



Going for geography gold

Olympic fervour is growing, and soon millions of people will descend on London for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) has been using this special occasion to encourage teachers and students to discover more about their own local areas and environments, and to learn about the economic, social and environmental impacts that the occasion will have on the UK and the capital.

For teachers, the Society has built up a wealth of online resources on geographical themes directly linked with the games. It's also encouraging younger pupils to look at how the Olympics relate to their own sporting activities and the places in which they exercise. The resources also help older students to consider the effects that the sporting occasion will have at the local, regional and national levels, and the role of the games in promoting London as a world city.

Students are being inspired to look at how East London has been transformed by the 200-hectare Olympic Park. The teaching resources help them to explore whether these changes are influencing other parts of the local area, as well as the degree to which residents can influence change in these areas. The resources also encourage students to think about sustainable development, the environmental implications and the effects that a big sporting event such as this can have in driving economic growth through infrastructure improvements and inward investment. Digital supporting materials, including information on the Olympic site, case studies on a number of nearby areas, including the Docklands as a whole, Canning Town and Canary Wharf, photographic studies of the regeneration process and fieldwork brochures add further depth.

Masterclasses, run by the Society, provide training for teachers on how to use these materials and field trips to investigate the Olympic site in the context of regeneration. Christopher Harvey, who teaches geography at Yeovil

College in Somerset, was thrilled by the chance to take part in one of the Society's master classes earlier this year. 'The masterclass was fabulous and the resources have proved very useful,' he says. 'Approaching the topic of socio-economic repercussions of the Games and its legacy is an Olympic event in itself for a lot of my students, who have never been to London before.'

'However, the online resources have helped tremendously and I now have my own field trip planned for the end of this term,' he continues. 'The class has considered transport issues in Weymouth and I now have the confidence to bring my students to the capital to conduct this unique fieldwork.'

The Olympics also feature in the Society's Walk the World project, which aims to find local connections across the UK's landscapes with all of the other 205 nations taking part in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The project, which is part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, is encouraging schools across the country to discover more about the geography and history of their local areas by exploring and finding those connections through walks. Students are investigating how their neighbourhoods have been changed and influenced by connections with countries across the world, submitting their own information and walks around their local area to www.walktheworld.org.uk.

As athletes are going for gold in sporting venues across London and beyond, school students can show their own geographical mettle in the Society's Young Geographer of the Year competition. This year, it draws inspiration from the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Walk the World.

Entrants are being asked to write about the most interesting connections between their local area and the other 205 competing nations, and how these connections influence the local geography. Entries close 5 October 2012; further details can be found at www.rgs.org/ygoty2012.

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) promotes enjoyment and understanding of our world. Membership is open to all. You may use geography in your profession, have a thirst for geographical knowledge or a passion for travel. Geographical is the Society's magazine and is available as part of membership. To find out more, call the Membership Office on 020 7591 3080



ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY (WITH IBG)

SELECTION OF EVENTS FOR JULY

3-5 July

Annual International Conference (Conference, University of Edinburgh)

The RGS-IBG's three-day annual international conference attracts more than 1,200 geographers from around the world. This year's theme will focus on the security of geography/ geography of security. There will be a host of Research Group activities throughout the event, as well as optional field experiences organised in and around Edinburgh.

i For further details, visit www.rgs.org/ac2012

8 July, 7.30pm

Tribe: Endangered peoples of the world (Lecture, Keswick)

Author and presenter Piers Gibbon describes the vibrant and diverse communities and cultural practices that he has encountered around the world, as well as some of the threats and challenges they face. Venue: Theatre by the Lake, Lakeside, Keswick, CA12 5DJ.

i Tickets: Open to all. RGS-IBG members and one guest: £9.50 each (quote membership number). To book, please call 01768 774 411

14 July, 11am-2pm

Anderton Boat Lift (Field trip and lecture, Northwich)

Join us for a boat trip on the River Weaver. Includes a river journey, ride on the Anderton Boat Lift and a lecture from local historian Colin Edmundson.

i For further details, visit www.rgs.org/cheshireandnorthwales



14 July, 10am

Bovey Tracey quarries and Buckfastleigh caves (Field visit, Devon)

Spend the morning exploring the origins, use and environmental issues of a working ball-clay quarry, and the afternoon visiting Buckfastleigh Hill's ice-age bone cave, quarries and ruins.

i For further information, visit www.rgs.org/southwest



21 July, 2.30pm

Mendip magic (Field visit, Blagdon)

The ancient Charterhouse landscape is full of mystery, myth and legend. Trace the history of this fascinating region from the arrival of the Roman 2nd Legion in 46 AD until the end of lead mining in the 1880s with leader Les Davies.

i For further information, visit www.rgs.org/westandsouthwales



23 July, 7.30pm

King's Lynn the hard way! (Lecture, King's Lynn)

Author and explorer Hugh Thomson describes his 640-kilometre journey from Dorset to Norfolk along the prehistoric Icknield Way. He uncovers the landscapes of ancient England, passing monuments such as Stonehenge and Avebury along the way. Venue: King's Lynn Arts Centre (as part of the King's Lynn Festival), 27-29 King Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1HA.

i Tickets: Open to all. RGS-IBG members and one guest: £8 each (quote membership number). To book, call 01553 764 864

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is a leading world centre for geographers and geographical learning. One of our aims is to stimulate the awareness and enjoyment of the subject to a diverse range of people.

Geography is about the understanding of the people, places and environments of our world, the processes by which they are changing, and the interconnections between them - both locally and globally.

The Society carries out a wide range of activities to support its aims. We support research groups; promote geography within the national curriculum; produce scholarly publications; provide training in scientific field techniques and expeditions; offer information through our large map collection, library and picture library; and engage the wider public through our popular national lecture series.

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Advancing geography and geographical learning



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