

Balfour Beatty plays key role in 2012 Legacy

Written by Darren

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Having played an important part in delivering the games facilities for the London 2012 Olympics, Balfour Beatty is ensuring a lasting legacy by playing a key role in connecting and engaging with the local community in East London through a number of sustainable initiatives as part of the company's redevelopment of the iconic Aquatics Centre.

The Aquatics Centre is literally being 'unwrapped' by Balfour Beatty as part of the £300 million post-Olympic transformation which includes having the 42 metre high temporary stands removed from either side of the building and replaced with glass elevations. The company remains on course to meet a 50% reuse, 50% recycle target and are engaging with local community to help see materials recycled and reused.

One project in nearby Hackney Wick is the Cre8 Arc, an eco-hub lodge, permaculture gardens and sporting facility built by a pioneering project team using more than 10 tonnes of recycled timber, steel and lights that Balfour Beatty have donated following the dismantling of the Aquatic Centre's temporary stands. In addition, the company have also become one of the project sponsors and a part of the management team, giving environmental, construction and mechanical and electrical advice. The company have also sent labour over to the project to assist with construction activities such as clearing, flattening and relaying the garden.

'The impact of our work extends beyond delivering vital civil infrastructure,' commented Stuart Fraser, Major Projects Programme Director for Balfour Beatty Construction Services UK. 'Leaving a lasting positive legacy upon communities and individuals is an essential part of our approach to sustainability and it's great to see materials reused on a project built by the community, for the community.'

The Aquatics Centre site team have also worked with a number of local students - assisting one degree student in his waste dissertation, providing site experience, auditing of waste facilities and meeting of key waste professionals. The student gained a first in both his engineering degree and dissertation and commended Balfour Beatty in his dissertation for their assistance.

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Another engineering degree student worked once a week with the site team to gain site experience to enable her to improve her business skills, and is now working in Brazil on the Rio 2016 Olympics.

To coincide with 'World Hunger Day 2013' the Balfour Beatty Aquatics Centre site team forewent their lunch and donated the money they would have spent to Newham Food Bank. The initiative was called 'The Olympic Park Hunger Games', and along with main contractor BAM Nuttall, raised over £200 for Newham Food Bank. The site team has now committed to working closer with the food bank and has planned a series of events to support them.

With the Aquatics Centre set to re-open to the public in the Spring of 2014 as part of the transformed Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Balfour Beatty's engagement with the local community represents an enduring legacy milestone.