

Friday 2nd June 2017

Sir Gary joins stellar line-up to boost business in Yorkshire

Sir Gary Verity will speak alongside UK business icon Baroness Karren Brady CBE and BBC World Affairs Editor John Simpson CBE at a new networking event in Yorkshire.

The Business Day at Bridlington Spa on Friday, June 9 - hosted by presenter, comedian and actor Alexander Armstrong - aims to boost business across the region and inspire new ideas.

It is the first time Bridlington Spa has held such a high-profile business networking day and it is set to become an annual event, giving Yorkshire delegates an invaluable opportunity to gain insight into the local and national economy.

The whole venue will be dedicated to The Business Day with room for more than 650 delegates. Keynote speeches by Sir Gary, Baroness Brady and John Simpson will be delivered from the impressive Spa Theatre stage, while exhibitors and sponsors will be in the Royal Hall. Breakout sessions throughout the day will give delegates a chance to get to know each other.

Sir Gary will talk about the part he plays in showcasing the county's thriving tourist economy on a global scale. Since joining Welcome to Yorkshire in 2008, he has increased the county's profile on a regional, national and international level.

He has built on the success of the 2014 Tour de France Grand Départ with the annual Tour de Yorkshire international stage race, broadcast in 180 countries worldwide and attracting millions of roadside spectators. In April this year, he was awarded a top honour by the French Government, a chevalier medal in the Ordre National du Mérite.

Last year Welcome to Yorkshire successfully bid to bring the UCI Road World Championships to Yorkshire in 2019, in partnership with the UK Government, UK Sport and British Cycling. Sir Gary is a director on the Board of Yorkshire 2019.

Baroness Brady is one of the most influential and inspirational business leaders in the UK. She has received numerous accolades for her passionate promotion of women in business, and has been Lord Alan Sugar's aide in BBC One's *The Apprentice* series for the past eight years.

Known as the First Lady of Football, Baroness Brady is the current Vice Chairman of West Ham United FC, and a former managing director of Birmingham City FC.

BBC World Affairs Editor John Simpson CBE is a journalist, broadcaster, columnist and author. The Lancashire-born foreign correspondent has interviewed around 200 world leaders, and every British prime minister since Harold Wilson.

He has reported from more than 120 countries and 30 war zones, and was one of the first reporters to enter Afghanistan in 2001, famously disguising himself in a burqa.

Host Alexander Armstrong is best known as half of the comedy duo Armstrong and Miller, alongside fellow actor Ben Miller, and for presenting the popular BBC One quiz show *Pointless*. He also frequently hosts the BBC's *Have I Got News For You*, and is the voice of the cartoon character Danger Mouse. In 2015, he released his debut solo album *A Year of Songs*.

Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, said: "I am delighted to be a part of something which cements Yorkshire's place as a UK powerhouse, and encourages new and established businesses to strive for the very best results.

"This inaugural event is a great opportunity for business people from near and far to get together, share stories and ideas, and be inspired by Yorkshire's flourishing economy."

Main sponsors for The Business Day are East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Hull City Council, Welcome to Yorkshire, University of Hull, KCOM, Humber Local Enterprise Partnership, The Sewell Group, Spencer Group and For Entrepreneurs Only.

Andrew Aldis, General Manager of Bridlington Spa said: "As the only venue able to host more than 650 delegates for business networking events, Bridlington Spa has created a new format, allowing delegates to tailor their personal itineraries. Keynote speakers will present from the theatre stage while the Royal Hall will be dedicated to the event's main sponsors and networking."

Cllr Stephen Parnaby OBE, Leader of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council said: "I'm excited and proud to be part of the team developing this powerful new event with a top-tier line-up of speakers. Delegates will experience an event that's a bit different, and sponsors will have the time and space to communicate well with existing and prospective customers."

For booking details, visit <https://www.bridspa.com/thebusinessday>.

- ENDS -

Images: Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire; Baroness Karren Brady CBE; John Simpson CBE; host Alexander Armstrong

Editors' Notes:

- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is the official destination management organisation for Yorkshire, working to grow the county's visitor economy.
- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is a not-for-profit membership organisation, funded in part by grants, sponsorship and Welcome to Yorkshire members. All money raised is reinvested directly back into promoting Yorkshire.

Key Facts:

- Tourism in Yorkshire is worth £7 billion annually
- The county's tourism and hospitality industry employs almost a quarter of a million people

For more news and a free image bank <http://www.yorkshire.com/mediacentre>

For further information contact:

Arlene Lawler

Senior Press Officer/This is Y magazine editor

Email: alawler@yorkshire.com

Direct Line: 0113 322 3546 / Mobile: 07866 622814