



The Lee Valley White Water Centre opens to the public on Good Friday, delivering a piece of early Olympic legacy for the county!

This is the realisation of one of our five ambitions and we are encouraged by our progress towards the other four so far! We have 81% of the county's schools registered for the London 2012 education programme Get Set, secured three teams to train in Hertfordshire pre-Games as well as achieving consistently high levels of registration for the Olympic procurement system CompeteFor.

We recently discovered that following a competitive tender process through the CompeteFor procurement portal, LOCOG has appointed 44 contractors from all over the UK and Ireland who will provide over 1,250 coaches and buses together with drivers which will be used at all London 2012 venues across the UK. Of the 44 contractors eight are from the Eastern Region and of this eight an impressive five contractors are from Hertfordshire.

The five successful Hertfordshire contractors are:

1. Cozy Travel based in Letchworth
2. Golden Boy Coaches based in Hoddesdon
3. South Mimms Travel based in Welwyn Garden City
4. Sullivan Bus and Coach based in Potters Bar
5. University Bus based in Hatfield

The Herts 2012 Team

Jon, Sophie, John, Sally and Gareth

visit us online at www.hertsisreadyforwinners.co.uk

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Brand new London 2012 venue open for an early legacy

Thrill seekers get ready, as the newest and best white water rafting centre opens its doors to the public.

The Lee Valley White Water Centre is the only brand new London 2012 venue to open to the public ahead of the Games and on April 22nd the Centre's doors open, offering adrenalin junkies a once in a lifetime opportunity: to use the same course the world's best athletes will compete on in summer 2012.

Lee Valley White Water Centre really does bring the Rockies to Hertfordshire with rafters reporting an unforgettable day out rafting the wild rapids. Centre Manager Simon Ricketts (former international kayaker) said: *"The Centre is the best of its type anywhere in the world and we give people great days out. This brand new, custom built venue is open for almost anyone to have a go at rafting and skilled canoeists wanting to test their skills can have a go on our demanding course."*

The Centre is the host venue for the Canoe Slalom events at the London 2012 Games and the Centre was built with legacy very much in mind. There are two separate courses - a 300m Olympic Standard Competition Course with a 5.5m drop and a 160m Legacy Loop, perfect for training and sports development.

Lizzie Neave, World Cup bronze medalist and member of the GB Canoe Slalom team said *"We're delighted to be able to train at this incredible venue - the team is extremely excited about what we can achieve here on home soil."*

Boasting first class facilities, two courses and guaranteed pumped clean white water, this Centre offers sports enthusiasts white water rafting, canoeing and kayaking. Experience the adrenalin rush as you negotiate obstacles, drops and 13,000 litres of whitewater flowing per second - its not for the faint hearted.

With white water rafting tickets cost just £49 per person, get your tickets now at:

www.gowhitewater.co.uk





Herts 2012 Ambassador's Rafting Guide!



On 6th April eight willing male volunteers (where were the steely women?) turned up to raft and gathered by the coffee counter to prepare for the morning's event as part of Lee Valley's test programme. Watching Team GB glide through the waves gave a false sense of security and when the call came to don our gear the banter was energetic. But the first real test was to get the wet suit on which proved more difficult than many imagined, especially after the legs were in and the tummy loomed. But having put it on twice-the zip is at the back not the front-got the boots on we then sauntered out with Peter our raft guide. Then even more gear, helmet and buoyancy aids, we looked fit to be launched in to outer space!

Having mastered the paddles we headed for the rising, moving ramp which dumped us in the holding pool. Heading for the torrent at full speed we were tossed, soaked and bounced to a set of commands which flowed from Peter in rapid succession and which were obeyed but not always in the order given. Until we reached the serene waters of the lake before heading up the ramp again. Being such a proactive group and

'up for it' our guide took his cue from us through ever increasing degrees of severity and different manoeuvres which created an adrenalin rush (boys will be boys!).

The last and fourth ride was to include trying to go back up a waterfall of water and we were warned the raft could go anywhere. We did it once and then on the second go it tipped and sent me out-I knew I was going but could do nothing about it. Starting under the boat I popped out into a raging torrent. Just about facing the right way like a cork I came out sucked in air, went down at a fair lick as bystanders threw the rope to catch me in full flow. At last catching it I was hauled in like a stranded porpoise. I returned to my boat and the disappointment that it was the last ride.

Getting out of the wet suit was as hard as getting in but with the warm sun, great camaraderie and a hot coffee the experience had proved even better than expected. We will do it again and so must you!

John Fuller



White Water Facts:

- You'll get at least four runs down the course
- You're guaranteed to get wet, so you must be confident in open water
- All equipment is provided - just bring an old pair of trainers with you!
- All rafters must be at least 14+ and under 18 stone

The Olympic Standard competition course:

- challenging grade 4 rapids
- 300m long white water course, with a 5.5m start pool
- Pumps delivering up to 15m³ of water per second – enough to fill a 25m swimming pool in 30 seconds!

The training course:

- 160m long white water course with 1.5m descent
- grade 3 rapids
- three pumps delivering up to 10.5m³ of water per second – perfect for paddlers wishing to improve their technique, move from flat water to white water and hone skills required to take on the Olympic course



How can your local community get involved and be inspired?

As well as a world class sports facility available to everyone which delivers a sporting legacy, another of our five key ambitions is creating healthier and closer communities through increased participation in sport, competition, cultural events and volunteering. As part of our work on this theme we have created a community engagement toolkit in order to encourage grassroots and local level enthusiasm and involvement in the occasion of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The toolkit works in conjunction with case studies of two areas that have set up organising committees.

One example is the Royston 2012 Co-ordinating Committee, which was set up in November 2010 in order to manage and create a programme of events. The committee is made up of representatives from local groups, such as from schools, churches and Sport Royston, as well as councillors and officers from the town and the district councils. The Committee is chaired by Town Councillor Lindsay Davidson and Les Baker (former District and Town Councillor and former Editor of the Royston Crow) is Deputy Chair and Secretary.

The banner under which all areas of the project work is 'Royston 2012 – A year of celebrations!' Existing events in the town's annual programme of events, such as the Royston May Fayre and the Royston Community Exhibition will have an Olympic theme in 2012.

The committee meets as and when required and acts as a supporting arm to the participating individual groups staging events and have no jurisdiction over the content of individual programmes unless problems can be foreseen, such as date clashes. The committee also aims to provide publicity and volunteers for events.

Both Royston and Bishop's Stortford town councils have allowed us to use their community engagement models as examples of good practice that can be replicated across the county. The toolkit offers key advice on how to get started as well as other issues you may want to consider when promoting a programme of community led events.

The toolkit and both the Royston and Bishop's Stortford case studies are available to download from the 'Get Involved' section of our website, www.hertsisreadyforwinners.co.uk



Olympic hopeful and Herts Talented Young Athlete – **Rhiannon Massey**

Hertford-based sailor Rhiannon Massey has come a long way since first stepping into a boat whilst on a family holiday at the age of seven. Now training with the RYA National Transition Squad, her aim this year is to be selected to compete at the Youth World Championships in France this July.

After starting her sailing career in a Topper dinghy Rhiannon now competes in a Laser Radial which is a 13 foot, one-person Olympic Class boat. This season 15 year-old Rhiannon has already won the title of 1st Junior Girl in three qualifiers and also in the National Laser Championships.

Unlike most other sports, the locations for training and competing in sailing are not usually on the doorsteps of the athletes. This means most Fridays after school Rhiannon travels three hours to Weymouth for a weekend of training, returning Sunday evening in time for school the following morning. Competitions and training camps take place around the country and even in Europe which means Rhiannon rarely has a weekend off!



This is Rhiannon's second year on the Hertfordshire Talented Athlete Programme during which time she has literally gone from strength to strength in her sport with the help of Performance Hertfordshire's Strength and Conditioning team based at Hertfordshire Sports Village. Supported by University of Hertfordshire, Herts County Council, Herts Is Ready for Winners and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, the programme has also enabled Rhiannon to gain valuable knowledge in areas of sports psychology and nutrition.

Rhiannon's goal for 2011 onwards is to gain a place on the National Laser Squad and eventually be selected for the Olympic Development Squad. With the determination she has shown so far in her sport, Rhiannon is sure achieve whichever targets she sets her sights on.

For more information on the Talented Athlete Programme please visit **www.hertssportsvillage.co.uk/hertstalentedathletes**

Enter the Herts is Ready for Winners Corporate Games

Businesses from across the county are registering their teams for the inaugural HRFW Corporate Games on Monday 18 July at Gosling Sports Park. Places are still available for teams of seven employees competing in an old-school style athletics event as well as football, kwik cricket, basketball hoops, doubles tennis and dodgeball.

This exciting new event will bring teams together from across the county for a competitive, yet fun packed day offering the chance to meet new people, network, promote their services and get back into sport.

Whilst attending one of the Partnership's business events last month, Olympic silver medallist Mark Richardson said, "This is a fabulous initiative by the Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners Partnership to increase participation and get the business people of Hertfordshire doing more exercise. Wellbeing in the workplace has obvious benefits and it is great to see people getting involved and competing in an event which is fun too." Mark won a bronze medal in Barcelona (1992) and silver in Atlanta (1996) both in the 4x400m relay.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available for companies wishing to boost their profile further. If you are interested in entering or sponsoring the games contact us at herts2012@hertscc.gov.uk. Teams need bags of enthusiasm and a good team spirit to prove their company is the very best in Herts.



Michael McGrath appointed as Paralympic and disability sports representative

The Hertfordshire is Ready for Winners Board has appointed Michael McGrath as a Paralympic and disability sports representative. Michael is a professional speaker, entrepreneur and business consultant. He is also the co-founder and CEO of Hertfordshire-based charity The Muscle Help Foundation.

His main roles and responsibilities will be:

- To be the voice for disability on the Board and its Olympic embodiment in the Paralympics
- Ensure that the aspirations of disabled young people are fully represented in the Partnership's ambitions
- The Board's champion in its external relations with disability groups and individuals.

"I am looking forward to engaging with the increasing number of Hertfordshire stakeholders that are seeking to embrace the opportunity to celebrate difference. The London 2012 Games provides a fantastic platform for people of all abilities to play their part. I'm especially keen to focus on making sure that with just over 500 days to go to the start of the greatest sporting event on earth, as many disabled young people in Hertfordshire get the opportunity to be really moved, really inspired, so much so that inclusive sport in the county sees even greater levels of participation after the Games have been and gone," said Michael McGrath.

Herts 2012 Ambassador John Fuller said, "We are honoured and privileged to have a man of Michael's knowledge and stature in his field on our Board. I personally look forward to working with him and having his input into the Partnership's activities for the next 18 months, I think this is a real step forward in achieving our legacy ambitions for the county."



And finally....

We caught up with the winner of our prize draw. Nicola Plant from Ware, entered our competition at Van Hage Garden and Leisure Centre last month. Nicola, pictured with Jon from the Herts 2012 team, was really pleased with her exclusive collector's box set of London 2012 pin badges.

