

# Le Tour de France

• The Yorkshire Grand Départ 2014



Picture © Graham Watson

## KS2/KS3 Resource Pack

Version control: Last updated November 2013

# Section A: The Yorkshire Tour

This section provides you with a wealth of useful background information on the Tour de France and the Yorkshire Grand Départ. It also contains specific cycling information which will help you set the scene for your students on the theme.



# Introduction

Welcome to the 'Le Tour de France : The Yorkshire Grand Départ, 2014'. KS2/3 Resource Pack designed for teachers, community groups and parents of young people aged from 7 to 14.

Le Tour de France or **La Grande Boucle** (the Big Loop), as it is nicknamed, is the greatest and most challenging cycle race in the world. First organised in 1903, it is an annual multiple stage bicycle race that takes place primarily in France. Up until 1954 the whole race took place exclusively in France. It was decided to start the race in the Netherlands that year, so the first 'foreign' Grand Départ got pedalling in Amsterdam! In recent years le Grand Départ has pushed off outside France every two or three years. In 2014 the Tour de France will start in England's biggest county – Yorkshire, where the first two stages will be ridden

through its glorious hills and dales, and charismatic towns and cities. The third stage will progress from Cambridge to London before the race crosses the Channel back into France.

This gives us a fantastic opportunity to get involved in the Countdown and in the Celebrations that will form part of the race itself! There are many ways of using the Tour de France theme to enhance the school curriculum, provide and contribute to community activities and be involved in the exciting build-up to this evocative race.

This Resource pack contains information and stories, facts and figures about this exhilarating event together with hot-spot suggested activities and a wide variety of curriculum 'spokes' full of ideas and activities that will bring '**La tête de la course**', chased by '**le peloton**' into your classroom. The aim is to motivate and inspire your students and young people – not only to jump on their bikes, but to enjoy exercise with moving scenery.

“It never gets easier.  
You just go faster.”

Greg Lemond





## Hot-spot Sprint Activity

Organise your own Countdown to le Grand Départ 2014 in Yorkshire and be at 'La Tête de la Course'! (See French words page B15 )

Your class or group collectively could form le peloton, from which individual students will sprint away at various stages (les étapes) as they develop their skills, knowledge and understanding to take the different jerseys!

Why not give your students the task of designing your own coloured jersey system for achievement?



**Le maillot jaune**  
(yellow jersey)  
the leader



**Le maillot vert**  
(green jersey)  
best sprinter



**Le maillot à pois**  
(polka dot jersey)  
best climber



**Le maillot blanc**  
(white jersey)  
best young rider

We also aim to investigate the impact this race has made on people since the first pedal turned in 1903 and why spectators turn out in their thousands. It is much more than just a French cycle race – it has become a worldwide institution!

We hope that your students will embrace the wide and varied perspective that the 'Tour de France' brings with it – qualities such as teamwork, challenge, perseverance, determination and courage. Through the variety of curriculum activities and useful links they will learn, enjoy, be inspired and ultimately be a part of and celebrate Yorkshire's Grand Départ on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th July 2014!

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: What is the last rider known as, and why?**

**A: La Lanterne Rouge – the 'red light', so called after the red light on the tail, end of a train!**

# The Yorkshire Grand Départ

**Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th July**

The world's greatest cycle race will start in England's largest county on 5th and 6th July 2014 and will bring the world – either physically or via the media – to Yorkshire!

This will be the first time that Le Tour has visited the North of England. In 2007 the Grand Départ took place in south east England and London.

The route will take the cyclists through York, Leeds, Harrogate and Sheffield, and many towns and villages along the way, so this is a great opportunity for everyone to watch the spectacle and be involved. It is certain that the route will be one huge festival as Yorkshire pulls out the stops with celebrations and activities to speed the riders on their way. As the peloton flashes by, the publicity caravan of floats, media and officials is a spectacle in itself and takes an hour to pass by!

## Stage 1: Saturday 5th July 2014 Leeds – Yorkshire Dales – Harrogate: 190km (120 miles)

Starting at the grand Leeds Town Hall, the route will progress through lovely Yorkshire scenery – Harewood – Otley – Ilkley – Skipton – Aysgarth – Hawes – Reeth – Leyburn – Ripon – Harrogate

The first stage takes the riders up hill and down dale through the outstanding scenery of the glorious Yorkshire Dales through picturesque towns and villages ending with a sprint finish in the beautiful spa town of Harrogate.



## Stage 2: Sunday 6th July 2014

**York – Pennines – Peak District – Sheffield: 200km (125 miles)**

Starting at the great historic City of York surrounded by ancient Roman walls the route will progress through quaint Knaresborough – Silsden – Keighley – Hebden Bridge – Elland – Huddersfield – Holmfirth – ending in Sheffield, which is fast becoming one of Europe’s great sporting centres.

The second stage takes in some glorious steep climbs including the magnificent Cragg Vale climb from Mytholmroyd to Blackstone Edge, which just happens to be the longest continuous ascent in England! This should provide a good warm up for the later mountain stages.



## Stage 3: Monday 7th July 2014

**Cambridge – London: 169km (105 miles)**

The Tour de France moves out of Yorkshire and into Cambridgeshire for Stage 3 Starting in Cambridge – Saffron Walden – Epping – Woodford Green – South Woodford – Walthamstow – Leyton – Olympic Park – Docklands – Embankment – the Mall

This will be quite a flat stage in contrast to the circuitous, hilly Yorkshire stages, and should promise an exciting sprint finish on The Mall in front of Buckingham Palace.

The Tour de France machine then crosses the channel to hurtle through the French countryside, tackle the high mountains and on to the iconic sprint finish at les Champs Elysées in Paris.

Visit the Welcome to Yorkshire Website to find out more and follow the Countdown to le Grand Départ 2014, [www.yorkshire.com](http://www.yorkshire.com)



### Hot-spot Sprint Activity:

- Challenge your students to set up tourism businesses and compete with each other to come up with the best ideas to bring visitors to your town or village or the nearest place where the Tour will be passing through

Or

- Set your students the challenge to set up their own businesses to design, make and market a special souvenir or Tour de France product to sell to local people and visitors to the region.
- Invite a representative from Visit York, Welcome to Yorkshire or a local business to judge the Tourism ideas, Souvenirs or Tour de France Products

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: In 1954 for the first time the Tour did not start in France. Where did this Grand Départ take place?**

**A: The Netherlands**

# The Story of Le Tour de France

## Le Premier Grand Départ 1st July 1903

It may seem hard to believe, but the very first Tour de France cycle race was not organised to advance competitive sport, but to boost sales of a French sporting paper!

During the late 19th century cycling became a very popular pastime, and as time went on, organised bike racing was introduced. Professional cycling became big in France and as Radio, TV and the internet were yet to emerge, people's main source of cycling news and information came from newspapers. Sports papers such as 'Le Vélo' sprung up to cover cycling in depth and soon found that by promoting races, then grew very successful. L'Auto was a smaller rival paper, which was desperate to increase circulation. When journalist Géo Lefèvre proposed the idea of organising a big cycle race through France, its editor, Henri Desgrange seized the opportunity.

On 1st July 1903, sixty intrepid cyclists set off from the Au Reveil Matin Café in the suburbs of Paris. They covered

2,428km in a circular route through six stages. Eighteen days later twenty one cyclists made the finish line back in Paris. The very first winner was Maurice Garin. Le Tour de France was born!

The race has taken place annually since 1903, except for a gap between the two World Wars, 1914-18 (the race did actually take place in 1914, as war broke out in August ) and 1939-45. This is why 2013 marks the 100th Tour de France, not 2003.

As the Tour gained prominence and popularity the course became longer, more challenging and hazardous mountain climbs were introduced.



Routes were designed to be as gruelling as possible to make the race more of a spectacle!

Today the Tour de France is organised by the Amaury Sport Organisation (A.S.O.). The trials and tribulations of the early riders are now the stuff of legend, but they laid strong foundations for the modern day Tour de France, which is now watched by millions of people around the world – along the routes, on TV and via the internet.

In the early days riders had to contend with sabotage from spectators determined to ensure their favourites would win. Throwing tacks on the road was a favourite tactic! (and actually happened again in 2012!)

At stage 10 of the 1910 Race, after tackling the hazardous mountain passes of the Pyrenees for the first time on roads that were little more than tracks, Octave Lapize famously accused the organisers of being murderers

“Vous êtes des assassins!”

The cyclists also had to be mechanics as they had to make their own repairs and were penalised if they received any help. As the years have gone by the severe draconian rules and logistics were gradually adapted and amended so that the Tour has evolved into the iconic, sophisticated and highly tactical race we know and love today.

Following the Second World War, participation gradually extended from a primarily French field to riders from



neighbouring countries and ‘Le Tour’ now hosts riders from all over the world.

## The Tour de France 100 years on

The Race is currently run by the Amaury Sport Organisation and is a UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale/International Cycling Union) World Tour event.

Together with the Giro d’Italia and Vuelta a España, the Tour de France makes up cycling’s prestigious Grand Tours. ‘Le Tour’ is traditionally held during July each year, and while the route changes, the race contains the same format:

- Grand Départ
- 21 day long stages over a 23 day period
- Each stage averages a distance of 413 km
- It alternates between clockwise and anticlockwise circuits of France
- 20 – 22 teams compete with 9 riders in each
- Team members must be dressed identically, except those in coloured jerseys
- Time trials (at least two)
- It includes the mountain chains of the Pyrenees and the Alps.
- The finish on the Champs Élysées

## How does the Tour de France work?

The organisation and logistics of the race can seem totally baffling with its complicated points system and peloton tactics. It uses specialised language containing evocative words such as **domestique**, **cracking**, **voiture balai**, **tête de la course**, **le grimpeur** and **flamme rouge**.

This link unravels the mysteries of the Tour de France through a very clear, concise and enjoyable animation  
<http://www.boneshakermag.com/le-tour-explained/>

**TDF Pedal Pushing Fact**  
**Q: Why is the King of the Mountains jersey design red polka dots on a white background?**

### Useful links:

**A Documentary by Chickasmith, '100 Years of the Tour de France' – You Tube**

An excellent Documentary was produced in 2003 tracking the history of this legendary race and it's legacy. Entitled '100 Years of the Tour de France, directed by Christophe Muel, narrated by Mike Tomalaris, it is shown in three parts:

1. Birth of a Legend
2. The Legend Rolls on
3. Stars of the Road

It contains original footage and provides an excellent introduction to the Tour as well as a good source or material for various curriculum areas.



### Hot-spot Sprint Activity

- Challenge your class/group to develop a quiz on the Tour de France on key facts
- Each team administers their Quiz to the whole group

*A: The original sponsor, Confectioners Chocolat Poulain sold chocolate bars with polka dot wrappers.*

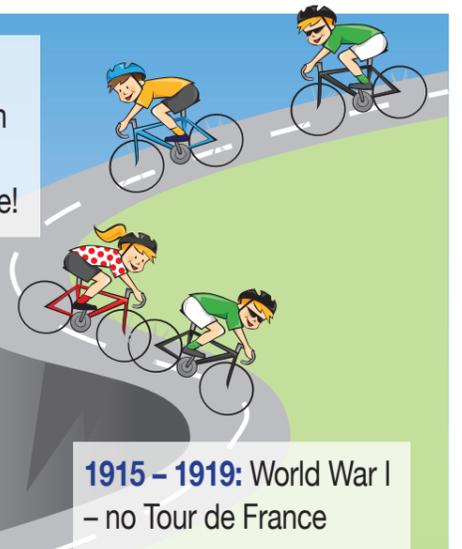
# TIMELINE: 'Le Parcours' of Le Tour de France

**1905:** Classification by time changed to a points system. Mountains were introduced into the route and an unofficial best climber was named, which set the scene for later accolades such as 'King of the Mountains'.

**1910:** High mountains such as the Pyrenees became part of the course

**1910:** the 'Broomwagon' (voiture balai) was introduced to follow behind the peloton to 'sweep up' injured or exhausted riders

**1904:** 12 of the 27 cyclists were disqualified for various offences, such as travelling on trains and hanging onto the backs of cars during the race!



**1915 – 1919:** World War I – no Tour de France

## Between the Wars

**1919:** The yellow jersey was introduced to identify the race leader.

**1924:** Henri Pelissier revealed to the Press that drugs were taken by many riders to get them round the course

**1925:** the number of stages was increased from 15 to 18 to reduce the length of each stage

**1927:** the number of stages was increased to 24. Sixteen of the flat stages were run as team time trials, with teams setting off at 15 minute intervals

**1930:** riders rode for national teams rather than trade teams

**1935:** Spanish rider Francisco Copeda was the first fatality. He crashed on a mountain descent, fractured his skull and died 3 days later

**1939 – 1945:** World War II – no Tour de France

**1948:** The finish of the race at the Paris Velodrome was filmed for TV for the first time

**1952:** Mountain top finishes and an award to the most combative rider each day were introduced

**1953:** The points system was introduced for sprints and time trials. The rider with the highest number of points – ie the best sprinter – was acknowledged by the award of a green jersey.

**1955:** Louison Bobet (France) was the first man to win the race three years in succession

## Post War Years

**1947:** 100 riders in national and regional teams took part. There was no German team and the Italian team was made up of French-Italians living in France

**1962:** The race reverted back to trade teams rather than national and regional teams. Tom Simpson was the first British rider to wear the yellow jersey

**1972:** Belgian Eddy Merckx known as 'The Cannibal', won his fourth consecutive Tour

**1974:** Tour de France came to UK for the first time. The cyclists crossed the Channel by boat, for the first stage in SW England



**1975:** The polka dot jersey was introduced for the best mountain climber and the white jersey for the best young rider

**1978:** Bernard Hinault (France) won the race on his first Tour, covering the 3,908km at an average speed of 36.084 km/hour. He would go on to win 5 times in total

**1981:** Phil Anderson was the first Australian to win the yellow jersey

**1986:** Greg LeMond was the first American to win the Race

## The 21st Century – the modern Tour de France

**2003:** The centenary route took place entirely in France, passing through the six towns on the original route

**2006:** The route travelled through five other countries – Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, and Germany

**2009:** Bradley Wiggins was awarded 3rd place after Lance Armstrong was stripped of his titles in 2012. Mark Cavendish won 6 stages including the final at the Champs Élysées.

**2012:** Bradley Wiggins was the first British rider to win the Tour de France, with Chris Froome in second place. Mark Cavendish won 3 stages including the final stage

**2013:** A second British victory as Chris Froome took the yellow jersey. He and the six remaining riders of Team Sky crossed the finish line at the Champs Élysées together.



# Giants of Yorkshire Cycling

Yorkshire is the ideal county for serious cycling with its roller coaster roads, glorious scenery up hill and down dale and lightening transition from country to town. This kind of roadscape makes for challenging cycling, and over the years Yorkshire has produced a rich heritage of men and women who have enjoyed international success in the cycling world.

**“ Yorkshire really packs a punch when it comes to cycling, with a rich heritage of men and women who have graced the international cycling scene ”**

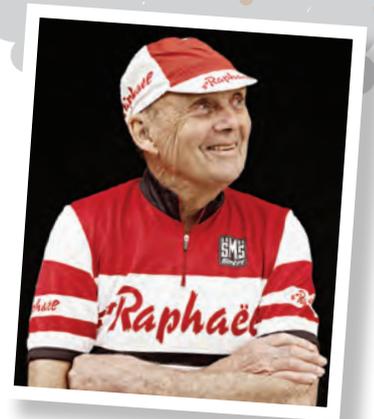
Welcome to Yorkshire

## Brian Robinson

Born in Mirfield, Brian joined Huddersfield Road Club at 13. He did much of his early racing during his National Service. He was the first British rider to finish the Tour de France in 1955 and the first to win a stage in 1958 completing seven Tours between 1955 and 1961. Brian was the

first Briton to win the Criterium de Dauphine in 1961 – the next Briton to win it was Bradley Wiggins in 2011! Brian

retired in 1962, but without doubt set the wheels in motion for Yorkshire cycling. At the age of 82 he still cycles today!



## Barry Hoban

Barry's racing career began in the 1950s with his local team, Calder Clarion CC. He then progressed into continental racing and between 1967 and 1975 won eight stages of the Tour de France – a record only beaten so far by Mark Cavendish. In 1968 he became the first British rider to win a Tour de France mountain stage, but his greatest success was beating Eddy Merckx and Roger De Vlaeminck in a sprint finish in the 1974 Ghent-Wevelgem. Often called the sprinters classic, this Flanders Classic Road Race takes place in Belgium in late March.

## Beryl Burton

A Leeds lass, Beryl has proved herself to be a true cycling heroine dominating women's cycle racing during the 1960's and '70s. She raced mainly for Morley

Cycling Club and later Knaresborough CC. During her illustrious career Beryl won 96 domestic championships and seven world titles, 13 pursuit titles, 71 time trial titles and set the women's record for the 12 hour time-trial which for two years (1967-69) exceeded the men's record! Beryl was also invited to compete in the Grand Prix Nations in 1967 – a rare distinction for a woman.

## Malcolm Elliott

Born in Sheffield, Malcolm's first race in 1977 was the start of a successful domestic and international career. Among many accolades he has won two stage victories in the Vuelta Espagna, two gold medals in 1982 Commonwealth Games won the Milk Race in 1987, was National Champion in 1993 and is also an Olympian. He has participated twice in the Tour de France, in 1987 and 1988.



## Ben Swift

Ben hails from Rotherham and at the age of 25 is a member of Team Sky and Team GB. His successes to date include Tour de Picardie in 2010, one stage of the Tour de California, two stages of the Tour Down Under and one stage of the Vuelta a Castilla y Leon. Ben is also a world champion on the track.



## Ed Clancy MBE

Ed is from Huddersfield and as a world Olympic and European Champion is making his mark on the track. In London 2012 he won gold in the team pursuit and bronze in the individual Omnium. In September 2012 British Cycling announced that Ed would join the team sprint for a number of competitions.

## Lizzie Armitstead

Born in Otley, Lizzie, at 25 is a professional road and track racing cyclist. She won the British National Road Race Championships in 2011 and rose to prominence in the London 2012 Olympics when she won Team GB's first medal of the games – a silver medal!



## David Stone MBE

Paralympic cyclist. Although born in Birmingham David now lives in Leeds. He started cycling aged 8 and competed in his first race at 15 when he was spotted by the manager of the manager of the Great Britain Team. Suffering from cerebral palsy, David has described cycling as an outlet of frustration and a source of freedom and enjoyment. After a break of 3 years he resumed his cycling career and won several World Championships, two gold medals in the Paralympics in Beijing and a bronze and gold medal in London 2012.

## Karen Darke

Born in Halifax, Karen is a British Paralympic cyclist, paratriathlete, adventurer, author and public speaker. Paralysed from the chest down following an accident at 21, Karen has not let this defeat her and among other feats won a bronze medal in the Para-Cycling World cup in 2009, followed by two silver medals in the Women's H2 road race and time trial events at the 2011 Para-Cycling world cup in Spain. Karen competed in the 2012 London Paralympics winning a silver medal in the Women's road time trial H1-2.

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact:

**Q: Who was the first British Rider to win a stage of the Tour de France?**



## Hot-spot sprint activity

Inspired by the Cycling Giants who pioneered this increasingly popular sport, a new generation of Yorkshire cyclists are starting to emerge and make their mark on the world stage.

- Inspire and motivate your students by challenging them to find our new, up and coming heroes of Yorkshire Cycling!

Here are a few names to start them off:

**Scott Thwaites**

**Adam Blythe**

**Dean and Russ Downing**

**Josh Edmondson**

- Find some local heroes very close to home in local cycling clubs – invite them to come in to talk to your groups
- Discuss the skills and qualities of a cycling hero. Work in small groups to create a life-size picture of your cycling hero in whatever medium you choose – words, pictures, drama or music. You could choose a real person or make up your own. Add the skills and qualities to the picture
- Imagine yourself as a cycling hero. Write a 'Day in the Life' diary page. As well as your activities describe your feelings and emotions

### Curriculum links:

**Literacy, ICT, PSHE, Art, Design, Music, Drama, French**

**A: Brian Robinson, who won stage 7, in 1958**

# Women in Cycling

The success of the women in the Great Britain cycling team in the 2012 Olympics without doubt raised the profile of cycling for women in the UK. However, both in the professional world and as a leisure and fitness pursuit, the percentage of women involved is still lower than that of men. Although women's cycling in Britain is growing, the pace of change is slow and at amateur level race organisers often struggle to attract female competitors with sometimes only one woman to five men competing. There is a drive to get more women cycling – programmes such as Breeze, set up by British Cycling to encourage and support thousands of women to feel confident and comfortable about riding bikes.

Find out more by visiting [breezebikerides.com](http://breezebikerides.com)

Bradley Wiggins is helping to fund a British based team, the Wiggle Honda Pro-Cycling team was established following 2012 to boost women's cycling. This includes some of UK's best young riders – such as Laura Trott, Dani King, Joanna Rowsell, Elinor Barker, Amy Roberts together with Giorgia Bronzini

(Italian World Champion) and Rochelle Gilmore (Australian world Champion).

## Female Cycling Heroes

There are increasingly more opportunities for women to get into cycling, inspired by a strong cohort of inspirational cycling role models. There will be local female Cycling Heroes in your area to draw from to inspire your students, but here are some well known women cyclists as a starter for ten. Some have started cycling from a young age, while others have taken up the sport later in life so there are a range of examples to motivate and encourage your students.



## Victoria Pendleton, MBE, CBE

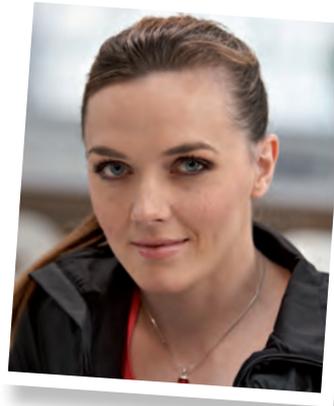
(b 24 September 1980, Stotfold, Bedfordshire) - a former track cyclist and double Olympic champion, who specialised in sprint, team sprint and \*keirin disciplines. She rode her first race - 400m, on the grass track at Fordham at the age of nine. During her career, representing GB and England, Victoria has won nine world titles, including six in the individual sprint competition between 2005 and 2012. When she won her first major medal at the 2005 UCI Track Cycling World Championships she became the third British woman to become a cycling world champion in 40 years. In the 2012 summer Olympics she won a gold medal in the keirin and a silver medal in the sprint. Victoria retired from cycling in 2012.

To find out more visit [www.victoriapendleton.co.uk](http://www.victoriapendleton.co.uk)

*\*Keirin is motor-paced cycle racing in which track cyclists sprint for victory following a speed controlled start behind a motorised or non-motorised pacer*

## Dani King, MBE

( b.21 November 1990, Southampton) While still at school, Dani was chosen by the British Cycling's talent team



coaches to be on their training team in 2005. She became a track cyclist and won the world team pursuit title in 2011 alongside Laura Trott and Wendy Houvenaghal, in 2012 with Laura Trott and Joanna Rowsell and in 2013 with Laura Trott and Elinor Barker. A track and road cyclist for Wiggle – Honda, Dani also won a gold medal in the summer Olympics 2012 with Laura Trott and Joanna Rowsell, setting a new world record time of 3:14:051.

To find out more visit [www.daniking.co.uk](http://www.daniking.co.uk)

## Joanna Rowsell, MBE

(b.5 December 1988, Carshalton, London Borough of Sutton) – a track and road cyclist with Wiggle- Honda, Joanna was spotted by British Cycling's Talent Team programme at school in 2004. Joanna won junior British National Track championships pursuit in 2005 and 2006. She went on to win gold medals in the women's team pursuit at the 2008, 2009 and 2012 World Championships and a gold medal for the team pursuit with Dani King and Laura Trott in the summer Olympics 2012.

To find out more visit [www.joannarowsell.com](http://www.joannarowsell.com)



## Laura Trott, OBE

(b.24 April 1992, Harlow, Essex).Suffering from asthma as a small child, doctors recommended that Laura should take up a sport to regulate her breathing

and later took up cycling. Now riding for Wiggle–Honda, Laura is a track and road cyclist specialising in team pursuit and \*omnium disciplines. At the summer Olympics 2012 she won gold in both events – (the team pursuit with Dani King and Joanna Rowsell) making her a double Olympic champion in her first Olympics!



to find out more visit [www.lauratrott.com](http://www.lauratrott.com)

*\*Omnium is a multiple race event in track cycling*

### Wendy Houvenaghel

(b 27 November 1974, Upperlands, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland). While in the RAF, Wendy started cycling in 2002. On completing her commission in 2004, her cycling career started to take off – riding on both road and track, but specialising in track. She has represented Britain in various World Cycling Championships, winning silver at the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 and gold at the team pursuit at 2008, 2009 and 2011 Track World Championships. Wendy has guided new riders in the Team pursuit and finished the 2010/11 track season as World Number One in the UCI World Rankings and in 2012 won gold in the UCI Track World cup Team Pursuit in London.

To find out more visit

[www.wendyhoudenaghel.com](http://www.wendyhoudenaghel.com)

### Marianne Vos

(b. 13 May 1987, Hertogenbosch, Netherlands) - a Dutch road and track racer, who started cycling when she was six and participated in races when she was eight. Marianne won a junior European world championship in road racing progressing to world champion in cyclo-cross and road racing at 19. She won a gold medal in the 2008 summer Olympics and gold in the women's road race in the 2012 summer Olympics. In 2006 and 2012 she has won the accolade of World Road Race champion.

### Beryl Burton

(see Yorkshire Giants)

### Lizzie Armitstead

(see Yorkshire Giants)

### Nicole Cooke, MBE

(b.13 April 1983, Swansea, South Wales) – a former professional road bicycle racer and Commonwealth, Olympic and World road race champion, Nicole retired at 29 on 14 January 2013.

Nicole began cycling at 11 with Cardiff Ajax Cycling club. At 16 she won her first senior national title, becoming the youngest rider to take the senior woman's title at the 1999 British National Road Race Championships. At 17 she became the youngest rider to win the senior women's title at the 2001 British National Cyclocross Championships. She turned professional in 2002, riding for the Spanish-Ukrainian Deia-Pragmacolnago, based in Forli, Italy. During Nicole's career her major wins include the Commonwealth Games Road Race, 2002; Amstel Gold Race 2003, Giro

d'Italia Femminile, 2004; La Fleche Wallonne Feminine, 2003, 2005, 2006; Grande Boucle Tour de France Feminine, 2006, 2007; Ronde van Vlaanderen voor Vrouwen 2007; UCI Road World Championship Road Race, 2008 and Olympic Games Road Race, 2008.

**TDF Pedal Pushing Fact:**  
**Q: Which TDF winner has Marianne Vos been compared to, saying that she is 'the finest cyclist of her generation'?**



## Hot-spot Sprint Activity:

- Challenge your students to research local cycling clubs and in the role of sports journalists arrange to interview female cyclists for an article with photographs. If the cyclists agree they could film the interview
- The journalist teams write up the articles for a sports newspaper and present to the rest of the class and/or school
- Journalist teams invite inspiring female cyclists to come into school to talk to the class/school

**Curriculum links:**  
 Literacy, ICT

***A: Belgian cyclist Eddy Merckx who competing in the late sixties and seventies won 5 consecutive Tours***

# Safe Cycling

Cycling is a wonderful means of transport for people of all ages; it creates independence, it gets people outside and into the fresh air and it is a very 'green' form of transport as it does not pollute the atmosphere, and it is a great form of exercise. There is nothing quite like the sense of achievement when the stabilisers are taken away and you are launched into the world on two wheels! However it is imperative that anyone who wants to cycle – whatever their age – can feel confident and be equipped with the skills to cycle safely. This is where Cycle Training plays a crucial part and will equip you with the skills and knowledge you need:

- to be a safe cyclist who is visible to and aware of the traffic around you.
- to know where to ride to be safe – eg riding in the marked cycle lanes on pavements.
- to ensure that your bike is road worthy and undertake basic maintenance

The best way to achieve this is through joining a cycle club or signing up to a proficiency programme.

The main programme for schools and community groups is Bikeability – a

National Standards Cycling Training administered by the Department for Transport. This is a cycling proficiency programme for the 21st century that is designed to give the next generation of cyclists the skills and confidence to safely ride their bikes on today's roads. Bikeability was developed by more than twenty professional organisations including the Royal Society for Prevention against Accidents and is supported by cross-Government departments including the Department for Transport, Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families.

## There are three Bikeability levels

### Level 1: Red Badge: age 10+

Learn to control and master the bike. Training takes place in an environment away from cars and traffic such as a playground or closed car park.

Get to know your wheels with top tips to keep your bike in shape.



**Level 2:****Orange Badge: age 10-11**

The training takes children out on the roads to gain real cycling experience to enable them to deal with traffic on short journeys such as cycling to school. Get geared up with tips on how to choose your bike and kit.

**Level 3: Green Badge: age 11-18**

The young people learn the skills to tackle a wider range of traffic conditions so that on achieving Level 3 they will be able to deal with all types of road conditions and more challenging traffic situations.

There is also Bikeability training for adults so you can involve parents, helpers and school staff.

Since the start of the programme hundreds of thousands of Bikeability badges have been awarded. The aim for 2012 was for half a million young cyclists to be Bikeability trained and the ultimate vision is that no child should leave primary school without the opportunity to take part in Bikeability training.

Schools can sign up to Bikeability, which as well as delivering the training provides a wealth of games, interactive discussions, creative ideas and lesson plans to inspire your young people to get on their bikes. There is also a guide to promote cycling in your school.

Visit the website

[www.dft.gov.uk/bikeability](http://www.dft.gov.uk/bikeability)

## TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: What British bicycle manufacturer sponsored the winning rider in the 1980 Tour de France? Who was the winner?**



## Hot-spot Sprint Activity

**KS2:**

Try the Sustrans 'Suss it out' activities, 'Staying Safe'

- Hi -vis treasure hunt
  - Hazard map
  - The great safety debate
- 'Suss it Out' is a series of free downloadable, fun and engaging activities

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

**KS3:**

Try out the Sustrans Big Street Survey which enables students to investigate the area around school and create a manifesto on how to make the streets safer and greener.

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

**or: Plan your route to school**

- Plan a safe route to school from home either on your bike or no foot
- Present you plan to younger people who live near you.

**Curriculum Links:**  
Science, Literacy, PSHE

*A: Raleigh; Joop Zoetemelk (Netherlands)*

# Cycling for Healthy Living

Cycling is acknowledged as one of the best forms of exercise to get fit and stay healthy and the beauty of it is that once you can ride a bike you can cycle as often as you please. You can enjoy being outside in the town or countryside and it's free. Cycling can open up a whole new world. There are many cycling clubs, groups and events to join in with if you need an incentive or if you want to cycle with an organised group. It is also a great way for people of all ages to socialise.

To find your local cycling club follow this link:

[www.britishcycling.org.uk/clubfinder](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/clubfinder) or use the local resources at the back of this pack – Wheels Within Wheels.

Encouraging children and young people to cycle will produce many positive benefits for the short and long-term future, so the Countdown to the Yorkshire Grand Départ is a fantastic opportunity to inspire them and equip them with the skills and confidence to get pedalling.

The Bikeability programme observes that

- More young people cycling will lead to

improved health and fitness, reduced congestion and pollution (which is also good for our health) and hopefully even more Olympic champions and Tour de France winner

- Cycling at least twenty miles a week reduces the risk of heart disease
- Young people who cycle are more confident, more independent and perform better at school

To encourage Cycling for Healthy Living why not organise a Bike to School Week. You could link in with the Sustrans programme which usually takes place in June (see below) or link with National Bike Week [www.bikeweek.org.org.uk](http://www.bikeweek.org.org.uk)



A great example of an organised programme that focuses on cycling and healthy living is the Sustrans UK-wide 'Bike to School Week' that takes place each June. This is a fantastic way to get your whole school or club involved in a ready-made programme jam-packed full of tips, events, activities and lessons to inspire young people and families to make more journeys by bike. The programme is designed to take place over six weeks with a step-by-step guide to help you get there. However, you don't need to wait until June 2014 – you can organise your 'Bike to School' week whenever it fits your calendar or curriculum.

Visit the Sustrans website  
[www.sustrans.org.uk/biketoschoolweek](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/biketoschoolweek)

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: Cyclists need to be super fit to tackle the High Mountains and win stages consistently. Who has been crowned 'King of the Mountains' seven times?**



## Hot-spot Sprint Activity

Try the Sustrans 'Suss it out' activities 'Being Healthy'

- Finger on the Pulse
- Get Creative
- The great Activity-off

'Suss it Out' is a series of free downloadable, fun and engaging activities

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

### KS3:

Organise and promote a 'Bike Fest' for your school or youth club

- Plan a variety of health focused activities.

### Curriculum Links:

Science, Literacy, Art, ICT , PE

# Cycling for All

A lasting legacy of Le Grand Départ in Yorkshire will be Cycle Yorkshire through the shared regional strategies for Yorkshire and the Humber which has been developed by Yorkshire and Humber Local Authorities and Partners.

This has and will put a range of bold objectives and deliverables in place to make cycling more accessible and enjoyable to everyone and realise the vision for Yorkshire and the Humber: 'to be recognised as a great region for safe cycling, inspiring more people to cycle more often'.

## What are the objectives?

- Cycling to be widely perceived as a safe, effective, cheap, healthy and enjoyable activity for commuting and leisure
- Yorkshire and the Humber to be recognised as a great region for cycle sport, cycle tourism and events
- A broad range of partners to be effectively working together to promote cycling
- Everyone in the region to have access to appropriate equipment to enable them to cycle



- Everyone in the region to have access to training to give them the skills and confidence to be able to cycle regularly
- Safe, high quality infrastructure and facilities to enable cycling, appropriate to local circumstances and need, to be provided throughout each local authority area, linking main residential and ingress points to main destinations
- Local authorities and partners to effectively encourage and facilitate everyone in the region to cycle more often as a mode of transport for recreation and for sport.

## The overall aim is that more people will cycle

- As a means of transport
- For leisure
- For sport

## How will this happen?

### Through highlights such as:

- Bringing cycle hire together across the region to form a network
- periodic Tour de Yorkshire events
- support for every large employer and school in the region to have a fully implemented travel plan

There are many opportunities in this region for people to improve their skills and confidence and enjoy cycling, including:

- cycle training in schools – Bike It and Bikeability training (see ‘Safe Cycling’)
- A cycle sports participation events
- Adult cycle training (Urban Cycle skills)
- Initiatives to get more people cycling to work
- Women-specific events and support (Breeze network, spin classes and clubs providing women-only rides)
- Cycle maintenance courses
- Supporting cycling clubs and the development of new clubs



Campaigns and events take place in all regions throughout the year. Examples include

- Cycle to work and school challenges – Bike to work and Bike to School weeks
- Guided cycle rides eg Sky Ride events, community events and festivals such as the York Festival of Cycling
- Amateur Racing events including Criterium Cycle races, time trials, hill climbs and Sportives.

Look out for what is happening in your local area. You may be surprised at how many bike activities are going on! (see Wheels within Wheels at the back of this pack for local events)

Here are some of the organisations you can access for information on events, clubs and initiatives

- [www.york.gov.uk/getyorkcycling](http://www.york.gov.uk/getyorkcycling)
- British Cycling – [www.britishcycling.org.uk](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk)
- Cycling clubs – find your local club through British cycling

- Sustrans – [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)
- Sport England (English Sports Council) – [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)
- CTC – The National Cycling Charity – [www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)
- Tourism bodies :
- Welcome to Yorkshire – [www.yorkshire.com](http://www.yorkshire.com) see link to Yorkshire Grand Depart
- Visit York – [www.visitYork.org](http://www.visitYork.org)
- Bike shops
- Gyms

It has never been easier to get on your bike, get pedalling and enjoy your cycling against the backdrop of our glorious Yorkshire landscape. Towns and cities.

‘Realising the legacy of Le Grand Départ – a strategy for cycling in Yorkshire and the Humber’ – in partnership with Yorkshire and Humber local Authorities and Partners. Read the Strategy in detail by going to <http://cycle.yorkshire.com>



## Hot-spot Sprint Activity:

### Tour de France board game

- Challenge your students to devise a Board Game and develop a sales pitch to sell their game to the Tour de France organisers
- For an additional challenge the board game is to be devised in French and English, and the sales pitch is to be presented in French and English

### Curriculum links:

Literacy, Maths, Art, Design, Enterprise, French

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

Q: What is the closest margin of victory for a Tour de France winner?

*A: Eight seconds! In 1989 Greg Lemond overcame a 50 second deficit to beat Frenchman Laurent Fignon*

# Scandal and Ethics

Throughout its hundred year history the Tour de France has seen some scandalous incidents of cheating, sabotage and doping.

In the history of sport, such are the pressures put on athletes to perform well that they will always strive to achieve above and beyond expectation. Some athletes, unfortunately, use unfair means to achieve the advantage. From the very beginning, the Tour de France organisers imposed strict rules and regulations so that each cyclist had a sporting chance of success. The rules have been adapted through the years to support the changing dynamics of the race. ASO has continued to uphold stringent but fair regulations so that the glory of the sport can be maintained and all who participate have exactly the same

advantage as his fellow competitors. Even the very first Tour de France did not take place without incident as members of the crowd did more than just shout their support and encouragement to assist their favourites but physically tried to hold back and even assaulted other riders.

The second race in 1904 was rife with incidents of cheating by riders and sabotage by supporters. Desperate to win, many riders took shortcuts, hung on to the backs of cars or rode some of the route by train! The fact that some stages were so long that they took place at night provided the incentive to cheat under cover of darkness. The supporters were even more vicious than the previous year, sabotaging bike frames and strewing the roads with tacks and nails. Worse than this - on Stage 2 at the top of the Col de la République at 3am the



riders were greeted by a group of about 100 people armed with clubs and stones who proceeded to attack them in order to assist their local man. One of the organisers, following in a car, fired pistol shots and the crowd dispersed. Maurice Garin commented

“If I’m not murdered before Paris I’ll win the Tour again!”

Garin did win, but was later among the eleven riders who were disqualified for cheating. Henri Desgrange despaired that these scandals may cause the second Tour de France to be the last. However, the race continued into the third year, with a significant and effective change as the organisers introduced more, but shorter stages. This did not eliminate the nails strewing practice for the next few Tours, and scandals continued throughout later years - in 1938 there was a report of a rider hanging onto the back of a car and in 1955 riders were fined for being given a helping hand by spectators.

More cases of unruly fans continued when in 1950, drunk spectators blocked the road in the Pyrenees and threatened the Italian favourite, Gino Bartali, forcing the Italian team to withdraw. The French government were obliged to apologise to the Italian government. Even more incredible, in 1975, was the case of the so-called fan who punched five-times Tour winner Eddy Merckx in the kidneys. Merckx won the stage, but thanks to the attack, did not win a sixth Tour.



The most long-standing scandal plaguing this sport is that of doping. This reared its ugly head as early as the 1920’s when French brothers Francis and Henri Pélissier (the 1923 winner) revealed to journalists how they got through the Tour.

“There, look, this is what we use to get through the Tour. Cocaine to go in our eyes, chloroform to rub on our our gums..., we run on dynamite”

It was common practice for the riders to drink alcohol during the race until the 1960s when a law was passed forbidding the use of stimulants in sport. Doping tests were introduced in the mid-1960’s.



However, this did not stop the practice – a fatal combination of brandy, amphetamines together with the heat and the climb led to Tom Simpson's death during the 1967 Tour.

As with many sports doping continued to tarnish the sporting ethics of the Tour de France, compounded by the measures some riders took to undermine the tests. In 1978 Belgian Michael Pollentier was disqualified after an elaborate system of tubes under his armpit containing clean urine was discovered.

In 1988 the Tour winner, Pedro Delgado tested positive for a substance banned by the International Olympic Committee, but it was not on the UCI's (Union Cycliste Internationale) banned list so he was not penalised. Tests taken the day before and after were clear, so the positive test is a mystery, but it still cast a shadow over the event.

The 1998 Tour, became known Tour du Dopage when the biggest scandal

in the history of the race erupted and resulted in the whole Festina team being disqualified. The Festina affair started when their Soigneur (carer/physical therapist) was stopped by the police on the French/Belgium border and found to be in possession of a massive haul of performance enhancing drugs. The fallout revealed that most of the team had been systematically doped, as part of a programme so the whole team was disqualified. Bruno Roussel, Festina's Director Sportif's explanation was that providing the team with the products would control what substances they were taking and ensure their good health!

Despite the fact that this scandal nearly killed the Tour de France, doping still continued. The most recent high profile doping scandal involved the American, Lance Armstrong, who after combatting testicular cancer in 2009, won seven Tours in a row – a feat that had never been achieved before.

However, doping accusations started to emerge and in 2012 after intense investigations he was stripped of all his titles.

Since then, now that the dirty washing of the Tour de France has finally been hung out for the world to see and through greater scrutiny and thorough drug-testing, there have been no new scandals to wobble the peloton!

Measures have been put in place and organisers will strive to ensure that the Tour de France stays clean. Chris Froome's speech on the podium after

winning the 2013 event endorsed the necessity to uphold and promote the Clean ethics of the Race with his evocative words:

“This is one yellow jersey that will stand the test of time”

## Ethics

It is human nature to focus on the infamous and notorious aspects of life. The Tour de France scandals can, however, be balanced by many instances of chivalrous and ‘Gentlemanly’ conduct.

### Le Gentleman

During the 2012 Tour de France, the old practice of ‘fans’ throwing tacks on the road raised its ugly head, with the result that Australia’s Cadel Evans suffered several punctures at Stage 14. Race Leader, Bradley Wiggins slowed the pace of the Peloton so that Evans could catch up, and was widely praised for his sportsmanship.

The French public gave him the accolade ‘Le Gentleman’.

### Team Spirit

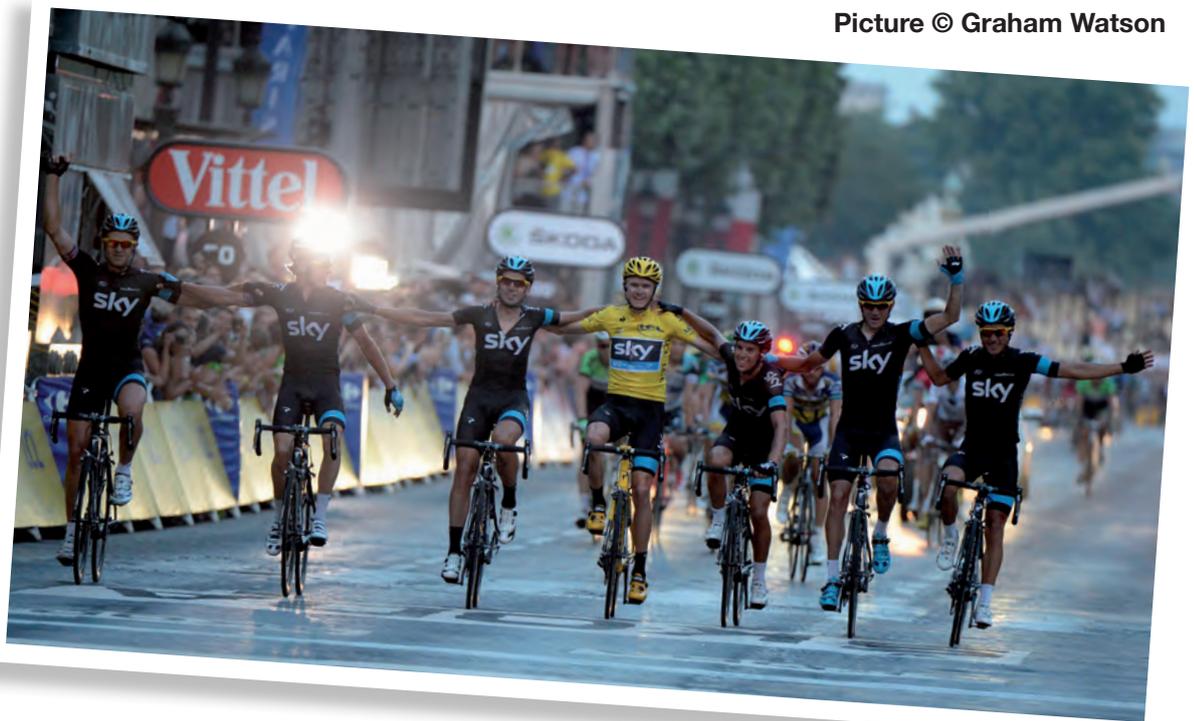
The modern day Tour de France operates very much on team spirit, and each team has a planned strategy

for choosing and supporting a leading rider. Each team member has a vital role to play such as that of ‘domestique’ to ensure that the leading is in a position to win various stages and ultimately the Tour itself. It is a complicated system, but a joy to watch as the team pushes a path forward through the Peloton, and the leader sprints to victory. Geraint Thomas of Team Sky commented that Bradley Wiggins...

“will be the first to recognise that he would not have been able to achieve his victory without a terrific team behind him”

Another great example of team spirit was the wonderful spectacle of Chris Froome crossing the finishing line the 2013 Tour de France with the remaining members of his team.

Picture © Graham Watson





## Hot-spot Sprint Activity

- Ethics/Scandal Drama: working in groups the students research an example of good Ethics or bad Scandal. They create a mini-drama of their chosen example and present to the whole class
- Choose an incident on Ethics v Scandal and organise a debate. The PSHE Curriculum activity could provide a starter for ten

**Curriculum Links:**  
Literacy, PSHE, Drama

### TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: Who are the oldest and youngest winners of the Tour de France to date?**

**A: Oldest: Firmin Lambert (Belgium) in 1922, aged 36. Youngest: Henri Cornet (France) in 1904, aged 19. This was the controversial year in which twelve riders including the 'winner', Maurice Garin, were disqualified for cheating. Henri Cornet was declared the winner four months after the Race!**

# Celebration, Music and Culture

The Tour de France, as well as being the most exciting and popular cycle race in the world, provides the catalyst for three weeks of celebration, music and culture along the route.

The Tour de France caravan publicity, composed of up to 180 vehicles, accompanies the cyclists. It is an hour long mobile road show with dancers, music and advertisers handing out promotional items! Millions of spectators line the route – many of them dressed in colourful and quirky costumes. The race is televised in around 188 countries which provides a fantastic opportunity for 3.5 million people to witness the continuous festival that welcomes the Tour de France spectacle as it hurtles through over 250 towns and villages and countryside along le parcours. The towns and villages pull out the stops to create their own local cultural festivals and welcome the world into their domain.

A vast myriad of souvenirs is available – books, posters, stamps, coins and clothes and many such items will no doubt form special collections!

There have been and are many unusual and creative ideas to celebrate the Tour

– both traditional and using modern technology! No doubt there will be many more amazing events to look forward to in the 100 day Cultural Festival that will form part of the Yorkshire Grand Départ. This is a great opportunity for you and your students to contribute to the Yorkshire Celebrations! Here are some of the quirky events and evocative ideas from previous Tours.

- Images of jerseys and bike sculptures on the city walls at Corsica Park



- The French farmers aerial bike at Stage 3, 2011 Tour de France – a wonderful aerial image of moving art. This can be found by going onto Google - [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

- The Tour de France attracts hundreds of dedicated and loyal fans year after year who line the roads and cheer on the riders, many wearing the most outrageous and flamboyant costumes. The route through towns and villages is a whirling sea of colour, noise and jubilation. One of the most well recognised characters is German Didier 'Didi' Senft who, dressed as a red devil complete with pitchfork, encourages the riders up some of the most challenging mountain climbs! Didi has been the Tour's red devil since 1993. He has been nicknamed 'El Diablo' and his trademark has been to paint trident symbols on the road ahead of the peloton. He often builds a special bicycle to bring along – one famously being labelled as the largest bicycle in the world!

See what other examples your students can find!

## The Grand Départ Cultural Festival

A magnificent 100 days Cultural Festival is being planned to take place prior to and alongside the Grand Départ which will showcase to the world the wealth of culture in Yorkshire. It will run from 27th March – 6th July 2014 – the start of the festival being the 100 day milestone before the Tour begins in York.

Across the county and along the route, Yorkshire will welcome the world, with millions of people experiencing and getting involved in a huge variety of cultural events. Contributions are being welcomed from a wide variety of organisations, members of the public and independent artists to create the



atmosphere and build up to the Grand Départ.

There are three main themes:

- **True Grit** – creative expressions of physical skills, courage and determination
- **Yorkshire 'en fête'** – creative transformation of Yorkshire's culture, heritage and landscape, urban, rural and coastal. Creative celebration of the bicycle, its green credentials and the Grand Départ in our county.
- **World Class Yorkshire** – Focus on Yorkshire's vibrant and innovative artists, arts organisations and members of its creative industries.

Independent contributions will feature alongside six 'grand spectacles'!

To find out more visit the Welcome to Yorkshire section on the Grand Départ Cultural Festival. <http://letour.yorkshire.com/artsfestival>

Perhaps your school would like to get involved!

## Music

### Songs from past years

Evocative music is used to accompany the televised footage of the Tour de

France. Most people will recognise the catchy theme tune to the 2012 and 2013 Tour even if they don't know who wrote it – 'We're on the Road to Nowhere' by Talking Heads.

Through the years over a hundred songs have been written to celebrate the race and the cyclists, which is another lasting legacy the Tour de France has for French popular culture.

When the record industry was taking off in France during the 1930's the organisers of the Tour chose an official anthem each year – songs such as 'C'est un tour' and 'Le Tour qui passe' in 1933, 'Vas-y-Theophile' in 1934, 'Les Chevaliers de la route' in 1939 and many more. The songs became hits after being played each evening in the stopover towns, and en route from the publicity caravan. Some are still sung years later when children learn to ride a bike.

After WWII the event started up again accompanied by popular music hall singers, and even an accordion player, Yvette Horner, who played every night on every Tour from 1952 – 1962!

As professional cyclists rose to stardom more songs were inspired than ever before particularly when the race became televised.

More recent songs inspired by Tour de France include Queen's 1978 hit single 'Bicycle Race'. In 1983, German electronic band Kraftwerk released 'Tour de France' soundtracks, and the

## TDF Pedal Pushing Fact

**Q: Each of the 21 stages is a race in itself so winning a stage is a great achievement. Only three riders have won 8 stages during a single tour. Who are they?**



## Hot-spot Sprint Activity

Use the Tour de France as an inspirational educational tool

- Plan a unique Road-side Celebration
- Create a sculpture or Art display
- Create an event to showcase Yorkshire or your town or village in the Tour de France
- Create a piece of music 'to ride bikes by'!

## Curriculum Links:

Literacy, Maths, Art, Design, ICT, Geography, Music

1985 theme, Charger, was recorded by the Buzzcocks. Now Tour de France enthusiasts are able to buy or download CDs with music written for or accompaniments to the television coverage of the Race.

*A: Belgian Eddy Merckx, Frenchman Charles Pelissier, and Belgian Freddy Maertens*

# Yorkshire Cycling Stories

This 'Spoke' focuses on quirky cycling stories from around the Yorkshire and Humber region. This is a freewheeling part of the pack, so if you know of any local cycling myths, and legends, or fantastic, fascinating true stories please email [TdF.york@york.gov.uk](mailto:TdF.york@york.gov.uk) so they can be added to the resource.

## North Yorkshire & York

### Reels within Wheels!

#### **Delivering cinema film reels by bicycle**

The war years proved to be an incredibly busy time for many cinemas and the Clifton Cinema, just outside the city of York was no exception. As most people did not own a television the Pathe newsreels shown at the cinemas was the only way that they could actually view events of the war unfolding. The films were usually showed a few days after the actual events had happened, but that was still remarkably speedy timing considering all the obstacles that the war imposed to everyday life. The film reels were often shared between a number of cinemas so were transported from cinema to cinema town by a bicycle courier!

**Source: Ian Grundy, Cinema architecture fan and photographer**  
<http://www.playingbingo.co.uk/land-bingo/history/05-history-york-clifton.php>

### Cycle the Solar System

#### **York's Solar System Model**

This is a totally novel way to enjoy cycling and learn about the Solar system! A scale model of the Solar system has been created along a 6.4 mile (10km) stretch of the old East Coast main-line railway running from the Millennium Bridge in York to Riccall near Selby. You will find the planets located at accurately scaled strategic points as they are in the Solar System when you pass through Bishopthorpe, Naburn and Escrick and on to Riccall. The Model was created by Dave Coulthard, Willy Hoedeman and Peter Thompson and was made possible by a Millenium award by the Royal Society and the British Association. Sustrans gave support as a community partner together with other sponsors and partners. The model was opened by Adam-Hart Davis in time for the Millennium.

To find out more and how to try out the route please visit  
[www.york.ac.uk/solar](http://www.york.ac.uk/solar)



## Les Françaises et Les Bicyclettes in York, 1943-45

During World War II bicycles were the only real means of transport due to petrol rationing and thousands were used by the population across Britain. Every air base had several hundred and they were scattered around the countryside as returning airmen (and women) “commandeered” any bicycle they could get their hands on, particularly if they were late for return to base after a night out on the town. Many were dumped in the hedgerows near the entrance to the camps.

The two French Squadrons based at Elvington (346 Guyenne & 347 Tunisie) were the only French Heavy Bomber Squadrons of RAF Bomber Command. President Chirac later referred to Elvington as the home of the modern French Air Force! The 2300 French personnel based at RAF Elvington were recalled to Mérignac (near Bordeaux) in France in October 1945.

However, before they climbed aboard their Halifax bombers to return to France, every bicycle in the York area

was up for grabs! The French airmen knew that they’d need transport to get to their homes after landing, so they stowed bikes in the bomb bays of each aeroplane. The airmen themselves had very little room, with bikes stuffed in every spare space inside. It is estimated that over 600 bicycles were “liberated” by the French crews at this time.

The French airmen were extremely popular with the local girls. Their uniforms were particularly glamorous in dark blue with gold braid, and the with their gallic temperament and “joi de vie” they were extremely popular. Quite a number of amorous liaisons were formed and as a result a number of these “stolen” bicycles returned once more to the City having been ridden right across France by those young airmen who missed their former home.

An original “Tour de France”!

**Ian Reed FRAeS, Museum Director,  
Yorkshire Air Museum & Allied Air  
Forces Memorial, Elvington, York  
[www.yorkshireairmuseum.org](http://www.yorkshireairmuseum.org)**

# Yorkshire News

Saturday, June 5, 1993



■ Pab Binns: cycle racer, businessman, postmaster, musician and storyteller, and the subject of Ouse Who's next production.

## Wanted – your memories of the Kelfield Livewire

THEY don't make them like Pab Binns any more.

Born George Smithson in 1884 and brought up by his grandparents, the Binns family, he became known as the Kelfield Livewire for his sporting prowess.

A supreme cycle racer, his dedication drove him on to success as the North East cycling champion. He was a cycle dealer and repairman too, who also found time to be the village postmaster from 1920 to 1940, and all this was topped off by a gift for pub storytelling and piano playing.

Now it is the turn of the villagers of Kelfield, near York, to tell his story. Pab Binns, 1884-1952, is to be the subject of Ouse Who Community Theatre's next pro-

duction, provisionally entitled – pun intended – The Spokesman.

"He was a real character, fondly remembered by his family and older residents of the village," said researcher and director Chris Cade.

"They still recall how Pab would entertain his shop customers or locals at the nearby pubs, where he played the piano by ear, with his stories of village history and his own remarkable achievements."

Villager Dave Lee has started penning scenes from Chris's information. He is a former landlord of the Cross Keys at Stillingfleet, just one of the hostleries where Pab used to tinkle the ivories.

Chris, meanwhile, has been busy talking to two of Pab's

daughters, Dorothy and Connie, his granddaughter Dot and many villagers, among them Joe Atkinson, the subject of Ouse Who's 1990 wartime documentary Joe's Medal.

A chapter in A E Brown's 1938 book *Tramping Through Yorkshire*, which records a meeting with the Kelfield Livewire, has also proved useful. But Chris would welcome more recollections from Yorkshire Evening Press readers, who can write to him at 1 Remount Cottage, Main Street, Kelfield, York YO4 6RG, or phone him on 0757 248534.

Work will soon start on the production.

## The Kelfield Livewire

George Smithson (1884-1952) aka Pab Binns was born and lived in Kelfield, North Yorkshire. Cycle racer, businessman, postmaster, musician and storyteller, he became a local legend and ultimately the subject of Ouse Who's Community Theatre's production 'The Spokesman' which was staged in 1994!

A supreme cycle racer, he became the North East cycling champion which won him the accolade the Kelfield Livewire! He was also a cycle dealer and repairman, village postmaster from 1920 – 1940, all topped off by a gift for telling stories and playing the piano in the local pub. Pab was also featured in a chapter in A.J Brown's 1938 book 'Striding Through Yorkshire'

"...George Smithson also known as Pab Binns, village postmaster, past-master of many cycling feats and also the undefeated champion of Kelfield Married Man's race which was eagerly contested at the Annual Feast, held to celebrate the harvest. The 'Kelfield Livewire', was well known in the surrounding villages as a 'wag' and a tinkler of the ivories, when not adding to his race trophies with his sure aim at darts..."

**Story Source: Chris Cade, Actor & Storyteller, Kelfield, North Yorkshire**  
[www.chriscase.co.uk](http://www.chriscase.co.uk)



# East Yorkshire & Humberside

## The Army Cyclist Corps

The Army Cyclist Corps, founded in 1915, was a corps of the British Army which was active during the First World War and controlled the Army's bicycle infantry.

The 5th (Cyclist) Battalion, the East Yorkshire Regiment was one of the first nine battalions to be formed in 1908 when volunteers were reorganised into the Territorial Force.

Volunteer cyclist units had been formed as early as the 1880s with the first complete bicycle unit (the 26th

Middlesex Rifle Volunteers ) being raised in 1888. Cyclists were used intermittently during the South African War as the bicycle was invaluable for reconnaissance and communications work and quieter and logistically easier to support than horses.

Most cyclist units served in the UK, being used for coastal defence work, though later on small groups of men were sent overseas and as previously were used mainly for reconnaissance work.

**From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**

# West Yorkshire

## Ellis Briggs Cycles

Ellis Briggs is a British bicycle manufacturer and has a shop based in Shipley, West Yorkshire. First founded in 1936 by Mr Leonard Ellis and Mr Thomas Briggs, it is the oldest bicycle shop still owned by the same family in the Bradford area and still in business today! After the second world war Ellis Briggs started producing lightweight

racing frames, which became popular with racing cyclists. The firm sprang to fame when cyclist Ken Russell won the 1952 Tour of Britain on an Ellis Briggs. Over the years Ellis Briggs have sponsored many international riders such as Bernard Burns, Brian Robinson, Arthur Metcalfe, Ken Russell, Doug Petty, Danny Horton and Dave Rayner.