



**Thursday 7 June 2018**

## **Award-winning Yorkshire Bank Bike Library project opens landmark 50<sup>th</sup> library**

The award-winning Yorkshire Bank Bike Library project has reached a milestone figure today by opening its 50<sup>th</sup> library.

The landmark library was launched in Hawksworth Wood, Leeds, at a ceremony attended by Sir Gary Verity DL, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Communities at Leeds City Council, and pupils from Hawksworth Wood Primary School, many of whom will benefit from the new library.

The Yorkshire Bank Bike Library scheme was launched as a legacy of the 2014 Tour de France Grand Départ and has one simple aim: to give every child in Yorkshire access to a bike, for free.

Since the scheme started three years ago it has gone from strength to strength and over 5,700 bikes have now been donated by people across Yorkshire, resulting in over 57,000 opportunities for children to cycle.

**Sir Gary Verity DL, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, said:** “We’re thrilled to have reached such a significant milestone for this inspirational and hugely rewarding project.

“The Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries are part of our vision that every child in Yorkshire should have access to a bicycle, and with every new bike library we open, we are one step closer to achieving that goal.

“Leeds has wholeheartedly embraced our scheme over the last three years and we’re delighted to have opened the 50<sup>th</sup> library in Hawksworth Wood.”

**Helen Page, Group Innovation & Marketing Director at Yorkshire Bank, said:** “In just three years this amazing programme has provided over 57,000 opportunities for people to ride a bike.

“Today’s opening of the 50<sup>th</sup> Yorkshire Bank Bike Library is a landmark achievement for the dedicated team that have got this scheme into every corner of Yorkshire.

“It’s so rewarding to hear about how the bike libraries have transformed lives – both for those that benefit from riding the bikes and also for those that truly feel part of something meaningful by being involved in getting the donated bikes ready for use.”

**Councillor Debra Coupar, Leeds City Council’s Executive Member for Communities, said:** “I have been delighted with the response from the public to the bike lending schemes which have opened in libraries and community hubs across Leeds.

“It is fantastic therefore, that the 50th Yorkshire Bank Bike Library has been launched in our very own Hawksworth Community Hub. I can’t wait to see members of the local community enjoy this fantastic initiative.”

The initiative has also had meaningful impact on the communities in which they are based, from helping people suffering from mental health issues to find solace, right through to teaching children struggling with autism how to ride a bike. To see first-hand how the bike libraries are changing people’s lives, visit [www.ybonline.co.uk/bikelibraries](http://www.ybonline.co.uk/bikelibraries)

The libraries are always on the lookout for more bikes so if you have any old or unwanted ones available, please take them along to one of the 62 donation stations across the county. Full details of their locations – and details on all 50 Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries - can be found at [www.bikelibraries.co.uk](http://www.bikelibraries.co.uk)

Once the bikes have been donated they are distributed to libraries right across Yorkshire, cleaned and repaired, and then loaned out to children who don’t have bikes of their own.

Last year, the Yorkshire Bank Bike Library scheme also became the first UK project to win a prestigious Peace and Sport Award in Monaco. Details on that can be found at <http://bikelibraries.co.uk/news/peace--sport---winners>

### **Photo captions:**

Photo 1: Sir Gary Verity cycles with pupils from Hawksworth Wood Primary School

Photo 2: (from left to right) Cllr John Illingworth, Cllr Debra Coupar, Sir Gary Verity, Cllr Hannah Bithell, Carol Young (Senior Media Manager at Yorkshire Bank) and children from Hawksworth Wood Primary School.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors:**

- Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries is a joint project with Welcome to Yorkshire’s cycling initiative Cycle Yorkshire and Yorkshire Bank.

- Cycle Yorkshire is a partnership of Welcome to Yorkshire, local authorities and other key cycling organisations in Yorkshire committed to using Yorkshire's Tour de France Grand Départ in 2014 to deliver a region wide cycling legacy for all generations and all abilities.
- Each bike library is different and all offer a range of activities, including short or long-term loans, family rides, skills training or activity sessions.
- The Sport Simple Program of the Year category rewards a program which uses sport as a tool for peace, applying simplified rules that are adjusted to the specific technical level of participants and/or environment of implementation, and using sport equipment created from local or recycled material.
- The annual Peace and Sport Awards recognise organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to peace, dialogue and social stability in the world through sport.
- Tag Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries in coverage on Twitter and Facebook using our handles: @BikeLibraries and <https://www.facebook.com/bikelibraries/>

#### **Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries Partnership Overview:**

- Yorkshire Bank has partnered with Cycle Yorkshire to launch the Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries initiative across the region.
- The aim is to make cycling more accessible in Yorkshire by providing communities with bike libraries.
- People are encouraged to amnesty their old bikes and drop them off at the designated donation stations.
- Donated bikes will make up the Yorkshire Bank Bike Libraries and be available to individuals, local enterprises and community groups to borrow, so more people, young and old, can enjoy the benefits of cycling.
- The partnership launched on 12 December 2014.

#### **Yorkshire Bank**

Yorkshire Bank was founded in 1859 in Halifax, West Yorkshire. Yorkshire Bank is a trading name of Clydesdale Bank plc, part of CYBG PLC.

#### **For more information please contact:**

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