The Paralympic Games is a vibrant and successful multi-sport competition for elite athletes with a disability. There are Summer and Winter editions in the same years as the Olympic Games. The Games, which are televised in many countries around the world, are the pinnacle of sporting competition for the athletes.
For 12 days in 2012 the world’s attention will be focused on the Paralympic Games in London and we are determined to deliver a spectacular showcase for sport.

Never before have an Olympic Games and Paralympic Games been more integrated in their delivery from the outset. Our vision is to use the power of the Games to inspire change: in people’s lives, in attitudes to disability issues and in the way sporting events are delivered.

With more athletes and teams destined to compete in London than at any previous Paralympic Games, we are determined to provide the arenas and the audiences to spur them on to achieving extraordinary feats. World records will be set and new heroes will emerge.

Our ambition is that in the stadia, on television and through new media channels a bigger and wider audience will watch these inspiring role models and grow in their knowledge and appreciation of the Paralympic Games. We will do this with new technology, ground-breaking marketing and media coverage.

This guide is designed to tell you a bit more about the Paralympic Games, the Paralympic Movement and London 2012’s plans for a truly memorable Paralympic Games. I hope it will be useful for stakeholders, people working on the Games, other associated organisations, volunteers and the media.

London is truly excited about hosting the Paralympic Games and we look forward to welcoming you in 2012.

Sebastian Coe
Chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games
In 1948, as the Olympic Games took place in London, the seeds for future Paralympic Games were sown.

Pioneering neurologist Sir Ludwig Guttmann organised a sports competition at Stoke Mandeville Hospital to coincide with the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony. He had already seen the rehabilitative power of sport for spinal-injured World War II veterans and wanted to build on this experience.

Guttmann then continued to repeat the event every year at about the same time. In 1949, he is reported to have said in his opening speech that ‘maybe one day there would be Olympics for the disabled’. Three years later, in 1952, Dutch athletes joined the event, creating the first international games for athletes with a disability.
The title of Paralympic Games was first widely-coined for the Games of 1988 in South Korea – although there are isolated examples of its use in Tokyo 1964 and Heidelberg 1972. It combines the Greek preposition ‘para’ with the word ‘Olympic’, emphasising how the two Games work in ‘parallel’ to each other.

In 1960, Rome became the first Host City to use its Olympic venues for the Paralympic Games, with 400 athletes from 23 nations participating. The first Paralympic Winter Games took place in Örnsköldsvik, Sweden in 1976. They marked the inclusion of athletes who were amputees and those with a visual impairment. Athletes with cerebral palsy first took part in 1980.

In 1984, a category called ‘Les Autres’ (‘the others’ in French) brought in athletes who could not be categorised in existing groups. More recently, these athletes have been subsumed into other classifications, organised by ability to compete rather than by particular disabilities.

Athletes with an intellectual disability were part of the Games of 1996 and 2000 and their re-inclusion for the 2012 Games is under discussion.
By the time of the Sydney 2000 Games, 18 sports were part of the programme, with Paralympic Sailing and Wheelchair Rugby making their debut. The Barcelona 1992 Games featured 3,021 athletes from 82 nations.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games will feature 20 different sports with as many as 4,200 athletes from 150 nations taking part.

Since 1988 the Paralympic Games have been in the same city and year as the Olympic Games, an arrangement formalised at the Sydney 2000 Games by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010 and London 2012 are the first Host Cities to be obliged to offer to host both Olympic and Paralympic Games.

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**The Paralympic Games – a history in numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Host City</th>
<th>Number of nations</th>
<th>Number of athletes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Stoke Mandeville, UK</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Tokyo, JPN</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Stoke Mandeville, UK &amp; New York, USA</td>
<td>41 (GBR) 45 (USA)</td>
<td>1,100 (GBR) 1,800 (USA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source – International Paralympic Committee ** Projected figures
The International Paralympic Committee

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is the global governing body of the Paralympic Movement. Based in Bonn, Germany, it organises the Paralympic Games and Paralympic Winter Games.

For seven summer sports (see Appendix One), the IPC also takes on the role of an International Federation, supervising and coordinating the World Championships and other competitions.

The IPC is committed to enabling Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and promotes the Paralympic values which include courage, determination, inspiration and equality.

The IPC was formed on 22 September 1989. Before that, the Games were organised through a coordinating committee featuring representatives of the five International Organisations of Sport for the Disabled (IOSDs) who dealt with disability groups at the time.

Four of these IOSDs are still part of the democratic structure of the IPC:

- IBSA – International Blind Sports Federation
- IWAS – International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Federation
- CPISRA – Cerebral Palsy International Sports & Recreation Association
- INAS-FID – International Sports Federation for Intellectual Disability

There are also representatives, from five regions, of over 150 National Paralympic Committees. The federation representing the deaf, the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (CISS/ICSD), was a founding member of the IPC but decided to withdraw after a few years and continue their own development of the Deaflympics.

Sporting excellence
Over the past decade there has been a movement towards merging the organisation of sport for athletes with a disability into mainstream sport. During this process, national and international sports federations have begun to take on responsibility for all athletes within their sport.

In 2003, the IPC launched a new logo or Paralympic Symbol – see visual below – with three ‘agitos’ (from the Latin ‘agito’, ‘I move’) around a central point. The symbol emphasises the IPC’s role in bringing athletes from all corners of the world together and enabling them to compete.

The three dynamic elements of the Paralympic Symbol are in red, blue and green – the three colours most widely seen in national flags around the world.

The IPC Handbook is the IPC’s constitutional document and is an equivalent to the Olympic Charter. It offers guidelines on the staging of the Games, the awarding of medals, the content of Opening and Closing Ceremonies and the Paralympic Torch Relay.

ParalympicsGB
The British Paralympic Association (BPA) is a registered charity that is the guardian of the Paralympic Movement in the UK. It is responsible for selecting, preparing, entering, funding and managing Team GB at the Paralympic Games and Paralympic Winter Games. The invitation to participate in each Paralympic Games is sent to the BPA as the National Paralympic Committee for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The BPA, its associated companies and all Great Britain Paralympic teams now come under the trademark name ‘ParalympicsGB’.

ParalympicsGB is one of London 2012’s key partners in delivering the Paralympic Games because of its wealth of knowledge about prior Games and the needs of elite athletes.

The IPC’s motto, ‘Spirit in Motion’, reflects the achievements of elite athletes who push themselves to their limits and exceed expectations in their sport every day.
Iconic athletes
Atheletic achievement is at the heart of the Games and Paralympians provide inspiring role models:

Ajibola Adeoye (Nigeria) – Paralympic Athletics
Ajibola Adeoye of Nigeria set the Paralympic Stadium alive at the final of the 100m at the Barcelona 1992 Paralympic Games. The Nigerian sprinter, an arm amputee, won the final in 10.72 seconds, setting a world record. He took almost a second out of the remainder of the field in an amazing display of speed and power.

Hou Bin (China) – Paralympic Athletics
A Paralympic Games multi-gold medallist high-jumper. When he soars above the bar, this single leg amputee lights up the stadium with his performances and his personality. At Atlanta 1996 he cleared a world record of 1.92m to win gold. He took a further gold in both Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004. Hou Bin has been at the vanguard of a sensational rise to medal supremacy from the Chinese team since 1996.

Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson (Great Britain) – Paralympic Athletics
Winner of 16 Paralympic Games medals, 1988-2004, including 11 golds, across five Paralympic Games in Wheelchair Track Racing. This makes her one of the most successful Paralympians of all time. Between 1992 and 2002 Dame Tanni also won the London Marathon six times. Born in Cardiff in 1969, her incredible sporting achievements as well as her engaging personality and fierce intellectual independence have won the hearts of the UK public, making Dame Tanni one of the UK’s most recognised sporting celebrities.
Bob Matthews (Great Britain) – Paralympic Athletics
This talented distance runner has competed at seven Paralympic Games. He twice won the 800m, 1500m and 5000m at the 1984 and 1988 Games and went on to win a total of eight Paralympic golds during a remarkable career, which may be extended since he has moved from the UK to New Zealand. The feats of this athlete, who is blind, have kept a whole team of guide runners busy over the years, supporting him through thousands of miles in training and at competitions of all levels.

Javier Ochoa (Spain) – Paralympic Cycling
Javier is a Tour de France cyclist whose twin brother was killed in an accident whilst they were out training. Javier sustained serious head injuries but, after spending nine weeks in a coma, eventually got back on his bike and trained for the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games where he won gold and silver in the Road Race and Time Trial respectively.
Michael Teuber (Germany) –
Paralympic Cycling
Germany’s Michael Teuber has taken gold in four European and three World Championships as well as at two Paralympic Games. He took up Cycling after breaking his back in a car accident in 1987. In 2005, Michael set a world ‘best one hour performance’ of 39.326 km/h. He is a multi-world record holder.

Natalie du Toit (South Africa) –
Paralympic Swimming
Destined to push boundaries, this South African swimmer competed at the age of 14 at the 1998 Commonwealth Games before undergoing a lower leg amputation three years later as a result of a motorbike accident. Undeterred, Natalie announced and fulfilled her desire to compete at the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games in both able-bodied and disabled categories. She was eighth in the able-bodied 800m Freestyle before winning two golds in events for swimmers with a disability. At the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games she won gold in the 400m Freestyle, setting a world and Paralympic record.

Esther Vergeer (Netherlands) –
Wheelchair Tennis
This remarkable Dutch athlete was once a Wheelchair Basketball player before turning to the sport of Wheelchair Tennis. She made the world number one spot her own from 2000 to 2006. Esther won the singles and doubles titles at both the Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004 Paralympic Games.
London will host ground-breaking Paralympic Games in 2012, giving the best possible experience to participating athletes, spectators and global audiences.

We are determined to create new standards of delivery, facilities, accessibility and opportunity. London’s aim is to ensure that the world’s best athletes have the best possible conditions to achieve their best and showcase their talent to the world.

For the first time in history, planning for the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be fully integrated.

London will strive to create a festival of sport, culture and diversity to inspire a new era in public attitudes towards disability and a new profile for sport for athletes with a disability.

The 2012 Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disciplines</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days of competition</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition venues</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training venues</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletes</td>
<td>4,200*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating nations</td>
<td>150*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical officials</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Paralympic Committees</td>
<td>162 [as at March 2008]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimate
List of programme sports
The numbers and types of sports on the Games programme have both developed since 1952. For the London 2012 Paralympic Games there will be 20* sports in the programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Archery</td>
<td>Eton Manor, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Athletics</td>
<td>Olympic Stadium, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boccia</td>
<td>ExCeL, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Cycling (Track and Road)</td>
<td>Velodrome, Olympic Park and Central London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Equestrian</td>
<td>Greenwich Park, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Five-a-side*</td>
<td>Hockey Arena, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football Seven-a-side*</td>
<td>Hockey Arena, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goalball</td>
<td>Handball Arena, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Judo</td>
<td>Fencing Hall, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerlifting</td>
<td>ExCeL, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Rowing</td>
<td>Eton Dorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Sailing</td>
<td>Weymouth and Portland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Shooting</td>
<td>Royal Artillery Barracks, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Swimming</td>
<td>Aquatics Centre, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralympic Table Tennis</td>
<td>ExCeL, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball (Sitting)</td>
<td>North Greenwich Arena 2, River Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Basketball</td>
<td>ExCeL, River Zone and Basketball Arena, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Fencing</td>
<td>Fencing Hall, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Rugby</td>
<td>Basketball Arena, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Tennis</td>
<td>Eton Manor, Olympic Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this is a Paralympic-specific document, we refer to sports without the prefix ‘Paralympic’ within the body of copy.

* Football is counted as two separate sports under Paralympic Games protocol as each category is governed by a separate Federation.
**London’s plans**

London’s achievement in winning the right to stage the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games has created the greatest opportunity in generations for the UK to promote a contemporary, progressive attitude to sport, design, culture and social inclusion.

Our winning bid promised a combination of world-class sporting facilities, an unparalleled spectator and competitor experience, a legacy of sustainable large-scale regeneration, as well as inspiring young people to get involved in sport.

An underpinning priority was our commitment to inclusive design, aimed at ensuring that London 2012 is ‘the most accessible Games ever’. To reinforce this, for the first time ever London 2012 will bring together the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, giving each a distinctive feel and sense of experience whilst making no distinction between them in the approach to planning, delivery and standard of service or the commitment to priority objectives.

The Paralympic Games in 2012 will take place from Wednesday 29 August to Sunday 9 September, using the same Village and many of the same venues as the Olympic Games. The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) is responsible for the staging of the Games and is determined to raise the bar in planning, delivery and profile.

Working with key partners, LOCOG will take account of the need for accessibility for athletes, support staff, spectators and the media alike for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games is set to be the most compact in history, designed to minimise travel disruption and maximise accessibility.

Most of the 20 Paralympic venues are set in two zones – the Olympic Park and the River Zone. These two zones are just 15 minutes apart.
Half of the 20 Paralympic sports will take place in the Olympic Park, which is adjacent to the Paralympic Village.

In the north of the Park, at Eton Manor, the Archery and Wheelchair Tennis venue will be converted after the Games into a state-of-the-art tennis and hockey centre, leaving a tangible legacy from the Games.

Venues in the River Zone will be within easy reach of the Paralympic Village: ExCeL, North Greenwich Arenas, Greenwich Park and the Royal Artillery Barracks.

Road Cycling will take place in central London, with Rowing at Eton Dorney, to the west of London, and Sailing at Weymouth and Portland on the south coast. Final detailed schedules for the Games will be published in the autumn of 2011. There will be a series of Test Events leading up to the Games to make sure that everyone and everything is ‘match-fit’.

Before the start of competition the Paralympic Torch Relay will travel through the UK, building public enthusiasm and awareness en route to a memorable Opening Ceremony in the Olympic Stadium.

The day after the Opening Ceremony will be a Paralympic Day, with further events and promotions designed to draw the crowds and increase public engagement in the Games. The UK already has an unparalleled history of support for the Paralympic Games and London 2012 intends to build on this momentum.

Once the Games begin, London 2012 will create another ‘first’ for the Paralympic Games. There will be reserved-seat session tickets available to fans of specific sports, ensuring they do not lose out in the drive to maximise attendance. This, and other pioneering marketing, access and transport initiatives, will enable London’s Paralympic Games to break new ground for sport.

Tickets for every event will be priced to draw record crowds – a ticketing strategy built on the successful promotion of Paralympic events at the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games and at previous Games. They will be affordable and targeted at everyone.

The majority of the 1.5 million tickets will be for events in the Olympic Park and ExCeL, with free transport between venues, ensuring every athlete enjoys passionate and vocal support.
**Key**
- National Rail
- London Underground
- DLR
- Train line
- Venue

**Olympic Park**
- Olympic Stadium

2. **Olympic Park**
   - Swimming
   - Wheelchair Rugby
   - Goalball
   - Wheelchair Basketball
   - Seven-a-side football
   - Five-a-side football
   - Cycling (Track)
   - Athletics
   - Wheelchair Tennis
   - Archery

**River Zone**
- ExCeL

3. North Greenwich Arena 1
   - Wheelchair Basketball

4. Greenwich Park
   - Equestrian

5. North Greenwich Arena 2
   - Volleyball (Sitting)

6. ExCeL
   - Boccia
   - Powerlifting
   - Table Tennis
   - Judo
   - Wheelchair Fencing

7. The Royal Artillery Barracks
   - Shooting
Culture
In partnership with disability and deaf arts organisations and the cultural sector as a whole, London 2012 will produce the largest arts, cultural and sporting programme of work by disabled people ever seen in the UK.

Over the next four years we will be working to build up the skills and capacity of a wide range of artists, audiences and sports people. We shall produce regional and UK-wide festivals and events. The UK has led the world in its arts and sporting excellence by disabled people. This cultural programme will celebrate these achievements and profile the tolerance and inclusiveness of British society. We estimate that the Cultural Olympiad will reach more than 30 million people in the UK.

Access will be built into the planning of the whole of the Cultural Olympiad. London 2012 will ensure that all performances and activities are fully inclusive, drawing upon best practice in terms of physical access, information in easy read, services such as audio description for visually impaired audiences and other technological innovations such as captioning and guiding.

Education
Young people are one of the key audiences for the London 2012 Paralympic Games. London’s education plans will focus on the Paralympic values, as defined by the IPC, of courage, determination, inspiration and equality.

London 2012 is producing an on-line resource which will be available to all schools and colleges across the UK. This will include films, materials to use during school assemblies and teaching ideas and tools.

The four-year education programme will create a network of schools, colleges and other education providers dedicated to the Paralympic values. The programme will be launched straight after the handover from Beijing to London in September 2008.

A range of additional teaching resources, developed by government, commercial partners and other organisations, will also be available to this network and will help to enhance young people’s learning and increase their engagement with the London 2012 Games.
The Paralympic Village

Living in a Games Village is always a unique experience for the athletes of the world. London 2012’s Paralympic Village will open its gates just a week after the close of the Olympic Games and will have a range of accommodation, relaxation and dining areas.

Some of these will be in the Residential Zone – a secure area which will include bedrooms and lounges, laundry and dining facilities; others will be in the International Zone – an area of the Village where a number of guests can be made welcome for a defined period each day to meet athletes or other team members.

The Village will be designed with some characteristics of a traditional ‘British village’, with a green space and water features at its heart as well as shops, coffee bars and other amenities. London 2012’s Village will be particularly compact and set within extensive parkland inside the Olympic Park.

The Village has been designed to be accessible to everybody from the outset.

The Village is being built to a British standard known as ‘Lifetime Homes’. This means that the apartments have 16 design features that will make them more flexible to the changing needs of their occupants. After the Games, the homes will, therefore, be suitable for people of all ages and people with a disability. This is the largest construction project in the world so far where access and the principle of Lifetime Homes have been implemented from the start.

Record numbers – possibly as many as 75 per cent – of all the athletes will be competing in the adjacent Olympic Park sports venues.

There will be some sports whose competitions take place outside the Greater London area. Rowers and sailors will be offered accommodation close to Eton Dorney and Weymouth respectively while they are competing. They will be able to join the rest of their team in the Paralympic Village once their events have finished.

Accommodation

Transport
London 2012 is working on integrated transport plans for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Games-time systems and networks will take on the task of moving thousands upon thousands of spectators and participants alike in safety.

Accessibility will be the key to success for both Games and is an integral part of the ‘Transport Plan for the London 2012 Games’. The Paralympic Games will make use of the high levels of accessibility to London’s public transport systems, including the Jubilee underground line and the Docklands Light Railway, the world’s largest fully accessible bus fleet and 21,000 accessible taxis.

As part of London’s innovative approach, a Games Mobility Service will be developed for the Olympic and Paralympic Games which could include the provision of powered scooters and wheelchairs at the venues and escorts for spectators who cannot travel long distances without assistance.

In order to keep traffic flowing during the Games, there will be dedicated Paralympic and Olympic traffic lanes between some accommodation areas and competition venues.

Sustainability
A responsible approach to environmental protection and sustainable development is central to the London 2012 vision and values. This ambition forms the ‘one planet 2012’ concept, which is framed by the London 2012 Sustainability Plan: ‘Towards a one planet 2012’.

London 2012’s sustainability plans cover all stages of the project cycle (before, during and after the Games) and highlight five priority themes: climate change, waste, biodiversity, inclusion and healthy living.

These themes are equally relevant to both the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and no distinction is made between the two in planning for sustainability. The Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 is providing independent scrutiny and assurance on the delivery of sustainability across the whole London 2012 programme.
Marketing and publicising the Games

The London 2012 Paralympic Games will have the power to inspire change. Raising the profile of the Paralympic Games and Paralympians is one of our key aims.

UK-based market research has shown that 69 per cent of people want to see more TV and general media coverage of the Paralympic Games.

In 2012, LOCOG is determined to showcase the Games and the inspirational abilities and achievements of Paralympic athletes to wider audiences, using established and new media methods.

The London 2012 team has already kick-started its marketing campaign for the Paralympic Games by developing the same emblem for both Games in an unprecedented move.

The Paralympic Games also offer a powerful opportunity for companies to associate themselves with athletic excellence whilst speaking to the general community and enhancing their reputation for good corporate citizenship.

London 2012 sells rights of association to the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games and the respective teams as a package.

Companies therefore become partners of both Games and both national teams. This has increased the value of support received from companies and is designed to ensure that the Paralympic Games are well supported by the activities of the domestic commercial partners both before and during the Games.

Global TV and media coverage of the Paralympic Games has grown swiftly since 1992. The IPC has pioneered arrangements with talented production teams to bring the Games to a wider TV and on-line audience. Nations such as Germany, Britain, Japan, Brazil, Spain, Norway, Australia and others have been in the forefront of these developments.

From 2008 onwards the host broadcaster for the Olympic Games is obliged to produce coverage of the Paralympic Games (called a ‘feed’) to the Paralympic licensed broadcasters in each country.

In the UK, the BBC has played its part by dedicating live and recorded coverage to the Games and making household names of Paralympians such as Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, Ade Adepitan, Chris Holmes, Danny Crates, Sarah Bailey and Simon Jackson. Newspapers have also adopted a trend-setting and significant role.
Sometimes people are not sure how to describe Paralympic athletes and are unclear about correct terminology. We aim in this section to answer some frequently asked questions:

**How should I describe an athlete who competes in Paralympic sports events?**
An athlete who has already competed at the Paralympic Games can be described as a ‘Paralympian’ (not a ‘Para-Olympian’ or anything similar). Other athletes who are competing at events of a high competitive standard but who have not yet participated at the Games can be called ‘elite athletes with a disability’ (see Appendix Five).

**How would Paralympians and elite athletes with a disability wish to be portrayed?**
Paralympians are sportspeople and like to be treated in the same way as other top sports performers.

Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson once said: ‘We will have come of age when the media criticise our performances and are negative about us in the same way as they are for other sportspeople rather than constantly praising us as being “brave”. Paralympians are achievers who do not necessarily wish to be portrayed constantly as “overcoming adversity”.’

‘I absolutely hate it when the media or anyone else describe me as “suffering” from cerebral palsy,’ said Paralympic swimmer Iain Gowans. ‘I “have” cerebral palsy. I’m not “afflicted” by it.’

Multi-Paralympic Fencing gold medallist Caz Walton (pictured overleaf) added: ‘I don’t mind being called a “wheelchair-user” but please don’t call me “wheelchair-bound” or “confined to a wheelchair”.’
What should the media take into consideration when interviewing Paralympians?

David Morris is the Mayor of London’s senior policy advisor on issues for disabled and deaf people, and a wheelchair-user. He says: ‘Whilst attitudes towards disabled people have changed greatly in the past two decades, you’d still be amazed at how many people talk to my personal assistant or any other able-bodied person rather than talk directly to me. It’s important to look at me and talk to me directly. The same applies for Paralympians as for any other disabled person.’

‘s I have a speech impairment and I might sometimes be difficult to understand until people get used to my voice,’ says Paralympic Equestrian medallist Sophie Christiansen, who has cerebral palsy. ‘But I want people to try hard and not to talk to me through my mum, my coach or anyone else if they can help it.’

Mike Brace, Chairman of the BPA and seven times a Winter Paralympian, was blinded by a childhood accident. He says: ‘When I’m being interviewed it’s important that journalists identify themselves and anyone else that they are with. It helps me put everything into context. It’s also important that they tell me when the conversation is at an end. I know that people worry about saying the wrong thing when they first meet me but they shouldn’t worry. Even saying things like “see you tomorrow” is fine because they are an accepted part of everyday speech and I use them myself.’

Caz Walton, Paralympic Fencing

David Morris, Advisor on issues for
Should I help if a wheelchair user seems to be finding a steep hill or a ramp difficult to manoeuvre?

‘Sometimes I know that people want to help me out if I am going up a steep hill or ramp and are not sure whether to or not. The simple rule is ask me,’ says David Morris.

Is it ‘athlete with a disability’ or ‘disabled athlete’?

There are differing views on this. The accepted ‘social’ model is, for example, ‘a disabled person’. In the sports world, though, athletes have always put the emphasis on sport first and disability second so the current preference is for ‘athlete with a disability’. This may change in the coming years as there are calls from some quarters for standardisation.

How do I describe the differences between all the disability categories in sport in everyday language?

At the back of this document is a background to classification in the appendices to this guide on pages 46 – 51. The general rule would be to stick with the sport’s own classification codes. So, for instance, a journalist might report on the T44 100m and describe this as a 100m for athletes who are single below-the-knee amputees or have an equivalent impairment. Similarly, the T11 Marathon is a Marathon for athletes who are blind; whereas the T12 and T13 Marathons are for athletes who have some sight and who are described as partially-sighted or visually-impaired.
There are currently 20 sports in the Paralympic programme. Here is a summary of each sport.

**Paralympic Archery**
Archery first entered the programme in 1960 in Rome. The sport is open to both male and female athletes with a physical disability in standing and wheelchair, team and individual events. From Beijing 2008 onwards athletes shoot both Recurve and Compound bows. Athletes are classified in three groups according to their functional ability (see Classification Guide, page 44). Archers shoot the Olympic round format at a 122cm target from a distance of 70m, including head-to-head ranking and elimination rounds as well as finals.

Archers need to display intense concentration, accuracy and strength. South Korea constitutes one of the power-houses of this sport.

Paralympian Antonio Ribello was the archer who famously shot a flaming arrow to ignite the Opening Ceremony flames for both the 1992 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
Paralympic Athletics
Athletics has been part of the Games programme since the first edition in 1960. Wheelchair Track Racing, so exciting to watch, joined the programme in 1964 in Tokyo. More recent Games have included all disability groups and most distances as well as seven field events categories. The latter includes Club Throwing for athletes with a severe impairment.

There are more events and participants in this sport than in any other in the Games programme. Athletes compete in classifications according to their functional ability and there are events for those who are visually impaired, those with cerebral palsy, amputees, spinal injuries and other categories of physical disabilities.

Boccia
Boccia joined the Paralympic Games programme in 1992. It is a uniquely Paralympic sport with Italian origins – hence the name – which was, in turn, adapted from an ancient Greek pastime.

Boccia, similar to the French sport of ‘boules’ or ‘petanque’, is played indoors on a long, narrow field of play (12.5 x 6m) by athletes with cerebral palsy and other similar non-progressive conditions. It requires focus, intensity and accuracy. Athletes aim to throw leather balls as close as possible to a white target ball called the ‘jack’. All events are mixed gender and include individual and pair events, played over four rounds, and team events, played over six rounds. At the end of each round, players score one point for the ball closest to the jack.

Nigel Murray won Great Britain’s very first individual Boccia Paralympic medal when he took the individual mixed BC2-class gold at the Sydney 2000 Games.
**Paralympic Cycling**

Cycling first appeared on the Paralympic programme in 1988 for Road events and in 1996 for Track events. Visually-impaired athletes riding on tandems with sighted guides or pilots were the first to develop the sport but were later joined by amputees and those with cerebral palsy and other physical impairments. Few can fail to be excited by the sheer speed and skill of these athletes, particularly on the steep banking of a Velodrome.

Riders use bicycles, tandems or handcycles, depending on their functional ability. Handcycles were introduced in 2004 for athletes who do not have the use of lower limbs. There are individual and team events on both Road and Track – incorporating Sprints, Time Trials, Pursuits and Road Races.

Former professional tour rider Javier Ochoa of Spain and Britain’s Darren Kenny have waged epic battles on both Track and Road in recent Games. After the Athens 2004 Games, some UK athletes in other sport disciplines participated in a talent transfer programme. This saw medal-winning swimmers such as Sarah Bailey and Jody Cundy convert to Cycling.

**Paralympic Equestrian**

The Equestrian discipline Dressage has featured on the Paralympic programme since the Atlanta 1996 Games.

Riders compete in four mixed disability groups or ‘grades’, with Grade 1 split into two sub-categories (1a and 1b). The visually-impaired compete alongside those with a physical disability in Grades 3 and 4 only. Each rider completes two tests – a Championships test and a Freestyle test – with the latter set to music. There is also a team event.

Each rider must memorise a series of required movements and show an ability to control the horse through a range of changes in pace and direction. In Atlanta 1996 and Sydney 2000 riders competed on ‘borrowed’ horses; they were permitted for the first time to use their own horses at Athens 2004.

Riders who are visually-impaired are permitted to use ‘callers’ to help orientate themselves around the arena (which measures 40m x 20m or 60m x 20m, depending on the grade).

The enthralling element of this event is the exacting level of skill shown by the riders combined with their seemingly uncanny ability to communicate with and control their horses.

Lee Pearson is one of Britain’s best-known Equestrian Paralympians. The multi-gold medallist is also the first Paralympian to have been elected to an international federation to represent all athletes – Paralympic and Olympic.
Football Five-a-side
Football Five-a-side, for footballers who are visually-impaired, was introduced in Athens 2004. One of the five players per team, the goalkeeper, can be sighted and can guide the others in the team. Matches last 50 minutes and are played outdoors, with teams allowed to make up to five substitutions. Players wear blindfolds to ensure fairness since there are many levels of visual impairment. The ball makes a noise and the pitch is smaller than a full-sized international competition pitch. It also has rebound boards, making the action fast-moving. Whilst there is no offside rule, all other rules are generally the same as for able-bodied football.

Football Seven-a-side
The Seven-a-side version for footballers with cerebral palsy joined the programme in 1984. This fast and exciting game is played on a slightly smaller pitch than in able-bodied competition, with no offside rule. Matches last 60 minutes and players can make throw-ins using one hand only. There are four different cerebral palsy classifications and each team must maintain a set ratio.

The UK re-entered the Paralympic Games programme in this sport for the first time since 1992 in time for the Beijing 2008 Games.
**Goalball**

Dating back to the 1940s, Goalball, like Boccia, is unique to the Paralympic Games. A sport for the visually-impaired, it made its programme debut in 1976 for men and in 1984 for women. Matches are played in absolute silence so that the players, who wear black-out goggles, can hear the bell in the ball. Players must roll the ball along the ground and try to score into nets. Defenders often attempt to block the ball by lying flat-out on the floor.

Matches last 20 minutes. There are separate team events for men and women at the Games. Six players form a team with only three permitted on the 18m x 9m court at any one time.

Brothers Tim and Tony Reddish both competed for Great Britain at the Sydney 2000 Games – the former in Swimming and the latter in Goalball.

**Paralympic Judo**

Judo for visually-impaired athletes entered the Paralympic programme in 1988 for men and in 2004 for women. The sport comes from a martial arts background in Japan and tests an athlete's strength, speed, agility, touch and balance as well as tactical awareness.

Contests last five minutes and take place on a ‘tatami’ (a set of 10m x 10m competition floor mats with different textures, to indicate the competition area and zones) and players wear ‘judogi’ (competition suits). In recognition of their lack of sight, players are permitted to make contact with each other before a contest begins; but this is the only modification to standard international Judo rules.

To win a contest a ‘judoka’ (or Judo player) must score ‘Ippon’ – a move equalling ten points. If ‘Ippon’ has not been scored by the end of the contest, the winner is the player who has accumulated the greatest number of points for a variety of throws and holds.

Simon Jackson has been one of Great Britain’s most successful Judo players. He won his first gold in Korea in 1988 at the age of 16 and went on to win twice more in 1992 and 1996 before taking bronze in Sydney in 2000 and finishing in the last 16 in Athens.
Powerlifting

There is a definite sense of theatre about the sport of Powerlifting, on the Games programme since 1964 for men and 2000 for women.

Audiences watch in suspense as athletes bench press weights by lowering the weights bar to their chest before heaving it upwards to arms’ length and locking their elbows to hold it. After three attempts per athlete, the winner is the individual who lifts the heaviest weight. In the event of a tie, the athletes’ bodyweight is taken into account, with the lighter lifter taking the verdict. Powerlifting is open to athletes with cerebral palsy, spinal injuries, lower-limb amputations and athletes with other physical disabilities who meet minimal eligibility criteria. The best lifters in the world can lift as much as four times their own bodyweight.

Emma Brown of Great Britain made history by taking the inaugural Paralympic Games women’s gold medal in 2000. She successfully defended that title four years later.

Paralympic Rowing

This sport entered the Paralympic Games programme for the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games. It features four events – a single scull contest for men and women, a mixed double scull and a mixed adaptive coxed four. Rowers in sculling events use two oars each; and in sweep boats, like the coxed four, use a single oar each.

The sculling boats are for those with a physical impairment and the single scull boats are adapted to use small flotation devices. The coxed four includes visually-impaired rowers and an able-bodied cox in a boat with sliding seats. Races take place in lanes on a 1000m course.

Dominic Monypenny of Australia was an early hero in this sport, taking the world title in 2006 at Eton Dorney on the course which will be used for the London 2012 Paralympic Games.
Paralympic Sailing
The spectacular backdrop of Sydney Harbour provided an ideal venue for Sailing’s Paralympic debut in 2000. All five disability categories compete in this sport at the Games which features events for a single (2.4mR) and three-person (Sonar) keelboat. The two-handed keelboat (SKUD 18) joined the programme in time for the Beijing 2008 Games and is designed for those with a more severe impairment.

Sailors are classified into categories using a points system that takes account of an individual’s ability to perform tasks specific to Sailing. There are rules governing the number of ‘points’ in each boat.

Racing takes place under international rules and each country can enter one boat per event. Points are scored for placings in each of a series of races. The nation with the highest number of points wins. Penalties are given for rule infringements, with the offending boats required to perform penalty turns before continuing around the course marked out by buoys.

Paralympic Shooting
Shooting joined the Paralympic programme in Toronto 1976 and is open to all athletes with a physical impairment. There are events in Pistol and Rifle Shooting across distances from 10m to 50m with men’s, women’s and mixed categories. Athletes shoot from standing, sitting (wheelchair events), kneeling and prone positions.

Shooting events feature a qualification round – of 40 shots for women and 60 shots for men – followed by an eight-athlete,10-shot final. Scores from the qualification and final rounds are totalled to identify the winner.

Two years after the Athens 2004 Games, Great Britain mourned the passing of a Paralympic legend. Isabel Newstead won gold in the SH1 air pistol in 2000 and 2004. Previously she had won golds in Athletics and Swimming in a career stretching back to 1980.
Paralympic Swimming
The atmosphere is always noisy during Swimming sessions at the Paralympic Games, part of the programme since Rome 1960. Swimmers, who are classified according to their functional ability rather than their disability, compete in individual Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle and Medley events as well as a number of Relays. All disability groups take part.

Optional in-water or ‘starting-block’ starts are available in some events and visually-impaired swimmers are permitted the assistance of ‘tappers’ to tell them when to make a turn. These are the only adaptations to standard Swimming rules.

Twelve-year old swimmer Jessica Long won hearts and minds at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games. Jessica, born in a Siberian orphanage but later adopted by an American couple, had both legs amputated when she was 18 months old. Brought up in Baltimore, Jessica enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame once she took up Swimming, winning three gold medals at the Athens Games in her first major event.

Paralympic Table Tennis
Table Tennis is one of the founder Paralympic Games sports. It has been on the programme since 1960 for wheelchair events, since 1976 for standing events and since 1980 for athletes with cerebral palsy. The sport provides the Games with some rapid-fire action in a test of reflexes, guile and speed. The sport enjoys high levels of global participation.

Men and women compete in singles, doubles and team events. Each match includes a best of five sets to 11 points contest. Standard international rules apply with slight modifications to the service rules for wheelchair athletes – except in doubles matches where the players are not required to alternate between returns. The preliminary rounds for the singles and team events often take place in a pool format, with the top two players or teams progressing to the knock-out tournament stages.

Natalia Partyka of Poland is an astonishing athlete who made her Games debut in this sport at the Sydney 2000 Games at just 11 years of age.
Volleyball (Sitting)
Sitting Volleyball made its first Games appearance in 1980 in Arnhem. The court for Sitting Volleyball is smaller (6m x 10m) than a standard court and the net is lower. There are team events for men and women at the Games. Players aim to score points by getting the ball over the net and onto the ground in the opponent’s half of the court. Each match is the best of five sets, up to 25 points, and to win a set a team must reach 25 points with at least a two-point lead, except for the final set where teams play up to 15 points. A team can field only six players on the court at any one time.

A standing version of Volleyball also formed part of the Games programme until 2000, after which it was discontinued.

Wheelchair Basketball
This fast and action-packed sport made its Games debut in 1960 and continues to draw huge crowds. Its origins were in the Veterans’ Hospitals of the USA.

Wheelchair Basketball is played with the same height baskets and on an equivalent sized court (28m x 15m) to the standard version. Five players from a squad of 12 can be on the court at any one time and matches last 40 minutes. Each player is given a points value depending on their functional ability and a team cannot field more than 14 points at any one time.

Wheelchair Basketball is now open to players who cannot run, jump or pivot. Not all Wheelchair Basketball players, therefore, use a wheelchair for daily living.

Several players could lay claim to the title of ‘all-time greats’ in this hallmark Paralympic sport. These include Baruch Hagai of Israel, a consummate tactician, and ‘Tree’ Waller of the USA, a ‘giant’ even sitting in his wheelchair, who was a star in the 1990s. Not to mention Britain’s Sir Philip Craven, President of the IPC, who was, and still is, regarded as the best ‘low-point’ player in the world.
Wheelchair Fencing

Wheelchair Fencing was developed by Sir Ludwig Guttmann at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and joined the Paralympic programme in 1960. Fencers display lightning-quick reactions and, as in competitive Olympic Fencing, each weapon is electronically wired to register ‘hits’. Fencers compete in wheelchairs that are fastened to the floor at a set distance apart (determined by the fencer with the shorter arm) to provide stability and freedom of upper-body movement.

The Fencing programme is open to those with spinal injuries, amputations or cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities. It is divided into men’s and women’s individual and team events. Men can compete in Foil, Epee and Sabre whilst women compete in the Foil and Epee only. In individual events the first fencer to score five touches in the pool stage and 15 touches in the direct elimination round is the winner. In the team events, the first to 45 touches wins.

Olympic fencers love to compete against wheelchair fencers because they need to use all techniques, particularly in weapons like the foil and epee. In Wheelchair Fencing there is no hiding place – no retreating down metres of piste to reorganise defence and attack.

Caz Walton is one of Great Britain’s most successful Paralympians, having won 10 golds in the sport of Wheelchair Fencing.
Wheelchair Rugby
This sport had quite a reputation before it featured at Sydney 2000. Its previous title of ‘Murderball’ is perhaps a clue to the intensity of competition in this sport, where wheelchairs are modified to provide crash protection.

Wheelchair Rugby is open to athletes with impairments in all four limbs. Each player is classified using a points system. Each team of four players, which can be of mixed gender, is allowed a maximum of eight points on the court at any one time.

Played indoors on a regulation-sized basketball court with a round rather than oval ball, the aim is to score goals by touching or crossing the opponents’ goal-line. A player in possession of the ball must dribble with or pass the ball every 10 seconds.

Hollywood came to Wheelchair Rugby in 2006 when the film ‘Murderball’, based on the USA Wheelchair Rugby team, was released.

Wheelchair Tennis
Tennis for wheelchair players became a full medal sport in Barcelona 1992, following a demonstration event in 1988. The quad players (those affected in three or more limbs) joined for the first time at the Athens 2004 Games.

Wheelchair Tennis is one of the more prolific Paralympic sports, with over 120 tournaments each year on the worldwide tour. It has just two categories at the Games: Open and Quad. There are men’s and women’s singles and doubles events in several categories. Players in all events are allowed to let the ball bounce twice before returning it – the only modification to standard tennis rules.

Peter Norfolk of Great Britain (pictured above) won the inaugural Quad Tennis Paralympic singles gold medal in Athens 2004.
Appendix One

Who governs which sport?

Paralympic sports have a variety of parent bodies. Their development is constantly evolving as more and more sports move towards integration within the structure of international sporting federations.

As at November 2007 the governance of the various sports was as follows:

IPC-governed sports (where the IPC is also the International Federation for the sport):

Paralympic Games sports
Winter
– Alpine Skiing
– Biathlon
– Cross-Country Skiing
– Ice Sledge Hockey

Summer
– Athletics
– Powerlifting
– Shooting
– Swimming

Non-Paralympic Games sports
– Wheelchair Dance Sport

Sports governed by International Organisations of Sport for the Disabled (IOSDs):

Governed by the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association (CPISRA)
– Boccia
– Football Seven-a-side

Governed by the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA)
– Football Five-a-side
– Goalball
– Judo

Governed by the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports Federation (IWAS)
– Wheelchair Fencing
– Wheelchair Rugby
**Sports governed by International Federations (IFs):**
- Archery (FITA – International Archery Federation)
- Bowls (International Bowls for the Disabled)
- Cycling (UCI – International Cycling Federation)
- Equestrian (FEI – International Equestrian Federation)
- Rowing (FISA – International Rowing Federation)
- Sailing (IFDS – International Foundation for Disabled Sailing)
- Table Tennis (ITTF – International Table Tennis Federation)
- Volleyball (Sitting) (WOVD – World Organisation for Volleyball for Disabled)
- Wheelchair Basketball
  (IWBF – International Wheelchair Basketball Federation)
- Wheelchair Curling
  (WCF – World Curling Federation)
- Wheelchair Tennis
  (ITF – International Tennis Federation)
Appendix Two

Guide to major disability groups/categories
Athletes competing at the Games are now divided into four main disability groups. They are:

1. Athletes with an amputation – ‘amputees’
2. Athletes with cerebral palsy
3. Athletes with visual impairment or blindness
4. Athletes with spinal injuries or other physical disabilities.

Until fairly recently a grouping called ‘Les Autres’ existed to cover all athletes with a physical disability who did not fall into the other four groups. These athletes have now been subsumed within the other four groups according to their functional ability for a particular sport or event.

Athletes with an intellectual disability have also competed at past Games but due to eligibility issues were suspended from Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008. Discussions are progressing towards their re-inclusion in time for the London 2012 Games.

Deaf athletes were also founder members of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) but later decided to stage their own, separate Games.

Some sports and events take place on disability-specific lines. For instance Goalball is a sport only for the visually-impaired. However, the introduction of ‘functional classification’ means that athletes can now compete in many sports, in mixed-disability groups based on their ability to achieve in a given sport and/or event.

Functional classification has offered the Paralympic Movement the option to combine classes and therefore strengthen competitive numbers at national and international level. This means that, at the Games, there are fewer medals on offer.

At the Seoul 1988 Paralympic Games, nearly three times as many medals were distributed as in the same Olympic Games. By the time of the Athens 2004 Games, that figure was down to twice as many. In the Paralympic Games it will never be possible to reduce to a figure similar to the Olympic Games because classification and fairness of competition have to be paramount; but the IPC believes that some significant reduction is still possible by further refinement of the system and combination of classes.

The IPC and its constituent members, who collectively set classification guidelines, are constantly striving to create a level playing field where sporting ability is the defining factor.
Guide to classification

All sport strives to create an environment of equal opportunity from which winners emerge simply because of attributes such as their skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability or mental strength. The Paralympic Games is no exception.

So, once a decision has been taken on which disability groups can compete in the various sports, a secondary process called ‘classification’ takes place. Classification helps Games organisers to group athletes with similar capabilities together in fair and equitable competition.

During classification – which involves observation of sport-specific tasks and activities – athletes are assessed for their ability to perform in a particular event. In case of any dispute there would be a physical examination too. ‘Ability’ in this case refers to an athlete’s functional potential and is not an assessment of their disability: this is a complete reversal of the old systems that were clinical and medical in origin and often intrusive. This is why in some sports, like Swimming, different disability groups are now able to compete against each other.

Meanwhile, in other sports such as Athletics, individual athletes are still defined by an assessment of their functional potential but this can be combined with their disability group. There are several categories, for instance, of Wheelchair Racing for those with spinal injuries or congenital conditions that affect the spine, because spinal lesions can be in different places. The higher the lesion, the less function in the upper body and arms, for example.

Classification is an on-going process. When athletes start competing they are allocated a sport classification and may be re-classified a number of times throughout their careers. If an athlete’s condition improves or deteriorates, for example, their sport class may change.

For many sports a specific letter and number combination is used to describe a particular classification. So, for instance, all track events in athletics start with the letter ‘T’ and T51 is one of seven wheelchair track categories whilst T11–13 covers the three categories of visual impairment.
What are the disability groups?

**Spinal injury**
The spinal cord, which travels from the brain through the backbone, is part of the central nervous system. It has 30 sections that give instructions to the body’s muscles. An injury or illness or a congenital condition can damage the spinal cord and cause paraplegia or quadriplegia. Paraplegia means paralysis of the lower limbs and all or part of the trunk. Quadriplegia means that the upper limbs are also affected. In sport, athletes are often classified depending on the segment of the spine where the damage (or lesion) has occurred.

**Cerebral palsy**
Cerebral palsy is a condition in which muscle tone, reflex, posture or movement are affected due to damage to the brain. This condition can occur pre-birth, at birth or as a result of a stroke or head injury. In sport, athletes with cerebral palsy are classified into groups depending on the level of damage which has occurred and to which muscle groups.

**Amputees**
Athletes with an amputation have at least one major joint or part of an extremity missing (eg: elbow, knee). This may be congenital, due to injury or illness. In sport athletes are classified depending on whether the amputation is on an upper or lower limb; is single or double; is above or below the elbow or knee. Athletes in these categories may compete using wheelchairs or prosthetic (artificial) limbs.

**Blindness/visual impairment**
There are varying degrees of visual impairment and athletes are given a classification depending on the level of useful vision they possess.

**All other physically disabled classes**
Athletes in this group have physical disabilities that do not fall into the other classification categories. This group includes those with Multiple Sclerosis and Dwarfism, for instance. In general, this group is integrated to compete within the other disability groups according to ability in a given sport or event.

**Intellectual disability**
This group of athletes did not take part in the Games of 2004 and 2008 because there is on-going debate about eligibility. Discussions are taking place about their potential return in 2012.
A breakdown of classification by sport

BBC Sport has produced an excellent classification guide for their Disability Sport website which we have reproduced here with some updates and additions to the original content.

Each sport has different physical demands and so has its own set of classifications.

Archery

Archery is open to athletes with a physical disability and classification is divided into three classes:

ARW1: Spinal cord and cerebral palsy athletes with impairment in all four limbs

ARW2: Wheelchair users with full arm function

ARST: Standing: Athletes with full arm function but who have some disability in their legs.

This group also includes amputees, athletes with other physical disabilities and cerebral palsy standing athletes.

Some athletes in the standing group will sit on a high stool for support but will still have their feet touching the ground.

Athletics

All disability groups can compete in Athletics but a system of letters and numbers is used to distinguish between them.

The letter ‘F’ is for field athletes, ‘T’ determines those who compete on the track while the number refers to their category.

11-13*: Track and field athletes who are visually impaired.

20: Track and field athletes who are intellectually disabled (a category which was suspended for the 2004 and 2008 Games).

31-38: Track and field athletes with cerebral palsy.

41-46**: Track and field amputees and athletes with other physical disabilities.

T 51-56: Wheelchair track athletes.

F 51-58: Wheelchair field athletes.

* Athletes who are blind compete in Class 11. They are permitted to run with a sighted guide. Field athletes in this class are also permitted the use of acoustic signals (voice, electronic, clapping etc) in the 100m, long jump and triple jump. Class 13 athletes have more useful sight than Class 12 athletes.

** Athletes in classes 42-44 must wear a prosthesis when competing. A prosthesis is optional in Classes 45 and 46.
Boccia
Boccia is open to athletes with cerebral palsy who compete from a wheelchair and classification is split into four classes.

BC1: These athletes are able to project a ball once it is placed in their hand.

BC2: These athletes have poor functional strength in all extremities and trunk but are able to propel a wheelchair and do not need assistance.

BC3 – WAD (‘with assistive device’): These athletes have the most severe degree of impairment: players in this category work with an aide. Players in this category cannot grasp and release the ball and as such use a ‘chute’ for the ball.

BC4: This division is for athletes with a severe impairment but not necessarily cerebral palsy. These players are not eligible to have an aide.

Cycling
Cycling is open to amputees, athletes with other physical disabilities, cerebral palsy and visually impaired athletes who compete in individual road race and track events.

Athletes with cerebral palsy are split into four divisions according to the level of their disability where Class 4 comprises the more physically able.

Visually impaired athletes compete together with no separate classification system. They ride in tandem with a sighted guide.

Amputee athletes, those with a spinal cord injury and athletes with other physical disabilities compete within the specific groups:

LC1: Riders with upper limb impairment.

LC2: Riders with impairment in one leg but who can pedal with both legs.

LC3: Riders with impairment in one lower limb who will usually pedal with one leg only.

LC4: Riders with impairment affecting both legs.

Athletes with more severe disabilities take part in handcycling and this is now included in the Cycling programme.
Handcycling athletes compete in three disability divisions based on functional ability:

**HC Division A (Classes HC 1-3):** These events are for athletes with complete loss of trunk and lower limb function.

**HC Division B (Classes HC 4-5):** These events are for athletes with complete loss of lower limb function and limited trunk stability.

**HC Division C (Classes HC 6-8):** These events are for athletes with complete lower limb function loss but minimal other functional disabilities, or for athletes with partial lower limb function loss combined with other disabilities which mean that conventional cycling is not viable.

**Equestrian**

All disability groups can take part in Equestrian sport but riders are divided into four grades:

**Grade 1:** Severely disabled riders with cerebral palsy, other physical disabilities and spinal cord injury.

**Grade 2:** Athletes with reasonable balance and abdominal control including amputees.

**Grade 3:** Athletes with good balance, leg movement and coordination, including totally blind athletes.

**Grade 4:** Ambulant (able to walk independently) athletes with either impaired vision or impaired arm or leg function.

**Football Five-a-side**

Five-a-side Football is played by athletes with a visual impairment. They are classified according to their level of sight, as B1, B2 or B3.

Players in the B1 classification are considered blind, while those rated B2 and B3 are classified as visually impaired or partially sighted.

**Football Seven-a-side**

Seven-a-side Football is played by athletes with cerebral palsy. Classification is split into Classes 5 to 8. All classes are made up of ambulant athletes, from Class 5 who are least physically able through to Class 8 who are minimally affected. Teams must include at least one member from either Class 5 or 6.
Goalball
Goalball is played by visually impaired athletes and a special rule means there is no need for classification: participants wear ‘black-out’ masks to ensure everyone competes equally.

Judo
Judo is contested by visually impaired athletes only. There is no categorisation as competitors are divided by weight.

Powerlifting
Powerlifting is open to all athletes with a physical impairment who meet the criteria set down by the IPC Powerlifting Sport Technical Committee. Examples of the type of disabilities that meet the criteria include: paralysis, cerebral palsy, lower limb amputations, frozen joints of the lower limbs etc.

Rowing
Rowing is currently divided into four boat classes which are part of the World Championships programme:

LTA4+: A four-person, sweep-oar boat plus cox with sliding seats. Open to athletes with an impairment but who have movement in the legs, trunk and arms. A boat can include a maximum of two visually-impaired athletes.

TA2x: A two-person sculling (two oars each) boat. For athletes with trunk and arm movement only. Has fixed seats.

AM1x: A fixed-seat single scull boat for men. Athletes have full movement in their arms only.

AW1x: A fixed-seat single scull boat for women. Athletes have full movement in their arms only.

The LTA4+ and TA2x are mixed gender boats.

Sailing
Sailing is a multi-disability sport with the amputee, cerebral palsy, visually impaired, wheelchair and other physical disability groups competing together.

Competitors are ranked according to a points system where low points are given to the severely disabled and high points for less disabled.

The Sonar class, featuring a crew of three, must not exceed 12 points. The SKUD18 is a new two-person class in Beijing 2008. Sailors in the single-handed 2.4mR must have a minimum level of disability which prevents them from competing on equal terms with Olympic sailors.
Shooting
Shooters are divided into wheelchair and standing groups split into sub-classes determining the type of mobility equipment the competitor is allowed to use.

**SH1:** For pistol and rifle competitors who do not require a shooting stand.

**SH2:** For rifle competitors who have an upper limb disability and therefore need a shooting stand.

Both classes have three sub-divisions within them.

Swimming
Swimming is the only sport that combines the conditions of limb loss, cerebral palsy (coordination and movement restrictions), spinal cord injury (weakness or paralysis involving any combination of the limbs) and other disabilities (such as Dwarfism and major joint restriction conditions) across classes.

**Classes 1-10** are allocated to swimmers with a physical disability, Class 1 with the most severe impairment and Class 10 the least, for example a partial hand amputation.

**Classes 11-13** are allocated to swimmers with a visual impairment. Class 11 will have little or no vision; Class 12 can recognise the shape of a hand and have some ability to see; Class 13 will have greater vision than the other two classes but less than 20 degrees of vision.

**Class 14** is allocated to swimmers with an intellectual disability – although this category was suspended for the Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 Games.

The prefix ‘S’ denotes the class for Freestyle, Backstroke and Butterfly. The prefix ‘SB’ denotes the class for Breaststroke. The prefix ‘SM’ denotes the class for Individual Medley.

The range is from the swimmers with severe impairment (S1, SB1, SM1) to those with the minimal impairment (S10, SB9, SM10). Swimmers may have a different classification for, say, Butterfly than for Breaststroke. This depends on the way their impairment effects their ability to do the specific stroke.

In any one class some swimmers may start with a dive or in the water and this is factored in when classifying the athlete.
Table Tennis
Table Tennis is played by athletes with a physical or with an intellectual disability spread over 11 classes:

Classes 1-5: Athletes competing from a wheelchair, with Class 1 being the most severely impaired and Class 5 the least impaired.

Classes 6-10: Ambulant athletes with Class 6 the most severely impaired and Class 10 the least.

Class 11: Athletes with an intellectual disability – although this category was suspended for the Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 Games.

Volleyball (Sitting)
Sitting Volleyball is contested by athletes who must simply meet minimal eligibility criteria that prevent them from competing with Olympic athletes.

Wheelchair Basketball
Wheelchair Basketball is open to athletes using wheelchairs whose impairments may include paraplegia, lower limb amputations, cerebral palsy and polio.

Athletes are classified according to their physical ability and are given a points rating between 1.0 – 4.5: ‘one pointers’ being the most severely impaired and 4.5 the least impaired. Each team fields five players but may not exceed a total of 14 points at any given time.

Wheelchair Fencing
All athletes in the sport of Wheelchair Fencing must use a wheelchair and the sport is open to those with spinal cord injuries, lower limb amputations, cerebral palsy and other forms of disability. Competition is split into two categories:

Class A: Athletes with good balance and recovery and full trunk movement.

Class B: Athletes with poor balance and recovery but full use of one or both upper limbs.

Wheelchair Rugby
Athletes are classified on a points system similar to Wheelchair Basketball, with the most severely disabled athlete being graded at 0.5 points rising to 3.5 points for the more able.

Each team is comprised of four players and is allowed a maximum of eight points in action on court at any one time.

Wheelchair Tennis
Wheelchair Tennis is played from a wheelchair with two classes – open and quad (impairment in all four limbs).
Other organisations representing disability sport in the UK
Organisations representing sport for people with a disability in the UK include:

National Governing Bodies
- Amateur Rowing Association
- British Amateur Weightlifting Association
- British Biathlon Union
- British Cycling Federation
- British Dressage
- British Disabled Fencing Association
- British Ice Hockey Association
- British Judo Association
- British Sledge Hockey Association
- British Swimming
- British Table Tennis Association for the Disabled
- British Volleyball Association
- British Wheelchair Curling Association
- The Football Association
- Great Britain Boccia Federation
- Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association
- Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby Association
- Grand National Archery Society
- National Smallbore Rifle Association
- Royal Yachting Association
- Snowsport GB
- The Tennis Foundation
- UK Athletics

National disability sports organisations
- British Amputee and Les Autres Sports Association
- British Blind Sport
- WheelPower (British Wheelchair Sport)
- Cerebral Palsy Sport
- UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability

Home Country elite and other disability sport organisations
- English Federation of Disability Sport
- Disability Sport Events (Events arm of English Federation of Disability Sport)
- Federation of Disability Sport Wales
- Scottish Disability Sport Disability Sport Northern Ireland

The Institutes of Sport in each of the ‘home countries’ also play a part in providing medical and conditioning services to elite athletes with a disability.
Disabled people in the UK today*

10 million disabled people in the UK (approx 7% of the population) (Disability Rights Commission)

6.8 million disabled people are of working age (Labour Force Survey)

8.6 million have a hearing impairment (RNID)

1.2 million have a learning disability (Mencap)

1 in 7 (14%) of the population experience mental health issues (Mind/OPCS)

£83 billion spending power

50% of disabled people are economically inactive compared to 15% non disabled

3 million disabled people are out of work

1 million would like to work

1 in 3 disabled people have been refused service or turned away from a public place

50% of disabled people feel that they are not listened to

Only 18% of primary schools and 8% of secondary schools are accessible

More cases were taken in the first year of the Disability Discrimination Act than under the Sex Discrimination Act or the Race Relations Act

*Source: RADAR
Appendix Six

Glossary

Functional ability – an athlete’s ability to perform in a particular sport and event which is assessed during the classification process.

Classification – the process of assessing an athlete’s competition grouping by sport and event using tests of functional ability (see above) and, sometimes, further medical assessment.

Agito – from the Latin meaning ‘I move’. A term describing a part of the International Paralympic Committee logo design.

Les Autres – From the French meaning ‘the others’. Historically, this was a group of athletes whose disability did not fit into previous classification (see above) groups.

Tappers – the term used to describe technical officials who use a long implement to tap swimmers with a visual impairment, thereby indicating that they are approaching the end of the pool and should make a turn.
Paralympic Games timeline

2008
‘Big build’ of Olympic Park begins

17 September 2008
Paralympic Flag handed over to London at Closing Ceremony of the Beijing Games

Autumn 2008
Launch of Cultural and Education programme

2010
Official 2012 Volunteer programme launched

2011
Test Events held

2012
**London Paralympic Games**
29 August – Opening Ceremony
9 September – Closing Ceremony

2012 onwards...
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