

Expert Insights.

Planning for the 2012 London Olympics



London's population is set to explode in July next year as spectators from around the world converge in the city to celebrate the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

While the Olympics are expected to bring in billions of pounds worth of trade and commerce to the UK, the influx of visitors to London will place extraordinary pressure on local infrastructure, air travel, accommodation and ground transport. The increase in demand for services as a result of the Olympics and other major events happening from June to September in London will affect the cost and availability of travel. Business travellers are advised to start planning now for the UK's biggest and busiest summer in history.

What to expect

Come July next year, London will be buzzing as millions of visitors flock to the city to see the world's greatest sporting event. A total of 8.8 million tickets are available for the 16-day Olympics and a further two million tickets have been released for the 11-day Paralympic Games (ref: Olympic Delivery Authority or ODA). The games will be hosted in 34 venues across Greater London. In addition, there are a number of other major events occurring in London over the summer that will place further strain on the travel industry and local infrastructure including: Wimbledon (25 June – 8 July), Ramadan (20 July – 18 August) and Notting Hill Carnival (26– 27 August).

One of the biggest issues for the UK government is transport. Currently there are 3.5 million daily journeys made by local residents or visitors on the London Underground system. During the games London's transport system will have to support an estimated 20 million extra trips made by spectators (ref: ODA). Organisers also estimate that on the busiest day of the games, the city's transport systems will have to absorb up to three million additional trips made by spectators commuting to Olympic events.

Impact on the travel industry

The cost and availability of air travel and accommodation will be the major concerns for corporates during the UK summer, particularly during the Olympics. Due to the nature of supply and demand, prices for air travel, ground transport and accommodation are expected to rise as availability closes out in the lead up to the games. Corporates need to start planning now in preparation for the peak period.

Best practice travel strategies

During the peak Olympic period corporates should reconsider all non-essential travel and look at what alternatives are available. Consider bringing forward or postponing meeting dates or conduct meetings outside of London. If travel to the UK is critical during this period, plan ahead with Corporate Traveller to secure availability and pricing that is in line with your travel policy.

Key dates

Olympic Games	27 July – 12 August 2012
Transition period	13 – 28 August 2012
Paralympics Games	29 August – 9 September 2012

Fast facts

- 20 million – trips will be made by spectators within London during the games
- 3 million – trips to be made by spectators on the busiest day
- 10.8 million – tickets are on sale for the London 2012 Games
- 800,000 – people are expected to use public transport to travel to the games on the busiest day
- 100% - is the target for proportion of spectators travelling to the games by public transport, walking or cycling
- 80% - of spectators attending the events in Greater London will travel by rail including the London Underground

(Reference: Olympic Delivery Authority Keep on Running)

