

Monday 1st February 2016

## Brittany Ferries sets sail for the Grand Départ

**Today, Brittany Ferries joins forces with the most prestigious cycle race on earth, the Tour de France. For both organisations, the partnership is an obvious one, with their shared spirit of travel, discovery and authenticity. Brittany Ferries becomes an official sponsor of the Grand Départ 2016, and undertakes to work with the Amaury Sport Organisation and the Association du Grand Départ du Tour de France Manche—Normandie, to support what is without doubt the most popular annual sporting fixture in the world.**

The Grand Départ of the Tour de France 2016 will take place on 2nd July, with the Manche department's emblematic Mont St Michel as its backdrop. The following day the peloton will make its way to Cherbourg. The town offers a spectacular harbour (the largest man-made harbour in Europe) and a strategic location perched between France and England. It's also a key Brittany Ferries port. For over 40 years now, this decidedly French company has set out on a daily mission to bring together people, places and convictions. Brittany Ferries builds bridges between Great Britain, France, Ireland and Spain, catalysing the movement of people and goods, promoting economic growth in the regions it serves, and bringing together different cultures. These values mirror those of the Amaury Sport Organisation and the Tour de France, in the way that this famous event unites sports fans throughout the world, and conveys the beautiful landscapes of France well beyond its borders.

### Promoting the regions

Created in 1973 as part of a movement to open up Brittany to the world, Brittany Ferries has developed a network of routes connecting ports and regions, linking up the Atlantic Arc. The company's pioneering spirit is imbued with a hunger for conquest and discovery. The company is proud to work closely and long-term with the regions and ports it serves, delivering them millions of passengers each year, and contributing to their economic development. Likewise, the Tour de France is a veritable shop window for France all around the world, a mythical trial that promotes the French regions and their heritage in a spirit of sporting excellence, determination and competition.

### Bringing people together

The Tour de France is the very essence of a great popular festival, bringing together men and women from all walks of life and all nationalities; uniting them around a shared passion for cycling. In this respect, Brittany Ferries is the perfect partner. Since the Grand Départ in Yorkshire in 2014, the British public's passion for the Tour de France has soared, boosted by the victories of Bradley Wiggins in 2012 and Chris Froome in 2013 and 2015.

### A shared passion

The Tour de France is all about passion. And Brittany Ferries too is about passion. Both shareholders and staff, 2,500 men and women, including 1,700 French seafarers, are united around the values that are integral to the Brittany Ferries brand, which are all about forging connections, and offering customers a refined and distinctive way to travel.

As the Manche department prepares to welcome the Grand Départ and two further stages of the Tour de France, Brittany Ferries today signs up as a partner of this landmark event, becoming an 'OFFICIAL SUPPORTER OF THE GRAND DEPART 2016'.

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**Quote from Jean-Marc Roué, president of the supervisory board of Brittany Ferries:**

*“Partnering with the Grand Départ of the Tour de France was an obvious choice for Brittany Ferries. The Manche department is intrinsically linked to the history and activity of our company. Cycling is a sport with universal appeal; our customers are cycling fans, and the passion for the Tour amongst the British public goes from strength to strength. I’m proud to be here with you all today at Cherbourg-Octeville, and to sign this partnership.”*

**Quote from Christian Prudhomme, director of the Tour de France:**

*“I welcome this partnership between Brittany Ferries and the Grand Départ of the Tour de France 2016. The Manche department is the perfect setting to send off the peloton of this 103rd Tour which will magnificently showcase the Manche department and its countless treasures. This event already promises to be very special, thanks to all the hard work of the Association of the Grand Départ of the Tour de France 2016 Manche Normandie. We’re proud to count amongst our partners this company which contributes to the promotion of our regions and our heritage, and which also offers a symbolic link to the Grand Départ held in the United Kingdom in 2014. Thanks to Brittany Ferries, the Tour de France will once again bring many thousands of cycling fans to the heart of Normandy, a region dear to the Tour de France and to many of its champions.”*

**Quote from Jean-Francois Le Grand, President of the Association of the Grand Départ of the Tour de France 2016 Manche Normandie.**

*“Public-private partnerships are a vital element for the financing of any large event, and the Association of the Grand Départ of the Tour de France 2016 Manche Normandie has found the means to meet its ambitions. I am happy to welcome Brittany Ferries as a supporter of the Grand Départ 2016. The company is a dynamic and constructive player in our region, so it’s completely logical that we find ourselves side-by-side today to ensure that this popular and unifying event is a collective success.”*

**-Ends-**

**Notes to editors**

**About Brittany Ferries**

Brittany Ferries is a passenger car and freight service operating from eleven ports, linking four countries: UK - France, UK - Spain and Ireland - France. Brittany Ferries is the market leader on the Western Channel, and a leading supplier of ferry-inclusive motoring holidays to France and Spain. Further information can be found by visiting: [www.brittanyferries.com](http://www.brittanyferries.com).

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