



Only One day to Go!

The Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners team have had an amazing month, hosting three teams while they have been doing their pre-Games training and also welcoming the Olympic torch.

Now the Games start tomorrow, it is time to get behind Hertfordshire's local athletes, Team GB and also the ones who have made themselves at home here over the last month!

Look out for the five days of competition at Hertfordshire's Olympic Venue the Lee Valley White Water Centre from 29 July.

Let the Games begin!



The Herts 2012 Team - Jon, Sophie, John, Sally and Gareth visit us online at

www.hertsisreadyforwinners.co.uk

or follow us on Twitter

www.twitter.com/readyforwinners

Hertfordshire School children to form Guard of Honour at start of Athletes' Parade

School children from Get Set network schools across Hertfordshire will form a Guard of Honour for the London 2012 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony.

Eight Hertfordshire schools have been selected as a recognition of their commitment to the Olympic and Paralympic Values through the Get Set network, the official London 2012 education programme.

These schools are:

1. Fleetville Junior School in St Albans will be representing Liechtenstein
2. Francis Combe Academy in Watford will be representing Burundi
3. The Knights Templar in Baldock will be representing Romania
4. The Meridian School, Royston will be representing Palau
5. Newberries Primary School in Radlett will be representing the Cook Islands
6. Pinewood School in Ware will be representing Guatemala
7. The Russell School in Chorleywood will be representing Kiribati
8. Turnford School, Cheshunt will be representing the British Virgin Islands

The Guard of Honour, made up of 250 schools, will line the route during the athletes' procession from the Olympic Village to the Olympic Stadium, holding lanterns and banners they have created to support one of the 204 competing teams. For many of the 10,500 athletes the Guard of Honour will be their first experience of the London 2012 Games.

LOCOG Chair, Seb Coe said: *"The presence of so many young people at the start of the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony will continue to show London 2012's commitment to put young people at the heart of the Games. For athletes, the Guard of Honour will provide a stunning welcome to the Games and the perfect curtain raiser for the Athletes' Parade."*

Teacher Release, Anne-Marie Riddle said, *"Pinewood School is honoured to have been selected, this is a once in a lifetime experience for eight of our pupils and three members of the PE Department. We are looking forward to designing our banner ready to cheer on Guatemala as they enter the Olympic Stadium."*

Chairman of the Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners Board, Derrick Ashley said, *"Hertfordshire has the accolade of 100% sign up for London 2012 education programme Get Set and so it is fantastic that our schools get rewarded for their commitment and enthusiasm for the Games by being involved in such a key part of the athletes' welcome to London."*

As well as having the opportunity to cheer on the world's best athletes and be part of a global moment, the school children will also get the exciting chance to tour the Olympic Park and see some of the London 2012 venues before the world turns its attention to Danny Boyle's Olympic Games Opening Ceremony in the Olympic Stadium later that day.



Three teams have made Hertfordshire their home as they prepare for London 2012

Hertfordshire has hosted the Afghanistan, British Virgin Islands and St Kitts and Nevis teams as they conduct their final preparations before the Games start.

St Kitts and Nevis were the first to arrive in the county on 1 July. The team of seven track athletes have been based in Watford, training at Woodside Stadium and staying in a nearby hotel. They made the best out of their time in Watford going to Top Golf, bowling, shopping at the Harlequin Centre and even going to Watford town centre for a night out.



The team also made time to visit pupils from Harvey Road and Yorke Mead schools in Croxley Green. Through the tremendous fund raising efforts of both schools, a huge £1,600 has been generated that will go to support the Caribbean islands sporting infrastructure in preparation for future Olympic Games. Family fun runs, tuck shops, visiting Olympic gymnasts were just some of the key things that the two schools have done to support this.

During the visit to the school the team took part in races against school pupils and also shared gifts and offered advice to the students during an assembly.

The St Kitts and Nevis Team are:

- Mr Kim Collins – Track Athletics: 100m, 200m, 4x100m
- Mr Jason Rogers – Track Athletics: 100m, 4x100m
- Mr Delwayne Delaney – Track Athletics: 100m, 4x100m
- Mr Antoine Adams – Track Athletics: 100m, 200m, 4x100m
- Mr Brijesh Lawrence – Track Athletics: 200m, 4x100m
- Mr Lestrod Roland – Track Athletics: 200m, 4x100m
- Ms Tameka Williams – Track Athletics: 100m, 200m

The Afghanistan Olympic Team arrived in Hertfordshire on Sunday 8 July in time to see the Olympic Torch pass through Hatfield where they are staying, training at the Hertfordshire Sports Village and Gosling Sports Park in Welwyn Garden City. The Afghanistan team consists of one judo, Mr Ajmal Faizzada, and two track athletes, Mr Massoud Azizi and Ms Tahmina Kohistani who will be competing in the women's 100m and is the third woman in history to represent her country at the Olympics.



The Leader of the Afghan team, Rahmani commented that the team had enjoyed their time in Hertfordshire, *"We have found London and Hertfordshire beautiful. It has a fantastic atmosphere and we have fantastic facilities to use."*

The final team to arrive were the **British Virgin Islands team** of two 100m sprinter Tahesia Harrigan-Scott and J'Maal Alexander. The team trained at Ridlins Athletics Track in Stevenage and stayed with host families in the nearby village of Aston.



Tahesia said, *"I have a really great family that I'm staying with, Peter and Pauline Greasby, it makes the transition and the stay over here in Aston very comfortable and homely."*

"The hospitality is great and to know that they put away their entire schedule to accommodate us and to make us feel at home is wonderful."

"The training is going well, there is not too much more we can do right now it is more preparing your body to compete, getting used to the weather and fixing the little things that you need to fix, we are already in shape so you just need to go out there and perform to the best of your ability at the Games and go from there."



Hertfordshire's moment to shine!

Thousands of people lined the route of the Olympic Torch Relay over the 7 and 8 July as it travelled through Hertfordshire.

Despite the rain in some areas the crowds embraced the Olympic spirit and celebrated the relay coming through their communities and the achievements of the Torchbearers chosen to carry the flame.

Ten locations in the county were included as communities on route. On Saturday (7 July) the Olympic flame travelled through Waltham Cross, including the Lee Valley White Water Centre, Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford and Letchworth, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, including Hatfield House and the Herts Youth Games, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead on Sunday.





Olympic Torch rides the rapids

Lee Valley White Water Centre was a unique setting for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay on Saturday 7 July.

The centre, where the five-day Olympic Canoe Slalom competition will take place, provided a dramatic backdrop to the Flame and marked the countdown to the start of the Games.

Members of the GB Raft Team, led by their Captain, Lee Valley White Water Centre's Assistant Manager, Paskell Blackwell, paddled the raft that transported the Flame and the lucky torchbearer, future Olympic Canoe Slalom hopeful Zachary Franklin.

Chief Executive of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Shaun Dawson said:
"It was fantastic that the Flame visited Lee Valley White Water Centre and that we played a part in helping it along its journey to the Olympic Stadium."

"The crowds were clearly wowed by the sight of the Flame riding the rapids and it was a great opportunity to shine a spotlight on the centre as an Olympic venue and the water sports that will be available to the public so soon after the Games."

Members of Team GB showed the audience the sporting skills they could expect to see at the Canoe Slalom event. There were also freestyle kayaking demonstrations, followed by thousands of ducks representing different London 2012 sports being released in to the water, with the winning duck giving its ticket holder a prize of a rafting adventure at the centre.

Opening its doors in April 2011, Lee Valley White Water Centre was the only brand new Olympic facility that the public was able to use and enjoy ahead of the Games. The centre will reopen after the Games on 8 September with a new season of rafting and paddling, tickets are already on sale. For more information or to book, visit www.gowhitewater.co.uk or call **08456 770 606**.





Torch Lights up the Herts Youth Games!

The Olympic torch relay coincided with the Herts Youth Games.

The Herts Youth Games sees over 1,500 children aged between 11 years and 15 years old compete in a number of sports including indoor athletics, aquathlon, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table-tennis and boccia. This year the Herts Youth Games also held two demonstration sports - fencing and bowls.

The Herts Youth Games promotes friendly competition between the ten districts of Hertfordshire and provides a great opportunity for families and communities to come together through sport. Rain failed to dampen the spirits of participants and spectators as children enjoyed arts and crafts in between competing and of course, waiting for the arrival of the Olympic torch.

North Herts were crowned the overall winners with East Herts taking 2nd place and Hertsmere finishing in 3rd place. Welwyn Hatfield fell just outside the top three finishing a respectable 4th and picking up the award for Fair Play.



Paralympic Torch Relay is coming to Hertfordshire!

After the excitement of the Olympic Torch Relay, Herts communities can look forward to the Paralympic Torch Relay. The Paralympic Torch will visit the communities of Tring, Berkhamsted, Bourne End, Watford and Bushy.

Stoke Mandeville Stadium will be the venue for the official Paralympic Flame Lighting Ceremony on 28 August. Four flames from London, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh will be united to form the Paralympic Flame which will be taken on a 24-hour overnight relay to the Paralympic Opening Ceremony at the Olympic Stadium on 29 August.

The 24-hour relay - presented by BT, Lloyds TSB and Sainsbury's - will see the Paralympic Flame carried 87 miles by 580 inspirational Torchbearers, working in teams of five, from Stoke Mandeville to London. It will travel through some of the communities of Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, before visiting all six host boroughs and a number of internationally recognisable London landmarks. From the iconic Abbey Road crossing in the north-west of the city to historic Greenwich in the south-east, the Flame will come right through the heart of London.

St Albans is one of 36 communities from across the UK have taken the opportunity to host Flame Celebration's over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Each celebration will be unique and have a flavour of the local area but will have the Paralympic values at its core. For more information about the Games and events in Hertfordshire visit

www.hertsisreadyforwinners.co.uk