

Press release: Welsh Secretary wishes Team Wales good luck ahead of Commonwealth Games

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns is backing Team Wales for medal glory at the start of the Commonwealth Games in the Gold Coast tomorrow (4 April).

The 214-strong Welsh contingent has made the journey to Australia where athletes will compete in 15 different disciplines. The squad includes eight competitors who will be taking a break from their school studies to join in the hunt for medals Down Under.

Speaking ahead of the Games' opening ceremony, Alun Cairns said:

Wales punches above its weight in the sporting world, and the number of Welsh athletes who have travelled to the Gold Coast this year demonstrates the strength and passion we have to compete in Team Wales colours.

The Games are a unique opportunity for athletes to compete under their own flag at an elite level, representing a range of sports from lawn bowls to powerlifting.

The nation is backing Team Wales, and I wish the entire squad the best of luck as they aim to reach the highest heights of their sports over the coming days.

Team Wales is aiming for its most successful overseas Commonwealth Games this year, with athletes hoping to top the 25 medals they won in Auckland in 1990.

The 230 Welsh athletes who competed at the Glasgow Games four years ago were the most successful in Welsh Commonwealth Games history, taking home a total of 36 medals including five golds.

Amongst this year's hopefuls are triathlete Non Stanford, who is leading the team at her first Commonwealth Games.

Double Olympic medallist, swimmer Jazz Carlin will carry the Welsh flag at the opening ceremony on 4 April, as the defending 800m freestyle champion competes in her fourth Games.

11-year old Anna Hursey has been making headlines recently, as the table tennis player from Cardiff is believed to be the youngest person to represent Wales at any sport at a senior level, or to compete at a Commonwealth Games

for Team Wales.

This year's Commonwealth Games form part of wider Commonwealth celebrations across the UK, as London prepares to host the [Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London this month](#) (16-20 April).

Wales has also reaffirmed its strong links to the Commonwealth, hosting a series of Commonwealth Big Lunches in partnership with the Eden Project as part of the official celebrations in the run up to the Heads of Government Meeting.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns was joined by endurance athlete Richard Parks and representatives from youth, faith, diaspora and sport groups in Wales [at a Big Lunch last month](#) to celebrate the global relationships forged by the Commonwealth.

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