

# Birmingham 2022 gives nation a cause for celebration

- 8 in 10 people think major UK events including Birmingham 2022 give people an opportunity to celebrate
- Record 1.5m spectators bought tickets for events across the West Midlands
- Stats on Games participation, job creation and legacy projects show lasting impact on local communities

Nearly half the UK tuned in or turned up to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, new polling shows, with eight in 10 people saying it gave the country the chance to celebrate.

The findings, in a survey conducted by Ipsos on behalf of DCMS, means the Games – delivered in record time – drew an estimated overall UK audience on TV, online and in person of more than 20 million. Birmingham 2022 also drew an estimated global TV audience of hundreds of millions as the city shone on the world stage.

The survey also reveals that two in three people from Birmingham and the surrounding area engaged with the Games, with a quarter of those polled saying they turned out to watch the Queen's Baton Relay as it travelled through the city.

The statistics are published today in a new report Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games: The Highlights which shows the positive benefits the event has had on sport and cultural participation, job creation and the regional economy.

Nigel Huddleston, Minister for the Commonwealth Games, said:

These results really underline that Birmingham 2022 was more than just the 11 days of fantastic sport. The West Midlands and the UK really got behind Birmingham 2022 and recaptured that 2012 spirit, giving the whole country the opportunity to come together and celebrate our amazing athletes.

The legacy of the Games has only begun, and I can't wait to see the region continue to reap the economic, cultural and social benefits from delivering a showstopper summer.

Ian Reid, CEO of Birmingham 2022, said:

These results are testament to a lot of hard work by an incredibly dedicated team. Birmingham and the West Midlands did itself proud and there was a real feeling of renewed opportunity right across

the city and region. Venues were packed, spectators had a fantastic experience, and local businesses felt the real-time economic benefits as tills were ringing thanks to increased visitor numbers. The legacy of these Games is just getting started and these results demonstrate the positive impact and benefits that major events deliver.

A record 1.5 million spectators bought tickets for the event, making it the most popular Commonwealth Games ever to be hosted in the UK. More than 5 million people came to Birmingham city centre during the two-week period of the Games – a 200% increase on the same period in 2021. Millions more followed on TV and online. The opening ceremony attracted 5.2 million viewers and a total of 28.6 million tuned into the Games on the BBC. The event was also streamed 57.1 million times on the BBC – a record for a Commonwealth Games.

Dame Louise Martin DBE, President of the Commonwealth Games Federation, said:

Birmingham 2022 was a spectacular Games that has set a new benchmark for Commonwealth sport. It was the first to award more medals to women than men, had the largest ever integrated para programme and was the most sustainable Commonwealth Games ever hosted.

Along with special sporting moments, Birmingham 2022 will also be remembered for the way the people of Birmingham embraced the Games, creating a welcoming, electric atmosphere that inspired our Commonwealth athletes to reach new heights.

Importantly, the Games will also leave a lasting legacy, having accelerated regeneration, created jobs and skills opportunities and been a catalyst for investment to help those who need the most support to get physically active.

The significant core public investment in the Games of £778 million has accelerated investment and regeneration in Birmingham, the West Midlands and beyond. Alexander Stadium was transformed for the Games and communities, and Sandwell Aquatics Centre is providing elite and community swimmers and divers with a brand new, world-class facility.

The event also created 40,000 jobs and skills opportunities for local people, including 14,000 volunteer positions. A dedicated Jobs and Skills Academy invested over £10 million to train unemployed residents to take advantage of the Games-time roles. Six in 10 people from Birmingham and Sandwell said the Games has had a positive economic impact on the area, by supporting the local economy and raising its profile in the UK and abroad.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

As I reflect on the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, I can honestly say I've never felt prouder to be from the West Midlands. This summer's spectacle must represent a starting point and not a finish line. I want to see a lasting legacy for the people of the West Midlands for generations to come and it's already clear that there is immense potential to deliver just that.

We brought communities together in a moment of collective celebration, we upskilled thousands of local residents, we doubled our pipeline of inward investment leads, and – with Sandwell Aquatics Centre and the revamped Alexander Stadium in Perry Barr – we're providing a tangible legacy for future sporting superstars.

It's great news that Games sporting equipment will now be shared free of charge with local grassroots organisations and I look forward to seeing much more good news in the weeks, months and years ahead.

The Games has amplified ongoing investments in Perry Barr, including the refurbishment of the train station, wider transport improvements and the creation of up to 5,000 new homes supported by a £150 million investment by the government.

This public investment has also helped to unlock over £85 million additional funding from a range of public and third sector bodies including a £35 million investment from Sport England to deliver a physical activity legacy. As part of this work, a wide range of sports equipment used by teams and athletes during the Commonwealth Games from boxing gloves to martial arts mats and basketballs will be gifted to local sports groups and clubs across the West Midlands.

Cllr Ian Ward, Leader of Birmingham City Council, said:

This is precisely why I championed bringing the Games to Birmingham for so long. When people questioned whether we could afford to host the Commonwealth Games, I was always convinced that we simply couldn't afford not to do it.

The Games were about so much more than 11 days of world-class sport. They delivered homes, jobs, transport improvements, cultural opportunities and a collective sense of pride.

The people, communities and businesses of Birmingham rose brilliantly to the challenge and together we hosted an unforgettable festival of sport, culture, hospitality, and sheer unbridled enjoyment.

Tim Hollingsworth, CEO of Sport England, said:

The Games were a wonderful platform to create lasting impact in communities across the country – bringing us together through sport, culture, community and friendship.

Sport England's 'Uniting the Movement' strategy takes a long-term approach to challenges with activity levels – including tackling the deep-rooted inequalities that prevent some people from taking part in sport and activity. Our £35million investment into the Games targeted support to where it's most needed, in order to create inclusive opportunities for people to come together and get active in their communities – now and for years into the future.

## **Notes to editors**

The embargoed Birmingham 2022 Highlights Report has been published on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/birmingham-2022-commonwealth-games-the-highlights>

## **Further Ipsos polling results**

- Almost 8 in 10 (78%) people say major UK events including the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games gave people the opportunity to celebrate.
- 3 in 4 (75%) people agree that major UK events including the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games gave people the opportunity to come together nationally.
- 3 in 4 (72%) people agree that major UK events including the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games gave people the opportunity to come together in their local community.
- 2 in 3 (61%) people agree that events like the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games make them feel proud of the UK.
- 6 in 10 people in Birmingham (60%) agree that the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games has had a positive impact on the economy in

Birmingham and Sandwell.

- 6 in 10 people (58%) in Birmingham think that the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will have improved perceptions of the area, with less than 1 in 10 saying it won't.
- Nearly half of people nationally (46%) have watched, followed online, or taken part in Birmingham 2022 events.

## **Birmingham 2022 delivered some important Commonwealth Games firsts:**

- Delivery in a record 4.5 years rather than the usual 7 years, with over half of the total delivery time in extraordinary circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- The first major global multi-sport event to have more women's medals than men's and the biggest para-sport programme in Commonwealth Games history;
- Commonwealth Games sporting debuts for basketball 3x3, wheelchair basketball 3x3 and cricket T20.

Birmingham 2022 been part of a landmark year of celebration for the UK and the Commonwealth. In June, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations saw people and communities from across the UK, Commonwealth and beyond come together to celebrate this historic milestone, marking Her Majesty The Queen's 70 years of service. Further cultural events are continuing throughout the year through UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK, with PoliNations launching in Birmingham's Victoria Square on 2 September.

## **Physical activity and wellbeing**

### **Further quotes**

Sahara Mohammed, Operations Manager of the Impact Fitness Academy said:

The Commonwealth Games being in Birmingham were brilliant for showing the amazing community we have in our city.

At Impact, we focus on developing children not only in their wrestling and boxing ability, but in helping them become more confident and resilient people for the community and beyond.

We welcome in people from all backgrounds, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, and give them a place to develop their talents and passions. Hopefully, we'll see one of our members in the next Commonwealth Games!

Alex Mee, Cluster General Manager at Bloc Hotels, said:

As the first business to achieve Games Ready accreditation, we were thrilled to play our part by offering a warm welcome to visitors from all over the Commonwealth. The hotel was bustling and the atmosphere throughout the Games was incredible, with our Games Ready trained staff playing an important role in providing local knowledge and advice to help guests make the most of their stay.

Bloc Hotels is incredibly proud of its Birmingham roots and the Games provided us with the opportunity to show our guests, and the rest of the world, why.

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Business and Tourism Programme (BATP) is the first economic legacy programme of its kind aligned to the Games, designed to strengthen bilateral ties between the UK and Commonwealth markets.

Gideon Orovwiroro, Chief Operations Officer at Kora, said:

Through BATP, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games provided a valuable gateway into the UK and West Midlands, facilitating conversations with the region's investment promotion agency, the West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC). Their support was key to our expansion, in the form of our new Birmingham office, and will enable many more businesses and individuals to use our innovative payments infrastructure.