

DISCOVERING PLACES

www.discoveringplaces.co.uk

HERITAGE TOOLKIT



Getting involved in the London 2012 celebrations

There is no doubt that 2012 will be a unique year for the UK. The Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and many other significant anniversaries and events mean that the eyes of the world will be on us in a way that is unlikely to be repeated in our lifetimes.

As Chairman of The Heritage Alliance, I am keen that our members, and all the grassroots heritage organisations which own, manage, promote and care for so much of our historic environment, make the most of the opportunities which this year will provide. We recognise that there are concerns about the impact of the Olympic Games and other events on visitor numbers and the pressure on our infrastructure, but equally there are likely to be a very large number of tourists looking for interesting places to visit and things to do around their trips to the sporting and other activities.

This Toolkit highlights some of the opportunities which London 2012 and our own project within it, Discovering Places, provide for heritage organisations, large and small, to get involved. Most are straightforward to access and involve little or no expenditure, and we hope therefore that you will read this and take advantage of as many as you feel you can manage. The London 2012 Games have placed a particular emphasis on the involvement of local communities so that people throughout the UK feel that they can participate in activities associated with the Games, and the heritage sector is ideally placed to help with this.

The UK's heritage is one of the most important aspects of our tourist industry both for overseas and domestic visitors, so let's work together to ensure that it is rightly celebrated during this special year.



'The UK's heritage is one of the most important aspects of our tourist industry'

Loyd Grossman

Chairman of The Heritage Alliance

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Discovering Places, the London 2012 campaign

As I write it is just over six years since I first attended a meeting hosted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport about opportunities for the cultural sector around the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It was immediately apparent that up to that point, more than six months after London had won the right to hold the 2012 Games, there was no significant involvement from the heritage sector and the initial plans for the cultural programme were very much focused on the performing and visual arts.

I was determined to address this, so once LOCOG (the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) had appointed its cultural team I arranged an early appointment and suggested to them a public engagement programme in heritage as part of what was to become the Cultural Olympiad. Fast forward to September 2008 and my initial idea had grown to encompass the natural and built environments alongside the historic, and was launched as 'Discovering Places', one of the major projects of the Cultural Olympiad.

Within a year we had attracted significant funding from the Olympic Lottery Distributor, enabling us to develop the original concept into a fully-fledged project giving local heritage and environment organisations throughout the UK the opportunity to get involved with the Games. And now here we are in 2012, heading towards Games-time itself and with all the excitement that brings.

Please do read through this pack, get in touch with the Discovering Places team and with your local London 2012 Creative Programmer to see what special opportunities there are in your area, and above all make the most of this extraordinary year!



"my initial idea had grown . . . and was launched as 'Discovering Places', one of the major projects of the Cultural Olympiad."

Ian Lush

Deputy Chair of The Heritage Alliance and Founder of Discovering Places

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**Deputy Chair of The Heritage Alliance
and Founder of Discovering Places**

Contents

Page

Discovering Places Overview	1
Discovering Places Projects	2
1 Meet the Species	2
2 Discover Explore	3
3 Walk the World	4
Key London 2012 initiatives	5
1 London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay	5
2 Local Leaders	7
Further opportunities for getting involved	8
Getting social	12
Discovering Places in action	13
Discovering Places and London 2012 contacts	16



Managing Organisation

**The
Heritage
Alliance**

Project Partners

**Bristol Natural
History Consortium**

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

 **Olympic Lottery
Distributor**
LOTTERY FUNDED

Discovering Places

Discovering Places is London 2012's Cultural Olympiad campaign to inspire people in the UK to discover their local built, historic and natural environment.

Why get involved?

This year, London 2012 will be the 'greatest show on Earth', and this toolkit is designed to highlight the key opportunities for you in the 2012 celebrations.

It's easy to use – do read through and also visit the websites.

The first three projects in the toolkit are at the heart of the Discovering Places campaign, and these are followed by further London 2012 initiatives, all of which could help you to...

- raise awareness of your project and work
- increase visitor numbers to your site
- encourage community involvement
- reach new audiences - young, old and in-between
- showcase your creativity to the rest of the UK and the wider world
- generate a positive legacy
- inspire others to participate
- encourage collaboration with new partners.

Select what inspires you and what connects with your heritage site, and also get in touch with your local Creative Programmer to discuss and promote your event.

Our website www.discoveringplaces.co.uk is the place to go to for finding out what's on, what's coming up and for showcasing your messages, stories and news...

- In the last 12 months new visits to the website have risen by 70% while return visits have grown by 30%
- The Discovering Places blog <http://www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/blog> showcases guest bloggers from partner organisations and contacts from within our networks
- Our links with The Heritage Alliance means that we can publish relevant news stories and event listings in Heritage Update, an e-newsletter that goes out to around 15,000 heritage and cultural sector contacts each fortnight.
- Our monthly e-newsletter has an audience reach of around 1,700 and our Twitter and Facebook following is growing steadily
- As a London 2012 Cultural Olympiad project, Discovering Places can leverage London 2012 communications channels, including website event listings, newsletters and social media channels.

Discovering Places Projects

The first three projects highlighted in this toolkit are central to the Discovering Places campaign. Here's how you might like to get involved with one or all of these exciting new projects – Meet the Species, Discover Explore and Walk the World.



www.meetthespecies.org.uk

Delivered in partnership with the Bristol Natural History Consortium.

Bristol Natural History Consortium

Inspired by the conservation and bio-diversity work on the Olympic Park, Meet the Species is encouraging people to get involved in wildlife surveying events across the UK, to find out more about the natural world on their doorstep. And in the year of London 2012, the race is on to find, identify and record 2,012 animal and plant species.



Copyright © Sarah Briggs

The findings will be used to help protect and conserve wildlife in the future, just as the survey work on the Olympic Park has informed experts on the best way to design, build and manage the Park with wildlife in mind. Meet the Species has joined with Local Leaders and Garden for the Games to get people outdoors enjoying green spaces and creating outdoor places that are attractive to people and wildlife.

How to get involved

You can be part of Meet the Species in a number of ways...

- Find out about the key events across the UK being organised by the team at Meet the Species HQ
- Make your own event an accredited Meet the Species event, and become part of the Cultural Olympiad – with wider events listings and support from the Meet the Species team
- Add your valuable survey data to one of the largest scientific surveys of UK wildlife ever undertaken – and create a legacy for the natural environment
- Download the Education Pack to help run educational activities
- Access blog and Twitter feeds – and keep everyone up-to-date on what's happening.



Copyright ©Matt Postles

Through Meet the Species events there are opportunities to attract new audiences and tell the story of your heritage site's unique wildlife and natural environment. Find out more at

www.meetthespecies.org.uk



www.discoverexplore.co.uk



Delivered by The Heritage Alliance,
Discovering Places project.

The Heritage Alliance

This project is forging links with a wide variety of heritage organisations.

It is currently working in Scotland with key partners, including British Waterways Scotland, the Waterways Trust, the National Trust for Scotland, the John Muir Trust, Abriachan Forest Trust, Merkinch Local Nature Reserve, Inverness Museum, Historic Scotland and the Highland Council.



Loch Ness, Great Glen copyright © 2012 Gail Mackintosh

Discover Explore is a Discovering Places project that helps young people and their families discover hidden, historic and extraordinary stories and places in a cutting-edge and engaging way. This online, offline exploration encourages people to get outdoors and become involved in personalised and creative activities.

First, 'explorers' go to the Discover Explore website to find their missions. Then they head off on adventures along the Great Glen between Fort William and Inverness – uncovering natural and human stories from as far back as 400 million years ago.

They'll discover the art of the Picts, become Nessie guides and investigate the stories of people who used the Great Glen to spread influence, power and the important Olympic theme of truce.

Discover Explore offers a whole new approach to engaging audiences collectively for local, natural and built heritage organisations...

- The Discover Explore model can be applied to almost any location, and can incorporate all types of heritage asset
- It offers a new experience for your location, heightened visibility and joint marketing initiatives.

How to get involved

If you are a heritage organisation working in the Great Glen and would like to be involved in the project, please contact us at: anna@discoveringplaces.co.uk.

There are opportunities to link up with Discover Explore missions in the Great Glen in Scotland, and shortly in Lea Valley near the Olympic Park and other locations across the UK in 2013.





www.walktheworld.org.uk

Delivered in partnership with the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography and geographical learning

As the eyes of the world turn towards the UK for the 'greatest show on Earth' – London 2012 – Walk the World helps people to explore their connections to the 206 Olympic and Paralympic Nations and discover how these countries and their people have shaped our surroundings.

Walk the World offers everyone an easy and exciting way to engage with London 2012, no matter where they live. By joining forces with Walk the World, you can be part of in the challenge to find connections that take people around the world without leaving the UK.

Connections through buildings, place names, plants and animals, monuments, people and communities will reveal how the 206 Nations and their people are all part of our heritage. Through the [Walk the World website](#) people can submit their findings, explore links in their local area, and learn about the countries they relate to.

There's the chance to explore further by downloading and taking part in specially created walks throughout the UK or by creating new walks for others to share.

This online digital platform appeals to a wide audience, particularly younger generations, while the inclusive nature of the content should help engage hard-to-reach audiences.

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS ON HOW YOU MIGHT 'WALK THE WORLD...'

- Design your own walk – based on your local area or heritage site's unique and often surprising links to the 206 Olympic and Paralympic nations
- Put your heritage site on the map – Upload your local area/ heritage site's links to the 206 Olympic and Paralympic nations on to the Walk the World map, and take part in its weekly challenge
- Encourage friends/members/networks to uncover local connections and get actively involved
- Attract new audiences from the environmental and geographical sectors.

London 2012 Initiatives

There are two key London 2012 initiatives, Torch Relay and Local Leaders that you might wish to get involved with..

1. London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay

19 May – 27 July 2012

For more information please visit:

www.london2012.com/olympic-torch-relay

The Olympic Flame will come within 10 miles of 95% of people in the UK, Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey. It will enable local communities to shine a light on the best their area has to offer. You may be able to make a link between your work and the Torch as it comes to your area.

Is the Torch Relay passing near to you?

If the answer is **YES** – do contact your **local authority** (each local authority has an officer for the Torch Relay route) so that you can be part of their programme of events, and also their promotional and publicity campaigns.



Copyright © Simon Jamie

There can be other ways of attracting the people who are out and about to see the Olympic Torch Relay in your area:

- **Create your own event** that has an Olympic or Torch Relay theme, and continue the Torch Relay experience that visitors have come to enjoy
- **Offer discounts to groups** that have come to see the Olympic Torch Relay in your local area
- **Work with local schools** to create activities and school trips that relate to the Torch Relay
- **Talk to local radio, TV and newspapers** about London 2012/Torch Relay-inspired activities and events you are organising
- And be part of our **Torch Relay Blog**.

Find out more at: www.london2012.com/linethestreets

Discovering Places Torch Relay Blog

www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/blog

Through our blog, we want to inspire people to uncover alternative places within easy reach of the Relay route – places of interest ‘off the beaten track’ that celebrate a location’s heritage and identity.

From May 2012, Discovering Places will be devoting its blog to uncovering heritage sites, museums and other places that are not featured on the main Torch Relay Route but contribute to the UK’s unique heritage.



How could this benefit you?

Do you know of a unique heritage site or event that we should highlight on the blog?

Or somewhere that has a special Olympic connection?

If so, please get in touch at admin@discoveringplaces.co.uk

We'll blog three days in advance of a Torch Relay stop, highlighting places of interest in the area through which the Torch is passing.

Before this, we'll be inviting participating organisations to feed in stories about the area's built and natural environments – including those that have a connection to an Olympic nation or athlete.

London 2012 Paralympic Torch Relay and Flame Festival

24 – 29 August 2012

Four separate flames will be lit in London, Greater Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff before they are united to create the Paralympic Flame at Stoke Mandeville, birthplace of the Paralympic Games, on 28 August.

There will then be a 24-hour Torch Relay to journey the Paralympic Flame to London for the Opening Ceremony of the Paralympic Games on 29 August.

If you would like to run an event to coincide with the accompanying Flame Festival and lantern processions, you can join Local Leaders (see following page). The theme is 'Light a Lantern' and you can hold your event any time between 24 – 27 August.

Find out more information about the route: www.london2012.com/paralympic-torch-relay
 Find out more information about the flame festival: www.london2012.com/lightlantern

2. Local Leaders

www.london2012.com/localleaders



Local Leaders is a London 2012 campaign that reaches out to individuals and organisations who want to organise Games celebrations in their local communities.

London 2012 will provide Local Leaders with ideas, how-to guides, plus posters and invites to use for the celebrations.

Local Leaders provides the opportunity to raise the profile of local heritage organisations by:

- Highlighting the central role you play in the heritage and character of your local area
- Celebrating the work of the local volunteers that are at the heart of the UK's heritage sector.

Find more information about Local Leaders at www.london2012.com/localleaders.

How to get involved

If you want to plan a London 2012 Local Leaders celebration, the website has lots of ideas to help inspire people and get them involved. Here are just a few:

- **Garden for the Games** – Use your gardens or community spaces to celebrate through all things floral – create a London 2012 wildflower meadow or grow your own 'team' colours. Be a Garden Detective and discover all those vital minibeasts that make your garden home, and build some insect hotels for them
- **Opening Night In** – 27 July. Host an Olympic Opening Ceremony. Cook up a storm with themed recipes or create a VIP gala night
- **Super Saturday** – On 4 August 25 gold medals will be awarded at the Games. To celebrate, get your local community together for a BBQ or event to honour these record-breaking Olympic athletes
- **Light a Lantern** – 24-29 August. Glow with the glory of the Paralympic Games and join a Flame Festival or create your own lantern procession to show support for the Paralympic athletes.



Further Opportunities

All the Bells – Martin Creed

www.allthebells.com



Work No. 1197

Friday 27 July will be no ordinary morning. . .

At 8.00am, people across the UK will ring bells to perform Martin Creed's *Work No. 1197: All the bells in a country rung as quickly and as loudly as possible for three minutes*, a piece specially commissioned as part of the London 2012 Festival and supported by Discovering Places. It will mark the culmination of the four-year Cultural Olympiad and the beginning of the Olympic Games and the Open Ceremony, which takes place that evening.

All the Bells needs thousands of people to find as many different types of bells as they can. Local communities can get together and make a huge noise to mark the occasion of the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games.

Hand bells, door bells, bicycle bells, church bells, town hall bells, sleigh bells, cow bells, school bells, last orders bells, dinner bells... where there's a bell, Martin Creed wants someone to ring it!

How to get involved

This is a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase your places and spaces by bringing the local community together to celebrate in style.

Sign up at www.allthebells.com with your email address to receive information and tips on how to organise your local bell-ringing extravaganza.

And get in touch with the Allthebells.com team by emailing info@allthebells.com

You will also receive access to an exclusive Martin Creed ringtone – available to project participants only. All the Bells will also be adding features to their website to put your ringing on the map.

In the run up to the performance of *Work No. 1197*, Discovering Places will be working with All the Bells to highlight the captivating stories of heritage bells located all around the UK through our respective newsletters, websites and social media platforms.

So that we can share your 'heritage bells' stories please submit them to: admin@discoveringplaces.co.uk



Copyright © All the Bells

London 2012 Festival

www.london2012.com/festival



The finale of the Cultural Olympiad, the London 2012 Festival, will be a 12-week UK-wide cultural celebration. Opening on Midsummer's Day, 21 June, and running until the last day of the London 2012 Paralympic Games on 9 September, the Festival will provide an outstanding summer of arts and creativity in the UK.

Leading artists from all over the world will come together in the Festival 2012 programme. Audiences across the UK will have a chance to celebrate London 2012 through dance, music, theatre, the visual arts, film and digital innovation, and leave a lasting legacy for the arts in the UK.

One of the major London 2012 Festival project you might wish to join is Big Dance 2012. Its ambition is to reach three million people and inspire the whole of the UK to get involved in dance. There might be opportunity to host a Big Dance event at your location and reach a new audience.

London 2012 Get Set

getset.london2012.com/en/home



Get Set is the official London 2012 education programme.

Working with schools in your area there are many opportunities to create London 2012/ Olympic and Paralympic Games activities and events.

The [Get Set website](#) contains lots of free resources for 3-19 year olds to find out more about the Games and explore the Olympic and Paralympic Values:

- Olympic Values – excellence, friendship, respect
- Paralympic Values – determination, inspiration, courage, equality

The site also offers access to exciting prizes and opportunities through participation in competitions and partner programmes.

Get Set is also a portal to a number of linked programmes that are being run by partners, supporting learning in Communication, Collaboration and Citizenship, Culture and Creativity, Enterprise, Healthy and Active Lifestyles, Internationalism, PE and School Sport, Practical Learning and Sustainability and Regeneration.

Get Set is designed for schools and colleges, **Podium** is the Further and Higher Education Unit for the 2012 Games. It helps colleges, universities and their students to maximise their engagement with all aspects of the London 2012 Games :

www.london2012.com/get-involved/education/higher-education

Heritage Open Days

6 – 9 September 2012



heritage open days

www.heritageopendays.org.uk

To mark the close of the London 2012 Games, right across the UK people will be invited to 'get outdoors' and join in a range of events on Sunday 9 September.

Over this same weekend, Heritage Open Days will be celebrating England's fantastic architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission.

From castles to factories, town halls to tithe barns, parish churches to Buddhist temples...for four days in September, buildings of all ages, styles and functions throw open their doors to the public. It is a once-a-year chance to discover hidden architectural treasures and enjoy a wide range of tours, events and activities that bring local history and culture to life.

Registrations for 2012 opened on March 15th and you can find out more on how to be involved with Heritage Open Days on their website.

Heritage Open Days is delivered by a partnership of The National Trust, The Heritage Alliance and Civic Voice.



National Trust

The Heritage Alliance



Uncover, Discover

www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/uncover-discover

DISCOVERING PLACES

There are a wealth of incredible projects springing up across the UK inspired by the Cultural Olympiad themes – Welcoming the World, Active Participation and using Culture and Sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability and inspire cutting edge collaborations and innovation between communities and the cultural sector.

Uncover Discover celebrates and draws attention to some of these amazing projects, which help new audiences to experience the best of our historic, natural and built environments in exciting new ways.

For more information on Uncover-Discover project performances and events have a look on the www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/events or on the London 2012 What's on events listing for all of the Cultural Olympiad

Voluntary Arts

www.voluntaryarts.org



Voluntary Arts

Local voluntary-run amateur arts and craft groups are everywhere, even though you might know of only a few of them through friends or family members – in fact there are around 50,000 of them in England alone.

They are set up and run by enthusiasts whose driving passion is to create a space where they can share the creative activities they love with like-minded others.

Voluntary Arts is the UK and Ireland development agency for participation in the arts and crafts. It represents a network of tens of thousands of voluntary arts and crafts groups, taking part in everything from choral singing and embroidery to street dance and yarnbombing.

Linking up with voluntary arts and crafts groups from their community is a fantastic (and cost-effective) way for heritage organisations to bring vibrant human stories to historic places, for the benefit of the visiting public. As heritage organisations are vital in keeping our historic places alive, so traditional voluntary arts and craft forms, such as clog dancing and lacemaking, are fundamental in keeping our historic skills and traditions alive.

The voluntary arts and crafts groups benefit from linking up too – by having a new venue in which to practice their creativity, and a new stage from which to attract new participants, members and volunteers.

If you would like to find out about linking up with voluntary arts and crafts groups in your area, please contact us at info@voluntaryarts.org or check out our website at www.voluntaryarts.org

Find out how you can get involved with Voluntary Arts and promote opportunities for volunteering in your local area: www.voluntaryarts.org/take-part/opportunities-in-your-area

Accessibility Toolkit

www.accentuate-se.org

Do you want some ideas on how to make your heritage event more accessible for disabled and deaf visitors? Would you like to attract more disabled and deaf volunteers to get involved with your historic property? Have you thought of working with disabled artists to bring a different perspective to your interpretation? If so, the Accentuate Heritage Resources will be of interest to you.

Going online in early May, the Accentuate Heritage Resources are the culmination of the Accentuate-Creative Landscapes Project. Since 2009, the project has been working with disabled and deaf people in Gosport and Hastings to find creative and low-cost ways to make heritage events accessible to all.

The Resources are a mix of practical guides, films and case studies, and are designed for use by non-experts with limited budgets. They are all based on real experiences, tried and tested, and written by event organisers in the two towns.

Available on the Accentuate website from 1 May 2012.





Getting Social

Once you're involved you'll want to tell everyone what you're doing and share your news.

You're most probably already using social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook. These are the two most popular forms of social media – around 95% of 18-24 year olds are active on Facebook. And it's not just for the younger generation, over half of all people over 65 also use Facebook. Twitter is popular with 15.5 million adults, and used slightly more by women.

Being part of Discovering Places gives you lots of material to share with your followers and fans. Following the other Discovering Places projects will keep you up to date on current events and re-tweets will give your followers interesting new content and help to spread the word.

Follow @DiscoverDP for overviews, @MeettheSpecies for wildlife event news, @DiscoverXplore for news of outdoor adventures and missions.

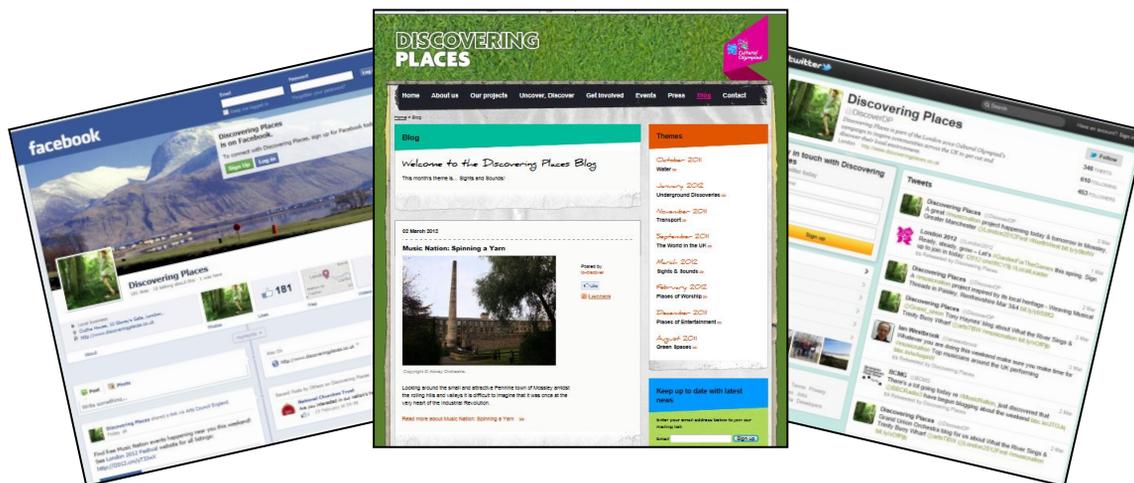
@London2012 brings you the big picture on the main event.

Your Facebook followers should be keen to hear how you're involved in London 2012 – share your photos and stories with them and collect reciprocal likes.

You can also keep in touch with what's happening across Discovering Places, Meet the Species and Discover Explore by following them on Facebook. And London 2012 contains more on the Games themselves and associated events.

Discovering Places also has its own blog – www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/blog and welcomes your contributions.

Potential bloggers should contact admin@discoveringplaces.co.uk



Discovering Places in action

These two case studies give an idea of initiatives that community groups and heritage organisations are already planning as part of Discovering Places and London 2012 projects...

MEET THE SPECIES
the race is on...

Arnos Vale Cemetery

Meet the Species is co-ordinated by the:
Bristol Natural History Consortium



Arnos Vale Cemetery copyright © Bob Pitchford

Arnos Vale Cemetery is a 45-acre cemetery in the centre of Bristol, and one of the earliest and most important working Victorian cemeteries in the UK.

It is a rich mosaic of habitats and provides an important urban green space. Arnos Vale is highly valued by local people as a park and by naturalists for its extraordinary biodiversity.

It's a vital habitat for badgers, foxes, slow worms, roe deer, five species of bats, and 23 species of nesting birds, including tawny owls.

Through **Meet the Species**, Arnos Vale will be running public events to search for wild species from Spring to Autumn 2012 – marking the Olympic Games and celebrating the nation's vital green spaces. These include:

- Spring Flowers guided tour
- Garden Cemetery guided tour of historic planting and landscape design
- Dawn Chorus Watch - with BBC The One Show's Mike Dilger
- Big Debate – Heritage v. Wildlife public debate between archaeologist Mark Horton and ecologist Mike Dilger
- Insect Spotting guided tour to find colourful bugs of all kinds
- Moth Watch all-night survey in association with Bristol & District Moth Group
- Bat Detection tour in association with Avon Bat Group
- Food foraging family activities in search of edible and medicinal plants, fungi, bark and berries
- Mini-beast hunt for young children.



Copyright © Bristol Natural History Consortium

Each event will record the number of species found, and data will be shared with external partners. This will supplement Arnos Vale's species surveys of 2004 and contribute to the 2,012 Meet the Species list.



West Norwood Cemetery

A Discovering Places project with:

Royal Geographical Society
with IBG
Advancing geography and geographical learning



Chapel of St Stephen copyright © Friends of West Norwood Cemetery

A member of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery was inspired by Walk the World project and created a walk through the Cemetery. The walk was submitted through the Walk the World website and is now available to the general public.

The South Metropolitan Cemetery, or West Norwood Cemetery as it is now commonly known, occupies 42 acres and opened in 1837.

It was the second of the 'Magnificent Seven' cemeteries that were created to meet the pressing need for more burial space in and around London.

The 21 monuments included in the newly created '**Walk the World**' walk take you through 63 Olympic and Paralympic nations and you can discover how natives of other lands who adopted Britain as their home have made significant contributions to life here.

To find out about some of the other 'Walk the World' walks, go to www.walktheworld.org.uk/walk

The Discovering Places blog is another great way to reach new audiences

Discovering Places Blog: Circus and Church – St Paul's Church, Bristol

Laoise Bailey of **The Churches Conservation Trust** said: "We've had fun exploring some of the lesser known stories about our churches and sharing these with new audiences through the Discovering Places blog in what is set to be an exciting year for the UK. At The Churches Conservation Trust we feel it is important that visitors to the Olympic Games get an appreciation of all that is exciting about our country especially our rich heritage, which is contained in our historic buildings – many of them churches."

From The Discovering Places blog

www.discoveringplaces.co.uk/blog

Discovering Places Blog: Circus and Church – St Paul’s Church, Bristol



Circomedia, St Paul's Church, Bristol copyright © The Churches Conservation Trust.

Dr Neil Rushton, Conservation Manager (West), the Churches Conservation Trust...

It may not seem like the most likely combination, but at St Paul's Church in Bristol the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) and Circomedia have managed to form a partnership that has benefited the church building and thousands of trainees into the esoteric arts of the circus.

In 2000, this 18th century neo-Gothic masterpiece was in dire straits, and we definitely do not mean Mark Knopfler here. The roof was caving in and the structural elements of the building were weak enough to warrant the building being mooted for demolition. But with an enormous effort from the CCT and extra money from the EU and the Heritage Lottery Fund we managed to save the church and form a partnership with Circomedia, who were looking for a new home. Twelve years on and the church is transformed.

Circomedia use it for circus training programmes, exhibitions and special dramatic-performance events. The church is a maelstrom of activity – vibrant and alive and proving that 'redundant' churches are very much able to contribute to local community life. It has also been a fundamentally important element in the regeneration of this part of Bristol – left to decay in the 80s and 90s but now being brought back to life by the efforts of the council and the local community. St Paul's is a fabulous example of what can happen to a near-derelict building is supported by state and private funding, the local community and the dedicated efforts of conservation professionals . . . job done.

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All the Bells

Get in touch with the Allthebells.com team by emailing

info@allthebells.com

The Heritage Toolkit was designed by Gail Mackintosh gmmack@live.co.uk

Managing Organisation

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Alliance**

Project Partners

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History Consortium**

**Royal
Geographical
Society**
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Advancing geography
and geographical learning

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