Things are really hotting up now!

The next month is going to be very busy for us as we prepare to welcome both the Olympic Torch and our pre-Games training teams!

You can find out about the teams that are coming on page 2.

No matter where in Hertfordshire you are you are not far from the Olympic torch on the weekend of the 7 and 8 July. The Olympic flame will travel through Waltham Cross, including the Lee Valley White Water Centre, Hertford, Ware and Bishop’s Stortford on 7 July and Letchworth, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead on 8 July.

A series of events are happening all over Hertfordshire to celebrate. Make sure you are out lining the route and don’t miss the opportunity to see the Torch on its epic journey to the Olympic Stadium.

Richard Hale School are counting down to the Paralympics

A group of students from Richard Hale School, Hertford are counting down after being selected as Young Games Makers to volunteer during the Paralympic Games.

The group of 12 were successful after going through the rigorous selection process by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and chosen as part of the tie-down crew.

The group are lead by two year 13 students, Aaron Hemsley and Alex Cloona who both already volunteer for sports clubs locally; they advertised the opportunity to be a Young Games Maker in school assemblies and in the school bulletin. This resulted in 30 applications which Aaron and Alex then had to sort through to find the Richard Hale School team.

The group have just come back from the London Disability Grand Prix as part of their training; they had the opportunity to get used to working within the stadium and practiced their tie down role which ensures that the athlete’s throwing frames are securely fastened to the ground while they throw.

Sebastian Coe, Chair of LOCOG, said: “These young people will get a once in a lifetime opportunity to play their part in delivering a world class event. The memories and experiences that they will take away with them will last a lifetime, as will the sense of pride and achievement and the friends they will make. As a result, I hope we inspire our Young Games Makers to volunteer or stay involved in sport long after the Games have finished.”

Aaron Hemsley, Richard Hale Young Games Makers Team Leader, said, “I hope that holding the Paralympics in London will encourage people around the world to take a great interest in Paralympic sports for those with disabilities. I’d like to see as a lasting legacy from the Games that encourage sports clubs to form grass roots sports for those with impairments or special needs, to involve them in sport and see how it could change their lives.”

Follow the Richard Hale Young Games Makers on their blog, http://rhs-ygm.blogspot.co.uk/
Meet the teams coming to Hertfordshire for their pre-Games training!

Over 600 facilities across the UK are approved pre-Games training camps for Olympic and Paralympic teams. Hertfordshire has 17 training camps, which offer wide ranging sports facilities from athletics to gymnastics and fencing to wrestling. Meet four of the teams who have committed to training in the county.

All information correct at time of production but subject to change.

Afghanistan
The Afghanistan Olympic Committee predicts they will be bringing 12 athletes for pre-Games training, competing in a range of sports. The main sport in Afghanistan is Taekwondo, but they are hoping to have representation in the wrestling, boxing, judo and athletics competitions as well. Mujeebullah Rahmani, Afghanistan NOC Chef de Mission & Spokesman said, “We have visited many venues last December but we found Hertfordshire the best one.”

British Virgin Islands
The British Virgin Islands (BVI) were the first team to sign up with Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners for pre-Games training in June 2009. Since then the relationship between the islanders and Hertfordshire has grown and a friendship has flourished. The BVI team will be hosted by the villagers of Aston, near Stevenage during their three week training camp. The villagers did a trial run in June 2010 with discus thrower Eric Matthias, Eric stayed in Aston while training at Woodside Stadium in Watford.

The BVI are anticipating six athletes to make Olympic qualification.

St Lucia
The St Lucian team will also be based in Hertfordshire next month. The team is expected to consist of two athletes and one swimmer. The St Lucian Commonwealth Youth Games Team stayed with students from Bishop’s Stortford High School last September before travelling onto the Commonwealth Youth Games on the Isle of Man.

Secretary General of St Lucia NOC, Alfred Emmanuel was so impressed with the facilities that Hertfordshire have to offer it became his pre-Games training venue of choice, “My visit to Hertfordshire has convinced me that this is the right place to be, leading up to the London 2012 Games. The facilities offered are superb likewise the technical and family expertise on the ground, these were all deciding factors for our choice.”

St Kitts and Nevis
St Kitts and Nevis NOC signed up to train in Hertfordshire whilst at the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010. Glenville Jeffers, Secretary General of St Kitts and Nevis NOC was taken on a whistle stop tour of Hertfordshire’s facilities by the partnership, on this way out to the Commonwealth Games and was convinced that the county is their choice for 2012 and possibly even Glasgow 2014.

The St Kitts and Nevis team is likely to include 13 athletes including Kim Collins. The 36 year old sprinter has represented his country at the Olympics on four previous occasions and was the country’s first athlete to reach an event final. Kim is also a former World Record holder for the 100m.

Others
We at Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners have had contact from other teams and federations interested in coming to Hertfordshire to train, so it is still possible that we will have other teams coming here before 27 July.

One certainty has been Herman Husslein, the Thai paddler who has been training at the Lee Valley White Water Centre and staying Grove House in Cheshunt, former retirement housing scheme run by Broxbourne Housing Association.
Talented Hertford sailor Rhiannon Massey has received a financial boost from local company Ashbourne Insurance to help her realise her dream of one day becoming a world sailing champion and compete in the Olympics.

Rhiannon, 16, is a pupil at Haileybury College in Hertford Heath and has already successfully competed in a number of junior World and European events. She races a Laser (a single-handed sailing boat) and is a member of Great Britain’s RYA Volvo National Youth Squad.

Rhiannon is supported by HTAP – Hertfordshire Talented Athlete Programme – which provides services and offers support to young talented athletes across Hertfordshire. It is sponsored by a number of organisations including the University of Hertfordshire, Lee Valley Regional Park, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners.

Ashbourne Insurance, which has offices in Hoddesdon and Cheshunt, decided to sponsor Rhiannon after a presentation by the University of Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners at a local business networking event urging local businesses to help the stars of the future. Sarah Smits, Financial Director at Ashbourne Insurance said: “We are thrilled to be helping Rhiannon pursue her sailing dreams. She is an incredibly talented young lady as her inclusion on the HATP programme demonstrates and hopefully our support will help with the many financial costs competing around the world entails.”

Nick Brooking, Director of Sport at the University of Hertfordshire, added: “It’s so important we work together with local businesses like Ashbourne to help our young athletes in Hertfordshire be able to compete on the world stage. Rhiannon has the potential to be a world champion of the future and I’m thrilled that the University of Hertfordshire and Ashbourne can do their bit to make those dreams become a reality.”

Jon Heyes of Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners said: “It is great to see Ashbourne Insurance of Hoddesdon and Cheshunt taking up the challenge of sponsoring Rhiannon Massey on her way to becoming Hertfordshire’s own potential future World and Olympic Champion. Our Herts Talented Athlete Programme, of which Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners is proud to support, is the vehicle for businesses to get involved in creating a real legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games which will be realised through young athletes like Rhiannon.”

Ashbourne Insurance have recently achieved an enormous amount of success in competing in regional and national business awards; and thought it would be an excellent way to celebrate their business success by ‘giving-back’ to a local youth with drive, great talent and passion. That individual is Rhiannon Massey.

To keep up to date with Rhiannon’s progress follow Twitter @ashbournesarah/@ashbourneins and on facebook.com/ashbourneinsurance.
Have you got what it takes to join the Hertfordshire Talented Athlete Programme

Like Rhiannon, young athletes from Hertfordshire with the potential to represent England or Great Britain have the chance to receive top specialist support to help them progress in their sport.

The Hertfordshire Talented Athlete Programme can count its alumni as recent Golf Open Championship silver medallist for best amateur Tom Lewis and National and European Junior sprint Champion Jodie Williams.

Athletes selected for the Hertfordshire Talented Athlete Programme gain access to top class service providers at Bodybalance physiotherapy and sports injury clinic who have experience working with athletes at Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Strength and conditioning coaches at Performance Hertfordshire currently work with the English Institute of Sport, England Golf Union, Arsenal Ladies FC and Badminton England to name a few a partners. This wealth of knowledge and experience provides the athletes with a great foundation and continuous high quality support during their sporting career.

Other services which enable these athletes to reach the top in their sport include workshops in nutrition, sport psychology, injury prevention and awareness of drugs in sport.

The HTAP has supported 62 athletes since 2007; 25 of whom have gone on to gain higher levels of support through National Governing Body programmes and University Scholarships.

Applications and criteria are available to download from the website www.hertssportsvillage.co.uk/hertstalentedathletes. Deadline for applications is Friday 22 June 2012.

Your guide to upcoming Olympic themed events in Hertfordshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 June</td>
<td>One Month and Counting</td>
<td>Waltham Cross Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 June</td>
<td>OFEST</td>
<td>Paradise Wildlife Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 June – 8 July</td>
<td>10 Days of Sport and Culture</td>
<td>various locations across Welwyn and Hatfield District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 July</td>
<td>Five Gold Rings Gala Concert</td>
<td>Broxbourne Civic Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 July</td>
<td>One World, One Voice</td>
<td>Hemel Hempstead School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 July</td>
<td>Heart of Flame Community Concert</td>
<td>University of Hertfordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 July</td>
<td>Heart of Flame, 3Music – The Final Showcase</td>
<td>University of Hertfordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 July</td>
<td>Olympic Torch Relay visits the Lee Valley White Water Centre</td>
<td>Waltham Cross, Hertford, Ware and Bishop’s Stortford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 July</td>
<td>Olympic Torch Relay visit</td>
<td>Letchworth, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 July</td>
<td>Heart of Flame, Herts Youth Games</td>
<td>University of Hertfordshire.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For up to date events listings go to the Event Calendar on our website, http://www.hertsisreadyforwinners.co.uk/events.html
Going for Gold!

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are just around the corner and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority is gearing up for the greatest show on earth!

On Saturday 7 July, Lee Valley White Water Centre will host the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay. Members of GB white water raft team, led by their captain Paskell Blackwell, who is also the centre’s assistant manager, will charter the raft, taking the Torch and Torchbearer down the mighty rapids.

With the five-day Olympic Canoe Slalom event beginning on Sunday 29 July, building work by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Locog) at the centre is nearing completion. Construction of the stands has begun in earnest and once finished, they will seat almost 11,000 spectators who will be coming to this fantastic venue from across the globe.

Visitors are encouraged to travel to the venue by public transport. Cheshunt is the designated train station and visitors will be guided through the park on a route called the Last Mile. There will be opportunities to enter competitions to win white water rafting experiences and buy gift vouchers. People can also test their paddling skills on kayak ergo machines.

And just three weeks after the end of the London 2012 Olympic Games and while the Paralympic Games are still taking place, Lee Valley White Water Centre will reopen on Saturday 8 September. Thrill seekers will once again have the chance to tackle the same rapids that the elite athletes had competed on.

For more information about Lee Valley White Water Centre or to book a rafting experience, visit http://gowhitewater.co.uk or call 08456 770 606.