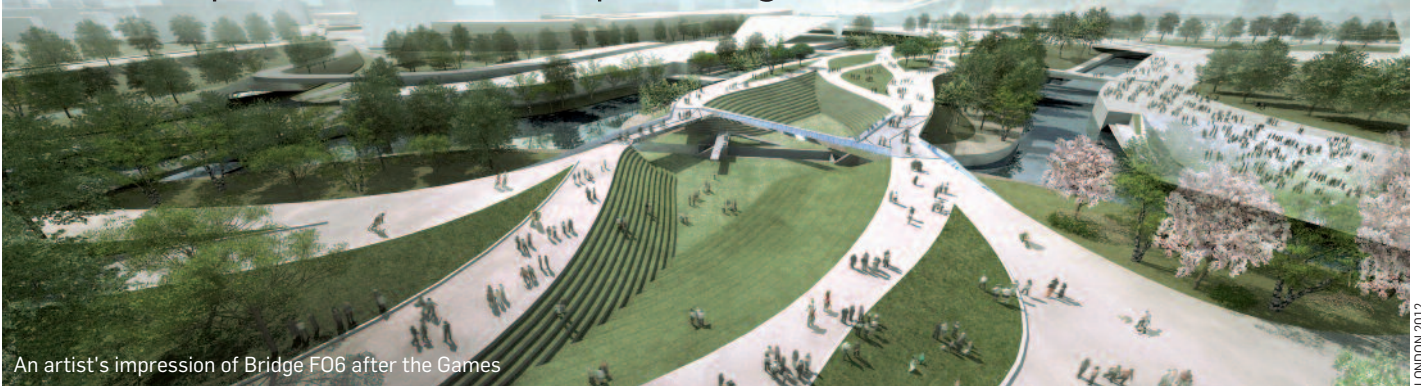


In part two of our series on preparing for the 2012 Olympic Games, LARA EADE looks at the importance of staff planning



An artist's impression of Bridge F06 after the Games

LONDON 2012

# AN OLYMPIC STAFFING EFFORT

**H**ave you, or your managers, thought about the impact that the London 2012 Olympic Games could have on staffing levels? Do you know whether transport or security restrictions will affect the way they come to or from work?

With half a million visitors due to arrive in the UK for the Games, 2012 provides enormous revenue-generating potential for the hospitality and tourism sector, but a global event of this scale will inevitably have an impact on staffing logistics for businesses. Employee engagement, too, should be considered – maintaining this during the Games will reduce the risk of staff poaching and improve the welcome that staff offer to visitors.

People 1st's recent State of the Nation 2011 report looked at employers' readiness for the Olympics, as well as lessons learned from previous Games, and getting staffing plans right emerged as an essential activity in ensuring that businesses are well-placed to profit from the Games.

It also highlighted the importance of acting early - however, despite the fact that 90 percent of businesses think the

Games will have a positive legacy for the tourism sector, 63 percent say that they are unlikely to put plans in place to prepare for the event.

It's not just businesses near the main sporting venues that need to think ahead – with many UK employees applying for tickets to attend Olympic events, or volunteering to help out at the Games, and all during the peak holiday season – it's important for managers to consider what cover they will require.

Julie Gallagher is HR director for London Midway Attractions at Merlin Entertainments, which owns the London Eye, Madame Tussauds and the London Dungeon among other attractions. She says that, while planning for such events is never easy, it is important to act in advance: "My advice is start now," she comments. "From the experience of Merlin, the more we have considered potential issues, the more detailed our plans have needed to become to overcome them."

For further advice on preparing your business for 2012, including tips, checklists and lessons from previous Game, download a free copy of People 1st's 'Ahead of the Games' guide at [www.people1st.co.uk/2012](http://www.people1st.co.uk/2012) ●

## Top tips for preparing your staff for the Games:

### Plan early

Decide on a staffing plan well before the Games

### Review your annual leave policy

The Games will coincide with school holidays, so you need to have a clear and fair policy developed in advance

### Be flexible with staff scheduling

Staff can be motivated and retained if employers maintain flexible scheduling so that they can attend events and enjoy the Games

### Consider your opening hours

Will later hours be needed to respond to high anticipated levels of custom? Think about what's going to be profitable, and ensure that staff are comfortable with your plans.

### Have contingency plans in place

The Games could have an impact on transportation - have a clear plan for how staff will get to and from their work location

### Keep staff informed about events in the local area

Ensure that staff fully understand what events are happening in the local area and how the business might be impacted on a day-to-day basis. This will create positive impressions among visitors who ask for assistance and will help businesses to respond to shifts in customer demand more efficiently

### Think about retention and employee engagement

Nearer the Games, businesses with skills shortages may resort to poaching staff from other establishments, so reviewing employee engagement policies is important

*Tips from People 1st's 'Ahead of the Games' report*