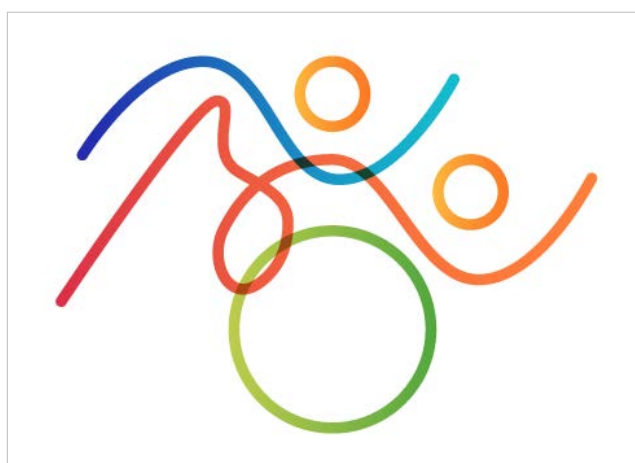


Vatican Honour for Menston Charity Leader

David Geldart, Founder and Chair 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 at the Vatican 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 organizations from around the world, to respond to the Holy Father's calls on the social responsibility of sports and the importance of sports practice as a means of human, educational and spiritual growth.

With over 40 years' experience in Catholic education 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. David 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 was appointed by the Secretary of State as a founding member of the Sport England Lottery Panel and subsequently as a board member of Sport England at a period of time that saw transformational changes in national

sport from community to elite level and London win the bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. An experienced presenter and speaker, he has lectured at International Conferences throughout the world on various aspects of education, sport and international development.

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, UK 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. *'Bambisanani'* is a Zulu word meaning *'working hand in hand'* which aptly encapsulates the philosophy of the partnership which seeks to provide collaborative learning opportunities for young people in both countries. Over the past sixteen years more than 10,000 young people from the UK and South Africa have participated in a variety of Bambisanani Partnership programmes and projects. *"This partnership has developed some of the best international education programmes in the world"* – The British Council



During the Summit in Rome, a Declaration will be presented that invites the world of sport to look to the future by embracing three fundamental characteristics: cohesive, accessible and tailored to each person. The first to highlight the need to reduce the gap between grassroots and professional sports, in the belief that the unity of sport is a value to be safeguarded and nurtured. The second to guarantee all people the right to practice sports, regardless of their social conditions (poverty, migration conditions and refugee status, marginality, war, prison detention, etc.). Finally, the third keyword focuses on enabling all people to be able to practice sports, even when they have physical or mental disabilities or psychological hardships.

The Summit provides for the participation by invitation of around 200 people from the world of sports (athletes, coaches, managers), International Sports Federations, and also amateur Sports Associations. Representatives of different Christian denominations and other religions will also be present, as well as non-profit organisations and educational institutions from around the world working for inclusion in society through sport.

At the conclusion of the Summit, in the presence of Pope Francis, participants will be invited to sign the Declaration with a commitment to increasingly promote in their own institutions and sports organizations the social and inclusive dimension of sport. This invitation will ultimately be extended to all sports entities throughout the world.

Speaking about the invitation David Geldart said, *"This is 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."*