I was interested to read the article by John Davies, *London 2012: Why not walk it?* in *Sheetlines* 95. I visited London for a long weekend during the games and built up an impressive collection of maps, guides and other literature from both inside the park and from around London. I was probably quite indiscriminate in my collecting but nearly everything was free (which appealed greatly) and I suppose that I was hoping to find something special amongst the various publications.

John’s article also served as a reminder that the Isle of Man hosted our own international games the year before, albeit on a much smaller scale. The event was the 2011 Commonwealth Youth Games which were held in September of that year and involved 811 athletes from 64 countries and just like the Olympics involved a body of volunteers – 1300 in our case. These games will have passed under the radar of all but the most ardent of sports fans but for a small community of 84,000 people we were quite proud to host the games and the organisers were under a lot of pressure to deliver.

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1 The author is Senior Cartographer at the Isle of Man Government mapping service
As the Island’s cartographer I was called upon to put together a mapping programme to suit the organiser’s requirements and although we only produced one map that could be called a brand new publication we were quite busy in the run up to the event producing “technical” maps to support event planning.

These technical maps were based on the Island’s large scale map data and contained a variety of themed overlays including venues, competitor information, games HQ, hotels, transport routes, recycling locations and road closure information. The maps were printed on large format sheets and posted at strategic locations during the games. They were also used during volunteer training which was satisfying to see (I was also a volunteer).

We also produced a glossy folded map guide which was intended for the volunteers but was also popular amongst the visitors and quickly sold out (if that term can be used for a give-away map?). This was a close cousin to the maps that I saw at the Olympics and included the games logo, sponsors information, a picture of Tosha, the Manx cat mascot, plus plans and information that we expected the visitors to need. This guide included much more in terms of design than the functional technical maps and we worked in partnership with Peel-based commercial cartographer, Vic Bates in order to complete the map and get it printed to a looming deadline.

What I remember now about this project was the quick turnaround demanded for each set of maps. For obvious reasons, deadlines weren’t negotiable – if there was a meeting scheduled for a certain evening, they had to have the maps available. Likewise for the glossy guides, the volunteer training was on one date and the teams arrived on another. Therefore the guides had to be available on those dates.

At the time I was a bit bemused when they all disappeared but after visiting London and becoming a collector myself I can now understand what was happening.

Postscript: As we have three children, I’ve been putting my Olympic souvenirs together in sets of three in the hope that one day in the distant future they’ll thank me for it. eBay has helped fill in the gaps and it’s interesting to see how much competition there is for many of the games maps and guides.