**Seb Coe:**

I made London 2012.

**Narrator:**

And they all have made London 2012, as Seb Coe says. But actually, 5,000 people helped build Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and then transform it afterwards. By 2025, 40,000 jobs could be available on and around it. Even before the Olympics and Paralympics 10 years ago, east London had a rich history of invention, innovation, and enterprise. So in this episode of My London Legacy, we want to focus on those skills and jobs opportunities, and the helping hand the Park can give an area that's becoming the best place in London to start and growing business.

**Siroun Button, Assistant Development Manager, Berkeley Group Plc:**

I think it was just the biggest event that had ever happened in the area. And before that, nobody had ever heard of Stratford. After it, I could kind of say, "You know where the Olympics was?" and everyone would know where it was.

**Henna Malik, Document Controller,** **Galostar Ltd:**

They're saying it's the most successful, actual Olympic Games, in terms of legacy-wise, that's actually taken place. The construction, the development of the area.

Yeah, I was born and raised here. I completed most of my education here. Got my degree from Stratford as well. I got my first job in Stratford, too, so to be back here after 10 years and still seeing how amazingly it's been really generated, it feels really special to be a part of.

**Vivian Murinde, Head of Inclusive Growth & Skills, LLDC:**

There are a number of exciting opportunities that local people aged 18 to 30 can access through the Good Growth Hub.

**Narrator:**

Coming up, we'll be hearing from some of the young people who've directly benefited from the developments taking place on the Park. But first, two of the initiatives that are helping to create the bright future. Shortly, Imtiaz Patel from Build East. But firstly, to find out more about the Good Growth Hub and the work it does, here's Vivian Murinde, Head of Inclusive Growth and Skills at the London Legacy Development Corporation.

**Vivian Murinde:**

The Good Growth Hub is one of the LLDC's skills, training, and employment spaces. It connects employers on and around the Park to local talent, aged 18 to 30, living in the surrounding boroughs of Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest. It's located at Hackney Bridge on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and offers a wide range of training opportunities, including London Living Wage internship, support for freelancers, apprenticeships, technical skills, training, master classes, events, and one-to-one advice and guidance and careers coaching.

**Narrator:**

So when was it established and what's the thinking, the reasoning behind it?

**Vivian Murinde:**

So the hub opened its doors in spring last year, and there's gradually phase from opening part-time to full-time in line with the COVID government guidelines. The name Good Growth Hub really comes from the hub's kind of core purpose to ensure that employment opportunities arising from growth on the Park really do benefit local people. So, we really want to ensure that inclusivity is at the heart of this growth, and that's really what we mean by this term "good growth." Through the East Works program, which is the LLDC's skills and employment program, we've been delivering a wide range of employment activities for the growing creative tech and cultural sectors on and around the park for some time.

We piloted a number of successful programs, and the Good Growth Hub really offers us an opportunity to take some of these projects to scale, to provide more opportunities for local people, to reach deeper into local communities and support more employers and businesses to grow inclusively. And like many other sectors, there are a number of barriers that prevent diverse talent from accessing opportunities. The creative sector is well known for low paid or unpaid entry level positions or internships, a lack of diversity across all levels, and exclusivity in terms of being able to access the sector through close networks. So really, those are some of the sectoral challenges that the Good Growth Hub hopes to eradicate.

**N**arr**ator:**

So tell me, why did you choose to open the Centre as a physical place to come and visit?

**Vivian Murinde:**

The decision to open a physical space on the Park really was a response to feedback from local people and employers who participated in our program previously. Local people felt that although they kept hearing about all the incredible opportunities that were at the Park, at East Bank and at Here East, and other sites and beyond, they really wanted a central place to be able to go and hear about those opportunities and to connect with employers. Something, really, to bring the offer together and to bring the opportunity to life. And likewise, employers on the Park were calling again for this centralized service or space to support their ambitions around inclusivity to connect with more local people and to diversify their workforce. Yeah, then the Good Growth Hub was born.

**Narrator:**

And like everything on the Park, it's the result, I guess, of partnership work and lots of different organizations coming together.

**Vivian Murinde:**

A New Direction are the organization responsible for managing the space and designing and delivering the Good Growth Hub service. However, there's a really, really strong Good Growth Hub network that influences the development and delivery of the Good Growth Hub, and I think this really is its greatest asset with the park being situated across the four boroughs ... Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, and Hackney ... have been really instrumental in the design and the development of the Good Growth Hub from its initial concept stage.

But we've also worked really closely with employers, local people, and community partners to co-design the Good Growth Hub service and all the activities that are delivered from the hub. This has been really important to ensure that the service is fit for purpose and responds to the needs of both businesses and local people. We know that we can't deliver everything ourselves, and so what we will be doing over the next few years, I guess, is bringing in local partners to support with the delivery of the service as well, where there's particular expertise where people are doing things really innovatively and differently within their local communities. Thinking about how that commissioning service works as well.

**Narrator:**

And that partnership work is an ongoing process, I presume?

**Vivian Murinde:**

So it's also really important that we continue to nurture and develop this network of partners if we are to reach our ambitions of reaching deeper into communities and supporting more local people and working with more businesses on and around the park. We've also recently established a governance structure for the Good Growth Hub, which we will be looking at implementing shortly over the next six to 12 months. It's been really important whilst designing this structure that the governance structure involves all of our kind of core stakeholders ... our local borough partners, employers, local community organizations, and young people ... so that they're the ones kind of overseeing the delivery of the service, and to ensure that the Good Growth Hub is sustained beyond the life of the LLDC, and that this really is a kind of community asset that's owned by the stakeholders. So this network piece and this partnership piece that we have already started to develop but will really be kind of focusing on developing as we go through the next kind five years and beyond, really is a core and central part to what the Good Growth Hub does.

**Narrator:**

So you mentioned local people and getting local people involved. How do local people listening get involved? Are there some exciting opportunities they can engage with coming up?

**Vivian Murinde:**

Yes. There are a number of exciting opportunities that local people aged 18 to 30 can access through the Good Growth Hub. We have our Creative Connect service, which is our one-to-one advice and guidance service, where people can come and get advice on their CV, cover letter, application for a job, general careers advice and coaching. We're also recruiting, currently, Full Step, our London Living Wage shared internship program, which offers a 12-month London living Wage placement at a creative and cultural organization in and around East London. We've got some really exciting partners that we're working with the V&A, Sadler's Wells, UCL, BBC, Bow Arts Trust, and many, many other local organizations in the sector as well. Please do sign up for that if you are really interested in an entry level position and making your first career move into the sector.

We also have our Freelance Fridays, which is an open session at the Good Growth Hub for freelancers looking for advice and guidance on their freelance career or looking to meet other freelancers as well. And there are a number of other kind of skills-specific training programs and events coming up over the next few months, so please do check our website for the most recent information, and also our Instagram as well.

And that website for more info: goodgrowthhub.org.uk. A key part of the promise after the games of 2012, 10 years ago, was the transformation. Not only of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, but this area of East London. Another project helping to do just that is Build East, a construction skills training center opposite the London Stadium, and a partnership with the Skills Centre, Transport for London, and LLDC, the London Legacy Development Corporation.

Imtiaz Patel is the Centre Manager and has told us the benefits of being based on the Park.

**Imtiaz Patel, Build East Skills Centre Manager – Stratford:**

First of all, what I would say is the actual opportunity of working with the LLDC on the Park that has such a huge and longstanding construction program. The partnership enables Build East to work with developers, main contractors, their suppliers to generate opportunity and vacancies. This, therefore, allows us, Build East, to plan and work with the employers to address skills gap in the short, medium, and long term. And to do that at scale, and on one of the most high-profile construction programs in the country, is a unique opportunity. Secondly, as the opportunity for the local community. Build East is an anchor for the institution, for the community, for them to come to and seek work and training.

It's something which hasn't really been made available beforehand whereby it's a centre where we can offer training opportunities, as well as training opportunities leading to sustainable jobs and employment, and real jobs, which we actually acquire before the training's actually set up. And for the community angle as well, people can come to us for advice, guidance, and we'll try and help them as much as possible in whatever capacity we can do. And thirdly, one of the things I would say is that, basically, Build East is a centre for which we are actively driving inclusion and diversity by creating opportunities for women, those of the [inaudible 00:11:40] background, or even disabled people in construction.

**Narrator:**

For those of us that covered the whole build up to the London Olympics and, indeed, the bid for the London Olympics and the Paralympics, that buzzword was legacy. And I would suggest that Build East is a significant part of that legacy, especially as you mentioned they're for local communities and local people.

**Imtiaz Patel:**

Absolutely. Yes. Legacy was a huge, huge thing in terms of the Olympics, the London Olympics, Stratford Olympics. They're saying it's the most successful, actual Olympic games, in terms of legacy-wise, that's actually taken place. The construction, the development of the area, and it was a massive, massive thing. Stratford as an area was extremely run down. I've been born and bred in Stratford, been educated down here through my school days, my college days. And I'm still a resident of Stratford as well, so I've seen the huge transformation that's actually taken place and the massive legacy impact that has been in the actual area, and it's amazing. It's absolutely amazing.

It's one of the areas that you didn't really even want to go to. People had the aspirations of actually moving out of the area. Now, you've got people actually wanting to come into the area. There's been a huge transformation of changes in terms of landscape-wise, buildings in terms of actual community, and it offers a unique opportunity for the local people, which obviously, through me and Build East, I've given the opportunity to actually change that and change their lives to transform their lives and get the most through the legacy opportunities that have been provided.

**Narrator:**

What made you want to become centre manager? How did that happen?

**Imtiaz Patel:**

It was actually for a recommendation for a friend of mine, so that was really, really good, indeed. However, once I actually heard about the project in itself, in terms of what was actually taking place ... Like I said, I've been born and bred in Stratford, went to a local comprehensive boy school, which was called [inaudible 00:13:42] at the time. It's now School 21. Went to a local college, in terms of Newham College, studied down there. It's an opportunity for me to assist the wider, local community and give something back in terms of and also get paid for it at the same time, which is a unique opportunity.

**Narrator:**

You've used the word opportunity quite a lot in this discussion, and there is as we know, fantastic opportunities and loads going on the Park. But there is this kind of stereotype that if you want to go into construction, it's a hi -is, it's a hard hat. But modern construction, there's lots of other roles and lots of other things that people can achieve in the industry. Is that fair to say?

**Imtiaz Patel:**

Absolutely. Fully agree there. People have this conception that construction's about digging trenches in hard hats. But that's completely outdated, and that's one of the messages that I really need to get out there to the wider community and people just to say, "Listen, that's not what construction is about." When we go out there and talk to actual schools, even local, community partners, that's one of the things I actually inform people about, first of all, initially. "Listen. These are all of the different job opportunities available within the construction industry, not just a few." You think about mixing up cement and putting some bricks up. Trade skills are still relevant, and they're completely needed, but the modern construction industry is much about digital as is the trades, and it's getting the message across. And what that means is that there's a well-paid and rewarding job for everyone, whether you want to be a bricklayer, a project manager, a digital engineer.

**Narrator:**

And I would suggest it's quite an exciting time to be in construction because the green skills and innovation is there at the minute, and there's lots of programs and lots of drives towards making things more sustainable. Climate change is a conversation we're having. NetZero, of course, is an ambition as well. And this all needs to come into everything that's now being built.

**Imtiaz Patel:**

Yes, innovation. Build East is looking to the future, and that's something that I've got to ensure that we do continuously, and we revisit all the time and take a look at it always. If we're going to pass a message across and get people to actually relate to that message, then we've got to be the drivers in terms of actually doing that. What Build East is doing is working with employers to respond to key emerging priorities related to green jobs as we combat climate change and aim for NetZero. We have some ESF programs and wide activities that we're going to be actually taking a look at to actually drive this. So it's modernization of the training, modernization and steering abreast of the training of the different opportunities available out there. And me, as part of Build East, being able to provide that to people and ultimately leading to sustainable employment. The ambition is for us, as Build East, to be an anchor training institution at the Park for a number of years to come.

**Narrator:**

Thank you so much for your time.

**Imtiaz Patel:**

No problem at all. Brilliant.

**Narrator:**

Since 2012, more than 320 young people have benefited from apprenticeships on or around the Park. So as we mark 10 years on, let's hear from some of them who've benefited directly from the work being done at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

**Siroun Button:**

Hi. My name is Siroun Button. I grew up in Newham, and I currently work at Berkeley Homes as a Development Manager.

**Renea Henry-Kemp, Community Engagement Manager, LLDC:**

My name is Renea Henry-Kemp. I'm the Community Engagement Manager for London Legacy Development Corporation, who essentially manages operations on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. I started seven and a half years ago as an apprenticeship.

**Henna Malik:**

My name's Henna Malik. I'm from Newham. I work as a Document Controller in East Bank. I've been working there for the past eight months.

**Siroun Button:**

I really wanted to get involved with the Olympics, but I was a year too young, it was called the Legacy Youth Panel at the time. It's now the Legacy Youth Voice, so it's still going. I started at 16. It started me thinking about what I want to do going forward, and I'd never been in a situation where I sat in a boardroom and people wanted my opinion in that way. I was in foster care when I was younger as well. I thought that my experience was kind of a fluke, and it wasn't standard. And I think to be put in a situation where people were asking my opinion, I think that was just amazing.

**Renea Henry-Kemp**:

I lived in Waltham Forest, so I kind of saw Stratford go through this massive transformation piece in front of my eyes. And I kind of just saw it as a destination to shop, because obviously you saw a big sign, "Westfield," and then you'll see the staging. But what attracted me to become an apprentice is that I was quite confused on what I wanted to do. I wasn't solely ready on going into university yet.

**Henna Malik:**

It opened up so many doors for everyone. So be it voluntary, be it paid work, that was 10 years ago when everything started in 2012. And now, in 2022, that excitement's back again for me personally because now I'm on a wider scale project, part of a different sort of industry altogether. So it's exciting me all over again, to be honest.

**Siroun Button:**

I'm now working on a site in Bromley-by-Bow. I find it really exciting that I can bring all these ideas that I've always had and the experience that I've always had. And because I've got the precedent of the Olympic Park, I'm like, "Well, of course we can dream bigger." If you told me ages ago that UCL would be moving to Stratford, I probably wouldn't have believed you. But I think that's the kind of things that can happen, and I think that's exciting.

**Renea Henry-Kemp**:

The way it allowed me to be quite versatile and quite flexible and the way I want to kind of bend my career has been amazing, and type of people who I've met with on my journey have inspired me remarkably. They've just inspired me, especially the young people I work with. They are so talented. And again, I just think I'm just surrounded by really talented members internally and externally. It's an amazing corporation and I think everyone who I've met enjoys their job, and I think that's what makes it worthwhile.

**Henna Malik:**

My company, Galostar, are doing the brick and block work for two different buildings. So the BBC Project and the Sadler's Wells Project. I mainly deal with the documentation, so enrolling new operatives, going back and forth with HR, setting up courses, doing the operatives' time sheets, submitting health and safety documents to the client. It feels like a really team-orientated environment, which is something I really like about this project.

**Siroun Button:**

I probably would've thought that they were just looking for kind of next sports styles, and I think it's really interesting that they've gone beyond that. But I think the really interesting thing is I started in architecture, and I've now gone into development. And I've gone into development with a kind of slightly more architect's mindset, but then also with a bit of community engagement thrown in there, and arts and culture and all of that stuff. I don't know that I would've gone down that road if I hadn't had the exposure that I did.

**Renea Henry-Kemp**:

We are definitely an innovator. We are definitely breaking the barriers and setting new standards of regeneration. And I think community members ... Well, existing community members, I should say, are starting to see the impact and the benefits of doing things out of the norm and breaking a glass ceiling.

**Henna Malik:**

It's not only providing opportunities for me, as someone who's nearly in their 30s, but also the kids who want to get into administrative roles. Even the project that I'm on, we're advertising for apprenticeships all the time, so there's a lot of inclusion here.

**Narrator:**

This is My London Legacy, a Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park podcast. 10 years on from the games, we're focusing on the stories, memories, and roles of all the people involved in London 2012, big or small, and looking ahead to what's still to come. Share your memories, too, on social media, #London2012, #PassTheBaton, and sign up for Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park updates, exclusive offers, and experiences at 10yearson.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk.

**Renea Henry-Kemp**:

My London legacy is really kind of amplifying and supporting and championing all the amazing talent that exists in East London. That would be it. The talent and the people.

**Imtiaz Patel:**

Seeing people transform their lives. People that I've been in school with, people that I've actually lived on the street with for many, many number of years. Them actually making the most of what's been available out there in terms of the local area.

**Siroun Button:**

My London legacy is finding my voice. I discovered that it's valuable and I use it a lot, and I hope to influence some change.