

Tour of Britain comes to Kingsbridge – Monday 6th September

The Tour of Britain returns to Devon in 2021 on Monday 6th September as the county hosts Stage 2 of the UK's premier cycle race as it winds its way from Penzance to Aberdeen over the course of 8 days.

The Devon stage starts in Sherford, tours the South Hams, crosses Dartmoor and will finish in Exeter about 4 hours later. All details of the race can be found at: <https://www.tourofbrtain.co.uk> and further information will be released over the next couple of weeks. The race's last 2 champions Julian Alaphilippe (2018) and Mathieu van der Poel (2019) are widely considered 2 of the sport's leading riders. Both won stages and wore the yellow jersey in this year's Tour de France. Indeed, every year some of the world's top riders and teams come to the UK to compete in the Tour of Britain. On each team there are 6 riders so that's 120 professional cyclists heading into Kingsbridge on 6th September.

Mark Cavendish is the first rider confirmed for this year's Tour. He equalled Eddy Merckx's record of 34 stage wins at the Tour de France in July and has won 10 stages of the Tour of Britain. He said: "It's always an honour to race on the home roads of the Tour of Britain" and be competing for the 12th time.

During the race, riders may encounter mechanical issues such as flat tyres, broken chains, maybe a crash, which will require the team car to reach them and swiftly fix the problem – sometimes the rider may actually swap to a new bike to make sure they waste as little time as possible.

The race convoy is a collection of cars and motorbikes that accompany the cyclists across the stage. This includes Police, TV motorbikes, team cars, convoy cars, commissaires, judges and medical staff. They will be split up ahead and at the back of the riders to enable safe riding conditions and temporary road closures. Every team has a communication system where they can feed information from their team car to their riders and vice versa.

By the time the race reaches Kingsbridge, we may see a small group of riders who have accelerated away from the main field – a breakaway – or the race could arrive in one large group – the pelaton – because out on the road there is potential for lots to happen.

The cyclists will head into town along the A379 from West Charleton, race along Embankment Road, ride up Fore Street, turn left on to the Plymouth Road and then head out along the A379 to Churchstow.

There are 3 intermediate sprints during the stage and one of them takes place along the Embankment Road starting by the zebra crossing at the Recreation Park, points to be won and time bonuses for the first few riders to cross. The action is fast and

frantic. Then the riders will have to check their speed to negotiate Quay roundabout before entering Fore Street and riding uphill past the shops.

We anticipate the advance Police motorbike escort managing the race and road closures to arrive in Kingsbridge early afternoon at around 12.30 and the riders should pass through between 12.45 and 13.05. You are strongly advised to be at the roadside between 30 minutes and 1 hour before the race is due to pass through. Therefore, you should aim to be at your chosen vantage point by 12.15 at the latest.

There will be music outside the Peacocks store in lower Fore Street alongside some children's entertainment in Quay House grounds so jot the date into your diary, get into town early, soak up all that Kingsbridge has to offer and enjoy the moment as you cheer on the riders.

Cllr Julia Wingate said: "With thousands of new people and families taking up cycling in the UK, this is an unmissable opportunity to see some of the world's greatest riders up close. They will flash past you in a blaze of colour, speed and brilliance. It's an amazing experience. What a great way to spend the last day of the school holidays!!"