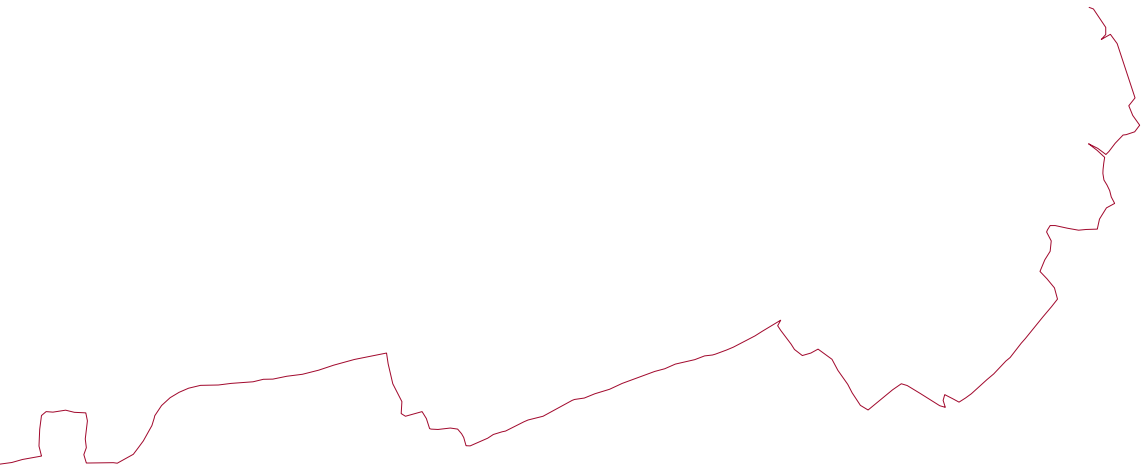


## THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DISTANCE



NEVILLE GABIE

THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DISTANCE

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NEVILLE GABIE

This publication is produced as an artist  
edition of 100, signed and numbered

| 100

Neville Gabie

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DISCLAIMER: NEVILLE GABIE WAS ARTIST IN  
RESIDENCE FOR THE OLYMPIC DELIVERY AUTHORITY  
DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OLYMPIC PARK  
FROM SEPTEMBER 2010 TO DECEMBER 2011.  
THIS PROJECT IS ENTIRELY SELF-GENERATED AND IS  
NOT PART OF THAT COMMISSION.

NEVILLE GABIE HAS VERY DELIBERATELY CHOSEN  
NOT TO SEEK ANY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM  
EITHER PRIVATE OR PUBLIC FUNDS TO REALISE  
THE AMBITIONS OF THIS WORK.

At precisely 9.00PM [British Summer Time] on July 27th 2012, the moment of the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic Games, Neville Gabie intends to be as far away as possible.

He is inviting you to write his brief and would like you to identify what in your opinion is 'the greatest possible distance' from the London 2012 Opening Ceremony and why.

#### Why would you do such a thing?

The Olympic Games are coming – 'you're part of it'. Over several years the hype and rhetoric has intensified, burying every objection, every local or national concern under the weight of its own self belief and the requirement that regardless, it will be a success.

'The People's Park – The People's Games' are the mantra but do they obscure a more honest assessment?

Who really controls the Games, who really stands to benefit?

Are the Olympics really anything to do with the promotion of sport, health and wellbeing, or is sport merely the foil for Corporate sponsors, the IOC and media companies to fill their pockets and for national government to spend our money for their edification?

Beneath the gloss, how much of what we now see as the modern Olympic Games, fulfils the founding aspirations of Pierre de Coubertin?

Has sport simply sold itself to the highest bidder, politics regeneration and the corporate giants?

Can the Olympic Games be a catalyst for regeneration – the legacy?

Inclusivity and participation are much used terms in relation to the Olympics. What exactly is meant by those terms?

#### Measuring distance

The opening ceremony is the rallying call to all participants. It is a ceremony designed to celebrate international participation. As a means of questioning this conceit it is at that moment Neville Gabie proposes to chart the greatest distance.

Distance could most obviously be thought of as a physical distance of miles, of remoteness and of silence; a desert, somewhere on the ocean, a mountaintop, counterpoints to the intense media focus of the ceremony itself.

However, a social or economic distance might be as valuable a gauge. The Olympic Park is located in some of the poorer areas of the UK with a very diverse ethnic community, not all engaged with the concept of the Olympics, or likely to benefit.

Just within East London it is easy enough to see how aspirations of inclusivity, the 'you're part of it' mantra can seem hollow. Within a world context that gap is even greater. What would it be like to experience the moment of the Opening Ceremony from Somalia, Afghanistan, North Korea, Saudi Arabia or Canning Town? What would it mean there?

**What we are asking from you**

Neville Gabie is inviting anyone to nominate a destination or location which might be thought of as 'the greatest possible distance' and explain your reasoning.

You may be as specific about the final destination and the means by which he is to get there as you wish.

You may also suggest how he should record or document the hours of the ceremony at your specified destination.

Based on the responses he will endeavour to travel to whatever is deemed to be the most distant / disconnected place selected, following your scripted direction as closely as possible.

The final choice of that destination will be made by an independent panel of artists, cultural thinkers, members of the East London Community in discussion with Neville Gabie. This will take place on 8th June 2012.

The debate leading to the final selection will be integral to the body of work. It will determine what is 'the greatest possible distance'.

All correspondence and suggestions will be collated and published as part of this project.

By submitting a suggestion you will need to agree your material may be published as part of the project, however it is up to you if you wish to have your name attached to your contribution.

**What Neville Gabie commits to do**

Neville Gabie will allow up to a month to reach the destination and will get there by which ever means are suggested. It might be by foot, cycle, boat, air or any other means.

The only stipulation is that it can be achieved with a material budget [ie; travel costs, travel equipment / excluding his time] not exceeding £1000.

At precisely 9pm British Summer time on 27th July 2012 and for a period of three hours he will make, document or record his location as a counterpoint to the Olympic Opening Ceremony.

Neville Gabie also commits to exhibit the resulting work within one year of the event.

Hi Neville,

Well it's hardly a worked up proposal, but it would seem to be entirely fitting to spend 127 units of time down the Bluejohn Canyon in Utah where Danny Boyle filmed his last blockbuster.

Best wishes

Alan

Hi

They're not great images, I know, but I think they capture the true essence of the Olympic torch going past the end of my road.

Best wishes

Andy

Neville

Like this – and would contribute to you going to Ancient Rome on 27.07.2012 and acknowledging a few original intentions of the Games. Hope there's not too much of a bitter taste to recollectiing your time with the Olympic Delivery Authority.

Alastair



Hi Neville,

I had thought about this but i found it quite hard really to think of somewhere (be it physical or conceptual), having had no contact with the games. As such I did not want to propose without having any true empathy as it were. But I thought again and decided that perhaps a comment from my position of apathy is, although the inverse of empathy, useful, if not a touch indulgent.

I guess in thinking about the great spectacle, that is the Olympics, there is an emphasis on such a short time the event takes place in comparison to the immense time and work that goes into the infrastructure..... and the cost.

For me, in the current climate, and world affairs, and given that the Olympics have drawn away funding to the arts organisations of the UK in the form of lottery funding, I think perhaps a trip to Greece and its Olympic park is timely.

Greece is of course the home of the Olympics; the origin, where it all started, but also the eye of the financial storm in Europe. Many of the buildings built for the Olympics there are now in ruin and not used, see the NY Times: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704025304575284841380683082.html>

Yes, Athens, there is nowhere you can go that will take you closer to the Olympic Spirit, and strangely, at the same time, further away from the ‘Olympic ideal’ (which we hold in our mind)..... and I know you like a good paradox

Aldo

Neville

While the world watches the flame being lit, I suggest watching the sun going down over the Bishop Rock Lighthouse in the Isles of Scilly.

Catch a sleeper train to Penzance, take the Scillonian III or a helicopter to St Mary’s, catch a boat to St Agnes, pitch your tent in the campsite and wait for the sun to set!

Paradise!

Allan

Dear Neville,

Thinking further about my nowhere island suggestion for your anti-Olympics place, I now see that Alex Hartley has unfortunately allowed the project to become contaminated by the Olympics! Therefore, my suggestion is as follows and must happen without any engagement whatsoever with Alex and his Olympic bandwagon:

On the date and time of the Olympic opening ceremony you must be somewhere near nowhereisland. Perhaps on a near piece of mainland looking out towards the island or alternatively, to avoid the carbon footprint of the travel, and in order to be mindfully near the island, you could be in a quiet place, beyond earshot of any Olympic sounds, with a large image of the island in front of you.

I would ask that you spend the 3 hours of the opening ceremony contemplating the attributes and qualities you would like the new living place (state is the word Alex uses) to have and also any aspects of nation states you dislike and would want to avoid.

Please make full notes of your thoughts. Note that I am asking for your views, not anything you may have read on the subject of nationhood.

My reasons for this suggestion are that:

1. I find the idea of a new living place (state!) very interesting and challenging, it immediately invites contemplation of notions of freedom.

Neville,

Sounds great! I would love to join you!

At the moment I’m thinking of my favourite beach in Cornwall, where we have been as a family on 27th July for 14 of the last 16 years. I’m really worried that because of the Olympics hoo-haa we won’t be able to go this year. It’s a secret place so I can’t divulge the destination as I don’t want too many people to be there, but I’m sure you know a similar place, or can imagine one.

Best wishes

Anna

Hi Neville

my suggestion is to distance yourself and do nothing, there’s a saying that comes to mind...‘its better to do nothing than to waste time’

I don’t know the source

Annie

x

Greetings and good evening Neville,

Feels like I know you, but I don't. I only know David Lillington, whom has suggested your project to me....

So I thought long and hard about a suggestion for your project. I discussed it with my 13 year old son and told him of your background and some of your art pieces. What would you suggest I asked him (Ibraheem Ahsan is his name)

He said it's simple mum, he needs to go to South Africa and have a cup of tea with Nelson Mandela during the opening ceremony....and with that he was gone like a puff of smoke.

I put all my ideas aside and thought this is the one to suggest to you. Rather brilliant (completely unbiased opinion of his mum)

Anyhow I wish you much luck Sir- admire your work, it's pretty unique.

Regards

Aseaa

Dear Neville

My sincere apologies for the tardiness – thoughts about great and greatest distances have been churning since you first wrote and in the chaos of recent months felt extremely timely but also challenging. So I find myself trying to resolve them at the last hour.

As you know I am most interested in how we come to know places, how we pay attention to the everyday, and as artists 'what happens when we stay?' (this is AIR's primary research question and after five years of it I think there is enough investigation left to last a life time). I think your Olympic Park residency was a fantastic example of staying and I deeply respect your quiet and patient being with the place and its people, that you achieved in often-unsympathetic conditions. It is this commitment to staying that I think informs my response.

At first I though I was going to ask you to be on the move – probably walking from Stroud – the place of your home (home feels very important in so may ways to your enquiry), and also near to the place where I was born, to Hackney – where so many feel incredibly isolated from the ambitions of this opening event, and from the games themselves (also the place of my home now). A travelling into London and yet a 'not arriving' in the Olympic Park, a marking out of our complicated and often unrealisable desires for the twenty first century city. Maybe I might have asked you to keep walking around the edges of the park before heading home.....

But this option was not quite fully satisfying my search for the greatest distance –

I wrote a list of things that might be essential to this 'place' or situation that was at the greatest distance away from the concreteness of it, from the hardness of the corporate deals, from the tightness of the systems, from the paranoid anxiety of the security – it began:

- an intimate scale of place and relationships
- a belief in the commons and in a collective shared voice
- a stillness
- a recuperative intention and gentle optimism

Today I realised where I need to ask you to be. It might not answer all of the above but I hope begins to address them.

My great current concern is for those who have to work in the middle of the night – for long hours and pathetic pay – for whom a relationship with their families, light and the city becomes almost impossible. The ethics of realising our twenty-four hour 'have it when you want it' society seems unquestioned. I think we need to be more attentive about how we establish our twenty-four hour city, to be more aware of the consequences of our demands on individual lives, and seek a more respectful expectation towards those individuals.

Dear Mr Neville Gabie,

This is an open letter submitting a suggestion for your project: "Greatest Possible Distance".

Firstly, may I congratulate you on a great idea for a project. Especially given your previous work, the idea of getting as far away from the Olympic opening ceremony as possible is an interesting and wonderfully ironic idea. It's clever, it's funny, it makes you think. It's almost everything that I believe art should be.

You are right to suggest that physical distance is the most obvious thought, but plonking yourself in the Pacific somewhere near New Zealand isn't very imaginative. I guess some people will suggest that you go somewhere particularly remote. Somewhere where people don't have safe drinking water. Somewhere where they haven't just built a new, and soon to be vacant, 80,000 seat stadium twelve miles away from the world's most expensive 90,000 seat stadium. I suppose that would feel pretty distant.

You say that you have £1000 to fund this trip. Is that in a Lloyds TSB account by any chance? Perhaps it is funding the companies that made the arms that the UK sold £5 million worth of to Damascus in the last 5 years? So here's a slightly more left field idea: why not go to a bar in Homs and ask the people there how far away from the 2012 games they're feeling?

At the very least that thousand pounds must already be in your account.

Maybe it's part of the however-many thousands you were paid to be the artist in residence on the construction site?

Money that was created out of thin air by private banks within an intrinsically, and increasingly unfair, unjust and unacceptable economic system.

But I digress. I suggest that you fly to Syria with British Airways. As a national flag carrier that flies half-empty planes most of the time, and yet pay environmental taxes per passenger, not per plane, they are particularly unfriendly to the environment. But rising sea levels, unlike baggage allowance, allocated seating and the price of onboard snacks, is hardly something it's worth us worrying about.

If they've stopped flights already, or it doesn't seem worth risking your life to fulfil this particular project; why not instead head to Indonesia? You could visit some of the people working for Adidas who made the clothes the athletes will be wearing and the people of Britain will be buying this summer. Why not ask them about their holiday pay or maternity entitlement? As the fireworks light up the East London sky you can ask them how close they feel to this moment of global sporting unity.

On the way back from Indonesia why not set down in Bhopal, India, to see how the locals are getting on with Dow Chemicals. Actually, maybe you should watch the opening ceremony there. You can ask some young "Slumdog" mother about how she feels about how much

“humanity” Danny Boyle has managed to instil, while she nurses her baby with contaminated breast milk.

Or if you don’t fancy the “third world” why not head to the southern states of the USA and ask them about how they feel about BP’s dolphin-valuation?

But you did say something about economic or social distance on a local scale. Yes, let’s not have the audacity to forget those poor people living next door. Maybe you could just walk into a pensioner’s house in Walthamstow and offer to pay their eDF energy bill for the year.

I guess pensioners don’t really have it as bad as many disabled people. A thousand pounds could make a big difference to someone forced back into work by Atos. They are surely a pretty great distance from the glitz and glamour of the big show.

Or you could go to Bristol and spend some time with the people who used to work at the Cadbury’s factory closed by the new American owners Kraft, despite having promised the opposite. You could write to Cadbury’s head office/ mail-box-for-tax-avoidance-purposes in Switzerland to ask for details.

But all that’s a bit heavy and not that much fun, so if I were you I’d just walk into the world’s biggest McDonald’s in Stratford and buy every fat kid an extra Big Mac and an extra large Coke.

Given the extent to which products are marketed, the draconian new laws introduced to protect “the brand” and even letters like this one repeating the names of all the sponsors: it’s hard to believe that, combining staging and the Olympic Delivery Authority, less than a fifth of the total cost of the games will be met by the private sector. So for every pound that Lloyds TSB, British Airways, Adidas, Dow Chemicals, P&G, BP, eDF, Atos, Cadbury’s and Coca Cola and the rest have contributed: £4 has been paid by the public.

That means there are therefore £9bn of potential projects that could have been funded but lacked the money because of the Olympics. I could suggest that you visit a closed library, a school without a playground or regional town with no public swimming pool. But it’s a bit hard to get to a place that doesn’t even exist so maybe disregard that.

I can completely understand why you would want to be the greatest possible distance away from all this. Why your involvement with the Olympic project so far has presumably turned you off of the whole idea. But if all you want is nothing more to do with the Games then by all means stock up on food and water, cut off your phone line, close the blinds and stay indoors for two weeks. But I think you want more than that.

Can you appreciate this beautiful image: a stadium, a country, a world full of people watching a show that they paid for themselves to enhance the power

and influence of the corporations and government that control them?

The Olympic Games: the bastard child of politicians’ egos and big business’ greed. The bastard child whose birth we celebrate in the opening ceremony. Whose cradle we will gather around. Whose ugly sprawling face we will claim to admire. Whose foul stench we will feign ignorance of.

You want to be the greatest possible distance from the reality of the Olympics? The greatest possible distance from the screams of Homs; from the factories of Indonesia; from the tragedy of Bhopal; from the environmental and economic disasters all around us; from the social and political injustice of Britain and the world; from the fat kids of East London?

Everything about the Olympics, like so much of our lives, is a great big exercise in being the greatest possible distance from the consequences of our actions and the reality of their impact on the world we live in. The opening ceremony is the perfect moment where this all comes together; an enormous and intense moment of collective not-giving-a-toss. The greatest distraction on the planet. It’s the fucking orgasm of disconnectedness. It is itself the very pinnacle of greatest possible distance.

Therefore, I suggest that you pull a few strings with your former employers and blag yourself a ticket. Go along to the opening ceremony and enjoy the show.

Dear Neville,

Forget how shit everything is, and, like everyone else: be a part of it.

Yours sincerely,

Brian

PS Your brief requests that I suggest how you should document the evening. Unfortunately, this is forbidden within the Olympic stadium. I suggest that when it comes to exhibiting you just run the official video of the opening ceremony, likely available soon on BlueRay.

this car stuck in a tree is what I had in mind... I pass it sometimes on my daily walk up the hill.

Bruce



Dear Neville,

I like the sound of your project, The Greatest Distance.

I’m tempted to suggest The Stockfish Museum, or the Cod Liver Oil Museum at Å, at the southernmost tip of the Lofoten Islands in Northern Norway, because it is pretty remote. But maybe it’s not so remote in terms of the Olympics, Lillehammer hosted the Winter Olympics in 1994 and they’re still pretty proud about that, so you might be subjected to discussions of it, or expected to be proud of the UK or Team blimmin’ GB.

On the other hand, I think you could also avoid a lot of Olympics nonsense at close geographical range to the site. You say on your blog that local people – and I am one of them – are disenfranchised from the GamesTM. I expect people round here will still be going about their business on the big day that it opens, you could spend the day with people who have been untouched by Olympic rhetoric.

Perhaps being as far away as possible from the Olympics is not a matter of physical distance. I imagine wherever you’ll be you’ll still be thinking about the Olympics. That’s what makes it totalitarian. Maybe the greatest distance involves drinking or drugging yourself into unconsciousness and sleeping through it?

There is a pub called The Cart and Horses in Stratford. Apparently this is the birthplace of Iron Maiden. There is quite a dismal display devoted to the

band in the corner of the pub.  
<http://www.cartandhorses.co.uk>

On Friday and Saturday nights they have fairly tragic rock covers bands at the pub. This is the place I would go to become unconsciously drunk on Olympics day. Here you will find people who are drunker than you have ever imagined drunk people could get, they play air guitar and lurch around the place. Despite the drunkenness and general low-life grimness, it is quite a benign place. You could use your money to buy more alcohol for people. No one would mind if you passed out.

Neville, it would be really wonderful if you would like to come and talk about and/or show some of your Olympics work at the Fattylympics. Alternatively, or in addition, it would be great if you wanted to make some work in response to the Fattylympics. You would be very welcome if if this what you decided to do.

All the best,  
 Charlotte

### The Greatest Possible Distance

The Mekong river, beginning in Eastern Tibet, flows south through China to Myanmar (Burma) where it forms the Laos border. Continuing further south alongside Laos it forms the Thailand border. It then flows through Cambodia to Vietnam where it eventually reaches the Sea.

The 12th longest river in the world its 2703 miles are bustling with life and are home to many species still being discovered today. The river creates a hub of natural energy and is home to both humans and natural habitats. The river, a consistent source of energy is ever renewing itself. A sustainable source of energy, the water provides for its inhabitants and those that live along its banks. For the fishermen, the boatmen, the rice pickers and the many nearby communities the river acts as a key connector between the countries with their dependence on this source.

The water, a link between place, countries united, yet, with a far from perfect history. Both China and Myanmar have some of the worst human rights records in the world with allegations of child cruelty. slavery and censorship. Myanmar suffers from the effects of years of isolation and has one of the least developed economies in the world.

The nearby golden triangle suffers economical decline due to government crackdowns on opium trading. All of this means that many of these areas in South East Asia surrounding the Mekong are

finding alternative ways to regenerate and restore their communities. The significance that the river has on the livelihoods of the people that inhabit these countries and their use of it as a source of power is an example of development that is, in my eyes, the greatest possible distance from the 2012 London Olympics.

I am sure that suggestions could be made for many areas of remoteness that offer a hive of activity and sense of community amongst humans participating within their own habitats. But I have chosen the Mekong River because it reminds me that the word redevelopment can have a very different meaning. Not to suggest that there has been no conflict between countries as a result of regeneration projects. However within the smaller more rural communities, it seems redevelopment can be defined by patience and an almost interminable process of nature and nurturing of the land, of building community by community. The river banks of these countries contain curious places, a world away from western ideals.

Caroline

### To Olympia!

I propose that Neville Gabie travels to what could be considered the ‘utopia’ of the Olympic Games-in-general: the Sanctuary of Olympia, Elis, Greece.<sup>1</sup>

Olympia held its festival every four years like its modern day descendant, and was the site of the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece from 776bc to 393ad. Such a proposal may at first be read as its author’s romantic investment in harking back to the purity or origin of the spectacle we are trying to circumvent. It may be considered an attempt to find a sense of truth within the tired roots of what has become a parade of culture and game playing. Perhaps if were to look so far back, she thinks, we would be able to uncover those buried objections, local and national concerns like shiny, golden ancient objects amongst the muddle. Of course, such a romantic vision of transporting oneself back to the ancient site of the Olympics would be neither possible nor desirable.

My decision for Neville Gabie to ‘return’ to Olympia is absolutely influenced—if not wholly reliant on—context. This context is, in fact, so integral to this choice that the place could even be read as the closest possible to the idea of the Olympic Games in general. If someone had asked me: ‘where can we send Neville Gabie so that he is the closest he could possibly be to the Olympic-Games-in-general without actually being in East London?’ I may have come up with the same answer. Perhaps this is not escape at all; maybe I am asking Neville Gabie to face deeper exposure and torment.

However, as Jacques Derrida puts it, ‘a context is never determined enough to prohibit all possible random deviation... there is always a chance open to some parenklisis or clinamen’. It is altogether possible that the most (non-) obvious, context-specific and relevant place also offers the most possibility of retreat. Indeed, trying to evade and escape context altogether would lead only to disappointment; taking oneself out of a situation for the very specific reason of escaping it and finding retreat elsewhere is highly reliant on that which is being avoided in the first place. It might be note-worthy that my idle, wandering mind imagines Neville Gabie’s escape in somewhat crude situations, often with exotic and touristic undertones. Neville Gabie is no more likely to evade the Olympic-hype in a far-away land than he is in East London, especially considering the agenda of the trip: ‘escape the Olympics!’. Well, I say, ‘escape to Olympia!'; rather than defining itself against the event in itself, the distance I am suggesting—which is also closely allied to the place’s offering of Sanctuary—is punctuated more by an opening-up to the possibilities of chance, anti-anticipation and non-particularity than by an attempt to cut off all associated meanings, emotions or anxieties.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, such an escape attempt would be arduous and, at best utopian, if not entirely impossible. Part of the sickness collated by the Olympics in those within physical, social or emotional proximity is

caused by its anticipation. Anticipation is that which Derrida describes as ‘grasping everything in advance, [it] does not let itself be taken by surprise; there is no chance for it’. Everyone knows that the anticipation of an event leads to disappointment or frustration, so why do we do it? Perhaps we are fearful of the unknown, or maybe anticipating the event is a way to feel part of something that alludes most of us. We are, it seems, expecting something quite wonderful – an event that will make some sort of community of the whole world, taking with it arts, music, culture; but, as Derrida asks: ‘would an event that can be anticipated and therefore apprehended and comprehended be an event in the full sense of the word?’ I would tend to agree with his answer: ‘if what comes and then stands out horizontally on a horizon can be anticipated then there is no pure event’. I am suggesting that in the interest of evading the hype and propaganda associated with the 2012 Olympics, as well as the opening event itself, Neville Gabie should not expect—or anticipate—a great escape. Instead, he should take himself to the Sanctuary of Olympia where the Games came to fruition all those years ago.<sup>3</sup>

The key to understanding my decision to send Neville Gabie to Olympia lies in a paradox of thinking. Olympia is at once the obvious choice of place to send someone seeking a utopia—or home—of the Olympic Games as well as to someone who seeks ‘Sanctuary’ or refuge from it. The discourse of the

English language that suggests a sanctuary offers (potentially religious) safety, respite and distance. It is within the Sanctuary of Olympia that the Olympic Games were first born. In the first instance—Olympia as utopia—we could say that the Sanctuary of Olympia could not but fall short of any expectations we may have of the place. Utopia comes from the Greek ou ‘not’ and topos ‘place’: by linguistic definition, utopia does not exist. It is unlikely that Neville Gabie will find any ancient truths relating to the Games and it is more than unlikely that he will find any clear lineage or genealogy between the modern day equivalent and its forefather. Nor will he, I am aware, find in the Sanctuary of Olympia true sanctum or escape; in semiolinguistic terms, Neville Gabie is merely one letter away from being at the heart of the Olympics.

This is, though, not only a semiotic displacement; the movement to the home / utopia / origin of the Games is a movement-in-general relating to the abstract concept of this institution. The place and origin of the idea of the Games is at once ‘undecidable’ as well as unobtainable. It is a place so imbued with historical, cultural and linguistic significance that its alterity could not possibly reduce itself to the economy of our horizon. It is a place at once utterly specific as well as being wholly general and ideal. Of course, in cultural, economic and political terms, such ideals associated with the Sanctuary of Olympia are worlds away from the

institution of the 2012 Olympics.<sup>4</sup> On a socio-political level, the financial crisis has seen Greece swept with deep poverty, wide unemployment and social unrest. On a personal/emotional plane, many of the nation’s people are suffering great sadness and despair as the realities of economic turmoil deepen.<sup>5</sup> In a wider global context, Greece is a country that is being made to feel more and more unwelcome as a member of the euro-zone. The Greek nation is under deep threat, and is unlikely to be revelling in the Olympic funhouse like other European countries under less immediate socio-economic threat. It is at this juncture that we find the greatest distance.

It would certainly also be my intention that artist Neville Gabie’s trip would not forego a wider appreciation and experience of the socio-economic situation in Europe as a whole. Whilst Great Britain is preparing itself for fun and games in the name of international and global interest, Europe in general is experiencing social and economic instability. This is not to forget that Europe still holds a great deal of the world’s wealth as well as being accountable for closing its borders to many well-meaning, needful individuals from the global South. I propose that Neville Gabie’s journey to Olympia, Greece, includes some of the most meaningful parts of Europe with regards to border control, hardship or unrest. It is also my intention that Neville Gabie finds distance (in the form of experience,

critique...) from the mythology that national events occur in the interest of ‘global’ concern. Such a vision forgets the great inequalities across the globe as well as the injustices done by border controls that try to protect the sovereignty of such nations.

As it is not my place to relinquish any possibilities that may await Neville Gabie on the journey, I will not say how he should travel or dictate an exact route. The one form of travel I forbid is aircraft because there are too many direct associations with the Olympics, and arriving in such a speedy, hassle-free way would not do justice to the journey itself; arriving at ‘distance’ takes time as well as space. I will just include some places that I think could be essential check-points en route: Dover, Calais, Marseille, Madrid, Zurich, Podgorica, Berat and Athens. I appreciate the practicalities of time constraints and budget, and therefore suggest Neville Gabie picks at least three of the above to stop, visit or rest. This will also depend on the route taken. Couch surfing or hostels may provide comfortable and convivial rest along the way whilst taking into account the artist’s budget.

Dialogue and communication also forms an essential part of my proposal. The engagement promised but perhaps not offered (at least not proportionately) by the Olympics is something that should not be lost in Neville Gabie’s journey and distant destination. I think it is possible to remain engaged as well as being distant

from the ‘gloss’. Perhaps rather than engagement in its more vacuous sense, the thing that is missing is conversation. The essential thing is not that people engage or should engage with the Olympics but that there should be offerings outwith the hype – platforms for expressing their experiences of being on the borderlines. Even those who choose not to engage or cannot engage will experience it in a certain way and it would be fantastic to create a platform where they could voice this. Something like: ‘if you’re not part of it – how does it make you feel?’

I would encourage the artist to explore ‘distance’ with those he meets on the way—and there will be many—who have, and haven’t engaged with the Olympics, as well as engaging in other dialogue on the journey. I would propose that in the three hours spent in Olympia, people from around the world could be invited to express their non-involvement with the Olympic Games at the same time, especially if they feel marginalised or isolated from the ‘Olympic Funhouse’. A more general discussion of distance itself may well follow, and this is good too. This could happen via Skype, or people could document their thoughts during the three hours by themselves. It is important that Neville Gabie uses the time of the Opening Ceremony to explore his experience of being-distant-in-Olympia as well as the distance experienced on the way. It would also be interesting for the artist to comment upon the success/failure of the distance

found, as I imagine the pursuit of distance to be a rather difficult one.

To Olympia! I wish Neville Gabie the greatest distance possible, and the best of luck,  
  
Claire

FOOTNOTES

- 1 I have included a map of the Sanctuary of Olympia for your reference: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Plan\\_Olympia\\_sanctuary-en.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Plan_Olympia_sanctuary-en.svg)
- 2 ‘My Chances/Mes Chances: A Rendezvous with Some Epicurean Stereophonies’ trans. Irene Harvey and Avital Ronell. Taking Chances: Derrida, Psychoanalysis and Literature. Eds. Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984. 1-32
- 3 ibid
- 4 An article depicting the discrepancy between the Olympic Games and the situation in Greece: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/09/greek-pole-vaulter-kyriakopoulou-olympics>
- 5 A conversation between a German and Greek national about the crisis in Greece: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/may/11/greece-germany-eurozone-crisis-perspectives>

Dear Neville

My name is Chie. I just read your Greatest Distance that came with Meantime mailing list. I and my friend Stuart Wilding would like to suggest that the destination for your Greatest Distance can be at Newham Atherton Leisure Centre, which has shut down by the council in spite of the complains from the local community that uses the facility. The council said that it is a waste of money to pay for the maintenance of the leisure centre while the Olympic swimming pool will be open. But the Olympic swimming pool will not be open to public at earliest until 2014. Meanwhile, people lost the only public leisure centre within the borough.

There is a great distance between the council and its local people here. And a place like this really needs to get a public attention. And I believe that art is not about occupying an imaginary independent autonomous space, but it needs to be at the heart of the system in order to reconfigure the already existing structure. Art and politics needs to occupy the same space, but identify different ways of reimagining the space. So, I would like to suggest that you might find what you describe Greatest Distance within the very local area which you are trying to critique.

<http://www.blowe.org.uk/2011/09/newham-council-to-close-atherton.html>

I have met a guy who was campaigning against the closure of the leisure

centre at this Unofficial Gentrification Guided Tour run by Carpenters Against Regeneration Plan (CARP). And I will get in touch with them if you are interested in the idea.

<http://www.gamesmonitor.org.uk/node/1544><http://www.facebook.com/carpvoice>

Best wishes,  
Chie

Hey Neville

I'm sending this by way of introduction to Tim Cresswell. I'm sure he would be really interested to hear about this.

One thing that did occur to me is one of the Nowhereisland citizens in the High Arctic might be interested in inviting you up there. Ny Alesund is the northernmost settlement in the world and not only geographically remote, but remote in the sense that the scientists there are investigating landscape which has emerged from hundreds of thousands of years beneath the ice. Another thought, was perhaps Barentsburg which we visited on the expedition – which is the Russian mining town and remote in the sense of being distant from the Western world of consumerism.

Just two thoughts – let me know if any of interest. There might be a very interesting connection with Nowhereisland citizens who have an immediate connection to the Olympics through the nomadic island – but who are geographically remote from the island territory.

Claire

Dear Neville

I think is not the physical distance that matters. It is about really doing and thinking something else in that precise moment. I suggest you watch an action movie with headphones on, light out, i-phone shut down. Or a comedy. Or listen to music (headphones on) and read a novel. Or even better make love while they all parade nationally.

By doing this and ignoring the planetary event you will put the maximum distance between you and “the event” and don't let occupy your life.

About how to show lovemaking in the gallery, you just can have an audio.... either just voices of the couple making love or if you want to be more ironic voices of the couple making love and in the back barely heard a tv with the live coverage of the opening..

about me: I never stopped drawing on walls ceilings and floors all over the world. My wife and me build a nice studio-home in our hometown where we have for the first time in more decent conditions our works and books. We spend summers and winters there. We have a 6x6 meters garden... I am constantly on the run. I am writing you from Geneva but tomorrow I go to Rennes Dance Museum.

This year I still have to do solo show in Reykjavik, New York, Stuttgart. I am kinda active on facebook. I am allright. I hope you are too. I crazy loved the fact you have been Olympically in residence. When I do lectures I show my Bristol

cantina drawings and with this occasion I talk about your long-time overall project there. It was something....

Keep in touch. Wish you good!

Dan

Hi Neville,

Have been thinking on this on and off for the last month but it's not easy – keep on coming back though to perhaps sitting in the largest MacDonalds in the world on the Olympic site – seems to me a world away from what the Olympics should be about!

Hope all is well with you and to catch up again soon.

All best

Dan

Hi Neville,

Hope it's not too late, I was told you had extended the deadline.

I have two suggestions:

The place is in the middle of nowhere – geographically, intellectually, culturally etc. – to most people here; the next town is a foreign country and people generally don't take a great interest in the rest of the wide world. I think you'll be quite far away from the Olympics here – mentally and physically.

The next suggestion is for you to spend time with an athlete who qualified for the Olympics but cannot participate – for whatever reason, maybe an injury or so. Someone who probably won't have another chance to participate. Such a person must feel so far away from the Olympics, even if they are sitting in the stadium watching events.

Anyway, it will be interesting to see what you decide to do – good luck with the decision. It was nice meeting you both and hope you can make it back here again sometime.

Take care,

Dalene



Dear Neville,

I would suggest the south of Argentina, ANTARTIDA – TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

David

Neville,

what should you do in Paris? Book into the hotel Esmeralda, <http://www.hotel-esmeralda.fr/> which is not too pricey and lovely, and in a great spot, and then go to the café round the corner, which I can't remember the name of but the staff at the Esmeralda will tell you, it's just across the little park with the amazing swirly art-nouveau sculptured fountain in, and sit there and write out in one go into a huge exercise book all your thoughts about the Olympics since you started and up to now. Imagine you are writing them for a French person, or else for some particular person you know.

David



From Fluorescence and Flashlights to Fish and Freedom

Proposal

To spend time creating a short piece of video or animation about Neville going from the Olympic Village (a very busy place which will be getting a lot of people's attention), to swimming amongst fish in Henleaze quarry near Bristol, where people don't care about what's going on, and there isn't the glamour of press attention.

For Neville to create this film collaboratively with us, in visits during the month leading up to 27 July 2012.

The team:

Kate Co-Director

Neville Co-Director and protagonist

Deborah Artist collaborator/facilitator

Other residents Artist collaborators

Whilst the context (a women's medium secure unit) will influence ideas and production, this should not be a focus in the final artwork.

Some of the contrasts our proposal offers are:

We will collaborate, rather than compete.

Instead of external restrictions and rules, we will work with individual and collective choice.

Although many things have a concrete, measured reality, we will be more interested in immeasurable imagination.

Hi Neville

How does the following sound?

The project I propose for you is one that I'm exploring and could be a pilot for my research and wondered how you might respond to it in light of your proposal The Greatest Possible Distance.

I live a stone throw away from the Olympic Park, Leyton side, with looming towers of social housing... dominating the landscape. I have not been successful in getting any tickets to the Olympics, and will not have the opportunity to go beyond the green wall (the barrier that once was), however it all feels familiar as images/news from inside are conveyed to the masses.

Thinking about how images/messages are conveyed the project IMAGINE\_ LEARNING FROM THE ASCENSION ISLAND explores the concerns of the dialectic relationship between art and site, and the interdisciplinary concerns of the terms of engagement, and the modes of communication.

IMAGINE\_ LEARNING FROM THE ASCENSION ISLAND investigates alternative strategies for curating and for the presentation of work, as did the conceptual artists of the 60s and 70s by exploring art outside the gallery context to find 'new networks and means of dissemination'. IMAGINE\_fictitious in nature exploits what Marshall McLuhan described in the 1960s as 'a mediated exchange system of information and images'.

The inspiration for the project is the Ascension Island a sovereignty of the British Crown, an isolated volcanic island in the equatorial waters of the South Atlantic Ocean – an unlikely destination for art goers – but who needs to go if you were to tap into the main industry of the island – communication. (In 1821 the Ascension Island became a victualling station and sanatorium for ships engaged in the suppression of the slave trade around the West African coast. Until recently Ascension Island was a main relay point of the coaxial submarine cable system laid between the United Kingdom, Portugal and South Africa with links to South America and West Africa. Other services operating on the Island include Cable and Wireless (previously known as the Eastern Telegraph Company) international satellite telecommunications service, the BBC Atlantic Relay Station, as well as hosts five ground antennas that assist in the operation of the Global Positioning System (GPS) navigational system.)

Neville, I would like you to travel to the Ascension Island (Military of Defence permission required) to make a work whereby for the three hours during the opening ceremony your 'artwork' can be experienced over the web through perhaps multiple platforms like google, Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, Chatroulette, YouTube, Second Life and ebay.

Deborah

Neville

By all means. As to where to sleep, I suggest a homeless hostel: somewhere unlikely to be involved in the Games, and where the money might be better spent.

Best

Derek

WE HATE No. 8: THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Although support for the 2012 London Games appears already to be declining in inverse proportion to the huge escalation of costs and the prospect of Lottery funds being diverted away from good causes, Londoners are commonly said to be “largely” supportive of the project. Well nobody has asked me. I have been implacably opposed to the whole enterprise from the outset. My latest rant is on behalf of all those who hold similar views.

You may say, “What has this to do with *Innovations in Information?*” My response is simply that some of the financial information provided in support of the bid appears to have been decidedly optimistic if not innovatory. According to *thelondonpaper* (6 March 2007), members of the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee went so far as to accuse the organizers of the games of indulging in “Alice in Wonderland” budgeting. The cost of the project, as now officially revealed, is already more than treble the original

prediction and is probably destined to go on rising; which seems to be the way of all such adventures. As Simon Jenkins put it in *The Guardian* (2 March 2007): “To build six temporary stadiums for 16 days of sport is the kind of gesture once confined to African dictators”.

A claim in mitigation is that the required developments will help the long-term regeneration of the areas in which they are placed. Well, perhaps, but surely another triumph of hope over experience. The evidence from other major cities that have staged the Games in recent times hardly supports the notion of an ongoing Elysium. In a letter to *The Guardian* (10 March 2007), Kevin Swaine pointed out that the Athens Olympics left the country with such a debt that every new home built in Greece now has a 19% tax added to help clear the enormous burden.

A more fundamental objection than money, however, is the nature of the modern Games: far removed from the historic Greek celebrations in honour of Zeus; even from the relatively modest Games held in London in 1948. For the whole bonanza has become largely a rite to nationalism. The Olympic logo may have interlocking rings, but the reality is that rather than being bound in a great spirit of unity the priority of the superpowers is to come top. Personal achievement in sport is primarily a contribution to national pride and supremacy.

The staging of the Games has also become overblown. Each successive host nation cannot be seen to put on a poorer show, so that the attendant presentation becomes more and more elaborate. As far as Britain is concerned this cannot be for the greater glory of our contestants, for if anything is reasonably predictable it is that we will finish among the also-rans of the medal table. The elation that greeted the success of our Olympic bid was, I believe, symptomatic of a fundamental malaise. The supporters of the project have fallen for the conceit, born in Britain’s colonial past and encouraged by Elgar’s sublime music, that ours is a land of hope and glory which God has made mighty. Why ‘God’ should favour one nation above another is unexplained, but the vainglorious hope is that he will make us “mightier yet”. Patriots have succumbed to an inflated sense of our national importance and our place in the world.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the sporting arena. A few, admittedly stunning, successes have inflamed a climate of wholly unrealistic expectation. Pride has well and truly gone before a fall. In football, rugby and, most recently, cricket we have been brought crashing down to earth. Yet a whitewash in the Ashes has not restored humility. Rather we are urged to new ambition by looking forward to a renewed contest in 2009!

I do not wish to pour scorn on the achievements of our Olympians, some of which over the years have been truly heroic. I protest rather at the context in which the medals are won: the triumphalism attending elite success over the mass failure of the losers. In this respect the London Marathon is a far more inclusive model. Pride of place is given to elite competition, but without the pompous anthems and the flag-waving, and followed by a huge contingent of people who simply run for the joy of being part of a great event with the opportunity to raise lots of cash for good causes.

Finally, to return to the financial issues, there is the telling argument that the money devoted to the Games – our money – could be better spent; the Lottery will be raided when there are more deserving priorities. If it must be for sport, then let us strengthen local activities held for grassroots participation rather than national ascendancy. Derek Mapp, chair of Sport England, charged with getting two million more people active before the Olympics, is quoted in *Guardian Sport* (22 March 2007) as saying, “It is like I have to do it barefoot”. Sport England’s lottery income will be cut by £55.9 million in 2009, which will bring its contribution to the Olympic project to £395 million. And this against a total annual income of £265 million.

Arts funding is also threatened. Joan Bakewell, chair of the National

Campaign for the Arts, is reported in *London Lite* (16 March 2007) as saying that Lottery funding had been a “golden egg” for the arts. “Today,” she added, “it’s starting to look a bit tarnished”.

“All victories breed hate,” wrote Baltasar Gracián in *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*. For my part, I simply hate the thirst for supremacy. I would like to see the billions about to be lavished on the 2012 Games used to enhance the Social Fund.

Derek

Hello Neville,

I am Eléa studying in the University of Brighton in second year – I would like to share an idea.

Why not take a plane and be above the Olympic park but high enough to not see it properly but see the south of England. It would give you an exceptional and unusual point of view on the site and see whether you can see it from high up in the sky. Of course you need the sky to be clear and the weather conditions good but touch wood it will be.

Also as it will be half during day light and the beginning of the night you could also see it from two point of view and compare the size of the site seen from the sky and the light of the site which might glow a lot and can be seen from high up .?

May be the end of the plane trip could be a jump with a tandem parachute and land in one of the poor area which surround the site and ask people of the area their though and feeling of the last three hours of their life. And you could record all the trip with a camera and a video recorder?

(my first though was to fly over the site paragliding but as I am a paraglider I know it would be risky to do that and probably forbidden by the security of the site.)

Hope this doesn't sound too crazy. But you do crazy thing and I like it carry on.

Good luck and best wishes

Eléa

Neville,

We read about your project THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DISTANCE (from the opening of the Olympic Games) in a local South African paper, BEELD of 17 May 2012. Hereby then our contribution.

Regards,

Elna and Marna

Be sure to inform Liewe Heksie (nickname of Levinia Heks) of your visit in order for her to be prepared. She likes to braid her hair and tie it with ribbons for special occasions. She also practises knitting and you may receive a multicoloured scarf on arrival! Ignore the holes due to fallen stitches because she will only claim it to be her unique pattern. If you consider a present for her, new ribbons for her hair or a jar of golden-ochre honey is perfect.

She would most certainly invite her sophisticated friend Karel Kat (Karel the cat) from the city to bestow glamour on the English visitor. Karel will be essential to translate from Afrikaans to English. Given her forgetful and extremely shy character she depends a lot on her best friend Blommie (Little Flower) to assist her. The cosy kitchen will create a platform for inspiring stories about the adventures which Heksie and her friends have experienced. Stories like her attempted visit to the moon or her unconscious brilliance in saving Karel from expulsion from his home.

Conversation about the stars in the northern hemisphere in comparison to the southern hemisphere stars Heksie sees through her kitchen window could open up a totally new star-filled experience to her. Be sure to look up at the stars when you are outside her house and admire the glittering brightness against a velvet black winter sky.

Since gardening is well practised by both the English as well as the Blommeland (Flower country) inhabitants, you are bound to be escorted through her garden which is usually lit up by fireflies at night. Plants that are in bloom during winter in her garden may be of special interest to you. Maybe she would offer you a cutting of a plant in her garden. Remember to praise her on her flowers because she blossoms under approval.

Liewe Heksie is not precise in remembering her magic-words, but with the help of Blommie she could conjure up her magical horse on whose back you and Karel could fit. She and Blommie and her tiny pet cat Matewis will escort you on her broom to the palace of King Rosekrans. How exciting to be able to discuss similarities and differences regarding palaces and nobility. It might even be possible to admire the Silver Rose which is guarded in the palace and which is responsible for the protection of Blommeland.

And thus the three hours could be spent.

Kind regards and congratulations on your brilliant idea. As a special treat I include the first few seconds of her signature tune, sung by herself!

Elna / Marna



Hi Neville

I haven't managed to come up with a feasible idea for your worthy project, but following on from yesterday's email, it's not an exciting idea, but I think that the 'legacy' surrounding Nottingham is so valid and strong (I look at Wendy's emails and just cheer at how brilliantly she's taken up the gauntlet) that maybe you could just go there, sit under an apple tree and take a big juicy bite, there should be some ripe about then. And give yourself and everyone involved in Orchard a big pat on the back for making a difference in the world.

There's my tuppence worth,

x

Fab

Dear Neville

Got your email on your alternative project via Kel – which made me chuckle (BYW – I liked your Great Lengths piece. It gave a human face to all that Olympic hype –a work of integrity).

In classic martial arts there is a concept of the ideal focus for which we strive – when the physical, mental and spiritual come together. The modern school has taken the physical aspect and made it into a “sport” emphasising the competitive element, forgetting the spiritual.

I suggest you go somewhere remote in the UK, to reach a point that has no network coverage, without any GPS/satellite communications device, in the spirit of a pilgrimage, to try and discover this moment of convergence.

Regards

Fiona

Hi Neville

What a wonderful brief. Sounds like a perfect crowdfunding project to me... but I appreciate you have chosen not to seek public or private sector funding.

My suggestion is to fly a kite to symbolise the importance and value of individual expression and 'waywardness'. The reason for the suggestion is that a kite will choose its own way, led by conditions – the wind, the weather, the climate – determined by nature rather than by politics or social or economic factors. The kite symbolises freedom, liberty and self expression. The kite is a low cost item – popular all over the world – and Kite Festivals are important to many countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Greece, the UK to name a few.

Kite flying can be a solitary or a group activity, drawing parallels with all human endeavour whether sporting or social. Some human skill is involved in controlling the kite but ultimately it is up to nature and the prevailing conditions as to whether a kite can be flown on the day you have chosen: 27 July.

I suggest that the kite is flown from a high point, in fact a 'highest point'. This could be the highest mountain or the highest building in Greece which would take your Great Lengths project back to the Olympic Games country of origin and highlight the contrast between the high-flying ambitions of the Games and the reality of people's everyday lives.

All good wishes – Frances

Furthest Distance Proposal.  
‘From one place to the other’

Distance: how far one object is from another, the area of separation, the space one has to cross: The Olympic track, the start line, the finish line.

The measure of time against space run, thrown, jumped, launched, twisted and spun.

It is an interesting concept, to formalise a ‘game’ in which the objective is to escape one’s immediate surroundings in the quickest time, a body pumped with adrenaline fleeing the place at which they start for the place at which they finish.

I realise that this is not always the purpose of the games, that there are other goals and intentions within each sport, but it has always struck me, as the spectator, that I am watching people essentially running away.

Distance is treated with the greatest respect within the games, seconds are collected, even split to form parts of seconds, everything is counted.

Distance travelled = the time taken to cover space; multiplied by the speed it takes to get there. It constitutes the entire athlete’s journey, every footfall, every inhalation of breath.

I propose that the furthest distance from the Olympic Games is at the end of every athlete’s journey. I propose collecting the winning distance from every sport within the Games. The furthest Shot Put thrown, Javelin launched, each cycle track, running

track and swimming distance collected and in the case of team sports the average distance covered from a team member must be found and recorded. As the 2012 Games have not yet started all distances must be collected from the previous games in Beijing.

When all the distances from the Olympics have been collected and added together they will form a singular distance representative of the Games, the distance will also become a journey: From one place to the other.

My proposal is to start at the very centre of the 2012 Olympic site, wherever that is deemed to be, and to go this distance away from the games, at a time when people will be rushing toward the epicentre of the Olympics, I propose that you take whatever means to cover this distance to its end point.

As opposed to the games where destinations and speed are essential, this journey is only focused on the distance, with no fixed point of ending and no time restriction. The journey can be made by any means, on foot, by bus or train, perhaps a lift in someone’s car. I propose the artist being a flanner, ‘a person who walks in order to experience it’ This is a journey of the Olympics, the end of it will be the furthest distance from the games.

When this distance is achieved, a line must be drawn across the floor, to mark the finish point.

Freya

Hah, Neville, I like it,

First quick thoughts are:

The Bahamas, thinking of a prominent Offshore site, known from its technical economic withdrawal from tax zones around the world, was speaking today with golding + senneby here in Stockholm who have been exploring this notion of offshore as the current state of abstraction, so one for you to be abstracted from the world is to mimic the economic systems which also remove themselves from the parts of the world they don’t wish to contribute to, whilst maintaining power and control over previously sovereign realms!

Second to that could be to be in flight to the Bahamas whilst the ceremony is going on, so you are in a sense abstracted whilst travelling to a place for the purposes of being abstract!

I’ll send your proposal to them also to check out!

Third and final option was to ask you to choose the site based on your idea of the site on planet earth which has the least signs of culture.

Have fun  
best  
G

Dear Neville,

I read the article about your latest work concerning the Olympics in the Guardian over the weekend. It sounds a great idea! Come to Leyton Marsh. It isn’t far away but it’s a long distance from the supposed ideals of the ancient Olympics. I live in Clapton, Hackney and being so close to an Olympic site I now feel that the sport is just a smokescreen. I made the image above in February in response to being told to be excited by the upcoming Games by an ODA project manager as he explained how he was going to build over Leyton Marsh.

Good luck with the work,

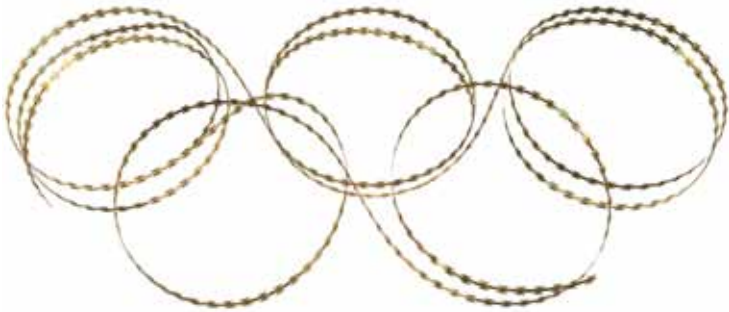
Gideon

Hi Neville,

I’m sorry for the long delay..

I’ve read many of the responses on your ‘the greatestdistance’ site. Very funny and spot on in many cases.

Yes, there was an Occupy encampment which we called the ‘community support camp’. Personally I hadn’t had direct contact with Occupy till then although I was broadly supportive. I became friends with two Occupiers in particular and was very impressed with their idealism, understanding, generous hearts and humour. They were welcomed and fed by us local residents. We managed to hold the ODA off for one day but as we had to go to work the Occupiers were able to be our



eyes and ears and bodies too and for the rest of the time while they were camping they kept the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and their contractors from building on our green space.

I was not excited by the 2012 Olympic Games but it was only the behaviour of the ODA so close to me that opened my eyes to ‘The Olympic Games’.

It’s been a fascinating six months and I’ve met many people who have been documenting what has been going on in Stratford for years.

It’s also been a revelation about how planning permission gets granted and how councillors come to decisions – especially in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Local politics can be interesting!

To get an insight into how locals feel about Leyton Marsh and the ODA please have a look at <http://saveleytonmarsh.wordpress.com/>

The greatest distance away from the Olympics could be a bat survey on Leyton Marsh.

Or perhaps an evening stroll without expectations nor hopes of achievement, just a wander along the River Lea. If it wasn’t documented would that be pushing it too far?

Or perhaps a consideration of how the reinstatement plan and the long term ecology of the marsh and adjacent site of special scientific interest can be preserved for the long term. Keeping

this area as a place for contemplation and experiencing Nature and that which isn’t Man.

Alternatively how about taking your own picnic into the main Olympic stadium and uploading videos of events on YouTube while using the words 2012 and Olympics and documenting the legal process that ensues? This isn’t as far away from the Olympics but an interesting process to document perhaps :?)

Since a number of people have been sent to prison and others threatened with costs of hundreds of thousands of pounds I would not like to have my name attached to the image.

Though I’m more than happy for you to stick it on your blog.

Please ask me anything at all that you’d like to know in more detail.

best of luck, Gideon

Hi Neville,

I think I may have missed earlier messages related to this given my gmail problems ... but here goes. My suggestion is to be in the small town of Nieu Bethesda in the Klein Karoo, South Africa. Why? It could quite possibly be the exact opposite of the opening of an Olympic games that you could possibly get. It is renowned as one of the most remote places in South Africa ... fossils found in this region date back to the triassic age. To set up a camera at an elevated vantage point overlooking the town and to film this as a riposte to the opening ceremony of the Olympics would make a wonderful contrast and equally pivotal statement. Good Luck!!!

Greg

Hello Neville

I would like propose that, at precisely 9pm British Summer time on 27th July 2012 and for a period of three hours, you engage in a community activity on one of the islands of the Outer Hebrides – Harris, Lewis, Barra, Skye, Uist, Benbecula or Mull as appropriate – as a counterpoint to the Olympic Opening Ceremony. I would suggest the activity of sheep shearing, since this has both a practical value and a variety of interesting symbolic resonances in the circumstances.

My reasons for suggesting this are as follows. Given that the UK is hosting the Games, it seems appropriate that ‘the point of greatest possible distance’ should be located within the UK. Given that the feral elite that now rules the UK, for which the Olympics serve as just another opportunity for self-promotion and income generation in the guise of a faux-populist Nationalism, is both remorselessly urbanist and deeply ignorant and contemptuous of the needs and values of small rural communities, I am suggesting a remote community in the Hebrides. In my experience such communities have, of necessity, to practise communal values that the Government has perverted and repackaged as those of the ‘Big Society’. The practical and small-scale communal act of sheep shearing also contrasts in interesting ways with the fetishisation of competitive sport as a seemingly unlimited focus for consumption, thinly masked by

issues of ‘health’, self-development’, ‘safety’, etc that in reality also neatly correspond with the psychosocial demands of possessive individualism.

Best wishes

Iain

Hi Neville

I realize that by the time you’re doing the project, shearing will be over – I should have suggested sheep dipping but was side-tracked by the image of shearing as a metaphor.

Have asked that we circulate your PDF to all our networks and will copy Mel into this so she has the right wordpress details.

All the best

Iain

London Olympic Games 2012

Panem et circenses (“bread and games”) from madding crowds in ancient Rome and now, in modern, “civilised” capital of UK – you are probably, especially if you live in London, well familiar with this already. It is enough to have a short walk around the city, to watch some tv (sic!), read a newspaper (..) to see it everywhere: London 2012.

I have to admit I do not really feel like taking part in it, the entertainment machine working to keep people blind, busy and unaware of really important things (and as you will hopefully see – something even bigger underneath..) and if you don’t feel like me as well – please read this short article. Actually, maybe you should read it anyway, well – especially, if you are going to watch opening ceremony or any of the events on tv, or even go to Olympic venues to celebrate.. well – celebrate what really? Romantic ideas of athletic competition and fair play of Baron de Coubertin perhaps..? Please read this and if you find this intriguing – ask questions, do not take my words for this or any one else’s, research and try to find out the truth, to see it through all the confusion and disinformation out there. This article below is a part of much bigger thing I’ve been working on for quite a very long time now. The information shared here is not intended to spread fear but to shed light in one compact dose for those who have no time to do their own research now on sinister possibilities which may affect

us all.. What you will read below you may find sometimes hard to believe as they do not teach those facts at school, you won’t read this in the newspapers nor see it on tv or in the cinema. I put a lot of effort and time to find those information and gather them together in one article.. – hope you will find it at least interesting. I do not expect making every one believing in what I wrote but maybe at least some of you.

Writing this I have to assume you are familiar already with some ideas and terms – do not feel put off – New World Order, Illuminati, Masons (I think Masons is a group taken by, along with some their symbols and rituals, and now controlled by Illuminati group), Jerusalem, Zion, Babylon and other. I use sometimes words, for example “god”, “Satan”, “evil”, “Lucifer”, etc. – which probably would need some separate discussion about their nature and representations as well, but for sake of keeping this piece as short as possible I will leave it for now. Credits to various sources on the net – there is quite a lot to read over there if you find time and ask the right questions.

**“The individual is handicapped by coming face-to-face with conspiracy so monstrous he cannot believe it exists”** J. Edgar Hoover, former chief of F.B.I.

**“The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he doesn’t exist”** Charles Baudelaire, 19th century French poet

**“From what you have, take an offering for the Lord, everyone who is willing is to bring to the Lord an offering of gold, silver and bronze..”** Exodus 35:5

We are probably all, at least those who spend very little time in front of TV and a lot of time looking for the information, more or less familiar with the New Jerusalem, Zion and New World Order concepts. We heard about Masons/Illuminati and believe in their existence.. or not.. – in existence of those who, allegedly, keep the secrets of the universe away from those who would profane or abuse it. If you do, and for keeping this article short I have to assume you do – you probably will not have a problem in recognizing Masonic/Illuminati or biblical symbolism and numerology tradition in the Olympics, with probably the most obvious “Zion” word in it’s logo (and this word was concealed also in the previous Olympics logos from Beijing and Sydney Games and in the last winter Olympics logo), one-eyed mascots of the London’s Games, pyramid shaped lights of the Olympic stadium (compare with the pyramid with the all seeing eye from the dollar bill), Bethnal Green road/ Roman road being a connection between Olympic Village and central London (Jesus according to The Bible went to Jerusalem through Bethany village), Olympic village surrounded with biblical names of the urban landscape.. and more.



I believe those Games in London have been planned and prepared for a very, very long time and the decision of the Olympic Committee to “award” London with its organisation was for some not surprising at all. Otherwise how would any one explain they could find a very large piece of waste land almost in the middle of the one of the biggest European cities, capital of Great Britain, at the beginning of the 21st century..?

The 2012 London Olympics are officially known as the Games of the XXX Olympiad. These Roman numerals translate to the 30th Olympiad of the modern era.

The Olympics originally began in ancient Greece. They consisted of athletic competitions held in honour

of Zeus, the chief of the Greek gods. As he appeared to the Greeks, and very few people know and realise this fact nowadays – Zeus actually was the current incarnation of the Evil (Satan) – he was worshipped among other titles as Zeus Aphesio “the Liberator” and as Zeus “the Saviour”. Prometheus stole the fire from Zeus, according to tradition, but Zeus would still set mankind free from all moral and societal constraints – man would become a purely hedonistic creature, pursuing endless pleasure and self-fulfilment (you would like to compare it with prophecies of St. Nilus, a 5th century ascetic monk – see endnotes) but only because this would lead humanity to self destruction in the end anyway. Every four years the Greeks would hold Olympic celebrations.

The name Olympic comes from Mount Olympus, formed after the gods defeated the Titans in the Titan War, which was considered to be the dwelling place of Zeus and the pantheon of associated deities. The Olympic Torch today is ignited several months before the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games at the site of the ancient Olympics in Olympia, Greece. Eleven women, representing the Vestal Virgins, perform a ceremony in which the torch is kindled by the light of the Sun (I think I do not have to explain the importance of the Sun symbol), its rays concentrated by a parabolic mirror. So the Sun temple from where the Olympic torch comes to every Olympic Games is located in the place sharing its name with the Zeus’ Mountain. Fire, Sun, evil gods pretending to be a good ones – from the very beginning, the Olympics have served as the high holy days for worship of Evil.

The ancient Olympics are recorded to have first been celebrated in the year 776 B.C. The ancient Olympics “were celebrated until 393 AD when they were suppressed by Theodosius I as part of the campaign to impose Christianity as a state religion.” (Wikipedia). Theodosius knew about Olympic symbolism and ended it, because those were celebrations of the Evil God, when introducing Christianity as a religion of goodness in its fundamentals and opposing the Evil. In the modern era, the Olympics were first held in 1896. Each Olympiad continues for a period



of four years. Thus, the first Olympiad ran until the year 1900. The upcoming London Olympics are the 30th in the series, expressed by the Roman numerals XXX. This is significant as the repetition of a number three times denotes fullness and completion. (I have to make a short note here – numbers, and letters as well by the way, are very powerful symbols indeed. I believe, and I guess I share that belief with Illuminati, numbers and math in general, especially geometry, underlies creation and destruction. It is something so fundamental that the whole life is based on it – I would like to suggest little research of the Golden Section, Φ, Fibonacci sequence,...). The number thirty in the Bible is clearly associated with the beginning of rule:

*Joseph, the son of Jacob, was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt and was made a ruler of Egypt.*

*David was thirty years old when he began to reign in Hebron and Jerusalem.*

When He began His ministry, *Jesus was about thirty years of age.*

..This year, 2012, Prince William turns 30 years old..

A little more on numbers: *The torch relay will arrive on 18 May 2012 from Greece. The relay will last 70 days, with 66 evening celebrations, six Island Visits with about 8,000 people carrying the torch 300 m (330 yd) each, starting*

*from Land's End in Cornwall. The torch will have one day outside of the United Kingdom when it will visit Dublin on June 6.* (Wikipedia)

Note the preponderance of the number six in the torch ceremonies. The torch will arrive in the United Kingdom on the 18th (6+6+6) day of May. There will be 66 evening celebrations, and 6 island visits (66 and 6). The torch will visit Dublin on June 6th (6th month, 6th day)..

Babylon is the city that the Scriptures (the sacred religious writings) use consistently to denote Satan's kingdom, while Zion is emblematic of the kingdom of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua (Jesus). Satan, of course, would turn this on its head. Apparently even as those in the highest levels of Freemasonry are taught that Satan is the good god and Yahweh is the evil god, so too does Freemasonry call Babylon by the name Zion. Evil power is constructing Babylon, its kingdom and rule upon the earth, but is falsely calling it Zion or New Jerusalem – very often we can see Illuminati practicing great deception by presenting Babylon as if that was Jerusalem/Zion. You can see the word “zion” everywhere now with the Olympics, they do not even try hard to hide it anymore because they want us to be familiar with this concept. Look at this picture on the right of the very popular sight in London now – it says “2012”, right? Well – not really. We are used to read



in western culture from the top to bottom and we, even if unconsciously, record this inscription as “zion”. There is a great experiment in psychology when you have to read text with words containing misplaced letters in the middle – for example “spceial” instead of “special”, “maikng” instead of “making” – brain reads it correctly without even realisation there is a misspelling. These same rules apply to Olympic logo. During the short, 5 min walk along the South Bank in London, place visited by tens of thousands people from all around the world every day (London Eye is there) I counted the word “zion” – concealed in “2012” and London 2012 logo – displayed 38 times. In marketing and advertising this technique is called subliminal programming – human mind records things unconsciously and remembers them.

Zion, New Jerusalem – it is worth noting now what was a gospel (poem known now as anthem “Jerusalem” by, openly a Mason, 16th century English poet William Blake) sang during the marriage of Prince William last year at Westminster Abbey:

“and did those feet in ancient time  
walk upon England’s mountains green?  
and was the holy Lamb of God  
on England’s pleasant pastures seen?  
and did thy countenance divine  
shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
and was Jerusalem builded here  
among those dark satanic mills?

I will not cease my mental fight  
nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
till we have build Jerusalem  
in England’s green and pleasant land..”

Masonic poem during the royal marriage ceremony of the future king..? It gets better, or worse actually – the theme of the Olympic London opening ceremony will be.. “England’s green and pleasant land...” *The three-hour ceremony – which will start at 9 pm on July 27 – has been designed by British movie director Danny Boyle. His vision of a “green and pleasant land” will showcase the British countryside, using real sheep, cows and horses.. The model for the £27m project shows a farm and surrounding fields, with ploughing...* (recent Yahoo! article).

New Jerusalem would include new Salomon’s Temple. It looks like Illuminati want us to think of Olympic Stadium to be a New Jerusalem Temple or at least it’s symbol and London/ England as a New Jerusalem – but remember it is really a Babylon – in the Babylon Satan combined the mankind as one (multiculturalism, new world order) in which they worshipped him by his lies. We can read in The Bible about building Salomon’s Temple:

“And Salomon determined to build a house for The Name Of The Lord (...) and told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them..” – so he



conscripted 70000 men as carriers,  
80000 men as stonecutters in the hills  
and 3600 as foremen over them..

70000 is a number of the volunteers  
working with the Olympics..

80000 is a capacity of the Olympic  
Stadium..

and apparently there will be 3600  
supervisors...

A key component of the Olympic stadium design, and one which is filled with symbolic meaning, is the lighting system. The name Lucifer means “light bearer” and he promotes himself as the bringer of light to mankind. The symbol of Satan’s rule is the pyramid with the all-seeing eye atop it with out-  
raying beams of light.

Despite the First and the Second Temples in Jerusalem being destroyed many years apart, they were destroyed at exactly the same day: “the ninth day of the month of Av” in the Hebrew calendar. In modern calendar, UK time in 2012 this date is 20:56, 27th July.. – the day of London’s Olympics opening ceremony which will start at 9 pm! Is it just a coincidence? And 27/07/2012 is 2+7+7+2+1+2=21=3\*7=777 – again we have the repetition of the number. This is a very significant moment in time and there will be a lot of people, with their emotions, gathered together in one significant place at that time, most of then unaware of what they are really celebrating. Many sources point at this time (or the another important,

from numerology point of view, day 03.08.2012) as a possible date of another false flag operation (another after attacks on 9/11 and 7/7), costing a lot of lives, carried out in order to bring closer the New World Order idea realisation. I can’t say it won’t happen but personally I doubt it as there are more rituals following opening ceremony during The Games so I think Illuminati actually will do everything to stop anything and/or any one from interfering with those rituals. Now it make sense that security related budget of the Olympics will be at least 4 times bigger than the predicted one. And with latest news of the Army (Royal army!) deploying its staff to secure venues and people.. Soldiers in the streets? I think someone want us to get used to this sight and a police state situation. I actually just read in one post on the net that in May the army was conducting series of exercises in urban warfare with special emphasis on “anti-terror” measurements and dealing with crowds – exercises officially related to Olympics.. – maybe Olympics, maybe not.. and if Olympics indeed – what they were really preparing for? To prevent or to bring order after..?

I wrote a bit about The Stadium but on the grounds of the Olympic site is also a monument, the largest public piece of art in the United Kingdom. It is being built specifically for the 2012 Olympics. It is called the ArcelorMittal Orbit. It rises 115 meters into the air (377 feet).

The Wikipedia article on this monument contains the following words:

*Tom Dyckhoff of The Times, while calling it a “a gift to the tabloids” and a “giant Mr. Messy,” questioned whether the Olympic site needed another pointless icon, postulating whether Orbit would stand the test of time like the London Eye and become a true icon to match the Eiffel Tower, or a hopeless white elephant. Suggesting the project had echoes of Tatlin’s Monument to the Third International, and especially Constant Nieuwenhuys’ utopian city New Babylon, he asked whether Orbit was just as revolutionary or possessed the same ideological purpose..*

*New Babylon is a Utopian anti-capitalist city designed in 1959-74 by artist-architect Constant Nieuwenhuys. Henri Lefebvre explained: “a New Babylon -- a provocative name, since in the Protestant tradition Babylon is a figure of evil. New Babylon was to be the figure of good that took the name of the cursed city and transformed itself into the city of the future.. In the New Babylon, the bourgeois shackles of work, family life, and civic responsibility would be discarded. The post-revolutionary individual would wander from one leisure environment to another in search of new sensations. Beholden to no one, he would sleep, eat, recreate, and procreate where and when he wanted. Self-fulfilment and self-satisfaction were Constant’s social*

goals. Deductive reasoning, goal-oriented production, the construction and betterment of a political community--all these were eschewed."

This construction was designed by Anish Kapoor, and financed by England's wealthiest citizen, Lakshmi Mittal, owner of ArcelorMittal steel company. Anish Kapoor admits to being inspired by the Tower of Babel in his design (see Wikipedia for reference). The impression one has while standing in front of this monstrosity is confusion. There is no symmetry and the mind has trouble perceiving any order or beauty in the tower. A sense of dissonance and discord prevails. This is fitting as the name Babel means "confusion".

In a strange twist, unlike Nieuwenhuys who called his kingdom by the evil name of Babylon while it was good, Satan would take his evil kingdom and give it the name Zion.

Speaking of the buildings it is worth noting, that thanks to royal (!) family of Qatar we have over the Olympic village and over the whole of London now – the Shard. Maybe it is just me (I actually came across quite a few posts on the net mentioning this as well) but it really reminds me the tower of Mordor with all-seeing eye on the top from famous Tolkien's Trilogy. At the beginning I found this connotation making me smile but short research brought some fascinating facts. For example – you may remember that Trilogy starts



with 111th (!) birthday of the Wizard, then there are Two Towers (9/11?) and then – The Return of the King (Prince William's future role?). I wrote earlier about Mount Olympus and Olympia from where Olympic fire travels – what about the Mount of Fire and its Rings of Power.. – arresting when you compare it with Olympic rings in its logo! On the top of it you have to remember that J.J. Tolkien was a professor at the Oxford University, institution obviously run and controlled by Illuminati. He wrote in one of his letters that the story was just coming to him while writing it..

Besides the above, from the rituals and symbolism I would like to point out one which is really striking – women's triathlon event.

Women's triathlon was introduced to the Olympics only in 2000 in Sydney. In London it will take place in and around Hyde Park on 4th of August – 55 women will in the morning of that day enter the water of the Serpentine lake.. According to the Bible Satan in the paradise deceived Eve and Adam by the character of the snake (serpent) and several religions, occultism and freemasons are teaching about snake power energy. Water itself is a powerful symbol of life and fertility especially if it is located around so many war and death memorials – and Hyde Park is full of them. It gets even more interesting if we remember that Kensington gardens, next to Hyde park, is designed in the way that

landscape around includes pentagram and the Masonic square compass – both fundamental Masonic symbols, with the Serpentine beneath and Kensington Palace in front of it all (former palace of princess Diana, her memorial is located as well in Hyde Park, next to Serpentine.. and will be soon a residence of Prince William..) – all seen pretty clearly in the aerial view of this part of the town.

Women taking part in triathlon, after the swim, will be cycling (yellow route in the picture below) to Buckingham palace and the Goddess of Victory in front of it along the route which strangely reminds the birthing channel. Symbolically it is enormous – one could say those women will carry the semen (water) of the Serpent (from Serpentine), enter the birthing channel, and give a birth to something or some one in front of Buckingham Palace – and on that day, 4th of August it will be exactly 30th anniversary of Prince William's baptism which took place.. at Buckingham Palace. That's one of the reasons I believe Prince William, born btw on a day of summer solace, with royals loyal to NWO around the world, is being prepared for a very important role in the near future..

Every detail of the Olympic events has been planned with great care. They are impregnated with occult symbolism, and this Olympics stands to be the greatest occult celebration of the rising of NWO rule over the earth that has yet been seen.

This is all just the tip of the iceberg. Unfortunately it may up there be a little chaotic and will raise more questions than answers as I was trying to squeeze a lot of things into maximum 10 pages. Read it again please, send it to people you think may be interested in the subject, do your own researches – during research pieces of the puzzle slowly fall into place – I myself have still a few loose ones though.

I think Illuminati place sings quite clearly in front of our eyes – some see it but can't really do anything about it anyway apart maybe from letting others know, some see it but they for some reasons don't, or can't, care.. or do not believe in what they see. Some do not see it at all but get the message unconsciously anyway.. zion here, zion there, new Jerusalem.. – it must be good.. – but it is not. You have to see the whole picture. It is Babylon. It is New World Order.

In our busy life, working, worrying about the future, providing for ourselves and families we have no time and will to think and recognise the real dangers and real treasures, we have no time to find solutions to the system making us chase after money most of our life – after false god fictionally putting value on everything from bread roll to the house, from slice of cake to human life. And around 80% of all the money on the financial market, 80% of your money, is not even real, it is just a

binary code in the computers, numbers in the system, numbers on your bank statement – but because of those numbers we sometimes forget about our souls, about love, goodness, truth..

I’ve spent a long time researching current times and history (alternative), Bible, Illuminati and Masons and personally I believe in existence of people pulling the strings from behind the curtains, standing behind governments, politicians, economists, falling quality of education, widening wealth gap, ... wars and terrorists. I believe that The Bible is a real story but misinterpreted. I believe.. well – I believe in a lot of sometimes unbelievable things but this is a very long story and I, after all, may be wrong. Time will show.

Wish you all well – have only the reasons to smile and be truly happy!

J

This writing and more should appear on my website at some point in the near future – [www.leopArt.com](http://www.leopArt.com)

END NOTES

St Nilus was a 5th century ascetic monk who was a disciple of St John Chrysostom (a doctor of the Church). He made a prophecy (though some dispute it dates from his time) relating to the 20th century which is striking in its foresight. Here are a few particularly pertinent sections of his prophecy – the last phrase is particularly interesting (– remember those below are words from 5th century, over 1500 years ago!):

“After the year 1900, toward the middle of the 20th century, the people of that time will become unrecognizable. When the time for the Advent of the Antichrist approaches, people’s minds will grow cloudy from carnal passions, and dishonour and lawlessness will grow stronger. Then the world will become unrecognizable. [...] People’s appearances will change, and it will be impossible to distinguish men from women due to their shamelessness in dress and style of hair. [...] At that time the morals and traditions of Christians and of the Church will change. People

will abandon modesty, and dissipation will reign. Falsehood and greed will attain great proportions, and woe to those who pile up treasures. Lust, adultery, homosexuality, secret deeds and murder will rule in society. [...] At that time men will also fly through the air like birds and descend to the bottom of the sea like fish. And when they have achieved all this, these unhappy people will spend their lives in comfort without knowing, poor souls, that it is deceit of the Antichrist.”

New World Order (NWO, N.W.O.) is the global totalitarian dream that a banker, Mayer Amschel Rothschild, helped revive in around 1760 to protect his private bank from government regulation. His grand blue print is best described by his paid social engineer called Dr. Adam [Spartacus] Weishaupt, Professor of Canon Law in the University of Ingolstadt – Weishaupt adopted the term “Illuminati.” Recent USA presidents in their speeches were often referring to building the New World Order.

The “War on Terror” has been manufactured by the New World Order to finally realise their goal of total world domination. This is war which

cost fortune but would never be won, every one can be called a terrorist but no one would even ever see any. New World Order has created a globalized economy in order to create financial dependencies between the nations.

The crash of the American Dollar most likely will be used as the Trojan Horse to destroy the globalized market and create the chaos and conditions required to bring in the New World Order. The crash of the world economies coupled with food shortages (famine) and World War III in the Middle East will be used to create the perfect crises out of which the New World Order will arise as the solution. They invented it, planned it, and they will make it work. The NWO modus operandi uses a simple Problem>Reaction>Solution process to gain control.

NWO support democracy because in this system they can easily control people on the top of power by corruption or fear, one NWO puppet is replaced by another in so-called democratic voting. Royals and other powerful figures around the world opposing NWO are destroyed (Tsars, French royals, Kennedy family, Husain, Kaddafi,...). Illuminati use their money, power and control to manufacture the crises or at least their knowledge to do nothing to prevent them, just to use them or to use the consequences of natural disasters. In reaction to those, the people cry out for help from the horrors of war, famine and despair – NWO seizes this opportunity to deceive and enslave the masses into their One World Dictatorship / Government. There is no real clash of cultures, East vs. West, Christian vs. Muslim, but instead Illuminati controlled propaganda is manufacturing conflicts to keep us in fear so we continue to play the game. We are all pawns in this game and until we realise this truth we will continue to be exploited by the New World Order for their personal gain.

Neville,

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.” Edmund Burke (1729-1797) – English statesman

“I wondered why somebody didn’t do something. Then I realized – I am somebody.” Unknown

What a wonderful challenge you have set, one that has really captured my imagination. I was out with Kel this morning Walking the Land and mentioned my suggestion to him. He urged me to send it off to you, so here it is.

Your proposal to conceive an artwork describing the greatest possible distance/disconnection from the Opening Ceremony on July 27th is founded on your challenge to the notion that the Olympic Games are a catalyst for regeneration and doubt that legacy is being created. I am sure that the experience of your commission with the ODA and contact with East London communities will have informed this current project.

I would like to offer you a counter challenge which will both spotlight the ‘people and communities passed by’ as you put it, and demonstrate the legacy that is being achieved at a great distance from the Olympic Park and host boroughs – in Weymouth and Portland.

My proposal is for you to travel the greatest possible distance by going backwards through 150-180 million years to the quarries of the Isle of Portland within the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, and to a community as socially and economically challenged as those surrounding the Olympic Park. Specifically, I would propose that you engage with young people imprisoned in the Young Offenders Institution on

the Isle of Portland, some of whom may have family in East London.

My challenge back to you then, is that by travelling this distance away from the razzmatazz, you will be travelling towards a place and community where the choice of Weymouth Bay as the venue for the sailing events, has inspired a strong environmental partnership which, through Wild About Weymouth and Portland, is undertaking projects supporting young people to learn skills to address their own disconnection.

The modes and routes that I suggest you travel are:

1. Olympic Park to River Thames at Bow Creek by foot or water down the River Lea, a tributary of the Thames.
2. By Thames Clipper along the River Thames to Greenwich.
3. Disembark and walk west along the Thames Path National Trail to Goring and Streatley and pick up the Ridgeway National Trail
4. Cycle the Ridgeway south west to Overton Hill, the end of the Ridgeway.
5. On foot, follow the ancient route of the Ridgway along ridge lines on rights of way to Swanage on the Dorset coast, just east of Weymouth and Portland
6. Travel by sea kayak to the start of the new England Coast Path at Rufus Castle (Church Ope Cove) on the Isle of Portland.

6. Disembark beneath the towering walls of the Young Offenders Institution to a warm welcome from the governor, young people and the Wild About Weymouth and Portland project manager, Lynn Cooch.

[http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/nmp-south-dorset-ridgeway/South\\_Dorset\\_Ridgeway\\_NMP\\_web.pdf](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/nmp-south-dorset-ridgeway/South_Dorset_Ridgeway_NMP_web.pdf)

I hope that this proposal has appeal and it goes without saying that I would be more than happy to help with the organisation of your journey back in time.

Kind regards,

Jacqui

Neville,

I think the ‘greatest distance’ must be metaphorical. I worry that to take yourself a literal distance away from the opening of the Olympic Games has the potential to be seen as arrogant when you’ve been so involved. Rather, I would like to see you try do something for those you identify as being adversely affected by London 2012 and its legacy.

As the opening ceremony begins with the arrival of the torch relay (from Greece and representing the Olympic Spirit), I propose that at the moment the flame is lit, you facilitate an alternative torch relay symbolising the ‘real’ spirit and legacy of the event.

The flame will be created by those identified as being dispossessed or disillusioned by the coming of the Olympics, whether through being moved from their houses, unable to get tickets or having to change the name of their shop. You will design an event whereby the dispossessed share their experiences before creating a flame which is carried, either by relay or as a group, to a predetermined destination where it will be symbolically presented/ returned to the IOC.

The alternative torch relay will be documented through film, photography and the collecting of testimonies of the dispossessed, the £1000 to be spent on event costs and publication.

James

Hi Neville

I managed to spread the word of your project through the campus so I hope you received some nice suggestions. I havn’t been able to send you my thoughts though. I would love to know what you have planned. I had been thinking of such curiosities as life on the ‘happiest place on earth’- Vanuatu! somewhere I would love to explore.

Here is a link of [An Idiot Abroad, Desert Island -S2 E01](#), I enjoyed it all but about 20 mins in was something interesting.

I also find the concepts of competition for the sake of unity fascinating. Some tribes of skilled fishermen compete for pride and fish with extraordinary patience, stamina and skill to then return and share the bounty equally, in such remote places as Aropa, Anuta islands, elsewhere in the South Pacific. Truly a world away from the our Capital.

James

Neville

I’ve been thinking about your problem and I vacillate

1. you should do some kind of penance (I think you may ask for suggestions maybe you have some already )

2. you should completely ignore the whole thing i.e. don’t watch don’t do anything special sleep maybe take telly radio away don’t buy papers don’t look at posters don’t have conversations about it don’t engage in anyway if it’s possible record how hard it is I don’t know do you live in london maybe not. I live here and I think its going to be tough here maybe move here for the two weeks and then ignore it

3. go to the original olympic site in greece and have your own games with your family and friends or read through the original olympian ideals maybe thats a penance and could be done anywhere maybe you should write them out like lines .

or

4. you could watch me on tv in the opening ceremony and see if you can find me I could give you a clue if you wanted god knows im going to try and hide myself so you’ll be doing very well if you did look at us promoting our nation to the world look how proud we are

best

Janet

Hi Neville

Re: The Great Escape or the Greatest Distance

I think that you should go to Argentina. Firstly, as a symbol of political distance between two countries.

As the UK ‘celebrates’ the 30th anniversary of the Malvinas / Falklands conflict.

Secondly as a symbol of political / militaristic display- linked to the Malvinas/Falklands anniversary.

At a time when the military statuary of London is expanding – a £5million Bomber Command Memorial is being unveiled on 28th June 212 in Green Park with a Lancaster Bomber flypast dropping red poppies.

The London2012 Olympics has taken over the city as a military organisation of the urban space of the city, under the assumption of an imagined ‘security’ threat. This will involve large scale troop army, navy and RAF activity over and through the city of London.

The medal ceremonies will involve the visible presence of the armed forces as carriers of the medals when they are presented to the athletes.

Secondly, as a symbol of Cultural Exchange between the UK (and by implication the nations at the International Olympics) to represnt a united cultural activity to unite nations in peaceful, cooperative, amicable activity. The fact that you

are a single individual undertaking this is a poignant opposed to the mass transportation and displacement of athletes, media, spectators, and administrators

regards

Jeremy

Dear Neville,

The antipodian location would be 51S 179E give or take a few sea miles. If you set off from Dunedin on the South Island of New Zealand you should head off in a South Easterly direction and sail or fly out about 700kms.

Jeremy

Hello Neville

Thanks for this – great idea.

My immediate thought is that the greatest distance from the Olympic Park would probably be a residential flat on the fringes of the Park.

The proximity would highlight the fact that the residents have no involvement in the Games, no tickets, no interest, no cultural connection etc.

I’ll forward to people I think would be interested.

Jes

Dear Neville,

I hope you are well and enjoying your trip to South Africa. Last weekend we visited Freya at the mill- it was so nice to enjoy the sunshine in Stroud!

Apologies for having taken so long to get back to you regarding the Olympic project – I hope we have made it in time! Please find below Oli’s and my response to your call for ideas:

Oliver: The Olympic machine tries to absorb everything of human and cultural value that it can. Sport, art, entertainment, ethics, politics, infrastructure and regeneration, civic duty, international relations, democracy, world peace, commerce and philosophy – the Olympics has a finger in every pie. It just sucks it all up into a vortex. It is difficult to think of a physical or philosophical space beyond its reach. To find and occupy that space would be to get as far away from the Olympics as possible.

Jess: The core of the Olympics is the celebration of human physicality, or physical ability, as a means of achieving super-human, near-godlike status. Mount Olympus was the seat of the gods. The Olympic torch represents the heavenly power stolen by Prometheus – a human victory over the gods, unlocking human potential. Through great feats of athleticism, Olympians reach into a celestial, divine space. But over the past century, we have become more aware of physical human potential having been overtaken by

technology. Technological prosthetics have helped man orbit the Earth and walk on the Moon. ‘Super-human’ has given way to ‘meta-human’, and the revelation that human potential is greater when combined with science and technology, which has somehow perhaps subverted our own understanding of our physicality as a species. In other words, the Olympics is all about maxing out our human potential, but it tries to ignore the fact that we can go beyond human potential through technology. Like video-games and virtual worlds that enable us to remain relatively still physically, and simultaneously active and productive.

Oliver: The symbolism is blurred because Prometheus was arguably stealing a piece of technology, but I guess that’s the point – the modern Olympics is no longer a strong reflection of the Promethean ideal.

Jess: The notion of celestial space is key. Writing on the human condition, Hannah Arendt described the immediate reaction to the moon landing as one of relief, in the sense that humans could finally escape ‘imprisonment to the earth’. That sense of going beyond the earth and reaching into a celestial space is a sentiment underlying the Olympics, but the advance of technology is making, or has made, that sentiment increasingly symbolic. It is this fracture between the ideals reflected in the

aesthetics and physical challenges of the Olympics, and what we now know is possible, that seems to offer an outside perspective on the Games. This shift in perception might perhaps call into question the philosophical foundations and motivations of the Olympics.

Therefore, to be the furthest from the Olympics, I imagine a space, whether real or virtual, just beyond the reaches of human strength and physicality. Obviously, the idea of space immediately conjures up ideas of physical remoteness, but it is the philosophical significance of space travel that is interesting. I imagine an artwork that engages directly with the duality of this metaphorical and physical distance. My proposal for the ‘furthest distance from the Olympics’ is to go to the NASA Goddard Space Centre in the USA (<http://www.giss.nasa.gov/about/visiting/>) (or alternatively, the UK Space centre in Swindon!!) and, at the start of each of the first event on each day of the Olympics, document the position of ‘Voyager 1’- the furthest satellite from Earth. It might also be interesting to record dialogues with both an aeronautical engineer and, separately, an athlete, about human potentiality and development, and the relationship between physical capabilities and technology.

Oliver: I don’t feel that I want to use the traditional Olympic ideal as a

springboard to determine the furthest place from the Olympics. If the actual Olympics aren’t going to pay much attention to it, why should I? I’m more taken by this idea of the Olympics as a black hole of meaning, sucking all of human experience and value into it and belching it out. What are the things that even the Olympic machine wouldn’t try to co-opt? Could you spend the Olympic opening ceremony at a terrorist training camp? Or doing something morally good but not easily absorbed into a brand strategy, like helping to rehabilitate pedophiles? Distributing contraceptives to sex workers?

All the best,

Jess / Oliver



Dear Neville,

At the now defunct airfield outside Richmond (in the Great Karoo desert, Northern Cape Province, South Africa) you will find the remnants of the old 'airport control building' – a ruin that consists of three and a half walls; there is no roof left, no door, no windows, just bricks and crumbling plaster. Here you will find no people, no noise, no technology and no hint of the Olympics. There is a solitary chair painted against one wall. If you seat yourself here during the day you will see only blue skies above. If you seat yourself here during the night you will see only starry skies.

There is no need to reserve the seat because nobody comes here anymore; just wild animals, birds, insects, perhaps a lonely lamb.

Even if you can not make it here, just imagine that you occupy the chair on the wall from wherever you are.

Cheers

John



Hi, Neville

Jason passed your project on.

After due deliberation I suggest you go to the original Games site in Greece. The moral distance between it and the current Olympics is as great as can be imagined. And at present being in Greece would have a resonance of its own.

Alternatively you could go to one (or all) of the spiritual homes of the present Olympics – the global HQ of Coca-Cola, Budweiser or McDonald's.

All best

John

I would suggest getting together with some local people and playing simple non-competitive, co-operative games with them. I know there are such things but it would be fun to find out what they are. (Sex, done properly, not 'who comes first', but I don't think that would be on, popular though it famously is among the athletes. Actually I'm surprised that synchronised sex isn't an Olympic sport anyway.) Passing a ball around and collaborating to keep it in the air might be more acceptable. Or how about role-play games involving dodging and making a fool of imagined Olympic security guards? But avoid counting or timekeeping?

You would only be able to recruit participants if it was fun, and they would have to not mind being captured on video somehow? Three hours is

a long time, though, and you might devote some of it to eating and drinking stuff that has none of the characteristics of Olympic sponsor products. And they would also have to prefer doing this to watching the opening ceremony. If Boris wins the mayoral election there might be scope for some piss-taking as well, although your locals wouldn't know who he was (their good fortune), and his showing at Beijing would be hard to parody.

All stream of consciousness to go into the mix!

Hi Neville,

I've read through the proposal, I think it is necessary to create a social and economic distance rather than a physical one.

Due to the nature of the event being global, physical distance is perhaps only a secondary concern. I also think that there is connection to be made between the life of an athlete and their daily routine and the life of that is has no relevance to. I'm not suggesting you go eat chips in coal mine for a day, but perhaps the natural starting point is to define what brings someone close to the Olympics so you can then work out how to get far enough away as possible, if that makes sense. So off the top of my head the criteria would be:

1. A location / society devoid of corporate visibility

Dear Neville,

I've been thinking about your project and wonder if the greatest possible (but still affordable!) distance might be in the water?

One of the issues I have with the Olympics in London is the impact they are having on the landscape and wildlife. It's not surprising that this is not discussed in any meaningful way, but I would nominate your spending the hours of your performance with non-humans in their environment...

Either in diving gear (which is man-made but enables you to behave more like the sea life you might encounter) or as you are. You could go to the Indian Ocean and dive in coral reefs or you could stay in London, battle your way through the Olympic superhighways and dive in the Thames, searching for life. I prefer the London option – the heroic battle towards your goal – like an inverted marathon where the object is not the screaming of the crowd but the silence of the deep.

With love,

Jordan



Hi Neville

I don't really feel qualified to adequately respond! But it would be lovely to have you back here – some interesting options are

Msinga area – specifically Elandsdraal at a store where locals bring their cell phones to be charged. It is one of the poorest areas in KZN and the most traditional in Zulu customs. I know a family of women there who are potters – they have had no education and sole source of income are their beer pots. It is unlikely they have ever heard of the Olympics.

Drakensberg area – Sibusiso lives in a home made from wrecked taxis made to look like the front end of aeroplane (see pic). He has built many of these homes. He tried to move his first "helicopter home" to his new site but it collapsed. He loves aeroplanes and sells small ones crafted from oil cans. He received a lot of publicity a number of years ago but couldn't cope with city life and fame so returned to his rural home.

Blaaubosch – just outside Newcastle. I recently visited an open cast mine where people make their own bricks and mine coal illegally – Many families live on the site – I can't really describe the place – it needs to be seen.

All the best with your project.

Judy

Hi Neville.

I would have similar thoughts to the Olympics and the huge other agenda.

It appears as one thing and is dressed and financed accordingly but there as I say there is a whole other agenda...

As a family we have not only opted out but have taken advantage in a non commercial way of homeswapping with another family through the guardian home exchange website. We are off to Versaille/ Paris and they are coming here with their Olympic tickets.

Not really the innovative, creative, far flung journey you are after but a family’s practical and creative solution to the disaffection!

Karen

Neville,

Don’t use the budget travelling far, learn argentine tango, it’s the ultimate escape to distance yourself from daily life, because you live in the moment of the 3 mins of the song just you and your partner in a collective experience with the dancers in the room....it’s hard to master, it awakens your brain and body to new experiences, it’s very addictive.....

Come along to tango south London TSL and learn salon tango from (imho the best in london, excellent teachers) Claire and Louis. Tom and I have been dancing at TSL for 6 years and it’s our physical and mental escape to another place, another culture and in many ways another time but paradoxically our way of appreciating and living in the moment.

Best wishes Kate

Hi Neville

the idea of being far, far away from the opening of the games resonated with my thoughts....i wonder if... well a slow walk to Athens to re-connect with original aspirations of the games may make a somewhat political statement that rejected the current interpretation of the games and what it stands for – or to be more realistic....the original British games were held not at ‘Much Wenlock’ but near to Chipping Campden on the Cotswold Way – and the first Games of the post-classical era to adopt the formal title ‘Olimpick’ took place in a field close to the Cotswold village of Chipping Campden in 1612

so I propose a Slow Walk around Gloucestershire’s own Olympian field, of 1612 thoughtful paces, metaphorically far enough away (in sentiment at least) from the commercialised nationalistic nonsense that will take place in london?

and it’s something that anybody could participate in with no winners

no athletes or their feet

there will be no losers, national anthems or tears

no commentators or pundit’s deconstructions

no sponsors

there’d be no prizes (except everyone could get a medal), no time disputes, drugs issues (unless it’s strong coffee to ward off the cold) or flag waving!

Hello Neville

How about cyling to Olympia, Elis [http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&q=Olympia, +Elis&bav=on.2,or\\_r\\_gc.r\\_pw.r\\_cp.r\\_qf.,cf.osb&biw=1292&bih=595&um=1&ie=UTF-8&ei=tfafT67bB8aj4gT93rDtAg&sa=X&oi=mode\\_link&ct=mode&cd=3&ved=0CA0Q\\_AUoAg](http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&q=Olympia,+Elis&bav=on.2,or_r_gc.r_pw.r_cp.r_qf.,cf.osb&biw=1292&bih=595&um=1&ie=UTF-8&ei=tfafT67bB8aj4gT93rDtAg&sa=X&oi=mode_link&ct=mode&cd=3&ved=0CA0Q_AUoAg)

the site of the original Olympics by bicycle because I like bicycles and it would take you 50 or more days to travel there with lots of places to visit

<http://bicycles.stackexchange.com/questions/6119/how-to-estimate-how-long-a-tour-will-take-uk-to-greece>

enjoy

Kevin Dennis

--

Spoke’n’Chain <http://spokenchain.blogspot.com/>

Kevin Dennis

How about travelling to the best playground there is Nishi Rokugu Koen Tokyo

<http://nipponnews.photoshelter.com/gallery/G00006V6tGwo6TWU>

The Timber Pavilion Hakone open air museum Japan

<http://www.archithings.net/open-air-climbing-net-hakone-pavilion-designed-by-tezuka-architects>

or simply an Adventure Playground with a big bunch of friends for play

Dear Neville

May 2012

Re: The Greatest Possible Distance

I propose for the London 2012 Opening Ceremony project that you walk from the Olympic Park to Eel Pie Island in East Twickenham, wearing electric shoes. These shoes, which have not yet been commercialised, use piezoelectric contacts in the heels to charge a small battery that can operate a radio tranceiver or cellphone.

Electric shoes were invented by Trevor Baylis, who lives on Eel Pie Island. He also invented the wind-up radio, which has had a major impact in developing countries. You will videomap your journey with a smartphone charged from a practice walk with the electric shoes and also charge spares while you walk – one on each shoe.

Racewalking is an Olympic event but everyday walking is another mode entirely. In this humble manifestation, it is perhaps the ‘Greatest Possible Distance’ from the 2012 ceremonial pomp. And yet we only ever get anywhere by walking. It is a fundamental act of human agency and can in certain circumstances be heroic.

Your shoes will have a pouch full of electronics (including a battery) on the side. This could arouse some concerns among the public. This would offer a parallel exploration of public space and associated notions of risk and safety.

According to google maps, the journey is approximately 17 miles and should take you six hours to complete. That calculation maps the most direct route but you are free to take another. Interestingly, you will traverse from far east to far west, across London central (<http://goo.gl/maps/jTyk>).

Your route should be tagged by tweets with the geolocator enabled. This tracking will enable others to later follow in your footsteps and do the same, creating over time a layered collaborative digital narrative, with a cutoff date in tandem when the Olympics comes to an end.

Upon reaching Eel Pie Island, Mr Bayliss and yourself should enjoy the opening ceremony together at the White Swan, adjacent the island. You will listen to the ceremony on a wind-up radio. Radio is the medium through which much of the world’s population will experience it also. They are, in effect, the ‘Greatest Possible Distance’ from the opening ceremony. You will continue to tweet as the ceremony begins, thus disrupting further time, space and technologies.

Best, Kim

Hi Neville,

a colleague passed on your proposal to what could possibly be your marathon endeavour.

My initial reaction, having followed the feverish anticipation (for some) of the Olympics in London, and having read the initial ‘Olympicism’ report by Pierre de Coubertin (which contains nuggets of equality, the betterment of humanity, the spirit of co-operation, and even some of the initial ancient Olympian ideas that include no weaponry and a cessation of hostilities between warring parties), I’d suggest that you should spend your £1000 visiting any shop that has Olympic in its title.

You could focus specifically on kebab houses, but obviously it’s up to you.

These may be some that have had a visit by the Olympiad junta (the stasi-like trading standards offshoot protecting brand identity), though I believe much of that was hot air. The nearest place to me is the Olympic Kebab on Tulse Hill whose proprietor is very friendly and would be a great person to interview.



Of course, one might have to call your greatest possible distance marathon something that doesn’t offend Locog, especially if you want to do live documentation of your trip on any social networking sites – as in this snippet taken from an article about Locog...

Crowd members don’t ...

- Upload a clip of William and Kate tripping up the steps of the Olympic stadium to Youtube: “A Ticket Holder may not license, broadcast or publish video and/or sound recordings, including on social networking websites and the internet.”

- Post your pictures to Facebook – this may fall under the same restriction.

- Take part in an ambush marketing stunt, “including, for the avoidance of doubt individual or group ambush marketing”.

I’m not sure how they close down that public arena, but it will evidently be part of the whole circus coming to town feel of the thing.

Anyway, that’s my two penneth worth. Good luck

Kypros

Dear Neville,

I think you can be right there at the opening and in your mind and heart be at the other end of the earth. Because if we cannot learn to be both there and not there in times of challenge and stress we will never avoid conflict or hold our own line. So be there and be as far away as you choose internally. Liz Rothschild. Presence and absence are all in the mind.

Liz

Neville,

Brilliant idea!

(To follow an obvious association given what you and I have been discussing and working on over last year or so....)

My immediate response is that you should return to Antarctica, which is an international zone, international like the Olympics, although, simultaneously unlike the Olympics as Antarctica (courtesy the South Atlantic Treaty) is – ostensibly – a place of international collaboration, whereas the Olympics is a 4 yearly moment of nationalistic competition.

But it will be mid-Winter, so you can’t get there!

Or are there flights of persuasion and imagination?

Practicalities aside, you would be hard put to get there on a budget of £1000, but on the other hand, money is simulation....

Good luck

Liz

Dear Neville

I will be on my allotment in Bristol during the opening ceremony, doing some gardening. For me this is the antithesis of corporate sell out; a place where I can be with family, friends and neighbours – encouraging wildlife, growing food to share and getting some exercise in the open air. You would be most welcome to join us.

With best wishes

Luci

Hi neville

hope things are going well, I received invitations to suggest where you should go – during the olympics - and expect you have many suggestions.

here it is, with a short explanation:

I thought there might be a country or two that isn't participating in the olympic games, and you could go there, but it isn't actually countries that participate, its sports federations and NOC's

then I found that only one of those participating Noc's or sports federations has banned about half of its citizenship from participating – i.e. Saudi Arabia which has an outright ban on females competing in sports.

Saudi Arabia: Sports Minister Confirms Women's Exclusion

The Saudi sports minister and head of the Saudi National Olympic Committee confirmed on April 4, 2012, that Saudi Arabia will not support women in practicing sports. Prince Nawwaf al-Faisal said: "Female sports activity has not existed [in the kingdom] and there is no move thereto in this regard."

therefore -and your budget limits will likely make this impossible – you could go to

National Olympic Committees, Athletic Associations/Organizations/Clubs

(Est. 1965)

POBox 6040, 11442 RIYADH , SAUDI ARABIA

Visiting address: Prince Faisal Fahd Olympic Complex RIYADH , SAUDI ARABIA

Tel.: +966 1 4821832

Fax: +966 1 4821951

E-mail: herawel@hotmail.com

URL: <http://www.saudiolympic.org.sa>

using any transport you wish, only with the proviso that such transport or means by which you travel is navigated, co-ordinated or provided to you solely by female pilots, sailors, drivers – some other things which women are prohibited from doing there.

"There is no doubt that the Saudi Arabian policy is in direct contravention of the Olympic Charter which states:

"Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic movement."

<http://www.womensviewsonnews.org/2012/04/saudis-should-be-banned-from-olympic-games/>

good luck with your journey, whether it is this suggestion or no, and I hope this finds you well

cheers

Mac

Hi Neville,

Fascinating project – can't wait to see where you end up and how – with regard to suggestions – guess mine are not highly original but thought I would throw them into the pot.....

My personal interpretation of distance would be to spend that day in Jakarta – where a population of 28 million produces enough rubbish a day to fill 10 Olympic size swimming pools – and where families and children have to scavenge what they can in order to survive. The point being that Jakarta's waste is visible and massive – but how much more do we produce as a country? – in fact the whole world and what is happening to our planet as a result? Just because it is hidden in the western world doesn't make the problem go away. The Olympics have become about money and waste – in terms of all the 'kit' and paraphernalia that is developed around it – all the marketing, the fast food etc, the leaflets, posters etc. And all this waste end up as landfill afterwards. It is consumerism at its worst – buying into a concept that actually no longer exists – that all countries can find common aims and goals through sport – it's about countries finding common sponsors and corporate profits.

My other proposal would be to spend the day in the Stock Exchange – where professional greed can outrun the greatest of athletes any day....

Kindest regards Maggie

Hi Neville

We met up in Inverness a couple of years back, when Matt Baker introduced us and we spoke about your work, Scotland, Liverpool, Antarctica and hitch hiking through desert landscapes...

I'm intrigued about your greatest possible distance Olympic project. The question reminded me of the strangest thing I've ever witnessed in a sporting contest. When I was a student I worked for a promotion company who provided parking, ticket sales and security for large scale sporting competitions. One summer, I ended up working at the Belfry golf course for the Ryder Cup. As I had an access-all-areas pass, I carried an element of swagger with me, I could go anywhere on site and would often blag my way into the corporate hospitality suites in the tented village and fill my pockets with all the luxury treats and drinks for my own appetite and that of my hard working, under paid crew.

I'm not a great golf fan and had spent the weekend watching people fly into the site in helicopters, only to be collected and transported to the hospitality suite via golf buggy. I'd noticed one particularly fat necked, multi-millionaire with the obligatory blonde 'niece' on his arm, having to undergo the physical discomfort of walking from his helicopter to a waiting golf buggy and spotted him at a table in the hospitality suite where he was feted by an army of clones wearing

golfing uniforms of Pringle jumpers and comfortable pastel slacks.

The tournament was drawing to a conclusion. The wealthy feller's table was heaving with bulky mobile phones, food, cigars, champagne – all the trappings of his overt consumption. He sat with his back to the actual golf course, a mere 100 metres away. This particular suite had a perfect uninterrupted view of the 18th green.

It was by far the best seat in the house, and no doubt came with a hefty price. I stood at the back of the suite trying to be inconspicuous and watched as the golfer who played the winning putt sank to his knees in tears and the cheering crowd engulfed him and team mates. The wealthy man at the table, with his back to the golf course, slowly lifted his head from his plate and briefly watched the scene on the large TV monitors in the suite.

The experience struck me as bizarre, that here was a man whose wealth insured an invite to the best seat at a global tournament and he couldn't be bothered to shift his neck to turn around and witness the event a mere 100 metres away, live. He experienced it via a TV screen and a satellite link rather than turn around.

I think the greatest distance from the Opening Ceremony at the 2012 Olympic games will be found in the kitchens of the Olympic stadium. The kitchens that serve the diners in the hospitality suites, paid for by

global corporate business and media. I imagine that a man or woman, probably of a non Anglo-Saxon origin, will be up to their elbows scrubbing the pots and pans used to feed the wealthy and disinterested, who are only there by invitation and because ‘it’s the place to be seen’. I doubt my imaginary kitchen staff will have an opportunity to sneak out into the corridors and steal a peek down the tunnel past the security guards, at the spectacle of global sporting camaraderie taking place below.

I would like you to spend the three hours of the ceremony recording interviews with the kitchen and waiting staff who serve the ‘top tables’ and ask them about their relationship with sport. Do they participate, did they take part as children? After the cameras have been switched off and the crowds have gone home, I’d like you to arrange one processional lap of the Olympic stadium with all the staff working in the low paid jobs at the arena, where they can celebrate the fact that the Olympics is for them, but cannot operate without them. They’re the real sporting heroes.

Hope this finds you hale and hearty

Yours aye

Mark

Neville –

We suggest that you go to Mount Hiei overlooking Kyoto in Japan and see if you can meet with one of the Kaihigyo monks – spiritual athletes from the Tendai Buddhist Sect. These monks wear course straw sandals, an all white outfit and a special long rolled straw hat and they undergo an intensive physical and mental training to run the equivalent of a 1000 day marathon over seven years. These extraordinary running monks and the long Buddhist tradition that they are part of is as far away from the competitive and commercial spirit of the Olympic games as we can imagine. We visited Mount Hiei a few years ago and caught glimpses of the terrain that they run. A 1000 day marathon stretches our comprehension but it is for the most part done with a high degree of privacy as well as privation.

You should probably travel to Kyoto by the most energy efficient means available to you –a merchant ship from the UK to Osaka and then hitch hike to Mount Hiei?

You should endeavour to find out as much as you can about the monks and to record or document your experience in such a way that you or a specialist in the subject can give a lecture/ presentation in the UK following your return – to which we would obviously like to be invited to satisfy our own curiosity and fascination with these monks.

You will find more information on the internet or by reading The Marathon Monks of Mount Hiei by John Stevens.

This gives an idea of their training regime:

1st year: 100 consecutive days of 26.2-mile marathons, beginning at 1:30 a.m., each day after an hour of prayer

2nd year: 100 consecutive days of 26.2 mile marathons

3rd year: 100 consecutive days of 26.2 mile marathons

4th year: 100 consecutive days of 26.2 mile marathons – performed twice

5th year: 100 consecutive days of 26.2 mile marathons – performed twice

On the 700th day, the monks undergo a 9 day fast without food, water, rest or sleep – a mind-boggling feat which would result in certain death for most human beings, before having a short rest of a few weeks and increasing their gruelling schedule

6th year: 100 consecutive days of 37.5 mile marathons

7th year: 100 days of 52.2 mile marathons and 100 days of 26.2 mile marathons.

All the best

Mark and tamiko

Neville

The furthest distance for me is in the polar ideas that guide what we as humans believe are worthy.. For me it’s in my magic spot at PP(real name not disclosed as we want to keep it pristine!!) leaning against my rock which has stood sentinel for eons and contemplating the true rings of existence...

Cycles    soil water air

Connectedness    everything is connected to everything else

Energy Flow    from the Sun to all living things

Relationships    food chains animals plants

Interdependence    everything depends on everything else

It’s having the freedom to WONDER at the awesomeness on the eagle soaring from its lofty towers,the migrating whale following ancient migrating routes to its mating grounds,the tenaciousness of the kangaroo resisting human intrusion, the clarion call of the currawong reminding us just how tenuous the threads that bind us to the greater whole can be so easily broken.. And I count my blessing that I have the luxury of this time to reflect that I’m not in a war zone,searching for food to feed my family and that I have shelter at close of day...

Stewardship, tolerance, inclusiveness adn harmony (the antithesis of competition,corporate greed and all the pomp that accompanies it). The urgency to reconnect with the true rings of existence is lost in a fractured world of corporate greed. Musings from a special place in the southern hemisphere!!!!

Marrian

Neville

The greatest possible distance from the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic Games is Batignolles, in the 17th arrondissement of Paris.

Paris was one of the five cities shortlisted to hold the games and was widely seen as the favourite to win the bid. On 6 July 2005 it lost the final round of voting to London (50-54). The tiny distance of four votes leads to the huge distance of alternative possibilities.

Had the Paris bid been successful, the athletes’ village would have been built in Batignolles on wasteland belonging to SNCF, the French national railway. This land is currently being regenerated with housing, retail and offices around a centre park, the Martin Luther King garden.

Batignolles and Stratford are therefore seperated by the infinite distance of the counter-factual yet one has continued to echo the other. This raises interesting questions about how much of a catalyst for regeneration the Olympics really are.

You should start as close to the Olympic Village in Stratford as possible and walk to St Pancras following the line of the railway as much as possible. You should then take the Eurostar (which will stop at Stratford International) to Paris and walk to Parc Martin-Luther-King in Batignolles to coincide with the start of the Opening Ceremony.

It would be intriguing to compare the permeability of public space around both parks and whether, by being disconnected from the Olympics, Batignolles has managed to reconnect with its people.

Martin

Hi Neville,

Wow, you’ve just blown me away, I had no idea!! Well, I think you walked into someone right here, who just happened to escape from the un-real of the corporate world to absolute reality as far away as possible, what could be further from the Billions earned by big corporates than the dire poverty of Africa. I don't suggest that you do it permanently like I do, but for the duration of the opening ceremony, it could be something, and as I said in our talk this afternoon, one cannot hope to change the world overnight, but even less in 3 hours, but in that short space of time, you most certainly can make a difference in one person’s life, and that is all it takes to succeed.

I can assure you the billions earned by the big corporates, the money spent by the British government and the city of London, is only going to enrich the rich, it’s not going to make a difference in the life of “Joe Soap” who is struggling to keep his family alive down near the docks. The soccer world cup is a perfect example, billions spent on the “show-piece” FIFA, a few businessmen, and the South African Government were all who benefited, today the stadiums, all except 2, are white elephants surviving on permanent tax payer bailouts, and the desperately poor who got nothing back then, get even less right now.

Perhaps, the furthest place could be right here in the heart of the Karoo, where we have 84% unemployment,

the highest rate of foetal alcohol syndrome in the world, an extremely high rate of HIV infection and astronomical rates of teenage pregnancy, one couldn’t get further from the Bollinger and Beluga of the opening ceremony, Simple question, how many mouths can an ounce of Beluga feed,

- a. At the opening ceremony?\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Here at the local soup kitchen?\_\_\_\_\_

Ciao 4 Now,

Michael

Hi Neville,

We met at the conference in Newcastle earlier in the year. I hope you’re well and as promised here is my suggestion for the greatest possible distance. I think the greatest possible distance is not a matter of geography rather the questionable ethical actions that are involved in the staging of the Olympics and the people and places that it effects. Specifically I am thinking about the displaced homeless people that are strongly encouraged to move out of the area to ensure that the Olympic precinct is clean, beautified and fit for international visitation. The peoples’ games huh, perhaps a more apt description may be the right peoples’ games. This is by no means a new phenomenon it certainly occurred in Sydney in 2000 and in Atlanta in 1996. I feel that to go the greatest possible distance it seems necessary to find the place where the Olympics push unwanted people towards.

To highlight the gulf between rhetoric and actions, I also have a suggestion to your activities when you find this place. Embrace the aspirations of inclusivity, join the Olympics disregarded people and share an action, a meal, something to bring together people to share a moment.

Anyway, all the best for the project. I think it is a great idea. If this suggestion is selected I would love to be involved.

Regards Michael

Hi Neville

Great counter-idea

I’d go somewhere which was the antithesis of the Olympics – Somewhere in an earlier evening time zone when it’s still light, and not dark, fairly sunny and where deprived/working class/ poor kids are just playing various open space/ street/beach sports for the sheer fun of it. Poverty/wealth, young/older and other contrasts, and of course they aren't in front of the television watching the opening. . That would probably mean somewhere like Brazil where the time would be about 5 pm. I'd go west rather than east. But you’d need to be sure of a good location, and some research would be needed to establish somewhere with the right combinations of vitality, local colour, play and non-commercialism.

Possible motto for the Olympics

- 1. Reassuringly expensive
- 2. A few moments of legacy, a lifetime of debt.

Hi Neville,

The beach has always been a place of play, free, and fairly liminal, so just ad hoc examples of sociability and fun and sporting play. But there is also charity work which may be one avenue to explore. When I was over in Rio for a conference a few years ago I visited some charity work activity with children from the slums involving

various sorts of sport, usually beach based, and that seemed to go on through the afternoon and early evening, so there may still be similar activities on the beach. Giving to the community, rather than exploiting, offering real opportunities, not commercial, not professional, not cynical. I can't find the example I visited on line, but here's another one. <http://www.volunteerhq.org/volunteer-in-brazil.html>. Maybe one of these organisations could find a not too dangerous locale not far from Rio, not too difficult to get to, where the beach is a place for pleasurable, purposeful play, and you could record various perceptions from children, adults, rich and poor while the Olympic opening ceremony was going on in England about the way meanings were made from sport, the Olympics, and so on.

Mike

Hi Neville

Wonderful project!

My immediate thought is to suggest a tropical island. But not any old one: the Indian Ocean island Diego Garcia (though I'm not sure whether this would be feasible with your budget).

Reasoning is that it's a remote place that the government doesn't want us to think or know about, primarily because of their removal of the resident (Chagos Islanders) population for essentially politico-military reasons (including the suspicion of hosting CIA 'extraordinary rendition' activities), and their policy not to allow the population to return (while brazenly declaring it a marine reserve). So the politics of the situation are both a reflection of the Olympic site, and an antithesis to it (massive publicity/minimised publicity). See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diego\\_Garcia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diego_Garcia), including the Wikileaks aspect.

I'll pass your email on to others, don't worry! And will look forward to what emerges -

all best wishes

Nat

Dear Neville,

Our mutual friend Bevis Bowden suggested I write to you. I have been working on an Olympic themed installation for some months, and had wondered about submitting its location for you for The Greatest Possible Distance. However due to unfortunate delays in putting it together I think it's not suitable for submission within your understandable time frame, mainly as what I'm doing can't really be made public until I've completed it (I'll explain below). Notwithstanding this, and as I have enjoyed your work on the Olympics so much and particularly like the idea behind The Greatest Possible Distance, I thought I'd drop you a line with what I've been up to in case you were interested. I now realise I should have done this well before your deadline - I bet you're very busy right now, so apologies.

Since the beginning of this year I have been transporting various items into a disused mill building in Docklands, in order to set up a multi-stage installation inside. The building is abandoned, fenced and patrolled by security guards, so I have done this surreptitiously, without the knowledge of the owners or the security guards who are not allowed inside the building itself. I am calling the installation Legacy.

Legacy Part One:

I have carried many bags of compost inside, and set up a small allotment

in a room on the 7th floor. I have planted this up with vegetable seeds, and fed by water constantly dripping through the damaged ceiling above and light from the large windows in the room, the seeds have recently started to grow. The seeds that are now growing there were originally intended for a friend's plot in Manor Gardens Allotments, the century old allotments that were destroyed in the creation of the Olympic Park.

Legacy Part Two:

I have acquired 200 solar powered toy rowing boats from a factory in China. A blocked drain on the roof of the building has created a pool area, open to the sky. I have been transporting the toy boats into the building, and will shortly be releasing them all on this pool. When the sun shines the boats, one for each of the countries competing at the Olympics, will race each other around this area - rather chaotically if my recent tests are anything to go by. From this wonderful vantage point you can see the Thames Barrier, the Dome, the lights of the City of London and indeed the Olympic Stadium.

Legacy Part Three:

I will shortly be carrying in a portable battery powered TV / DVD set, an invalid carriage battery and a solar

charging panel. I will set the TV up in a small office room inside the building and play a DVD of the opening ceremony of the Athens Olympics on loop. Of the 22 buildings built for the Athens 2004 Olympics, 21 are now abandoned and patrolled by security guards, much like the mill building inside which I have been working.

I would hope that the pieces I have installed inside this rather beautiful abandoned building offer a contrast with what is being presented as the legacy of the London 2012 Olympics.

If I had completed this all weeks ago and was therefore able to submit a location to The Greatest Possible Distance, it would be the pool on the roof. You can see the Olympic Stadium where the ceremony is taking place quite clearly - certainly any fireworks would be impressive from this point - but the isolation up there is intense due to the extreme journey you have just made. You have to pass through several (often razor wired) fences, hundreds of yards of scrubland while keeping an eye out for the patrolling security guards, work your way into the basement of a very rotten building and from there up to the roof, paying careful attention to the rotten floors. Once there it is peaceful and picturesque - the building has a majesty and a history, but is as far from what I believe the Olympic Experience has turned into as it is possible to be.

I wish you every success with The Greatest Possible Distance, and look forward to finding out where you end up!

Best wishes,  
Nick

Hi Neville

suggestions for action for the opening:

bury yourself in a common grave in a cemetery (in afghanistan for added media impact)

mount olympus, taking part or looking for the original olympic poetry and song competitions


a busy A+E department

more to follow

oogoo

FLYING CARPETS

Oona & Tony



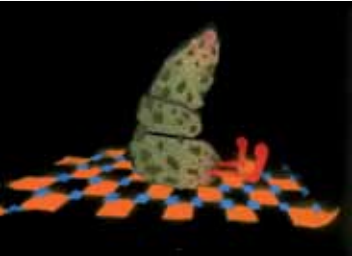
**Location:** A grassy area as close to the Olympic Stadium as possible without actually seeing it. 5 travellers, including Neville, will sit cross-legged in a small circle on 5 printed paper flying carpets made by Oona Grimes.

**Each traveller has a guide or genie who sits close to, but not on, their traveller’s flying carpet. Each genie has a different text describing a journey written by Tony Grisoni.**

**At a given time, the genies will blindfold their traveller, then begin reading the text to them in a quiet voice. The 5 will each picture their particular journey, visualising what is read to them.**

**Each journey ends at a different threshold to an unseen place. Remaining blindfolded, the travellers will quietly describe what they see and experience to their genie. The genie may ask questions to prompt them. This must be done very quietly. Each person will be aware of the other voices, but they must not be an intrusion.**

**When all have finished, the blindfolds will be removed and anyone present may ask questions prompting the travellers to describe their journey and tell what they saw there.**



Hi Neville,

I guess spending time with disadvantaged groups in the UK for whom the Olympics do nothing might be one idea. Alternatively given Olympic sport is now so far removed from the original idea perhaps going to Much Wenlock and doing one of the more obscure events from the first modern Olympics (egg and spoon race anybody?) would be fun. Perhaps just a jog in a park?

I wonder too if there is any space left where the corporate brands can’t get to you. Sadly, I pretty much doubt it.

I’ll keep thinking. Cheers

Paul

Neville,

Deelfontein is a ghost town stranded along the railway line almost exactly half way between Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa. The train no longer stops in Deelfontein, but a little over a hundred years ago, almost concurrent with the Modern Olympic Games, it used to be the centre of military activity. During the Boer War, [1899-1902] the last war where the British aggressively sought to extend the boundaries of Empire, Deelfontein was the frontline field hospital. The lasting testimony to its past is the cemetery filled with soldiers no older then the athletes that will compete in London.

Today it takes a long overland journey to reach Deelfontein. There is little reason to go.

Given its history and location this must be the greatest possible distance. On July 27th it will be mid winter, cold and very dark by 6pm. I suggest you make your way to Deelfontein where the remains of the railway platform is still visible, then for three hours wait in the dark for a train that will not stop.

PAUL

Hello Neville

I doubt I will be the only person to come up with these ideas, but I’ll try and be first!

Be first in the queue; go to the sight of the opening ceremony in 2016 – Rio?

For the duration of the London event

Or

Be last in the queue; go to the stadium in Beijing for the duration.

Or

Rio for the opening ceremony, Beijing for the closing ceremony. (pushing the budget!)

Kind regards

Paul

Dear Neville

While not wishing to limit the possibilities of your being able to travel to an exotic location, my proposal is that you stand on the roof of my studio, 1 Rowse Close, with your back to the Olympic site, on the basis that this would be in the realms of ‘so near, and yet so far’, whilst also incorporating studied indifference. (In a similar fashion, the only time I ever went to the races at Cheltenham was before I started my long teaching stint just over the road).

Best

Paul

Dear Susan and Neville,

Eynhallow is a magic place and I'd love to take you both there at some point – but reading through the brief I don't think this is the right moment. One issue is that it's late in the season, and there's little happening with the birds so we'll not be around. But more importantly a visit to the island is arguably even less inclusive than attending the Olympic opening ceremony!! So doesn't really address this brief. Sensitivities about disturbance to the birds and the research project, combined with the health and safety nightmare of being responsible for a small wooden building with a woodstove on an uninhibited island with difficult access mean I'm a bit of a control freak about letting people use the house without a university staff member who's familiar with those sensitivities being there too.

Hopefully we can arrange something another time if you're interested

All the best

Paul

Hi,

North Ronaldsay is very special – landing field (quite literally), right on the northern edge of Orkney with its own special sheep, lovely lighthouse, seals and great beaches. A real exposed feel to it.

Neville,

The Lat/Long location of the Olympic stadium is at 51.538336 degrees North and -0.016512 degrees East.

So, the position diametrically opposite on the earth's surface (Antipodal Point) is 51.538336 degrees South and +0.016512 degrees East

As I'm sure you are aware, this is in the wilds of nowhere in the middle of the Southern Ocean!

If you could find a suitable ship or aeroplane, this could possibly be the place to be.

However, getting as far as possible from the Olympics also means escaping from all kinds of communications that might be providing event results for example and, no doubt there would be TV, Radio, and 'helpful' crew etc. who would make sure that you didn't miss out on the event.

I personally would not want to travel literally to the other side of the globe only to catch a glimpse on TV of David Cameron and Boris with Seb at the big party.

Just a (relatively) short distance from the above Antipodal Point at 54.433 degrees South and 3.4 degrees East lies Bouvet Island.

This is usually described as the most remote island in the world. The territory is a Norwegian Protectorate and is described as uninhabited. Earlier this year the 780 metre summit of the

island was climbed and the climbers left a time capsule.

I reckon that this is the furthest place on land from the Olympic stadium so gets the geographical top score.

I also think it's pretty much the most isolated in terms of bumping into any sports fans with TVs, particularly as it will be mid-winter.

If I were you, I'd be trying to find some Norwegian to give you a lift. If you do, can I come with you?

Hope to see you at the site festival launch.

Regards

Peter

POLLY ROWLEY-SAMS  
pljrs@hotmail.com

See when you're small and you get old  
that if you keep digging you'll eventually  
reach Australia (or if American China)  
and then you have a day dream  
that if you dig<sup>down</sup> in your garden now  
by the time you were (eighty) 80 you  
would have dug to Australia, or if not  
would die and in death pass your digging  
on to someone else who'd get there  
instead. Well, the furthest I think  
from the Olympic games would therefore  
be the end of a size 6 drill bit, that's  
been drilled through their location on a  
globe.

Then using electricity generated by gym  
equipment used by Olympic athletes in  
training for the Olympics run on electric  
bicycle (All terrain!) and drive/nole it to the  
located point. And then have a cup of tea.

Hi Neville,

Here is something of what I propose; though I am deeply insecure in this sort of field. Perhaps I need to do this anyway as it is so far out of my comfort zone! I will have to look back at my e-mails to see whether there is an entry form that I have to fill in but let me send this off before I begin thinking it is too ephemeral.

I intend to take local pigments, crush them and sieve them. Once they are fine I will then mix them with water to make a paint. With this paint I will write, calligraphically, texts about the impermanence of reality and the fragility of existence. These will be written on rocks on the Morija mountain face as well as walls in odd places. The texts will be cryptic and will need some thought to decipher.

Therefore even their meaning will be somewhat fleeting. Because the paint will have no fixative they will disappear before too long. Some of the texts, though by no means all, will be recorded photographically. The documentation will also be about the disintegration of the texts. The photographs will be collected and bound into books. A certain amount of books will be bound and some of the books will be donated to obscure libraries in Lesotho and the UK. The books will also have no mention of author or artist.

Cheers, Patrick.

[second email]

I have looked again at the proposal. It seems that I just have to e-mail you(?).

I stand by my proposed idea; not a physical distance really but rather a distance in philosophical terms and I think really that this means you need to get yourself to the top of Makhoarane mountain where you need to pound, grind and sieve some local ochre which you should then write the following quotation from Soetsu Yanangi's: "The Unknown Craftsman" on a a rock..

"The plain and unagitated, the uncalculated, the straightforward, the natural, the innocent, the humble, the modest: where does beauty lie if not in these qualities?"

Or something of your own choice...

In the meantime I will forge ahead with my own texts.

Hi,

Your project sounds really exciting, Ruth Hecht emailed me the link. I am a bit late to reply and must hurry so hope this brief description is okay, it's such an interesting idea and I just remembered.

The furthest possible distance would be in some ways to go to where the clothing factories/sweatshops in indonesia where women work for addias and Nike etc the people who sponsor endorse and make money out of the olympics ( see article in the Independent – a few weekends ago) to take these women or some of them at least some gifts or hamper of small artworks to let them know people do think about them too. It seems ironic as the olympics is marketed and often endorsed by celebrities as being about fairness and nations working side by side not ripping people in poor nations off. Also sad as do they ever get time to run and do sports themselves perhaps they work so much they just want to rest in their time off. It reminds me a bit of cinderella as it's a bit like a party the other side of the world they are not invited too but are part of making. I have not researched this idea much so sorry if it sounds a bit strange and woolly but I have been thinking about these women as I have been making some drawings of the women in sweat shops making the trainers on some white trainers.

Have fun with your project

Thanks from Rebecca

There is a factory in Indonesia the sukabumi plant which is 60 miles from Jakarta in the idea you would spend the 3 hours telling the workers that people do think of them and are aware of what they face, perhaps you could show them arts works make them tea or cake or food but just do something nice for them to persuade them that they are valued and considered by some people in the wider world even though it may not feel like it. Or perhaps they would like to give you letters of drawings which detail their lives for you to take back to England.

I was a bit tired when I wrote before and I did not include the fact that I feel it's the greatest distance not just in a physical distance sense but in an emotional and ethical sense too. good luck as I said it sounds a fun project although I bet some of the proposals like this one would be quite dangerous and hard to do in reality.

Good luck with it, let me know what happens. thanks from Rebecca

Dear Nev,

Well, I don't hope you're having a good time! I know you are and that makes me feel good. Can't wait to hear all about it.

Finally, here is my project. I haven't had much time to work on it so I hope it's good enough. Let me know. Also about the controversial issues concerning the project I just want you to know that I support this project totally and like your integrity. You work has always been concerned with involving people and the social objective of communicating to and including those often excluded from artistic circles is what makes it so important and special. You always involve the people on the sites whether they be, new residents, ex residents, builders and workers etc, and you did the same in the Olympics project. You fulfilled what was asked of you for the Olympic Project and I don't believe that means you have to stand down and not express what you feel. Actually I think it's really important . As the times advance it's becoming all too clear to many people that they don't count and all the noise and fan fare is just for the benefit of few, with lots of insincere advertising, all based on speculation.

Really looking forward to seeing you both soon. Lots of love Rob

The Greatest Possible Distance

I love your projects and was so excited about being able to participate in one, even if I had no idea what it was going to be about.

After receiving your email I spent a few days with my head buzzing around the world trying to find a good place to send you to. Then suddenly, just as I sank my teeth into a delicious fish pie at lunch, that place I was looking for came to me. I would like to send you to a mountain that I have gazed at many times across the beautiful landscape that lay between me and this place that I will probably never be able to visit, but you could and I think you'd love it.

Mount Athos.

A place where time does not exist. The natural beauty of this place alone would transport you to some place very far from London and the Olympics. The human world of events and life situations have no place or space here. Still being in Europe and not far from London, it's simply another world.

Beside the confines of the Aegean Main,  
Where northward Macedonia bounds the flood,

And views opposed the Asiatic plain,

Where once the pride of lofty Ilium stood,

Like the great Father of the giant brood,

With lowering port majestic Athos stands,

Crowned with the verdure of eternal wood,

As yet unspoiled by sacrilegious hands,

And throws his mighty shade o'er seas and distant lands.

And deep embosomed in his shady groves

Full many a convent rears its glittering spire,

Mid scenes where Heavenly Contemplation loves

To kindle in her soul her hallowed fire,

Where air and sea with rocks and woods conspire

To breathe a sweet religious calm around,

Weaning the thoughts from every low desire,

And the wild waves that break with murmuring sound

Along the rocky shore proclaim it holy ground.

Sequestered shades where Piety has given

A quiet refuge from each earthly care,

Whence the rapt spirit may ascend to Heaven!

Oh, ye condemned the ills of life to bear!

As with advancing age your woes increase,

What bliss amidst these solitudes to share

The happy foretaste of eternal Peace,

Till Heaven in mercy bids your pain and sorrows cease.

Byron

Reasons

There are various reasons why I think this is a good choice and feel excited about it.

1.I love the fact that it is in Greece, the country where the Olympics began. The symbolic idea of going back to the origin of something in order to escape it – glorious!

2. Worldly events, such as the Olympics, are of no importance on Mount Athos.

3. On Athos they live in a world apart with a different calendar and time. Every day or two the clocks are reset as they measure their time according to the sunset.

4. It is a very special place.

5. It's easy and inexpensive to get to.

Getting there

You have to get a flight to Thessaloniki. Then a 3 hour bus journey to Ouranpolis from where you take a boat to Dafni on the west coast of Mount Athos.

The main downfall of this place is that you need to get permission to go and I'm not sure how difficult this is or how long it takes.

The Holy Executive of the Holy Mount Athos Pilgrims' Bureau  
109 EGNATIA STR.  
546 22, Thessaloniki, Greece  
Tel. +30 2310 252578, Fax +30 2310 222424

During the hours of the Olympic ceremony I think you should be out and about tracking down some of these monks and bring us back a full report on what you discover. What are they up to and what is their problem with women!!

Robyn

Dear Neville,

In response to how far away from the Olympics you should be, my answer is that you should be as close as you can be physically, but in another World psychologically.

My suggestion is that you spend your time in one or more of the dozens of nursing homes for older people which surround the Olympic Park.

In this country we've privatised our care of older people in the same way that we've privatised the Olympics. Like the Olympics, in care homes you'll find people from all over the world – working there because people whose cultural heritage is English won't work for such poor wages, doing such thankless work.

The Olympics is about celebrating the body beautiful; it's so much easier to look at healthy bodies – including healthy disabled bodies – than having to think about our elders who are no longer considered part of our society because they are physically and / or mentally unable to look after themselves any more.

For three hours observe what goes on: talk to the staff and the elders they are looking after. Their lives are rich, they will have rich stories to tell – far richer than the story of someone beating a world record and winning a medal.

There is a crisis in care for older people in this country; billions of pounds is needed to create a system which

Neville,

Very quick thought. You were thinking what's the furthest from the olympic village you can get?

I thought that as its founded on a greek idea, and our western civilisation is built on ancient greek culture with roman and other stuff thrown in – with a fundamentally hierachical, material and rational emphasis – that something that's about the interconnection of all things, intuition and the invisible might be the furthest away culturally. The sun dance is exactly that (native american ceremony).

Its about interconnection, oneness and connection – self sacrifice and healing others. Not winning or loosing, or the physical and material world.

That's a bit abstract – but I can explain.

Aboriginal culture – the bush men or the native americans are a cultural gulf apart. Perhaps that's something to look at. It's an entirely different planet. Like going to the moon.

At the sun dance if you look up and see a plane flying over it seems as if that world does not exist.

Its hard to write about but that's my thoughts on it!

Best wishes

Sara

Hi Neville

Almost too late! Sorry, I've been insanely busy, as ever....

My thoughts on getting as far away as possible from the Olympics: I think you should go somewhere (any country – London automatically disqualifies itself!) that is at least a day's walk (so say 15/20 miles) from an electricity supply and mobile phone reception/ internet connection. I was trying to think of how you could absent yourself from the Olympics as a global event which is performed predominantly in virtual space/on screen (although of course it has a material manifestation). I think being somewhere without access to the global world as mediated through TV/internet/mobile phones would qualify as far away! As for what you should do there and how you should record it, I'm not sure. I guess in terms of recording, it should be 'analogue', drawing/handwritten text rather than anything technology based. Maybe you could just sit and meditate?!

Sarah

Hello Neville

For your ‘The Greatest Distance’ project my knee jerk response is to spend an evening with someone who has been displaced by the Olympics thanks to the greed triggered off with some rather unscrupulous landlords, or indeed to look at a positive, to be with people who have chosen to benefit from the Olympics during a time of recession and choose to rent out their home and find out where that family/ couple/person has moved to.

Will keep thinking

Best wishes

Sarah

This is brilliant Neville, as are your projects as artist in residence!!!!  
Fucking great.

If I may, I would like to suggest a small waterfall on the UNESCO Heritage recognized Niagara Escarpment in a mid-sized steel town in Ontario Canada... but will contemplate that suggestion for a moment.

Cheers

Simon

I can understand how everything and anything having to do with the olympics is mired in controversy. Especially something that moves in a different direction.

I do believe that Plato said he would ban artists from the republic because their entire intention was to unsettle people by questioning things and providing other modes of thinking.

(oh silly Plato...)

Blimey Neville,

did LOCOG and the ODA really piss you off that much?!

Of course you could do your great lengths in London Fields lido, in Hackney.

That is, rather than being far away be as close as possible yet in a contrasting world of warm, non-commercial calm...

Simon

Hi Neville

I suggest the Carpenters Road estate which as I am sure you know is right next door to the site but is under threat from the redevelopment of the area. Plus residents have not seen much change to their well being. So near and yet so far.....

Sound an interesting project -

Good luck

Sue

Hi Neville

Thanks for this – I’ve forwarded to a couple of folk including Kirsten & Professor Paul Thomson who you met in Bristol.

If hadn’t been for the fact that you are already coming to Achiltibuie, I might have suggested it or Tanera but that seems like overkill...

The other place that seems especially relevant at the moment is the sea since we’re working with Aberdeen University and the marine biology centre in Cromarty. Such a large proportion of the planet is water, and being at sea gives you an entirely different perspective on everything. My first being on water possibly in and around Orkney.

There is an island situated in the Eynhallow Sound, a stretch of water which lies between Rousay and the mainland of Orkney where the Ab Univ marine biologists go every year to study the bird population.

It is a small uninhabited island – the name comes from Old Norse Eyin Helga meaning Holy Isle.

Was inhabited until the 1850s when typhoid led to the island being evacuated.

Orkney is very special – don’t know if you have been?

Getting to and being in Eynhallow is another small but significant step in being even more removed from urban/ human conurbations. The island is

located across from a lovely beach and fascinating, well preserved Broch.

The whole area (& rest of Orkney) feels very very ancient with a strong sense of the importance of nature, the continuum of life & human endeavour; what has been created over the centuries; how have human beings changed/stayed the same; what compels us to build/make/be?

Becoming rather emotional thinking about it all, actually.

Please add EYNHALLOW to your list of nominations.

All the best

Susan

Paul or one of the other scientists would organise a small boat to take you over & there’s a cottage there.

<http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/eynhallow/index.html>

Have you seen/read The Hunger Games?

Your point about ‘Who really controls the games, who stands to benefit?’ struck a chord.

There is a series of three novels with a teenage girl protagonist called Catniss – in the film played by Jennifer Lawrence.

The author was influenced by war footage and reality tv & combines these to create a form of game where only one (teenage) winner survives.

It’s been a big seller with teenage audiences and encapsulates/illustrates preoccupations with celebrity & obsession with voyeurism, staging events/life specifically for others to view, the ways in which less privileged societies are disenfranchised but actually have more power than they realise especially if they connect with others of a similar mind/ethos, etc.

Can loan you for Achiltbuie.

Susan

Hello Neville

Below please find some half-formed thoughts for your project – a response to your call for alternative olympic options, your ‘furthest away’ project. As you will see I haven’t taken this literally, as in distance of miles, as where I am suggesting is a relatively short distance from ‘the park’ but this was a conceptual journey I took one morning as I pondered your suggestion and your reasons ...

\*\*\*

inclusivity/exclusivity – who should neville be with?

a zoo – which/where?

enclosure/freedom

cheetah – the fastest mammal on earth (name derived from chita, hindi word for spotted one); average speed 75 km/hr (46.6 mph), top speed 112 km/hr (69.6mph – roughly our motorway speed)

(although peregrine falcons are actually faster at 200mph)

<http://www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo/exhibits/cheetah-rock/cheetah-facts,858,AR.html>

cheetah facts

travel to Whipsnade Zoo (or whichever Zoo you choose but this seems to be the main one for cheetahs in the UK) at 46.6mph, occasionally bursting to

69.6mph for short periods; try and run as fast as possible on arrival (record your speed); spend next three hours (can be longer/shorter, over a period of days or whatever you consider most appropriate to your research of the animals/own concerns but needs to be a specifically chosen time period and documented as such, with timings noted etc) observing the cheetah’s movement; what do you learn, what do you think; record visually and textually your own reactions (and those of the cheetahs to you if they start to notice your presence as you stay observing over time); document own movements as well as those of the cheetahs (instinctive as well as receptive) ... their awareness of you, yours of them, their total unawareness of the olympics, your total immersion (at the time) in the cheetahs as opposed to immersion in all things olympic

... the fastest mammals on earth observed and documented in captivity ...

in preparation, find out all you can about these mammals; practise running fast (train perhaps?); what you think you need/consider essential and what they need (have) to survive; anything and everything you think relevant and that might enhance your experience of the cheetahs ... how are they a part and apart from their environment – and you? (‘you’re a part of it’)

a shared world, a human world?

conservation and captivity, commercialisation and conservation, measures of control and why perhaps we need to conserve them in the first place?

why are we ‘conserving’ the games, whose benefit first and foremost?

speed of cheetahs and speed of athletes ... what are we playing at???

Suze

Hello

Lovely project.

Haven’t able to quite formulate my ideas into a coherent whole but here are a couple of thoughts:

Emotional, philosophical and ideological distance seem to me to be the greatest possible.

The rhetoric of the olympics is one of total inclusivity but I have never been convinced by this. However it’s difficult to argue against rhetoric especially when it is as entrenched as in this case. What it means though is that I find it hard to think of a destination that the weavers of rhetoric could not claim was included.

The other thought that I have had is that the olympics, sport, sporting events are all about lines: lanes, tracks distances, it’s very linear.

Of course the logo is an exception but I’ve always thought that the logo was lying to us.

Anyway, to my not entirely formed ideas.

I think that the greatest distance is expressed by doing something different, “wrong”, other, at the epicentre. It’s the flower down the barrel of the gun in Hungary or the standing in front of the tank in Tiananmen Square. So what about a circle, or circles (5 interlocking ones?!) of people right at the middle of the olympic village knitting squares for a blanket. No competition, totally

collaborative, creating something which will be anonymous and will form a crucial but equal part of a whole. No prize, no credit but a tiny thing without which the final finished product could not function.

Secondly, a Quaker Meeting, again right at the heart of the village. A circle of people sitting in silence, speaking when they are moved to do so, acting according to their inner sense of what’s right, no rules, no leader, no referee, and no winner.

There. Thank you for the opportunity to think about this in such depth.

Oh, one more even less formed thought. If the olympic village is not an option what about a rural Welsh chapel. Don’t know why that feels appropriate. Just does.

All best and thanks again.

Thomas

Hi Neville,

Hope all’s good with you.

This is in personal capacity in between various family tasks!

I'd suggest meeting members of the Tibetan community in the UK for a cup of tea. This time last year protesters highlighted the situation in Tibet during the torch relay but in Beijing itself voices of dissent were absent. I think the chat with the Tibetans would highlight a sense of humanity behind the headlines, would be a starting point for thinking about protest and unheard voices at the 2012 Olympics (local and global), and in contrast to the event itself would be simple and cost effective (a tube ride and a walk).

My daughter Ella (age 9) suggested either scuba diving to the bottom of the ocean (because the Olympics are not underwater and the Olympians are not cheered on by fish) or visit her bed (because it’s quiet and cosy).

Some great other ideas on your site.

See you soon when things have calmed down.

All the best

Tom

Hi Neville,

i think you should spend the 3 hours as physically close to the opening ceremony as possible... if possible, close enough to hear it going on in the background.

and you should spend the 3 hours interviewing a series of people who will not be taking part in the olympic games and find out why...

there will be lots of people who, for financial reasons, will be excluded, so this shouldn’t be too hard to organise.

in particular i would be looking to find within hearing distance of the opening ceremony...a soup kitchen... a youth club... a mosque... a pub... a squat... an old people’s home

best wishes, ursula

also... a young mother stuck in the house with a baby or two... a young carer stuck in the house looking after a sick parent... a special school... and/or a children’s home.

if you need me to write this up in a better way, please let me know.

Ursula

Hello Neville,

David Lillington is a very good friend of mine and he asked me to email you my response. I’m so sorry that I’ve got to do this really quickly and I am just thinking on my feet and it’ll come out in a sort of stream of consciousness, as I’m super busy at the moment and will be until, well, the games begin, ha ha!! (busy till July 3rd at least).

SO: I’m thinking of the Games, the idea of participation, and the London festival idea in general of happy-happy participation, jubilee street parties, international etc etc and I totally understand that you want to get away from it all ;-) on the other hand I’m quite into the Shakespeare in different languages thing, too.

So the idea of the Olympics is about competition, and healthy competition, and participation/groups, inclusion of everyone, disabled, healthy, fairness, humanity, and it’s also very democratic. Since that is my first thought, the second thought that is coming immediately into my mind is ‘what would be the polar opposite of this?’ and that could be a political regime such as the one in North Korea. I did actually think of North Korea before I read your pdf. So, going to a communist country would seem to be a far distance, but the furthest? Hmmmm.... maybe communism is also very about participation, inclusion of everyone, work ethic, daily calisthenics/ exercise etc etc, so – nope, not necessarily.

How about Auschwitz? SORRY to be so dark, but it just popped into my mind that visiting a Nazi concentration camp would be just about as far away as you can get from the ideas of democracy, fairness and inclusion, and even sports, health, competition, survival of the fittest, glorious achievements of the whole human race, encouragement from the whole planet, etc etc. um, is that a bit too dark??

Tell me if it is just too gloomy for you!! I think North Korea is also a good idea. Going to a hospital could also be far away from the idea of sports/health/ games. Or you could go to monuments in Berlin commemorating the concentration camps, but that seems a bit half-hearted. Right, so that’s my idea then, Auschwitz (there are other camps but that seems to be the most famous and easily accessible with your budget, no need for visas, etc etc).

Btw I love this work of yours, I hope you will email me when you’ve actually done it. David is quite impressed by you and he said I should meet you one day. Anyway, I hope you think of something and that it all goes well. Sorry for blabbering, but that is the only email style I know.

Take care Neville!! Hope that helps, or at least is so surprising that it forces your mind to think off a tangent, which might in turn help, or something like that.

Much love

Vaishali x

Hi Neville,

My name is Valerio. I have read your project and I completely agree with you, I did never gave a damn about Olympic games for my entire life (I am 60) But for me it was easy, I was never interested in any kind of sport, so it was natural. However I understand that it’s not the same for you, because you seem to like sport, but played in a different way. Robin showed me a book of pictures by you, there were all kinds of goalposts, in 3rd world countries. It made me wonder, seeing your pictures I imagined ragged boys playing in the dust and having a lot of fun. That’s sport, I said to myself. No money, no bets, no world cups, just the pleasure to kick the ball at the right time and hit the right spot. So let me counsel you a place where you will be really far away. The easiest answer would be New Zealand, it’s the place most far from Europe, but I suggest a different kind of distance. There is a monastery in a forest in central Italy founded around 1000 A.C. by St.Francis himself [http://www.monasterodicamaldoli.it/index.php?option=com\\_gcalendar&view=gcalendar&Itemid=121&lang=it#year=2012&month=6&day=1&view=month](http://www.monasterodicamaldoli.it/index.php?option=com_gcalendar&view=gcalendar&Itemid=121&lang=it#year=2012&month=6&day=1&view=month)

Title: Esercizi spirituali all’Eremo  
When: 24.06.2012 – 30.06.2012  
Description: Dom 24 – Sab 30  
Eremo phone: +39 0575 556021

Esercizi spirituali personalizzati (massimo 10 posti) La speranza cristiana guidati da Alberto Viscardi, monaco di Camaldoli

Hurry up, there are only 10 places. There is no TV at the monastery and mobile phones are useless. Maybe you can play soccer with the Monks, they will be delighted. Even if you are not a believer you will enjoy the peace and the nature around If you need help don't hesitate to ask me.

Sincerely yours

Valerio

Hi Neville,

Hope things are well, and have had a few thoughts about your project, as follows:

1: Distance in time and space measures the gap between success and failure, especially in the Olympic context, where fractions of fractions of seconds or barely perceptible differences in stride can decide between medallists and those whose names will not be heard again.

2: Because of this situation – that less than a tenth of a second can, for an athlete, decide between global success and lucrative sponsorship deals, or nothing – the distance between the achievement of Olympic ideals and being considered merely an ‘also ran’, a ‘failure’, is miniscule.

3: The ‘greatest distance’ between Olympic failure and success can therefore be a question not of thousands of miles, but of hairs’ breadths. Perhaps the nature of these distances, where physically negligible distances measure out vast social chasms would be worth exploring.

4: Perhaps this might involve measuring the distances between winning and losing Olympic performances in real, everyday places, to heighten awareness of the tiny judgements deciding participants’ fates. Perhaps you might visit those who narrowly failed in selection for national teams, or sportsmen who missed their big breaks by seconds or millimetres.

5: Perhaps this ‘winner takes all’ culture could be examined elsewhere. Might we try to determine and measure the precise difference between a hugely valuable and a worthless artwork, or that between a prizewinning and overlooked book. Perhaps you could track down the boxer who may have never quite got the match he needed to put himself in the running for titles, or the songwriter whose recordings were \*almost\* released by several different record labels, but never quite achieved release.

6: Perhaps, in the end, these times and distances, the length of a flea or the duration of a blink, also determine other kinds of success and failure.

7: Others who might be found could include: the inventor who is a few months ahead of the curve and loses the rights to his invention before its real value becomes clear; the scientist who answers the question neither media nor corporation is yet interested in having answered; the novelist whose book fell just outside the shortlist of a major prize; the jobseeker who always comes second on the shortlist of candidates.

8: The greatest distance? That between the success and achievement celebrated in the Olympics is all too often a question of negligible differences rather than great gulfs between the abilities of the participants, yet the rewards are not proportionally distributed. In this,

at least, might it be said that the Olympics accurately reflect the values of the cultures that stage them?

I hope this is of some use in your new project: I’ll be fascinated to see how it develops in July!

Best wishes,

Wayne

Yup,

it’s definitely social and economic and ethnic and physical – in the sense of bodily – find a fat Bengali teenager in the immediate purlieu and watch it on the box with him. Job done. But don’t you feel, Neville, that having sucked so long and so hard on the ODA tailpipe you’re basically a fucking hypocrite?

Best

Will

Dear Neville...

As usual, a brilliant concept.

Distance: The Elemi Triangle, perhaps in Kenya, of South Sudan or even Uganda?

I may imagine something else...this for starters.

Yvonne – writing from Brisbane Australia

On June the 8th a selection panel of six people met in the Danielle Arnaud Gallery in Kennington, London to discuss and select the proposal they wished me to fulfil. The Panel included, from left to right; Writer and critic, David Lillington, Novelist and director of Urban Words, Sarah Butler, Artist and writer Bill Drummond, curator Danielle Arnaud, Archaeologist and sports historian, Jason Wood, Arts Consultant Sam Wilkinson.

With more than 100 great proposals, they spent several hours reading through and discussing each, finally making a shortlist of four. I was then asked to do further research and report back to them before they made their final selection.



Hi Neville

What a wonderful brief. Sounds like a perfect crowdfunding project to me... but I appreciate you have chosen not to seek public or private sector funding.

My suggestion is to fly a kite to symbolise the importance and value of individual expression and 'waywardness'. The reason for the suggestion is that a kite will choose its own way, led by conditions – the wind, the weather, the climate – determined by nature rather than by politics or social or economic factors. The kite symbolises freedom, liberty and self expression. The kite is a low cost item – popular all over the world – and Kite Festivals are important to many countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Greece, the UK to name a few.

Kite flying can be a solitary or a group activity, drawing parallels with all human endeavour whether sporting or social. Some human skill is involved in controlling the kite but ultimately it is up to nature and the prevailing conditions as to whether a kite can be flown on the day you have chosen: 27 July.

I suggest that the kite is flown from a high point, in fact a 'highest point'. This could be the highest mountain or the highest building in Greece which would take your Great Lengths project back to the Olympic Games country of origin and highlight the contrast between the high-flying ambitions of the Games and the reality of people's everyday lives.

All good wishes – Frances

Neville

### 1. how to travel to Greece

I would not want to be prescriptive, however the following seems feasible:  
Train UK to Thessaloniki (3 days), or if time was pressing, fly to Thessaloniki.  
Bus from Thessaloniki to the Mount Olympus National Park, approx 100 km.  
Walk to summit, or peaks, using existing trails.

8 days seems to be the average time taken to walk to the highest summit (9,570ft).

There are 52 peaks within the Mount Olympus National Park and you may not consider it essential, practically or symbolically, to reach the absolute highest peak. Up to you.

Two useful websites:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/greece/tours/guided-walk/mount-olympus-guided>  
– useful overview of what is possible.

[http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/ShowUserReviews-g189502-d575425-r117884433-Mount\\_Olympus-Thessaly.html](http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/ShowUserReviews-g189502-d575425-r117884433-Mount_Olympus-Thessaly.html)

### 2. If no wind at 7.30 UK what to do for 3 hours

I suggest you make an offering to the twelve Olympian gods, including Zeus (who gathered the clouds and threw thunder and lightning from the holy mountain) to whom, in Greek mythology, Mount Olympus is home.

This offering could be in the form of herbs or plants gathered on your trip up Mount Olympus: which you symbolically set fire to. Sage would be good if there is any to be found: symbolising age and wisdom and purification. Mount Olympus is rich in flora and one of the World's Biosphere Reserves. You may not be able to pick or gather.

### 3. How to document or record the 3 hours

No strong feelings about this – but see suggestions below of other ways to document and record the journey.

You do not mention whether you wish to travel alone or in company.

If in company you might wish to invite a local guide, or indeed a Greek artist or writer or thinker, to join you for part of the trip and be temporary travelling companions.

I am thinking here of Robert MacFarlane's recent book 'The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot' where he invites local people, specialists in different fields, or just 'ordinary

folk,' to walk and talk with him for the day. These dialogues and conversations could become part of your documentation and recording of the trip.

You might also record the whole trip by engaging the people you meet in conversation about their thoughts on the concept of 'the greatest possible distance'. Or indeed the Olympian ideal and how this sits with the reality of people's everyday lives.

Meeting climbers and hikers from, presumably, all over the world in mountain refuges should bring some interesting thoughts and ideas into the equation. They too will probably have chosen to opt out of the whole 2012 Olympic thing.

4. Other thoughts:

The kite: how to choose which one to fly (or attempt to fly) – very important!

What sort of kite you take is important.

Where is the kite purchased or made?

Do you take a commercially made kite with you from the UK, or do you buy a commercially made kite when you arrive in Greece?

Or do you make a kite yourself, or commission a kite maker to make one especially for your trip in the UK?

Do you commission a special kite to be made in Greece which you pick up on your journey?

What colour should the kite be? What fabric or material?

I propose white.

White symbolises purity and cleanness, and peace too in many religions.

A white flag is a symbol of surrender or truce – link with kite/link with the Sporting Olympics/link with national culture.

A white feather is a symbol of cowardice.

White and black – symbols of extremes/opposites.

Homer is credited with saying:

'Olympus was not shaken by winds not ever wet with rain, nor did snow fall upon it, but the air is outspread clear and cloudless, and over it hovered a radiant whiteness.'

All these thoughts link back to my original proposal of the kite symbolising freedom, liberty and self expression and the flight of the kite being determined by forces of nature rather than political, social or economic factors.

Frances



Dear Neville,

At the now defunct airfield outside Richmond (in the Great Karoo desert, Northern Cape Province, South Africa) you will find the remnants of the old 'airport control building' – a ruin that consists of three and a half walls; there is no roof left, no door, no windows, just bricks and crumbling plaster. Here you will find no people, no noise, no technology and no hint of the Olympics. There is a solitary chair painted against one wall. If you seat yourself here during the day you will see only blue skies above. If you seat yourself here during the night you will see only starry skies.

There is no need to reserve the seat because nobody comes here anymore; just wild animals, birds, insects, perhaps a lonely lamb.

Even if you can not make it here, just imagine that you occupy the chair on the wall from wherever you are.

Cheers

John



Hi Neville,

What about making a Greatest Distance mini-documentary along the following lines:

Depart from the affluent suburb Richmond upon Thames on bicycle (the day the Olympic Torch passes through, July 24 – the Men's Olympic Cycle race will take place here on the 28th) to the nearest tube, then airport, fly to South Africa, by car or train to Richmond in the Karoo which is situated in one of the poorest areas in South Africa/probably the poorest Richmond in the world. Take a bicycle and cycle from town to the ruin at the airfield for the Opening Ceremony. Construct your own Olympic Torch (bonfire) and burn it below the chair on the wall in the ruin at the airfield. If you constellate a video camera about 3m from ground level, facing towards town you would get a nice shot of the ruin, with the torch burning next to the wall with the chair. In the far distance will be the dim lights and fires from the squatter camp (settlement nearest to the airfield) and a bit further back the town. The only sounds you pick up will be the traffic on the N1 highway, distant voices from the town and animals. What about condensing 3 hours of sound footage into let's say 3 minutes? Or just the sounds you want to remember during the 3 hours?

Regards

John

Hello Neville

I doubt I will be the only person to come up with these ideas, but I'll try and be first!

Be first in the queue; go to the sight of the opening ceremony in 2016 – Rio?

For the duration of the London event

Or

Be last in the queue; go to the stadium in Beijing for the duration.

Or

Rio for the opening ceremony, Beijing for the closing ceremony. (pushing the budget!)

Kind regards

Paul

Hello Neville

Here are some more thoughts on my proposal, “First in the Queue”

1 Do you have any suggestions as to what exactly I should do for three hours at the Olympic Park?

My idea was that you would find a good seat and wait .... Maybe with a thermos flask and dressed in some RIO2016 branded clothing .

2 It seems many of the venues are already built – do you have any thoughts as to where exactly I should place myself?

In the best seat in the house in the Maracana Stadium

3 How would you suggest I document or record the three hours – or not?

Of course you are going to need an architectural photographer :-)

Or

I like the idea of a video camera behind you with a really wide lens so we can also see all the stadium. Maybe have the countdown clock on the screen as in Twelve Seventy. This image projected live on the stadiums big screens would look pretty cool....

Or

Use the security camera footage from the stadium.

4 Are there any other thoughts you would like to add to your original proposal?

Me and my shadow.

This a slightly different idea about Neville Gabie’s Olympic legacy. Perhaps you could meet with a Ro based artist in the stadium and use the 3 hours to warn/ inform him/her about the joys of being an Olympic artist in residence and to come up with an idea for a joint piece of work.

This is from the rio2012 website.....

I found this guy, who will know all the right people to bribe, Sergio, riotour guide. ssm10@hotmail.com <http://www.blogger.com/profile/00069542300191328904>

Kind regards Paul

Neville

The greatest possible distance from the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic Games is Batignolles, in the 17th arrondissement of Paris.

Paris was one of the five cities shortlisted to hold the games and was widely seen as the favourite to win the bid. On 6 July 2005 it lost the final round of voting to London (50-54). The tiny distance of four votes leads to the huge distance of alternative possibilities.

Had the Paris bid been successful, the athletes’ village would have been built in Batignolles on wasteland belonging to SNCF, the French national railway. This land is currently being regenerated with housing, retail and offices around a centre park, the Martin Luther King garden.

Batignolles and Stratford are therefore seperated by the infinite distance of the counter-factual yet one has continued to echo the other. This raises interesting questions about how much of a catalyst for regeneration the Olympics really are.

You should start as close to the Olympic Village in Stratford as possible and walk to St Pancras following the line of the railway as much as possible. You should then take the Eurostar (which will stop at Stratford International) to Paris and walk to Parc Martin-Luther-King in Batignolles to coincide with the start of the Opening Ceremony.

Martin

[see page 53 for complete original prososal]

Hi Neville,

I’m really pleased to hear that the panel liked my proposal. The idea was something that struck me immediately and seemed quite resonant.

However, I don’t have a huge amount of knowledge or research behind it. That said, I did have a few more thoughts in answer to your questions.

I do think you should watch the opening ceremony. After all, television is the way most people experience the Olympics so, in some ways, watching it on TV is a more authentic experience than actually being in the stadium. I am also conscious of how formal and policed are the Olympics. I think you hint at these constraints in the brief for this project and this side of the Olympics reaches its nadir in the extreme brand enforcement on behalf of multi-national corporations with no stake in either sport itself or the area the Games take place.

So you should go in the opposite direction. I would suggest watching the opening ceremony in a bar near Martin Luther Park whilst talking to local residents about how they view the Games in general, the fact they could have been hosted locally and the changes to the local area.

You should, of course, only eat and drink local (and ideally independent) produce. I’m not sure if you speak any French but I would have thought some level of dialogue was possible. You should also walk the streets and the park, interacting with other local people.

You should definitely evidence this, although again not too formally; a loose photo-essay, for example. At the same time I don’t want my brief to shift you into pure journalism – I want your practice to be able to come through.

One final thing which adds some additional context but might not be directly relevant. Stratford City marks the eastern boundary of the Thames Gateway, a one time regeneration priority area which has essentially been put on the back burner by the current Government. You will be able to see how incomplete the project is when you go through Ebbsfleet International, supposedly a new hub for Kent that resembles nothing more than a vast park and ride. The Thames Gateway, like the Olympics, is a giant dream: costs are measured in the billions and the ambitious benefits sought are often elusive. Do we need to dream smaller, to think locally (particularly in these post-selection economic times)?

All the best and good luck with the project, Martin

Had Paris won the bid to host the Olympic Games they were scheduled to begin with the opening ceremony pencilled in for the 27th July. Instead based on a mere 4 votes out of 104, cast by people we have little idea of, the 27th will instead see London hosting that ceremony. But what has happened to the location in Paris marked out for the games? And if the subtext of the Olympics is regeneration and legacy how has Paris developed. Indeed given the economic state of affairs does Paris look back with some relief at missing out?

The selection panel discussed these ideas and finally felt that Martin's proposal offered the most potential. So On Tuesday the 24th I will begin with my walk from the Athletes Village in Stratford/Leyton and make for St Pancras.



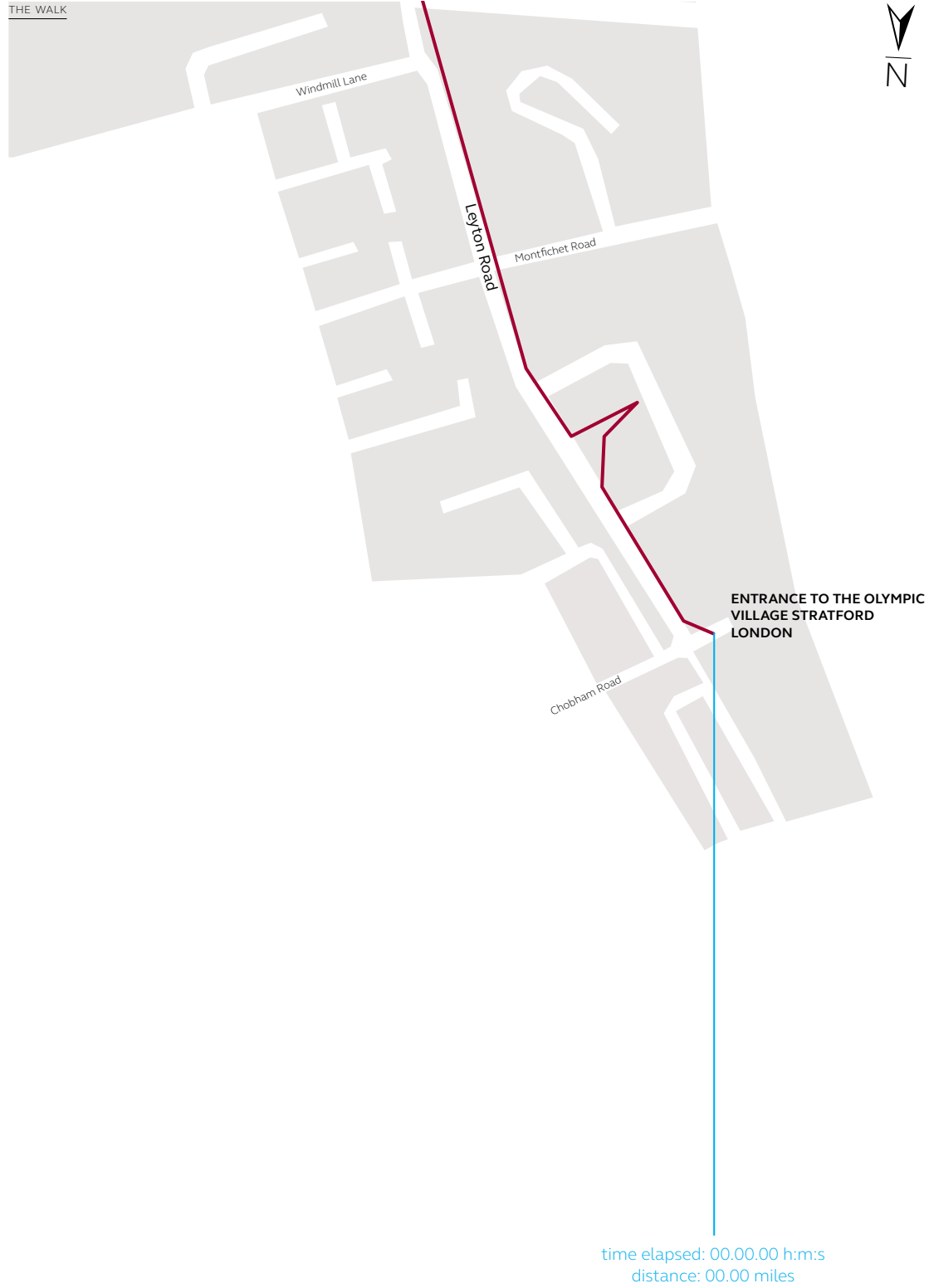




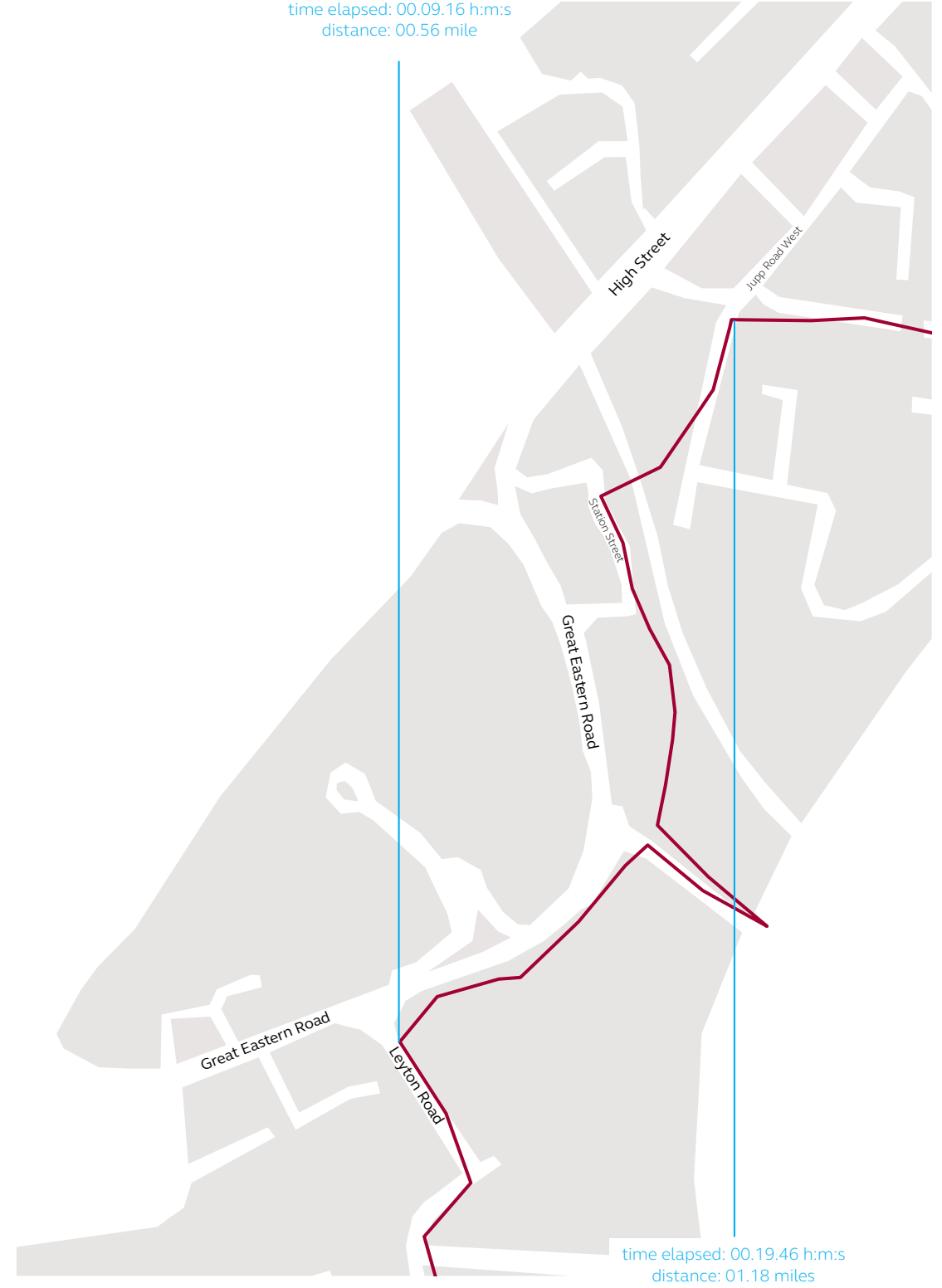


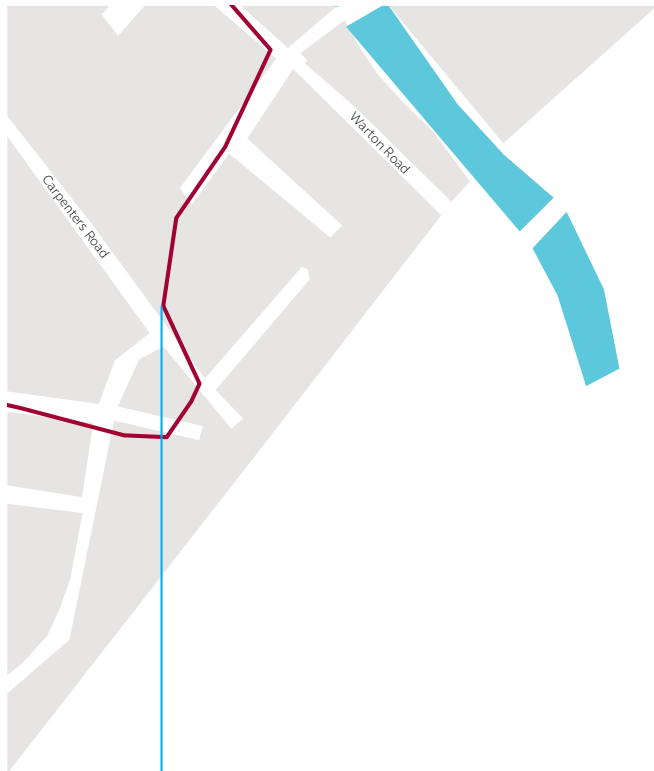






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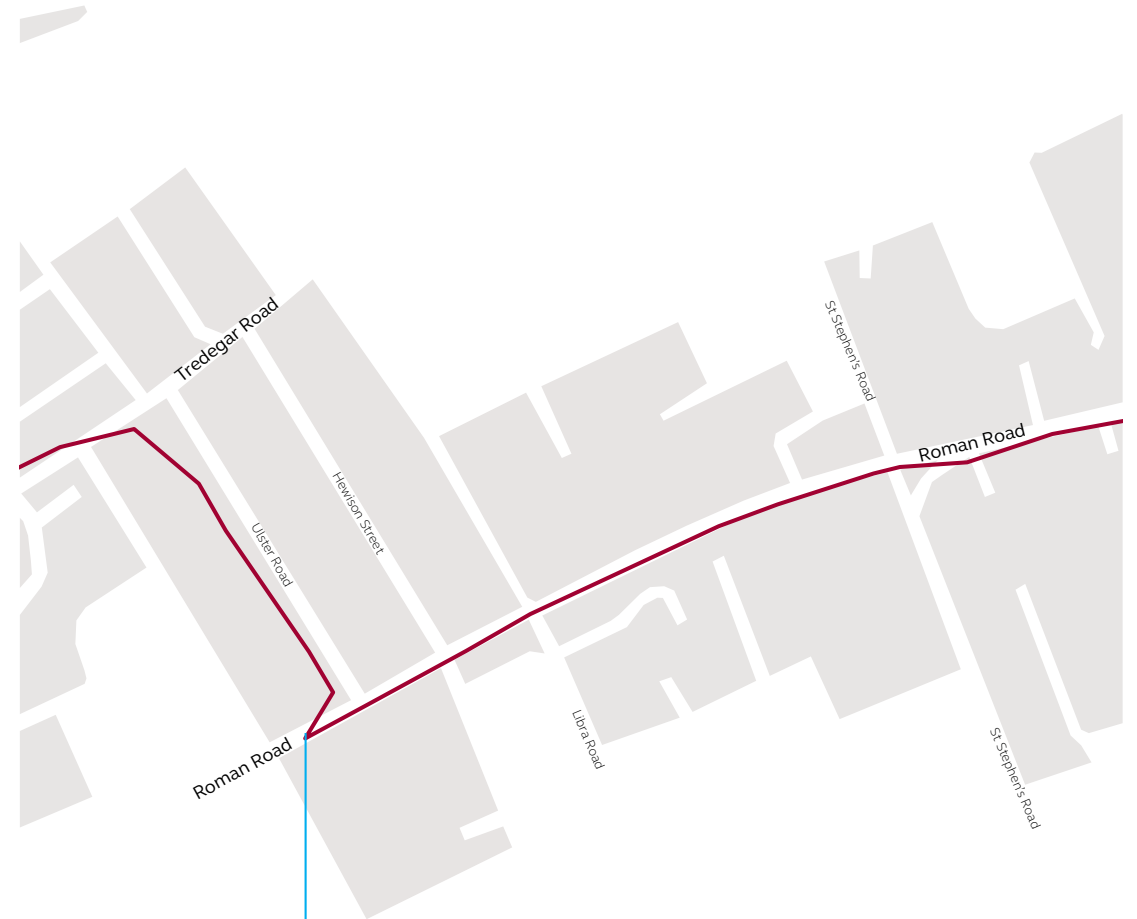
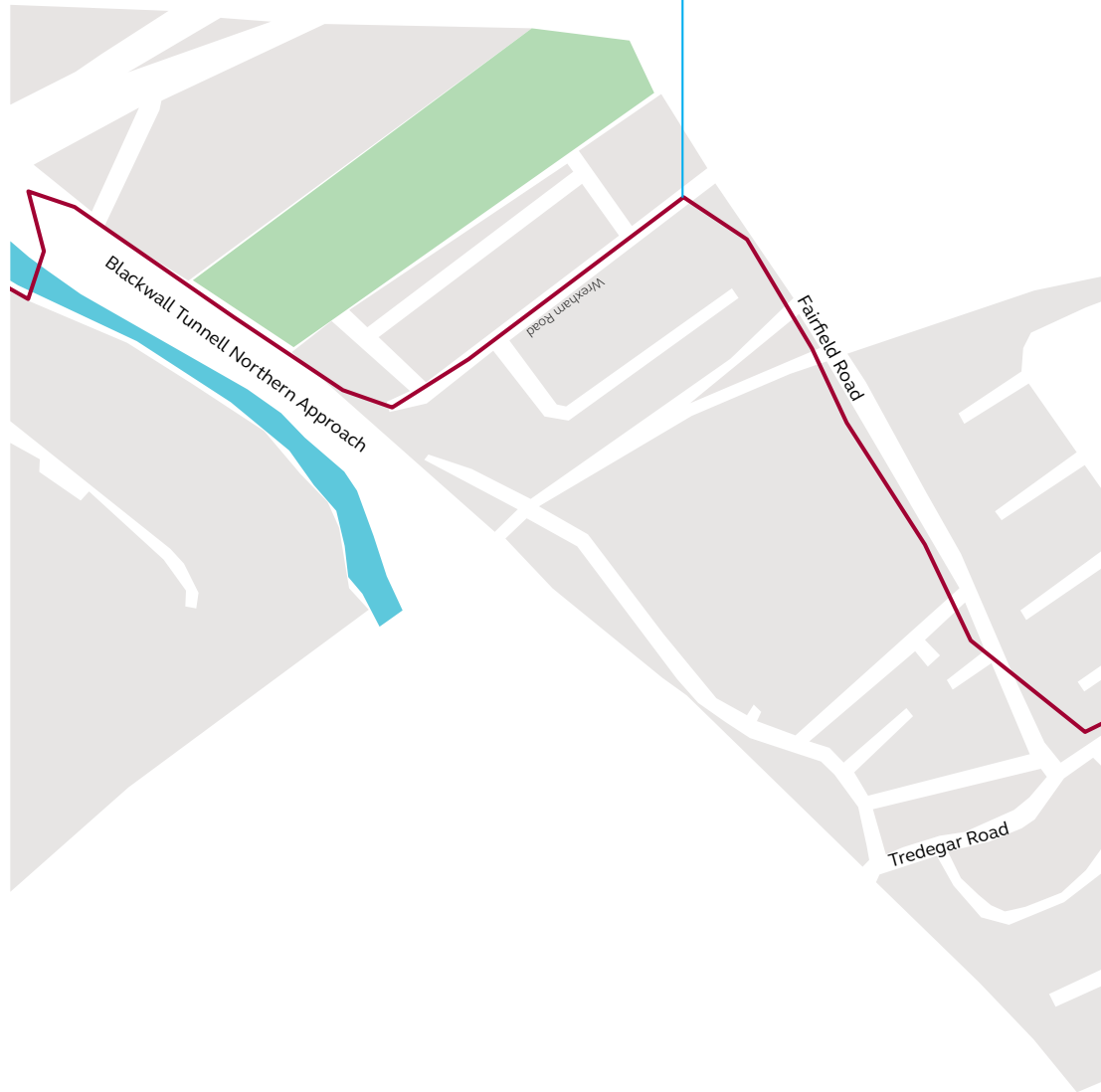
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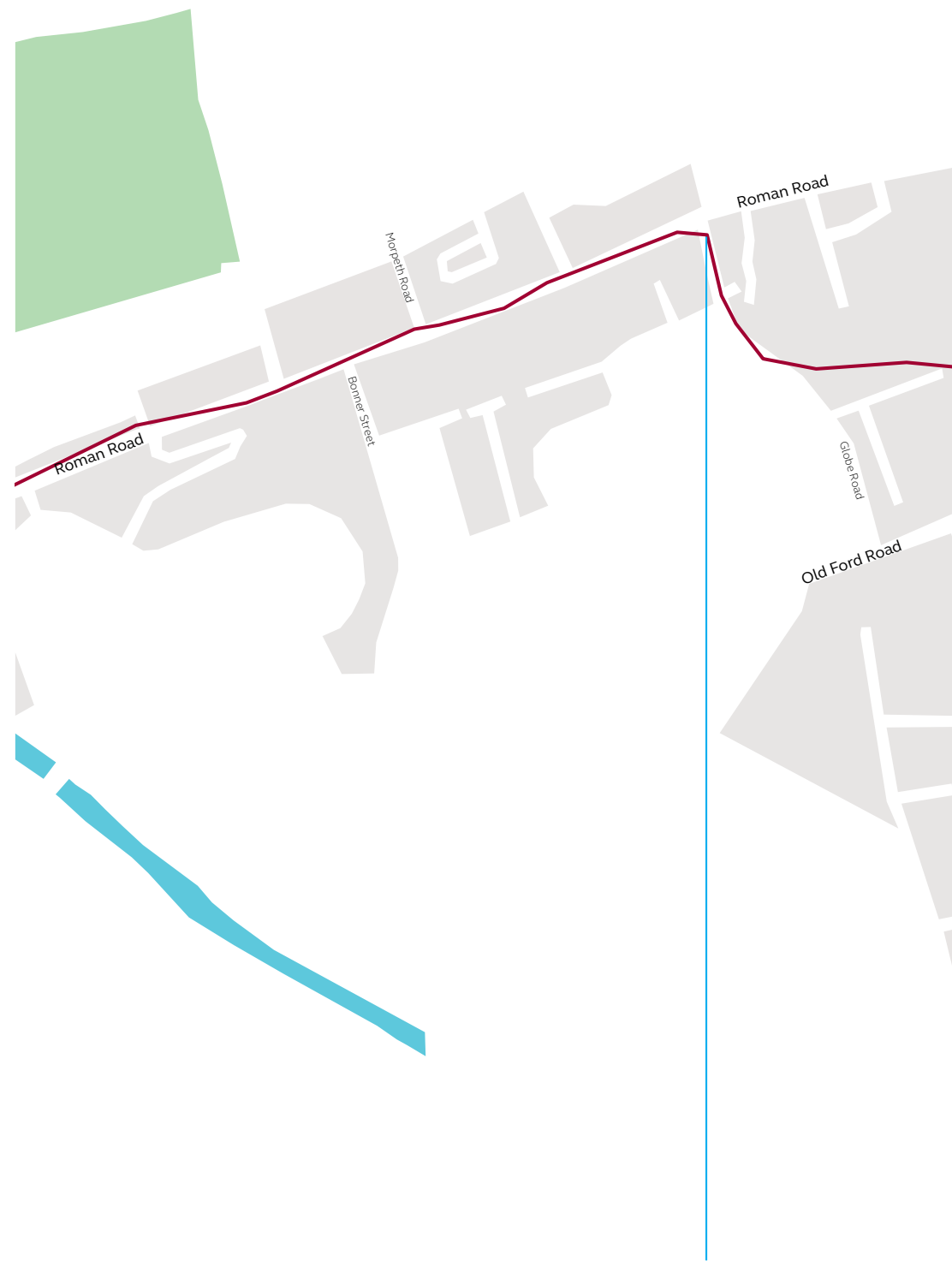


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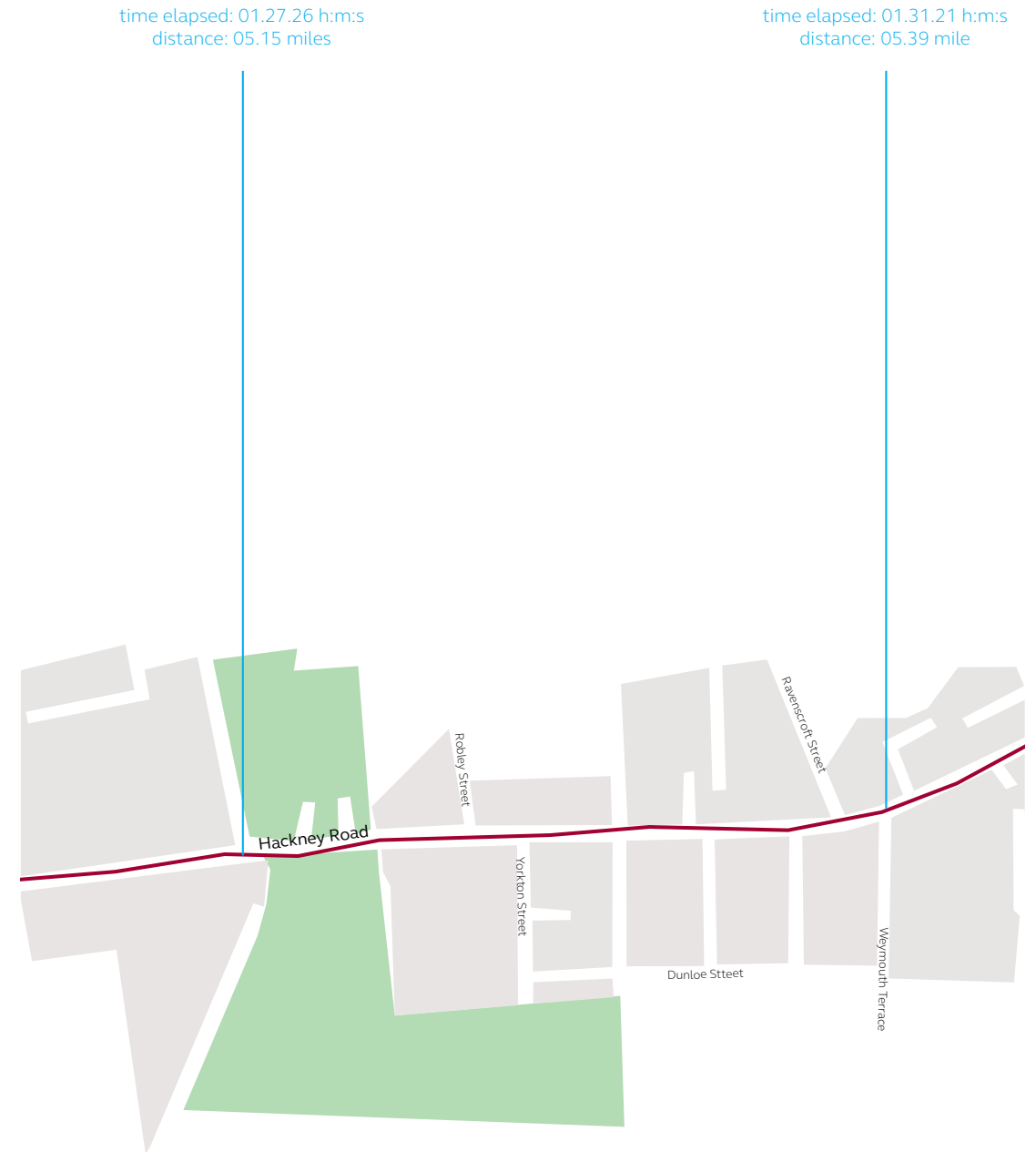
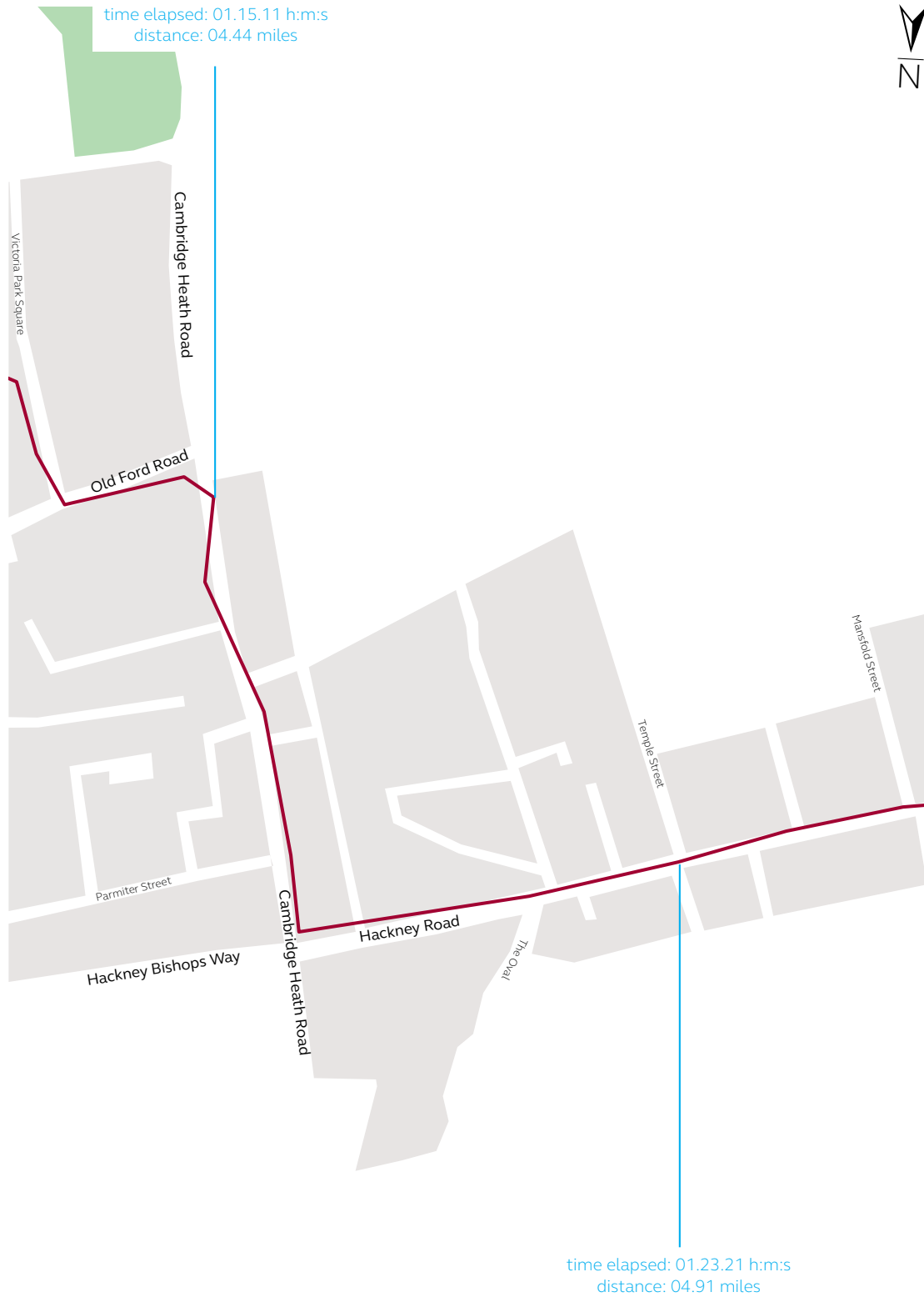
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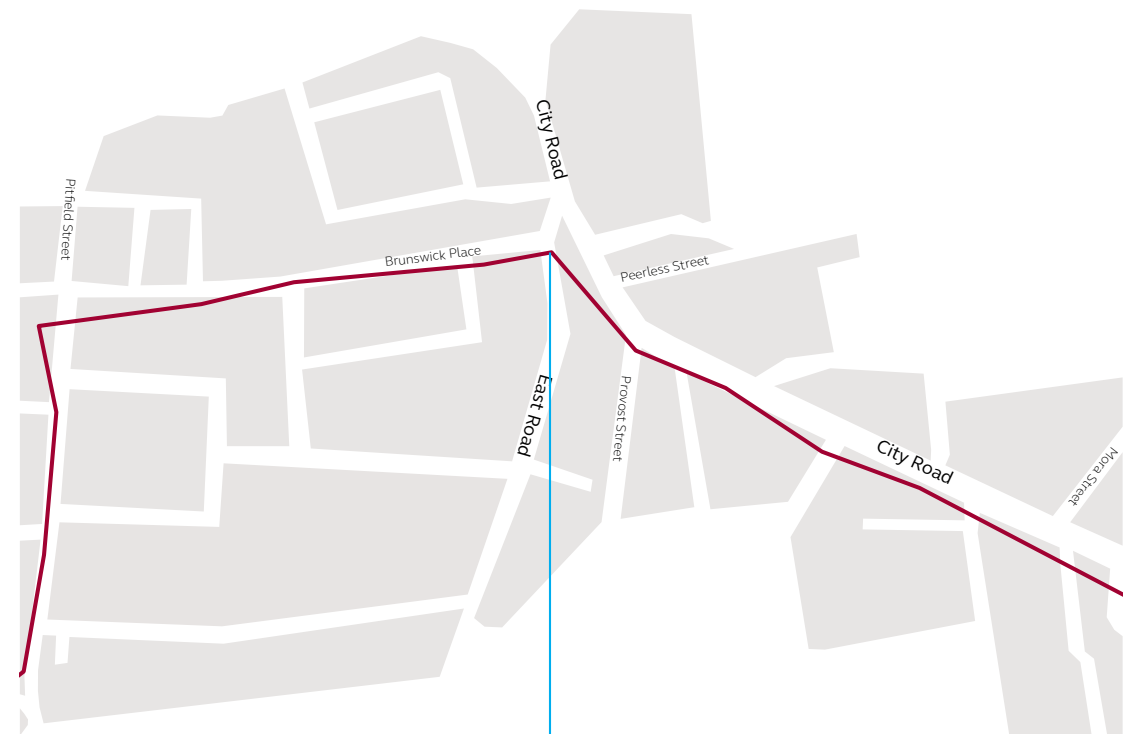
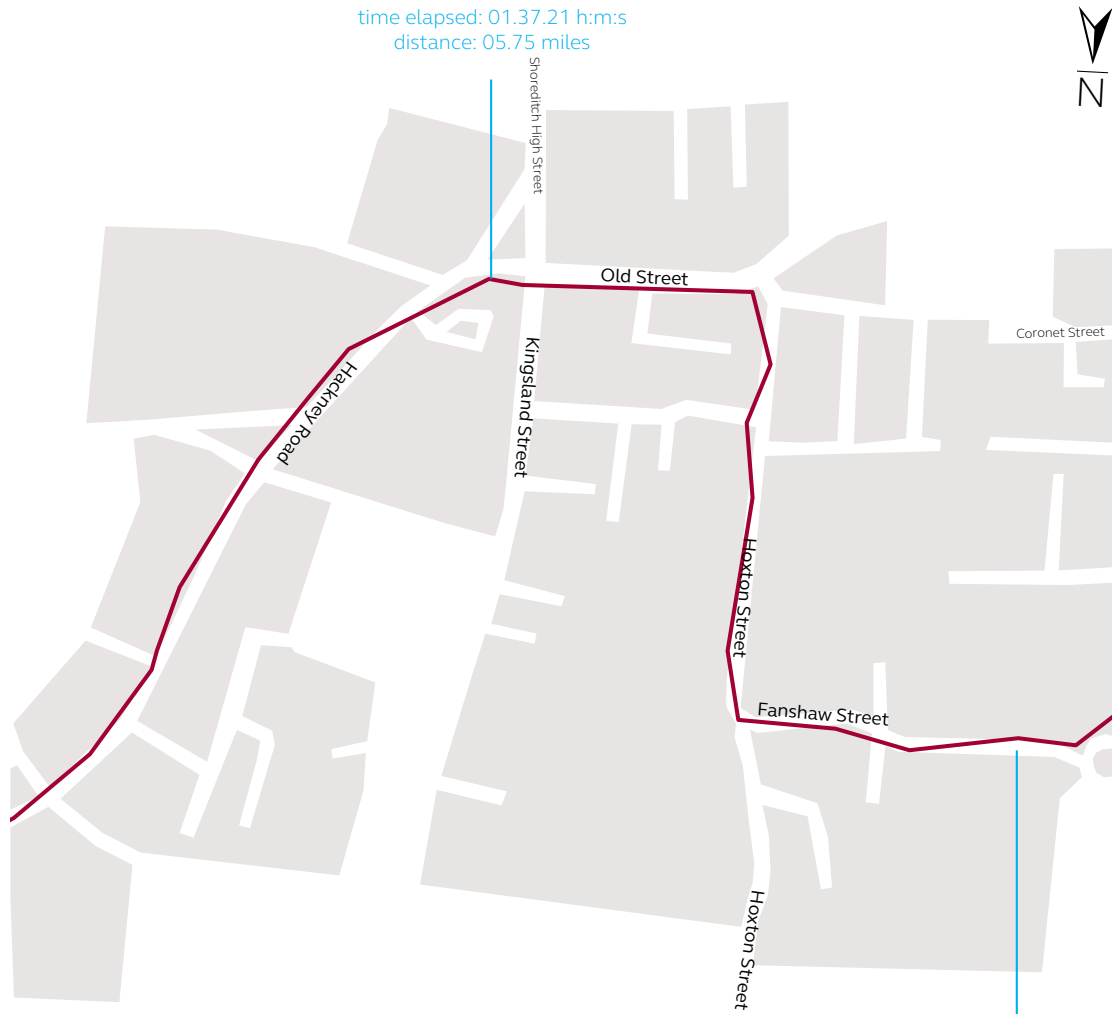


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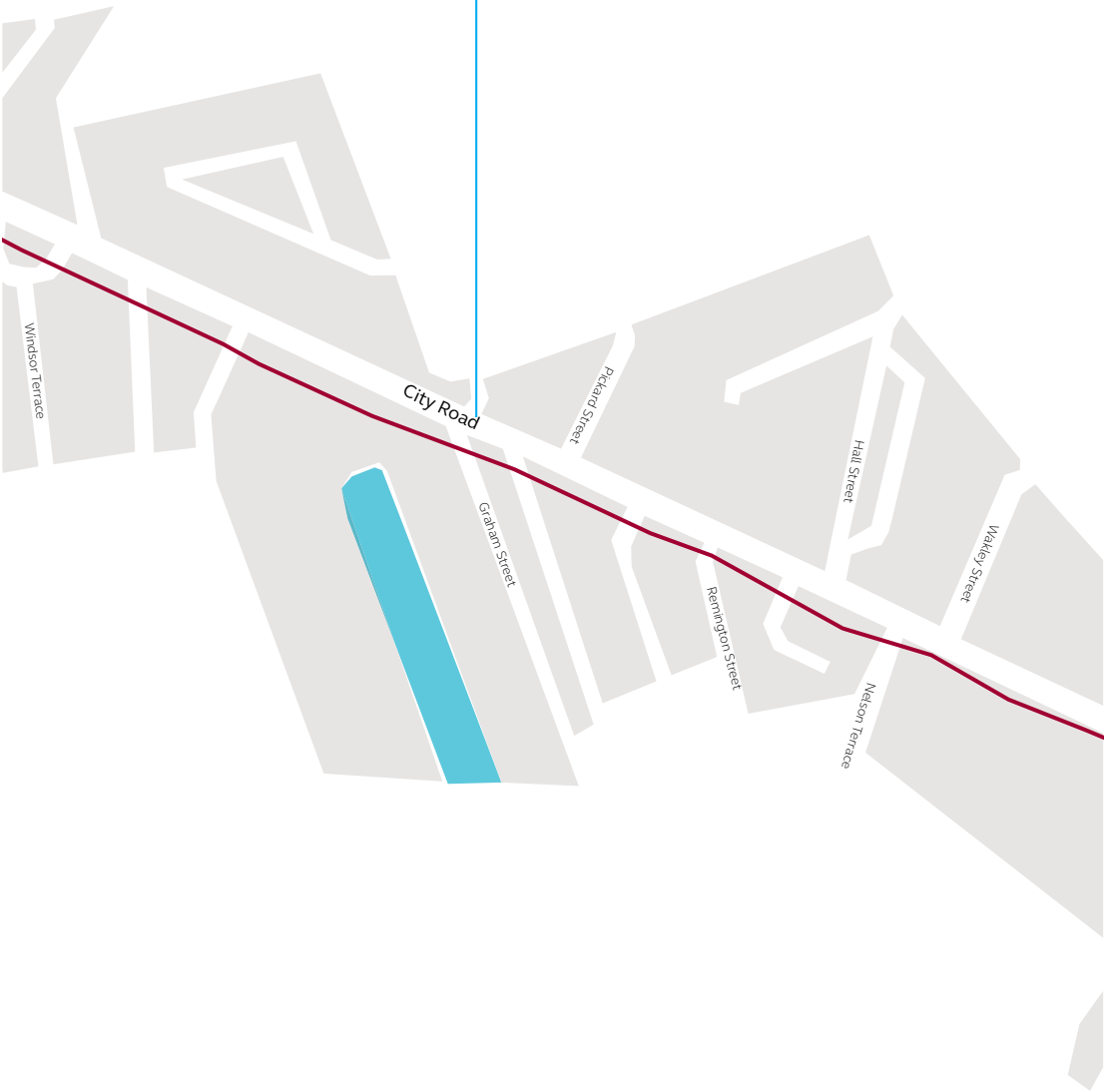


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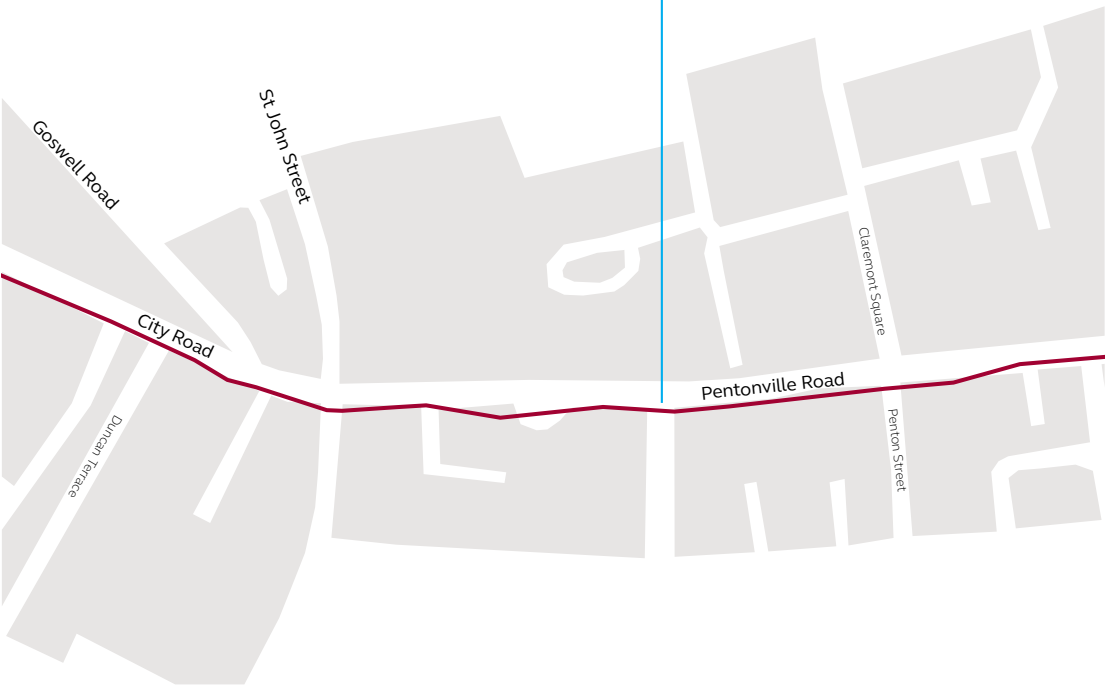




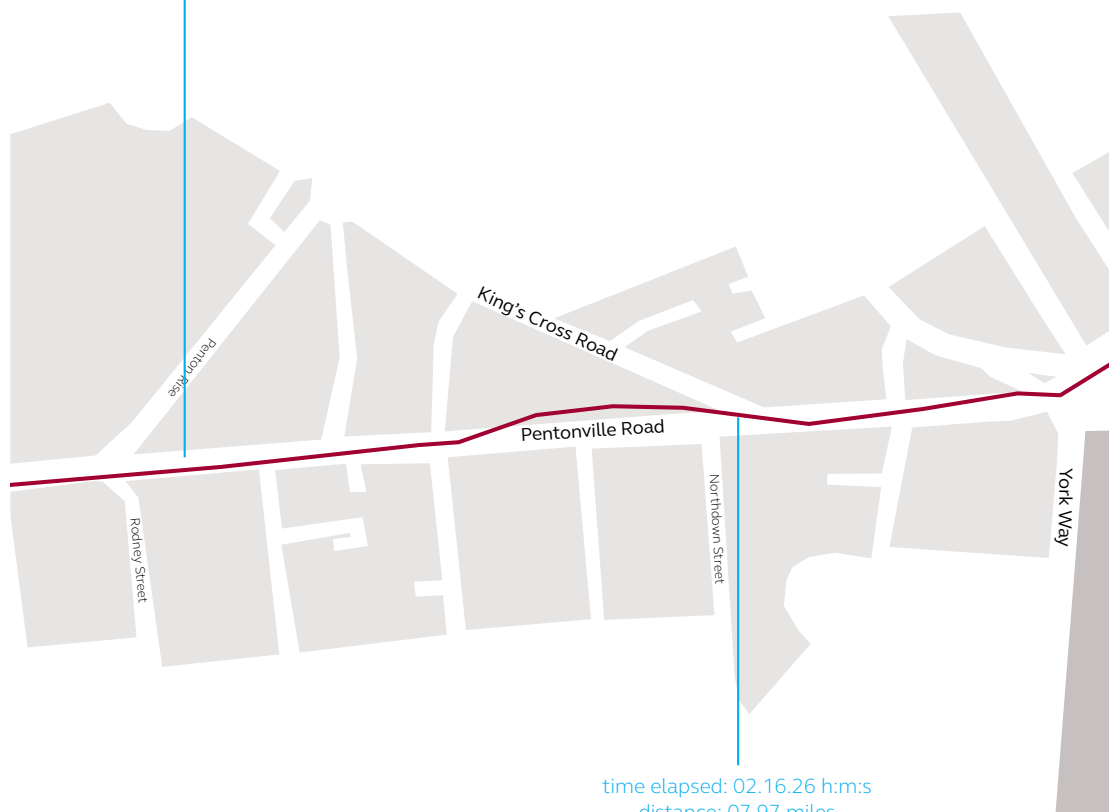
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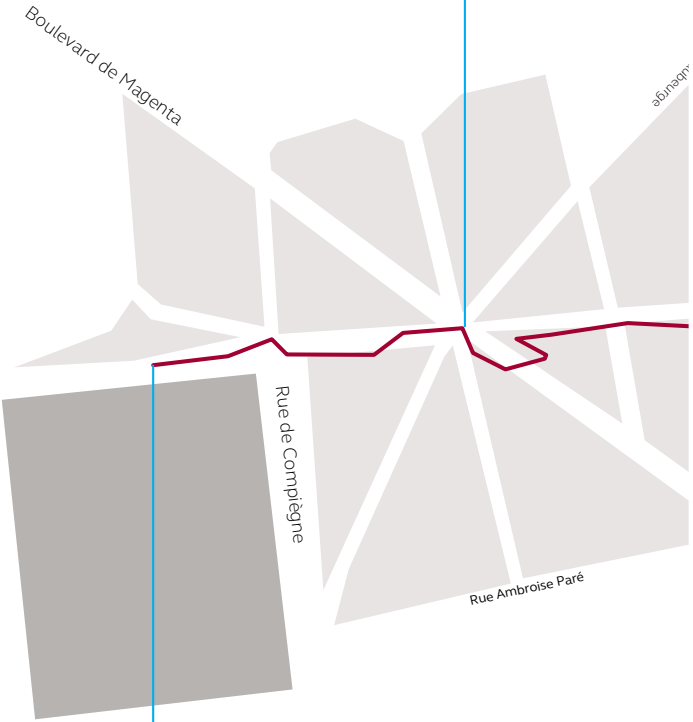
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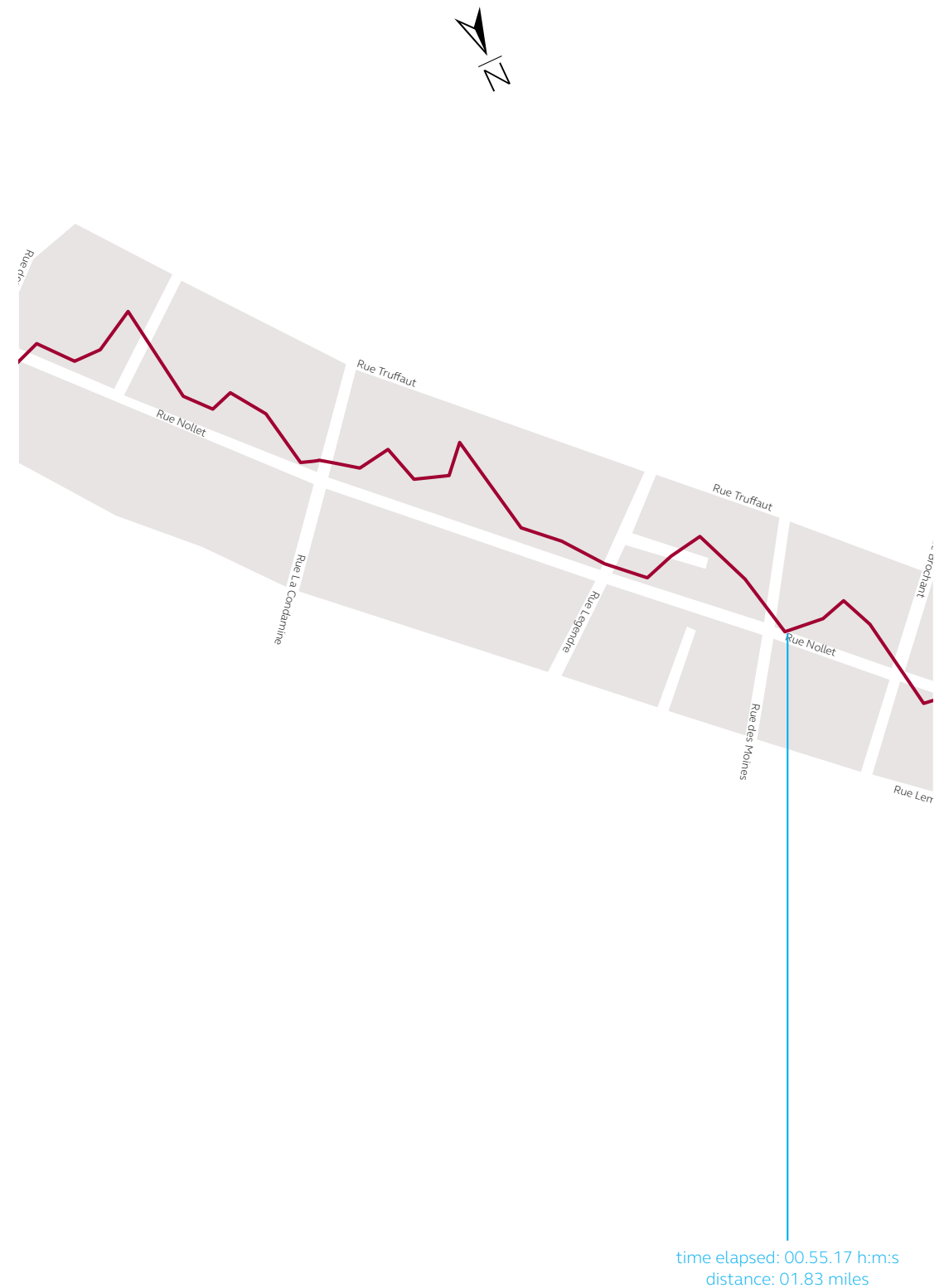
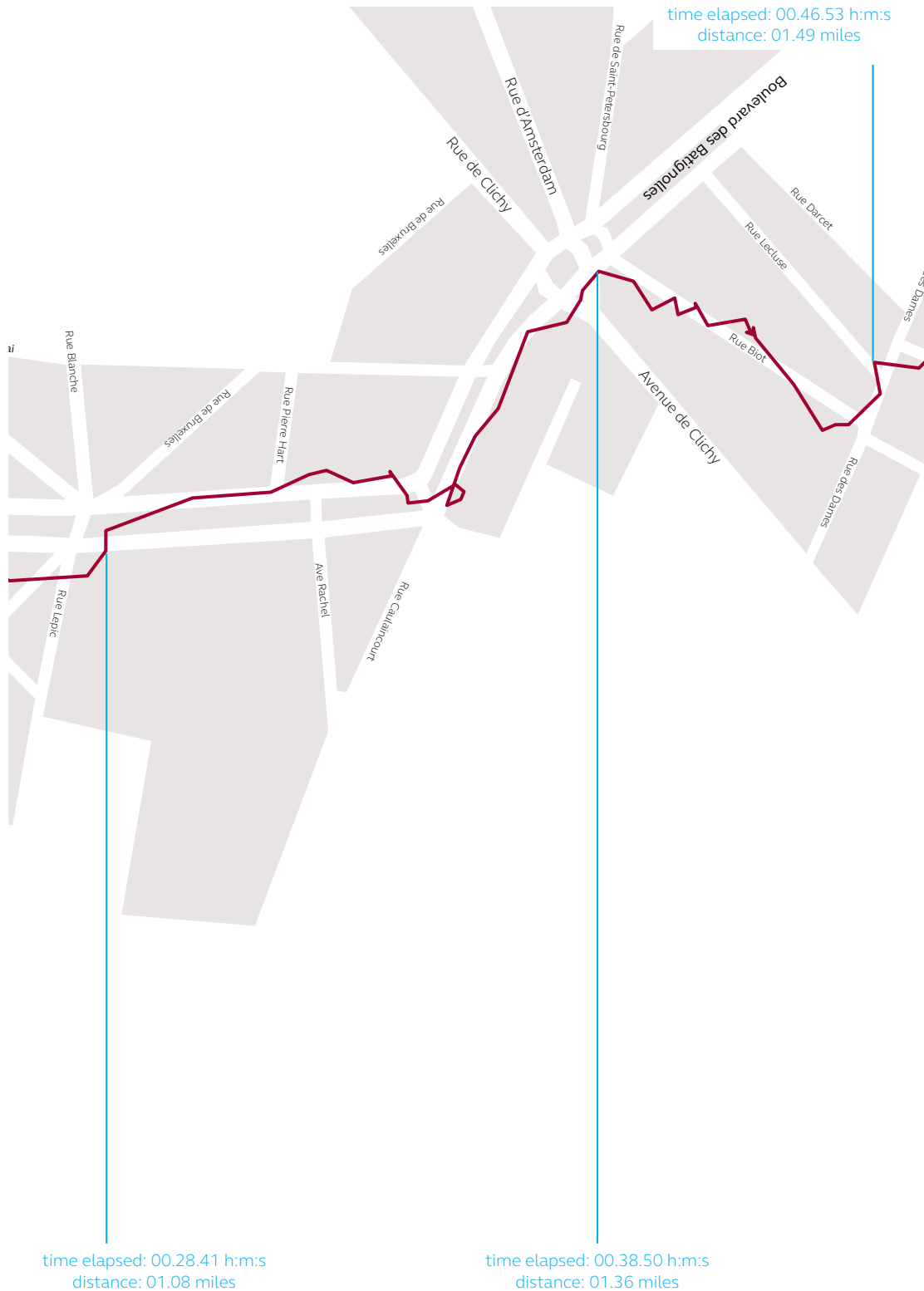
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GARE DU NORD  
RAILWAY STATION  
PARIS



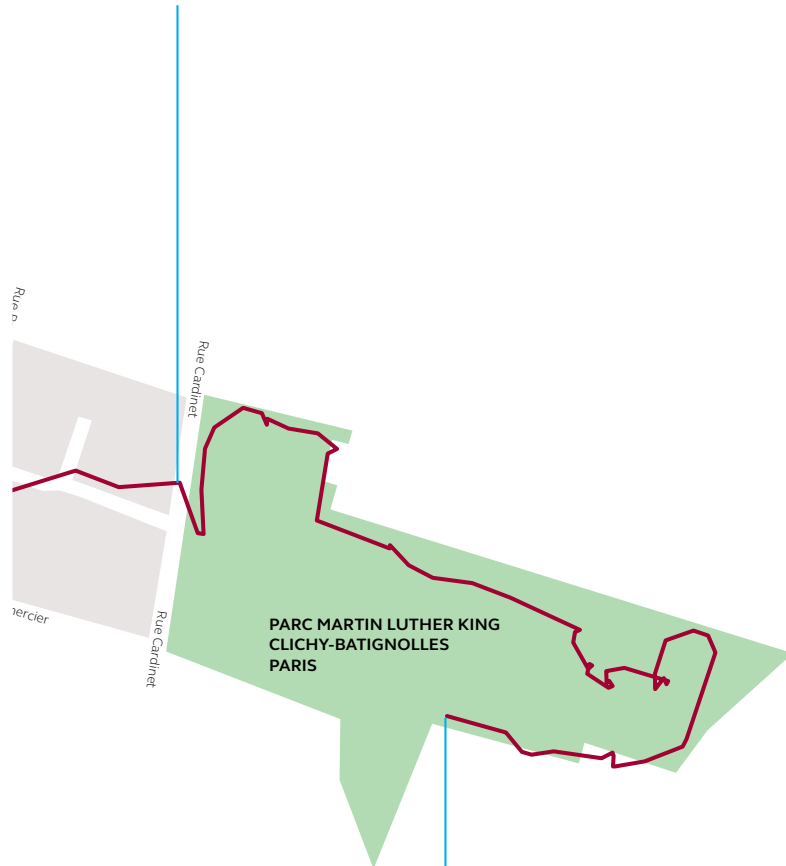
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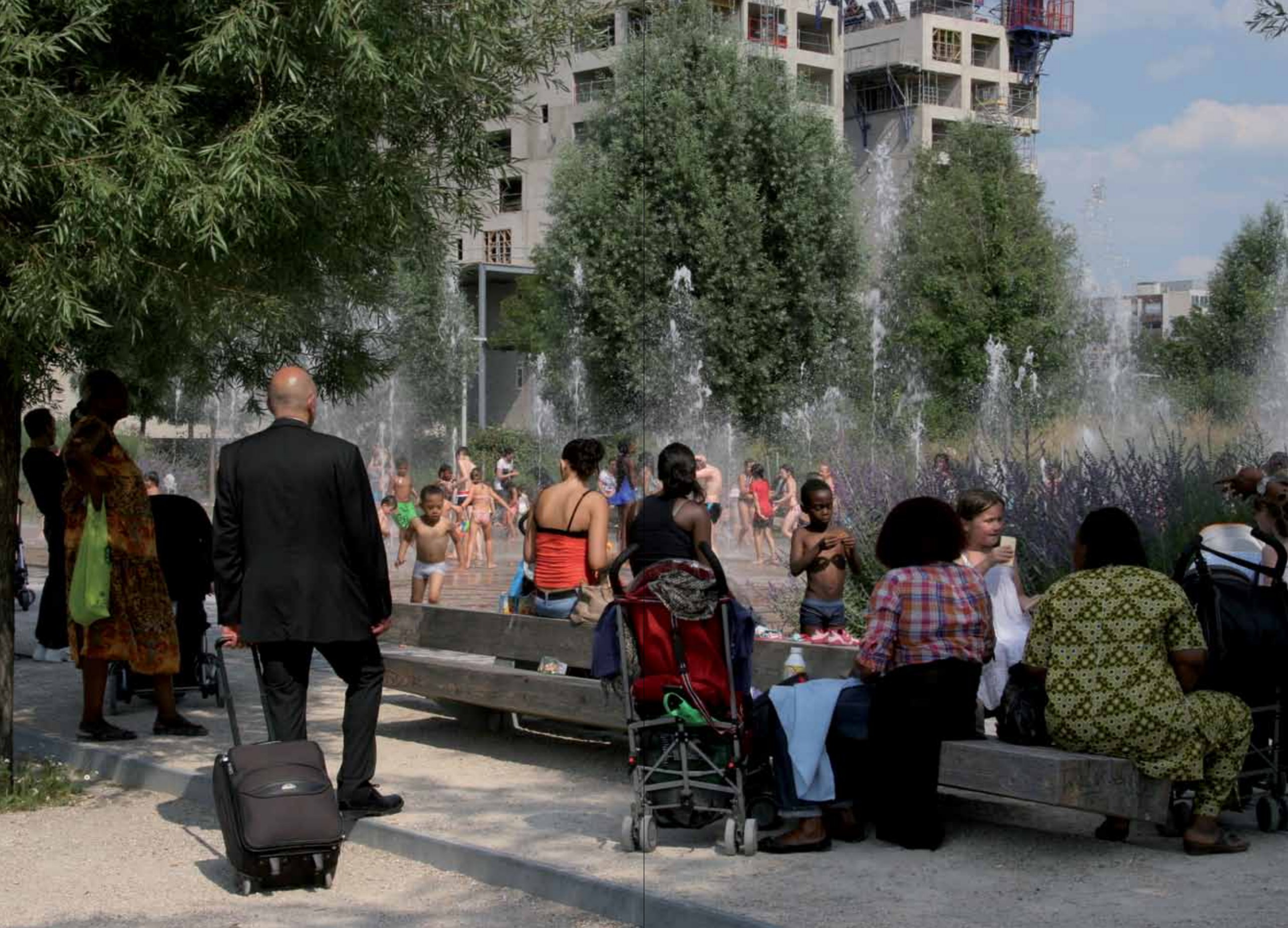
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Dear Neville,

I am sitting at the kitchen table and I am allowing myself three hours to write this letter.

In solidarity with you, my first thought was to drive to Parys on the Vaal River and spend three hours there.

My question or contemplation would have been on how well expansion or development is analysed and what impact it has or might have on existing communities. I wanted to walk the town and try to assess how more food outlets, specifically a pancake shop as has been suggested to me many times, would impact. It often happens that smaller communities or towns are being negatively impacted on by sometimes/often-opportunistic expansion.

Instead of going to Parys, I decided to go to “FilosofieKafee” that enabled me to be back home at 22h00 in order for me to sit and write this letter to you.

The “FilosofieKafee” is an event that takes place every last Friday of the month at Café Riche situated on Church Square in the centre of Pretoria. The “FilosofieKafee” (<http://filosofiekafee.blogspot.com>) is a monthly gathering of thinkers, philosophers, teachers, stirrers and other like minded individuals and has been happening for the last 14 years. Discussions at the FilosofieKafee have been held in English, French, Greek, isiZulu, but predominantly in Afrikaans, as it happens.

The topic for the night, led by Dr. Leon Wessels was: “Is gesprekvoering en onderhandelingsaanvullend of uitsluitend tot mekaar?” Loosely translated: “Are conversation/ discussion and negotiation complementary to or exclusive of each other?”

The subject brought up many questions as to where South Africa came from and where we are going. More urgent though, from the small audience, mainly where we are and how to proceed – is there still a place at the table for discussion at all?

I felt on many levels connected to your project. To summarise the gist for you, he reckons that negotiation presumes an inherent power base before entering into it. There is an agenda and no point “General” – a structured affair often with a pre-concluded outcome. Conversations are the opposite: it is more inclusive, wide-ranging and empathetic. Negotiations rarely succeed without prior conversation or discussion – but not the other way round.

There did not seem to be much optimism among the gathered but the evening concluded with a single very simple (or complex?) statement by Dr. Wessels: that he is tired of “the lack of energy” or the pervasive lassitude of people around him.

Your Paris-journey realised what every human being should have: the will to keep questioning and the energy to want to make a difference. Maybe on a

scale of 1-100 we can decide where our questioning and energy levels lie and where we slot in – what matters is that we slot in and maintain that level – 1 or 100 and every slot in between can and is of infinite value – is not the beginning and the end the same thing?

I had to share what was happening in Paris tonight. Professor Abraham Viljoen, one of the regulars and a well-known and highly respected theologian from Pretoria, made a comment towards the end of question time that the power of sport is still not exhausted. I simplify serious thoughts – you will understand.

He listened intently as I briefly shared your Olympic-intervention with him and he expressed a desire to keep contact and to be informed of your progress.

What feels so good about writing to you now is the realisation that the “knowledge of the power of energy” can be so uplifting. Questioning isn’t only brought about by the bad things that happen, but also by the triumphs.

I feel invigorated by having written, however much my lack of writing skills maybe.

I think the Opening ceremony might be over by now.

Go well.

Regards, Harrie

This body of work was entirely reliant on the many varied and wonderful contributions submitted. Without that breadth of thinking and commitment to putting pen to paper by so many, there would have been no distance to consider. Thanks in particular to Martin Lewis who, once his proposal was selected, met with me on several occasions to discuss the background to his idea and his expectations.

Thanks to the selection panel – Danielle Arnaud, Sarah Butler, Sam Wilkinson, Bill Drummond, David Lillington and Jason Wood – whose dedication in debating and selecting my destination went beyond all my expectations.

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The Greatest Possible Distance: Neville Gabie

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Neville Gabie did his MA in Sculpture  
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Previous projects include:

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Liverpool

Artist in Residence with the British  
Antarctic Survey – Halley Station,  
Antarctica  
[www.oneminuteweek.tumblr.com](http://www.oneminuteweek.tumblr.com)

*BS1* – a three years as artist in  
residence on a building site in Cabot  
Circus, Bristol [www.bs1.org.uk](http://www.bs1.org.uk)

*Up in the Air* – a five year project initiated  
and co-curated with Leo Fitzmaurice in a  
north Liverpool tower block

Guangzhou China – Vitamincreativespace

International Art Space Kellerberrin

Tatton Park Biennial 2010

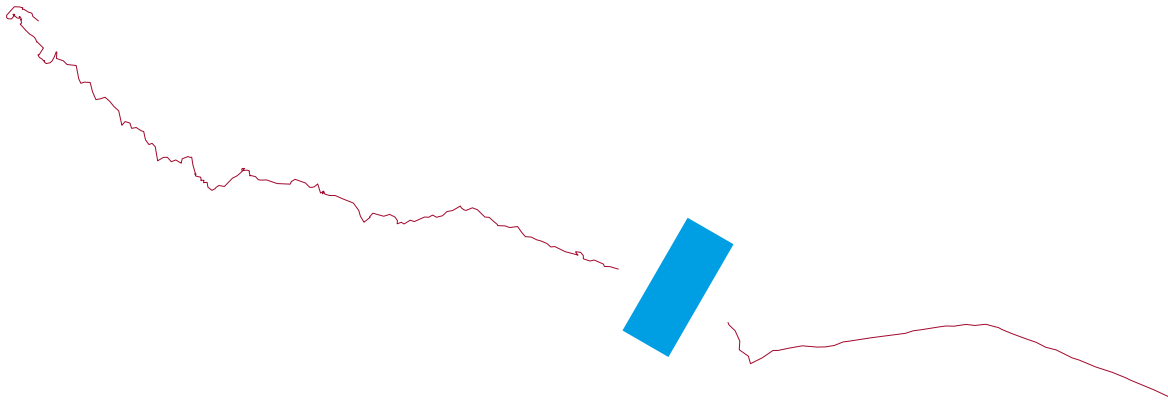
*Orchard* – in conjunction with the  
Contemporary Arts Society in  
Nottingham [www.orchardsneinton.co.uk](http://www.orchardsneinton.co.uk)

*Great Lengths 2012* – Olympic Delivery  
Authority artist in residence on the  
Olympic Park during construction  
[www.greatlengths2012.org.uk](http://www.greatlengths2012.org.uk)

He is currently undertaking a project  
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Leverhume Trust. His work is included  
in the Tate Gallery and Arts Council  
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At precisely 9.00PM [British Summer Time] on July 27th 2012, the moment of the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic Games, Neville Gabie intends to be as far away as possible.

He is inviting you to write his brief and would like you to identify what in your opinion is 'the greatest possible distance' from the London 2012 Opening Ceremony and why.