the nominated regional coordinators. We will support wherever we can and as best we can but you need to make sure of joined up planning at all times.

## 'OWN' DISPLAY SYSTEM IN REGION

It is possible that individual Renaissance regions will opt to purchase their own OSL display system which will mean that this/these can be loaned to local galleries, museums, libraries or archives. The OSL programme manager will be aware of how this has been agreed region by region.



## LOCAL EXHIBITION CONTENT

The key to success in finding the best objects, memorabilia and personalities with which to enhance your own exhibition is ensuring that the process of finding out about what is held locally has been carried out to the best of your ability. A very successful example of how this can be done was conducted at the River & Rowing Museum in October when representatives from over thirty local sporting bodies attended a presentation at the Museum. They were told how they could become involved, what involvement could mean to them and how best to go about finding material to offer for exhibition. A sample form, as used as a follow up to this meeting, is offered on the website. It can be altered to suit your own requirements.

## REGIONAL AGENDAS AND PRIORITIES

Some regions will be putting on major events leading up to London 2012. It is beneficial both to you and your region that you work together so that the sum of the region's efforts is greater than its parts. The OSL programme manager will be able to inform you in the first instance of what else is planned for your region but thereafter it is important that you keep the regional Renaissance contact informed as your plans develop.



## TOURISM

The Olympic Games will be staged in various venues around Britain and this presents an ideal opportunity for working together. There are also opportunities linked with training camps and teams who will be sited throughout Britain for much of 2011 and we would encourage you to explore all possibilities for working events into the tourist programme in your local area. OSL has excellent contacts within Visit London and Visit Britain who are good friends to this project and support our initiative.

## AND THE NOMINATIONS FOR LONDON 2012 ARE...

***One of the single most exciting possibilities directly related to London 2012 is the possibility of helping to influence the content of the major London exhibition. Nominate your best object/objects, story, memorabilia or personality and this will be considered by the London organisers. This is mutually beneficial since the London exhibition organisers will want to put together the very best material available for the 2012 exhibition and it gives the opportunity for the regions to have a tangible stake in the Olympic and Paralympic London 2012 story.***

## OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

### OSL MAIN CONTACTS

In the first instance the main contact for expressions of interest is OSL coordinator Cookie Scottorn at the River & Rowing Museum, Henley (tel: 01491 415608). From spring 2010 there will be in place an MLA funded programme manager (for 12 months) whose role will be to coordinate all aspects of the project between OSL and the regional and local organisers.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

OSL will be publishing a full document, in liaison with MLA, that will give further details about the nuts and bolts of organising OSL events including advice on what help is available and forms, templates etc for designing your exhibition panels and other material.

### GOVERNANCE

At the national level governance of OSL is via a steering group which comprises the directors of seven key sporting museums and the MLA. Current Chairman is Paul Mainds, Trustee and Chief Executive of the River & Rowing Museum in Henley.

### COPYRIGHT

Copyright clearance has been obtained for the use of images, the BOA/BPA film and the texts in the context of the core exhibition, that is to say, on the condition that they are not edited and are used in association with appropriate OSL branding.

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

If you are interested in taking part in Our Sporting Life please complete the form on the back page of this document or alternatively download the form from the OSL website [www.oursportinglife.co.uk](http://www.oursportinglife.co.uk) and send it to the address indicated. If you prefer to telephone then please call Cookie Scottorn on 01491 415608. She will be able to answer your questions and put you in touch with the coordinator responsible for OSL in your region.

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN OSL EXHIBITION

Name of organisation

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Address

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Web address

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Contact name and role

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Phone number

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Email address

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## ABOUT YOUR PROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION

### Exhibition Space

Please indicate how many square feet of exhibition space, or running feet of wall space, you have for an OSL exhibition

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### Dates

What are your preferred dates?

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### Resources

Do you have any funding for such an exhibition?  
Do you have local sponsors who you work with?

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### Size of organisation

How many staff do you have?

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### Volunteers

How many volunteers do you have?

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### Collections

Do you have sporting memorabilia in your collections?

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### Locally

Are you aware of collections of sporting memorabilia locally on which you will be drawing, for example, clubs, private collections, libraries or archives?

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### Locations

Are you aware of anyone else locally working with OSL?

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### Local Links

Are you working with local organisations, local government, etc?

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