

Will the Commonwealth Games enhance Birmingham's reputation?

By Poppy Surplice, Event Assistant at the Centre for Brexit Studies

The Commonwealth Games, due to take place in 2022 in Birmingham, is known as 'The Games for Everyone'. The choice to use Birmingham as the hosting city for the games, all comes down to it's cultural diversity and global powerhouse of innovation and creativity evolving year on year.

Birmingham acquired its nickname as the 'second city in England' during the 18th and early 19th when it developed as a major industrial and commercial city. Not only this, but Birmingham was known as the first industrial town of the world. Fast forward to present day, Birmingham's innovations include the HS2 hub, the Digbeth transformation Project and now the Commonwealth Games. Birmingham is certainly the best city to host the 2022 Games. According to a recent article in the [BBC news](#), the 2022 Commonwealth Games will be a "catalyst" for the post-pandemic recovery in the West Midlands. With all live events, including all sporting events, have been cancelled due to the impacts of COVID-19. The Games have been affected by the pandemic, with work being paused or put-on hold. Although the coronavirus outbreak has impacted the whole supply chain at the Games, it will be a real opportunity for the region to get back on it's feet. The Games will attract new funding and investment into the city, create jobs and apprenticeships for the local people and new opportunities for local businesses. Moreover, this will ensure the region can celebrate together to host sports and celebrate culture!

After Boris Johnson announced his roadmap out of lockdown at the end of February, live events can resume from the 21st of June. As the Games aren't until 2022, this gives the organisers enough time to plan ahead. The Games are on time and within budget, therefore the Games are in a really good place.

[Louise Martin CBE](#), Commonwealth Games Federation President stated, "Birmingham is truly the Commonwealth's city, and we look

forward to showcasing its humanity and pride over the coming months and years". Birmingham has a wealth of existing sports venues and arenas such as the NEC, NEC Arena and The Resorts World Arena.

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will determine the very best of Global Britain to the world, showcasing the region's strengths of being connected and accessible; youth and inclusivity; and a focus on regeneration and rejuvenation. Birmingham is perfectly positioned to attract people to the Games and to ensure that the benefits of hosting extend from the city and region to the UK and the Commonwealth. With 95% of the competition venues already in place, Birmingham 2022 Games will be an asset to the region.

The West Midlands had been it hard during 2020, with over 100,00 people losing their jobs because of the pandemic. The Commonwealth Games will provide over 30,00 jobs as well as many volunteer roles during the planning and days of the event timeline. The Games will provide around £526M towards the economic benefit of the West Midlands.

For the events industry, the Games will bring the sector back to life after the impacts of COVID-19 pausing all live events. As an event enthusiast myself, the opportunity to work on such a high-scale project would be a massive experience.

The main stadium used for the Games, will be the enhanced and refurbished Alexander Stadium in the City Centre. Already established as an internationally renowned athletics venue and home to UK Athletics, Birmingham will strengthen its reputation as the 'City of Running' through improving competition and training facilities at the stadium and increasing permanent seating capacity. The

stadium will house around 30,00 spectators during each Game. Post-Games the stadium will revert to a permanent capacity of around 18,000, which is the largest permanent facility capable of hosting major athletics in the UK. Therefore, the venue can be used for all sorts of events in the foreseeable future.

The plans of the Perry Barr athlete's village for the Games have been abandoned, whereby athletes and games officials will now be put up in existing accommodation at the universities of Birmingham and

Warwick and the NEC. But building of new homes on the site will still go-ahead without the time pressure of being ready for the games. Organisers have insisted that the Games will still be delivered on time and on budget, and a linked Perry Barr Regeneration Scheme involving new housing and transport infrastructure will still be completed in time.

The Birmingham 2022 Games will be a once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of, especially for the city and region. As mentioned at the beginning of the blog, Birmingham 2022 will be the Games for everyone, bringing people together from across Birmingham and the region, to provide a warm welcome to millions of visitors during the summer of 2022. If you're living in the West Midlands or close by why not get involved? Check out the Commonwealth Games website [here](#).