



**Wednesday 12 July 2017**

## **YORKSHIRE SIGNS PACT OF FRIENDSHIP WITH DORDOGNE**

Yorkshire has signed a Pact of Friendship with the Dordogne region in France and celebrated by displaying a giant piece of Land Art on the 11th stage of the Tour de France.

Councillor Stephen Parnaby OBE, Leader of East Riding of Yorkshire Council, signed the pact on behalf of the county at an official ceremony on Tuesday evening and Welcome to Yorkshire marked the occasion by exhibiting a 1,386m<sup>2</sup> yellow 'Y' close to Wednesday's stage start in Emyet.

Images of the 'Y' were captured by television helicopters as the peloton passed by and beamed to 190 countries around the world. Welcome to Yorkshire has also joined forces with the General Council of Dordogne to transform the region into a little corner of Yorkshire by distributing 4,000 Yorkshire flags along the race route over two days of action.

The Pact of Friendship was formed to honour the fact both regions are keen supporters of the Tour de France and that both are regarded as two of Europe's leading cycling destinations.

Councillor Parnaby was joined at the ceremony by representatives from Welcome to Yorkshire and Tour de France Director Christian Prudhomme. A hamper from Bettys was presented as well as a Yorkshire Terrier teddy and commemorative 'Yorkshire Loves Dordogne' flag.

Welcome to Yorkshire Chief Executive Sir Gary Verity said: "I am proud and honoured that Yorkshire has formed a Pact of Friendship with Dordogne. One fifth of Dordogne's population is British and I know many people who live in the region also come from Yorkshire, so it was hugely important for us to extend our hand of friendship and develop this wonderful partnership.

"The Land Art looked fantastic and it was amazing to see so many Yorkshire flags on the roadside. This is the start of a great friendship between our two regions."

Welcome to Yorkshire remains confident of hosting the Tour de France again in the future. Christian Prudhomme described the last visit in 2014 as 'The Grandest of Grand Départs' and the subsequent Tour de Yorkshire has grown to become one of the biggest and best supported races in the sport. The world's best riders will also be descending on the county in 2019 when Yorkshire hosts the UCI Road World Championships.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

- The Tour de Yorkshire was launched in 2015 to extend the legacy of the 2014 Grand Départ.
- The men's race is a three-day event with a 2.1 UCI Europe Tour classification.
- The single-day Asda Women's Tour de Yorkshire was awarded 1.2 status in 2016.
- 2.2 million spectators lined the route for the 2017 edition, up from 2 million in 2016.
- The 2017 edition was watched by 9.7 million TV viewers in 180 countries.
- The 2017 edition generated £64 million for the Yorkshire economy.
- Our ambition is to grow the men's Tour de Yorkshire to a four-day race and extend the women's race to two days.
- The race is supported by Yorkshire Bank, Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries, Asda, Virgin Trains East Coast, Dimension Data, Doncaster Sheffield Airport and Flybe, Mug Shot, Aunt Bessie's, JCT600, Tissot, Le Coq Sportif and Mavic.

The official Tour de Yorkshire website can be found at [www.letouryorkshire.com](http://www.letouryorkshire.com)

More information on Bike Libraries can be found at <http://bikelibraries.yorkshire.com>

To apply to be considered as a Tour Maker visit <http://letour.yorkshire.com/tour-makers>

**For further information, contact:**

**Nick Howes – Head of Sports Media**

Email: [nhowes@yorkshire.com](mailto:nhowes@yorkshire.com)

Direct: 0113 322 3505

Mobile: 07590 96482