

# Urban regeneration

**Regeneration:** In biological terms it means to recreate lost or damaged tissues. In geographical terms it means improving an area that has been experiencing a period of decline. In the east end of London the decline was brought about by deindustrialisation.

**Renewal or Redevelopment:** When areas are rebuilt to improve the physical environment. Redevelopment might involve changing the main functions of areas. The east end of London used to be an industrial area. Since the process of deindustrialisation has taken place in the UK the area became very run-down. The recent redevelopment of the area has changed the function from industrial to more commercial, residential and now sporting.

**Deindustrialisation:** Deindustrialisation is the process of factories closing down. Factories normally close down because demand for products has dropped or production costs have increased. Most factories that have closed because of rising costs have relocated to cheaper locations abroad (offshoring).

**Offshoring:** The process of factories moving to cheaper locations overseas. The new locations are often in LEDCs or NICs where labour, land, energy, etc. is cheaper and therefore reduces production costs.

**Gentrification:** The process of an area being improved by the people that live there. Young professionals might move into an area that is deprived (houses will be cheaper). As the income of the professionals increases they might make improvements to their house and local facilities e.g. park areas. The income of the professionals may also attract new businesses like restaurants.

**UDC:** UDC stands for Urban Development Corporation. Deprived areas of the UK were made UDCs to try and encourage regeneration. UDCs had the powers to give tax breaks, relax planning, help with finance. etc. The Docklands area of London (next to the Olympic Park) area was made a UDC back in the 1980's to help regeneration.

**Deprived:** An area that is relatively poor. It may have an income level lower than the national average, or unemployment higher than the national average or disinvestment or all of the aforementioned and more.

**Disinvestment:** When people are taking their investment away from an area. This might be shops closing down and relocating somewhere else.

**Derelict:** Buildings or areas of land that have been abandoned and are no longer used. Derelict buildings are often vandalised.

**Brownfield Sites:** Areas of land that have been previously built-on. The east of London had a lot of brownfield sites after many of the factories and docks closed.

**Social Sustainability:** Social sustainability means benefiting local people long-term. This might be done through infrastructure improvements, provision of affordable housing or job creation.

**Economic Sustainability:** Economic sustainability means benefiting the economy long term. It might mean increasing the income of an area, keeping inflation low or eliminating debt.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Environmental sustainability means reducing the impact on the environment. It might be using renewable energy, developing public transport or reforesting areas.

The IOC and also the British governments has sustainability standards that need to be met when hosting a major sporting event (The Olympics in London - 2012). The five main aims of the London 2012 sustainability plan are listed below:

**The London 2012 Sustainability Plan:** Towards a One Planet 2012 highlights how we aim to host the most sustainable Games possible, and the progress we are making.

The Sustainability Plan focuses on five key themes:

1. **Climate change:** minimising greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring legacy facilities are able to cope with the impacts of climate change.
  2. **Waste:** minimising waste at every stage of the project, ensuring no waste is sent to landfill during Games-time, and encouraging the development of new waste processing infrastructure in East London.
  3. **Biodiversity:** minimising the impact of the Games on wildlife and their habitats in and around Games venues, leaving a legacy of enhanced habitats where we can e.g. the Olympic Park.
  4. **Inclusion:** Promoting access for all and celebrating the diversity of London and the UK, creating new employment, training and business opportunities.
  5. **Healthy living:** Inspiring people across the country to take up sport and develop active, healthy and sustainable lifestyles.
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# London 2012 Olympics and Regeneration

## East London (Lower Lea Valley or Newham)

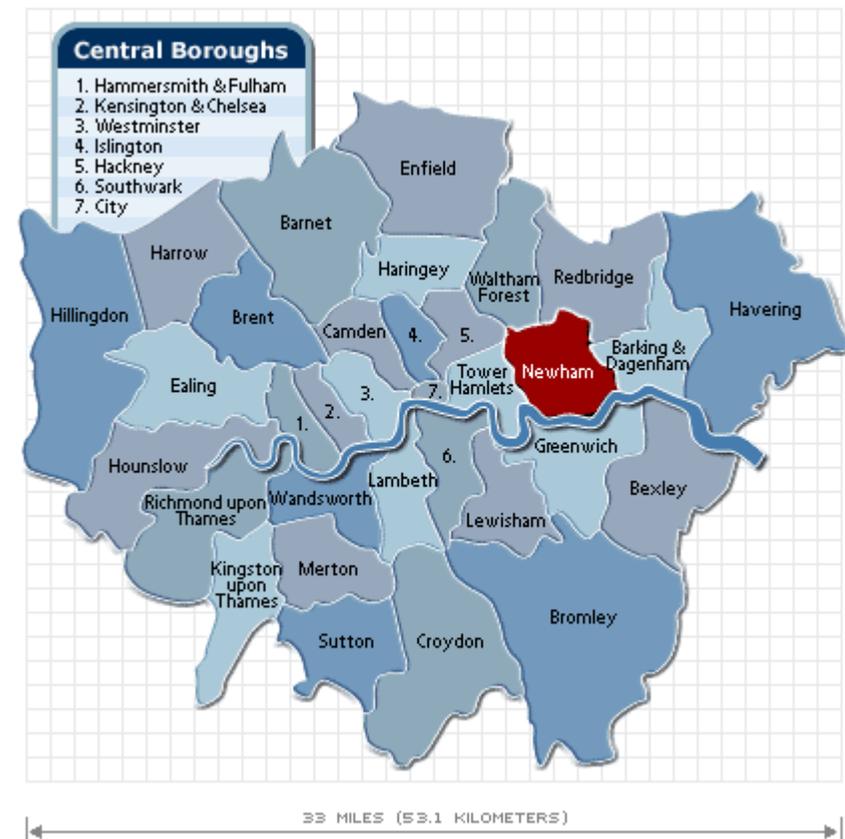
The East of London suffered badly during the second half of the 20th century because of deindustrialisation. The region used to be an industrial heartland with products shipped around the world from the docks. However, as more factories went overseas and the process of containerisation and bigger ships made the docks redundant the area suffered decline. Large areas became derelict and disinvestment took place.

The area of London that is seeing the most regeneration because of the Olympics is the borough of Newham. This area is sometimes referred to as the Lower Lea Valley, because Newham is situated at the end of the River Lea. The borough of Newham has a population of about 270,000. The population is very diverse, with only about 32% white British and the rest a mix of ethnic groups, ranging from Indian to Caribbean to Irish. Newham has the highest fertility rate in the UK (2.87) and highest birth rate making it have the youngest population structure. The employment rate in Newham is only 56.2% (6.5% London average). The number of Newham's residents on job seekers allowance is 6.3%, compared to the UK average of 3.5%.

It is estimated that 69% of children in Newham live in low income households and 41% lived in households where no one worked. On average workers in Newham get paid \$17000 less than the London average. Newham has below average owner occupation (only 32%). About 36,000 residents are applying for social (government) housing.

Newham has the 4th worst crime rate in London and the life expectancy is below the national average. Newham has HIV infection rates above the national average as well as child obesity rates above the national average.

As you can see from the information above, Newham was in desperate need of regeneration.





## How will the Olympic Games Regenerate East London?

- It will create 9,000 new homes in the Olympic park (during the games the houses will be used for athletes). At least half of the houses will be low-cost affordable housing.
- New schools and community centres will be built to accommodate the extra residents in Newham.
- Large brownfield sites will be cleared up in the Lower Lea Valley and the largest new urban park since Victorian times will be created in Newham.
- In total 1,850km<sup>3</sup> of polluted soil will be cleaned (left over from its industrial past)
- Transportation will be improved (DLR (Docklands Light Railway), East London Line (train line) and Eurostar (international train link to Brussels and Paris))
- New sports facilities will remain (velodrome, swimming centre, stadium, BMX track, hockey pitches, etc.) that can be enjoyed by athletes and local residents.
- The facilities can be used for future events, the UK is bidding for many World Championships including athletics, cycling and swimming, all of which can use existing stadiums and create future investment and jobs. West Ham United football team has also run the right to use the Olympic stadium which secures future jobs.
- 12,000 new permanent jobs will be created (managing new facilities, working in hotels and new transport links, etc.). Thousands more temporary jobs will be created during the games.
- A new media centre will be built that will remain after the games for creative arts
- The new open spaces and facilities will encourage a healthier lifestyle, hopefully increasing life expectancy and reducing problems like diabetes and obesity. The Olympic games itself should also inspire people to play more sport,
- Tourism will be boosted in East London (Sydney estimated that about \$8 billion of extra tourist income was generated by their 2000 Olympic Games)
- The image of East London should be enhanced from its current one of deprivation and unemployment into one of regeneration.
- The River Lea is being cleaned and opened up, It previously ran underground and was heavily polluted.
- New bridges will be built across the River Lea to improve transport links and accessibility. The cleaner river Lea should also attract fish and animal life to return.

- Overhead powerlines (13km) have been moved underground make the environment more pleasant and possibly safer (some people believe that powerlines can cause health problems)
- The positive multiplier effect will attract new businesses e.g. restaurants, sports shops, etc. to Newham. Also money earned by the 12,000 extra people of jobs will be circulated in the local economy.

## Objections to the Olympic Games

- Over 300 new businesses have been relocated to make way for the Olympic Park.
- 450 houses had to be demolished
- The UK's largest church was demolished
- The construction process will create noise, visual and air pollution
- Some trees were removed to make way for building (500 trees)
- 87 allotments (private gardens) were lost
- The Olympic Games could be a potential terrorist threat endangering local residents
- London council taxpayers will have to pay for about \$1 billion of costs to build the Olympic Park
- Construction work has increased road traffic
- There will be road restrictions during the game
- The games may have caused localised inflation meaning some first time buyers are priced out of the market
- Some travellers lived on the brownfield sites of the Lower Lea Valley and were forced to move on
- Many jobs will only be temporary

[Moynihan voices London 2012 legacy doubts - BBC](#)



[2. Urban Regeneration -- The London Olympics 2012.pdf](#)

[London 2012 on track to be the regeneration games - London2012 website](#)

[Olympics Shoot For Green Medal - BBC article](#)

[London 2012: Taxpayers have 'paid too much' for Olympics - BBC article](#)