

# Cambridge in the Spotlight



CAMBRIDGE was transformed recently when the third stage of the Tour de France brought its competitors, supporters and the world's media into the very heart of the city.

The response was overwhelming. Businesses embraced the opportunity to be creative and bask in the publicity surrounding the prestigious competition. The city, renowned for its love of cycling, was brought to life with knitted bunting, colourful window displays and special events that brought the community together with a tremendous spirit.

Although we are based a little further from the action over in Histon, we too were able to take part in the exciting build-up by housing one of 22 unique cycle sculptures created by local artist and cycling enthusiast David Mitchell. Pieces from his 'Peloton d'Art' were displayed by businesses across the city in the lead up to the big day, before being brought together as one final exhibition at Heffers in Cambridge. Each colourful piece was then put up for sale by secret auction, with a donation from each sale being made to Papworth Trust's OWL centre. It's a great example of how just one idea inspired by the Tour will have touched so many people.

The city was brought to a standstill as crowds lined the streets to see the procession of over 200 vehicles pass through the city ahead of the big race. There will always be critics but with events bringing people together throughout the day and indeed over the preceding weekend, it's difficult to argue that the Tour de France was a five-minute wonder.

Organisationally it was a great success. Communications were excellent with key organisations turning to social

media to advise the public of transport changes and which viewing areas to avoid as they became full to capacity. Businesses planned ahead for the disruption, many advising customers of changes in their opening hours or allowing employees to work from home to avoid congestion in the city centre. The city itself was showcased in the international media in the best possible light, and not just because the sun was shining so gloriously.

As we all work tirelessly to promote Cambridgeshire as a focal point for growth, opportunities and inward investment, the Tour de France provided just the spotlight our city deserves.



*John Bridge*

**John Bridge OBE**  
Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire  
Chambers of Commerce

**Social media provided excellent  
communication during  
Tour de France**

