**Seb Coe:**

I made London 2012.

**Schoolchild:**

We love Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Hooray.

**Narrator:**

We're celebrating what happened 10 years ago in 2012 with the Olympics and the Paralympics. We're celebrating everything that's happened in between, all the amazing things that have happened in the park.

## Peter Tudor, Director, Park Operations and Venues, LLDC:

Come along and have a look at everything that's changed. Why not come this year when we're doing all of these celebrations?

**Schoolchild:**

I usually come with my family, come here because the view is beautiful.

**Park Champion:**

Re-live those amazing memories, come and cry when Mo Farah wins because I always do. And yeah, enjoy yourselves. Come and party with us.

**Narrator:**

And we're also looking ahead because, of course, East Bank is coming and there's plenty more to come in this great location.

**Peter Tudor:**

I think it's tremendous.

**Kat, Park Champion:**

It's really hard to believe it was that long ago. 10 years on from the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, and in episode three of My London Legacy, it's time to party again as we reveal Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's year of celebrations.

**Narrator:**

Coming up, we hear about the plans for a wonderful weekend in the summer, the lighting of the new anniversary flame, and the return of thousands of East Londoners invited to the Great Get Together.

**Kareem, Park Champion:**

I feel like I'm playing a part in the London 2012 legacy when it comes to longevity and sustainability. We're not full of white elephants.

**Peter Tudor:**

There's a Free The Story So Far exhibition at the Velodrome, which will also stage world class cycling again with the Commonwealth Games.

**Jim Blakemore, CEO, Bikeworks:**

It's a great venue and I have to say, hat off to how they've kept it looking so spic and span in 10 years.

**Narrator:**

2022 is a special year for Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Marking 10 years since the world's spotlight shine on London for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. In that time the park has delivered on its legacy promises, creating world-class sports and entertainment venues, thousands of new homes, and a must visit destination for East London. Attracting six million visitors every year. A new survey also shows eight in 10 people believe it was right to invest in the games and are proud of the legacy of 2012.

**Lyn Garner, Chief Executive, London Legacy Development Corporation:**

I'm Lyn Garner. I'm the Chief Executive of the London Legacy Development Corporation.

**Peter Tudor, Director of Park Operations and Venues:**

Hi, I'm Peter Tudor, I'm Director of park operations and venues at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

**Narrator:**

10 years on they said Legacy wouldn't work.

**Peter Tudor:**

Yes, they did, didn't they?

**Lyn Garner:**

Look, Legacy was at the hearts of London's bid in 2005. And actually, let's look around us. It has worked so tremendously well. London can be proud that it probably has the best legacy of any Olympic games in the world, and I feel very confident in saying that.

**Peter Tudor:**

Here we are, and the proof is in the pudding. What Ken Livingston said, way back at the time of the bid, was he wasn't interested in the sport. He was interested in what bringing the Olympics to London could do for this part of East London. Go back to when the bid was won and this area, well it wasn't a wasteland, people sometimes say that, but that's not true. There were factories here, there were some homes here, there were allotments, but there were lots of places you really didn't want to go. There were piles of fridges, there were piles of tires spilling into the canals, the waterways were filthy, and the ground was all contaminated because of the diesel and the acid that had been processed here over the years. Fast forward to the games, all of that's been transformed. The buildings have gone. There's only one building, I think, that's left on the park that predates the games and there's a couple of bridges as well.

But the rest of it, the Earth was cleaned and new buildings created, the waterways were cleansed, the railheads and the pylons had disappeared, and we have these spectacular sparkling buildings, still sparkling, 10 years after the games and still very much in use and the beautiful parklands that everyone enjoys. And as we sit here on this bench looking around us, yes there are the venues from 2012, but there's plenty of new buildings that have gone up since then. New places for people to work, new schools, four new schools on the park. The universities are here in temporary buildings and they're soon going to be in their permanent facilities and people are living here too. So, this is a place, not just to visit, although we do hope plenty of people come and visit us this year, this is also a place to study, to work, and also to live.

**Narrator:**

2022 then, lots coming up. The park already seems to have changed, that the pink's back. The magenta's back. Tell us about some of the stuff that's coming up.

**Lyn Garner:**

This is a wonderful year because in 2022 we're not only celebrating 10 years since that wonderful games, but we are celebrating 10 years of the work that we've been doing here and we're looking forward.

**Peter Tudor:**

The big celebrations are all about the summer, particularly July the 23rd when with the Great Get Together returns. We've had a hiatus for two years because of the pandemic, but it's back, it's going to be bigger than, better than ever before. A big free community festival taking place across the day in the park with lots of input from the local community and also from our East Bank partners, the VNA, the BBC, UAL, and Sadler's Wells. It's going to be an amazing day and it's part of a big celebration that we're marking throughout the year. So, there will be a new exhibition opening up at the Lee Valley Valor Park about the games. You can go and see some of the medals and the torches and the other memorabilia from 10 years ago.

There's a new trail across the park with frames where you can have your picture taken with a building as it is now behind you, but a picture of how it was back in 2012 just in front of you. There's going to be the London Festival of Architecture coming to the park in June and their big, big model of London that the new London architecture folk have is going to be displayed in Westfield from the end of April through to the autumn. So, there's all sorts of things going on. It's going to be very exciting.

**Lyn Garner:**

Now, in this autumn we are opening the first of our East Bank buildings, which is fantastic. So, University College London opens its doors to students. It's just around the corner from where we're sitting here and it's the first building to open. And then the following year, London College of Fashion will be following another tremendous academic institution and the second building of University College London will open too. We'll open Sadler's Wells theater to audiences for Christmas 2023, and then later we'll see the BBC studios and the Victorian Albert Museum.

**Narrator:**

And lots of those will be involved in some of the summer events that are taking place this year.

**Lyn Garner:**

To be honest with you, our East Bank partners have been working in the community for years and years. Every year they reach out to local schools. There are extracurricular activities on the schools' agenda every year, with primary school children in particular. So, Sadler's Wells for example, run lovely dance classes for local kids and have been doing so for years in the local schools. These East Bank partners are really committed to reaching into the community and making a difference and they'll be doing the same this year. This year we'll be doing a very special Great Get Together weekend in July. We'll be welcoming thousands of local people to come. In previous years it's attracted in excess of 20,000 people. So, it's a big, big event. The East Bank partners will be involved, and they'll be running projects and commissions with local schools and so on throughout that weekend.

**Narrator:**

And there's also world class sport, because isn't it the Commonwealth Games happening here as well? Bizarrely, even though it's in Birmingham.

**Peter Tudor:**

We've got all sorts of things going on in the height of summer. The Commonwealth Games comes to the park. We've got four days of track cycling inside the Lee Valley Valor Park, and that's just one of the many big sporting events coming this year. Obviously, West Ham are doing well in the stadium, season ends quite soon. London Pulse, our resident netball team, are busy winning matches in the Copper Box Arena as our London Lions, the resident basketball team. And at the end of the year in November, we'll have the rugby league wheelchair World Cup coming to the park. The opening matches of England's campaign, three days in November, will be taking place inside the Copper Box Arena.

Abba is going to be here as well. I mean, it's not standing still. And that's the point that yes, we're looking back, but we are moving forward.

**Narrator:**

Yes. If we look ahead for the next 10 or 15 years, when this project is largely finished, we'll see 10,000 students in this area, 40,000 new jobs, and 17,000 residents all in the park. So it's a huge new chunk of London actually. We're just starting to see it tip into a whole new residential area at the moment, so we finished the first thousand homes on the park, 5,000 yet to come. Those schools are filling up, the visitor numbers are going up with East Bank opening from this year, and the students will bring a whole new dimension, I think.

And we're just seeing a school party come in now to go swimming, and this is the thing, that it's being used, the park is being used.

**Lyn Garner:**

Yes. Isn't that lovely? So, 60,000 school children learn to swim here every single year.

**Schoolchild:**

It's quite fun. When we first did it, me and this girl over here, we thought we were going to drown and then we went into the pool, I realized it wasn't that deep, and then I decided to make her very stupid move, put my whole face in the wall water without my goggles on.

**Schoolchild:**

I mean, I love everything about this Olympic Pool. I love the teachers there too. They help you whenever you are drowning.

**Schoolchild:**

I do like it. Here is fine, but anywhere else I don't really feel comfortable.

**Lyn Garner:**

And a million people come and use the aquatic center facility. The price they pay is the same price they do pay in their local pool, and they can be here when Tom Daley's here training, when Ellie Simmons is here. So, it's cheek by jowl with international athletes at the Aquatic Center. It's a wonderful facility, and very similarly we have community sports at the Copper Box Arena, one can go and cycle at the Velodrome, and of course, access a concerts or football at the London Stadium.

**Narrator:**

Lyn Garner and Peter Tudor from the London Legacy Development Corporation, which is responsible for managing Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. But the smooth running of the day-to-day activities also relies on the park champions, volunteers who last year helped and supported visitors for more than 17,000 hours.

**Kat, Park Champion:**

I'm Kat, I'm a park champion volunteer at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

**Kareem, Park Champion:**

I'm Kareem, I'm a park champion here and I've been here since 2015.

**Narrator:**

So first question, what is a park champion?

**Kareem:**

A park champion is someone who volunteers at the Information and Mobility Center in the Olympic Park. We help many different people with different needs, whether it's just wayfinding, or mobility needs or anything else to do with what's going on in the area. We've helped very local people; we've helped people from all around the world. I've met people from the USA, India, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. They come from all over because this is a very global, but also a very good place for the locals.

**Narrator:**

So, you started in 2015 volunteering, what was your memories then, of 2012 as we celebrate 10 years?

**Kareem:**

So, I did not really know there was volunteering. I was too young to think about it, so I could have only gone. Unfortunately, we didn't get tickets even though we scrambled to look for some. But I remember being really excited and a massive highlight of my childhood.

**Kat:**

They were all so happy. It was such an amazing time, and my first volunteering role was here at the London Stadium for London 2017, the World Athletics Championship. So, I finally got in then and I haven't looked back since. It's been great.

**Narrator:**

What would you say to people who maybe came 10 years ago and haven't been back since? How different do you think it is?

**Kat:**

It looks very different. We do have visitors that come back and they're like, "We haven't been here since 2012 and it's changed so much." But it's for the local area, for the jobs and the economy and just, it's regenerated the whole place. So, it's definitely worthwhile coming back, because you can have a go in the pool, you can go to the Copper Box, you can go in the Velodrome, you can go to places that you have seen on the TV and wanted to go and you'd see all the amazing stars from 2012. You can go and have a go now. So definitely come back to the park. It's changed a bit, but it's changing for the better.

**Narrator:**

So as a park champion, you've got a busy year coming up?

**Kat:**

Yes, we have got a busy year coming up.

**Kareem:**

I feel like I'm playing a part in the London 2012 Legacy when it comes to longevity and sustainability. We're not full of white elephant and we have so much continual use of the venues like the Aquatic Center, which is right next to us, is currently used for diving and swimming lessons, as well as local swimming sessions. We have events going on in the Copper Box Arena, we have cycling going on in the Velo park and it's just a lovely place to visit to do sports and to live. We have so much new housing coming up now, a lot of it which comes from the old athletes village and it's really great to show that to other people and be part of that legacy.

**Kat:**

Yeah, we're looking forward to it. We're looking forward to welcoming back the visitors after COVID as well. It's already been picking up. It's just been a really, really odds two years, the last two years. But yeah, we're ready, we're open, and we're ready to welcome everybody to come and celebrate with us because it hopefully should be an amazing summer and then obviously into the next year's ahead. Yeah, come back and celebrate, come and relive those amazing memories, come and cry when Mo Farah wins because I always do. And yeah, enjoy yourselves. Come and party with us.

**Kareem:**

And we do have a 2012 trail map with memories of the Olympics and that's all the time. So, you can sort of relive those memories whenever you wish. But of course, do come back for our 10-year anniversary celebrations. I'm looking forward to it and so is Kat, and so are the rest of the park champions here.

**Narrator:**

As we heard earlier, Velodrome and Velo Park will be staging four days of world class sport this summer as part of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games. But it's so much more than a world class venue.

**Jim Blakemore:**

My name is Jim Blakemore, Chief Exec of Bikeworks.

**Narrator:**

10 years on from London 2012, tell us where we are from the Velodrome point of view and from Bike Works point of view.

**Jim Blakemore:**

So, first of all, I can't believe 10 years of flown by. I mean we've come on leaps and bounds and actually, in many ways, this next five, 10 years is going to be our next accelerated growth. So, we've been now based, our HQ is in the Velodrome, which we moved into four years ago. COVID has been a bittersweet two years for us. We're still here, which is great, and actually we've grown a bit. We've, off the basis of some of the disproportionate health inequalities in the communities that we deliver in, we've created new programs, so cycling for wellbeing, a really cool and innovative side by side cycling taxi service, and we've taken on more inclusive cycling hubs. So, we've grown, and in many ways while the park is still being completed, we see this as our home now, and actually are looking to take a second venue opposite the Velodrome later this year to become our inclusive cycling center of excellence, so lots going on.

**Narrator:**

London 2012 changed a lot of people's opinions of cycling. It was another highly successful medal winning performances from the Olympians and Paralympians from Team GB. But I think also COVID has changed cycling as well. What's had more impact do you think, in some ways?

**Jim Blakemore:**

I mean, I've seen cycling have a disproportionate increase since setting Bike Works up and that's one of the reasons we set it up is there was a lot of investment going into cycling. And I do sort of think that sort of plateaued slightly. There's a huge amount of expensive infrastructure that's gone in in the last 15 years. The cycle superhighways, the quiet ways, and actually the quiet ways are a pointing case in that COVID, however you feel about them, lots of councils took that as an opportunity to put some fairly hardcore new restrictions for vehicular and motor combustion engine vehicles. So, I do think that people have decided that bikes are an alternative.

Cargo bikes are an alternative, so you can move freight around and I mean look, I drive a vehicle and just looking at the pumps now, 180, 190, driving a car in London is going to be out of the reach of many, many people. So there has to be alternatives, and you can't just expect people to jump on a bike. Some people have barriers, be them physical, economic or similar, but there needs to be organizations like us and many others who are handholding people on that journey to a more sustainable and greener modal shift.

**Narrator:**

How exciting is it that you are based in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park?

**Jim Blakemore:**

Yeah, I mean it's great. It's a big, beautiful open park. Yes, it's filling up with houses and businesses, but it's London. It's commercial, but it's still great connectivity. And for me, moving into the Velodrome is about reaching out and bringing people in and around that venue who wouldn't necessarily think that they should be or fit around that venue because it does cost a lot to use it, so that's one thing. And then the second thing is this sort of the permeation and the infrastructure that is now set up going into Wilton Forest, into Hackney, into Tower Hamlets, into Newham. There are so many, many people who live in those Boroughs who haven't even been in the park. So, if I can every year just chip away, I'll always work with my niche customers, niche beneficiaries, niche clients. But if I can just also work with just people who haven't cycled into the park to show them how easy it is and how much fun and how much just mental wellbeing, they can get out of it, that that's a happy side edition I suppose.

**Narrator:**

You mentioned there, people use the Velodrome, that's the point. We know the Commonwealth Games are coming here this summer, but people use it every day, every week.

**Jim Blakemore:**

Yeah, I mean absolutely, it's used. For many people it is going to be out of their reach. However, I was there on Sunday facilitating a non-standard cycle tryout and there was a youth track omnium going on and it was beautiful to see on a Sunday. Parents, friends, and loads of younger, up and coming track cyclists using it. It's a great venue and I have to say hat off to Lee Valley Regional Park Authority for how they've kept it looking so spic and span in 10 years. It's made out of concrete and wood. But I'm sure that many other venues around Olympics sites across the world and over history of, have very quickly descended. So, hats off to them. It's a great venue.

**Narrator:**

That's Jim Blakemore from Bikeworks. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games not only delivered an amazing hall of medals for team GP and Paralympics GP, but as we've been hearing in this episode of my London Legacy, it was also the catalyst for major regeneration in East London.

**Peter Tudor:**

So, in its 10th year, 2022, it's a special time to pause and party, a time to reflect on what's been, but also a time to look ahead, look forward, and discover what's still to come.

**Lyn Garner:**

Come along and really experience the place, get involved in the activities, come and have a look. It's fab. And why not bring the family? Try out a picnic, visit the aquatic center, you can go and cycle at the Velodrome. So, sort out a few things before you get here and really experience the place.

**Schoolchild:**

Please come. This park is very cute, the design is very cute.

**Schoolchild:**

They should definitely come here.

**Schoolchild:**

It's a really good opportunity to learn how to swim.

**Peter Tudor:**

This is a place not just to visit, although we do hope plenty of people come and visit us this year. This is also a place to study, to work, and also to live.

**Kat:**

The Legacy is continued definitely, and we are ready to look forward to our next 10 years of and see how the park evolves in that time.

**Lyn Garner:**

London can be proud that it probably has the best legacy of any Olympic Games.