



David Geldart, founder and chairman of The Bambisanani Partnership

Vatican honour for Bambisanani founder

By Claire Lomax

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THE founder and chairman of a Menston-based charity is to receive a Vatican honour.

David Geldart, of The Bambisanani Partnership, has been invited to contribute to a landmark sports summit at the Vatican in September.

The International Summit Sport for All – Cohesive, Accessible and Tailored to each Person, is being held in response to Pope Francis' call on the social, educational and spiritual importance of sport.

The summit will involve major sports and intergovernmental institutions and organisations from around the world.

A declaration will be presented that invites the world of sport to embrace three fundamental characteristics: cohesive, accessible and tailored to each person.

With more than 40 years' experience in education and sport, David's work has been recognised both nationally and internationally. During a highly distinguished career at St Mary's School, Menston he led one of the country's most successful Sports Colleges. He has held a range of key national strategic roles at the Department of Education, Department of Health and the Department of Media, Culture and Sport.

David currently leads The Bambisanani Partnership, a

multi-award-winning UK-based charity that originated as a partnership between St Mary's School in Menston and Mnyakanya High School in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa in 2006. Run entirely by volunteers, the partnership uses the power of sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership and has gained international acclaim for its work. The partnership now involves many more schools and universities in both the UK and South Africa. Both the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University are key members of the partnership. In South Africa the partnership operates in the Nkandla region which is one of most remote and deprived parts

of the country. Over the past 16 years more than 10,000 young people from the UK and South Africa have participated in a variety of Bambisanani Partnership programmes and projects.

David Geldart said: "This is a quite remarkable honour, in fact I can't think of a greater honour. It reflects so well on all the amazing Bambisanani team both here and in South Africa. The summit and subsequent declaration will raise the profile of sport and its potential and responsibility to be used as a force for good in the world. This is a unique opportunity to enhance the role of sports in society and produce an action plan to create real social change. It is an enormous privilege to be involved."