



David Geldart, founder and CEO of The Bambisanani Partnership, with the award

International award for Menston charity

By Claire Lomax

claire.lomax@nqyne.co.uk

A MENSTON charity which promotes health, education and global citizenship through sport in South Africa has won a major award for its work.

The Bambisanani Partnership has been named as International Sport and Physical Education Charity of the Year at the annual Acquisition International Non-Profit Organisation Awards.

The charity began as a partnership between St Mary's Catholic School in Menston and Mnyakanya High School in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in 2006.

Run entirely by volunteers, it uses the power of sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership and has gained international acclaim for its work.

Founder and CEO David Geldart said: "This is a tremendous honour. I am absolutely delighted that this award recognises the selfless, dedicated, pioneering work of our volunteers in both the UK and South Af-

rica; we wouldn't achieve anything without this amazing team of people who are committed to changing lives through sport."

The partnership now involves more than 30 schools, colleges and universities in both the UK and South Africa.

The University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College 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, with more than 90 per cent unemployment and one of highest Aids/HIV rates in the world.

"Bambisanani" is a Zulu word meaning "working hand in hand" which encapsulates the philosophy of the partnership which seeks to provide collaborative learning opportunities for young people in both countries.

The partnership has been recognised as making a "significant contribution" to UN Sustainable Development Goals relating to health and education; and is a founding

member of Sport and Sustainability International.

Mr Geldart added: "We are embarking on our most ambitious plans to date and this prestigious accolade will certainly spur the team on.

"This summer, 58 young volunteers from the UK (St Mary's School, University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College) will work with counterparts in South Africa to deliver a wide range of existing Bambisanani projects and programmes and introduce new ones.

"Our new cycling partnership with KZN Cycling will see us teach 5,000 children a year how to ride and maintain bikes. In the next 18 months we aim to increase the number of young people that we have worked with from 12,000 to 20,000.

"We are totally dependent on donations to fund our work and would be delighted to hear from anyone that can support us. With no employees or premises, any donations received go directly to our 'frontline' projects. There is much more for us to do."