What a result for the golden age of Yorkshire sport!

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Bradford and Rotherham are both already scoring success with the news that they have been awarded Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grants of nearly £100,000 to explore their sporting heritage.

With a long pedigree of sporting passion, these towns have football at the very heart of their communities. The investment from HLF will enable projects which aim to uncover the central role that supporting the towns' local team has played from the 40s and 50s to present day. From Bradford City FC's promotion to the premier league, to the intrinsic link between work and leisure for the mining communities of Rotherham, sport has had a significant impact on shaping modern day life across Yorkshire.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and the Humber said:

"We are really pleased to support these projects under the Your Heritage scheme. The grants will enable people of all ages to engage with a topic and pastime which has been close to their hearts for generations. Much has changed in the world of football since the 1940s and we look forward to the results of these exciting history projects which will bring the legacy of these famous clubs, their players and supporters, and their role and impact on the communities around them to life."

In Bradford, Bantams Community Programme (BCP) have been awarded a £49,400 HLF grant for an 18 month oral history project called bantamspast memories to conserve the memories of people who live or have lived around the Bradford City Football Club ground and explore the impact it has had on the community over the past fifty years. An exciting opportunity to get involved in Bradford's sporting heritage, the project will create openings for around 500 people from diverse communities – fans and ex-players – to volunteer, carry our oral history interviews, make radio broadcasts, hold events, help design an exhibition and give guided tours.

The project, aiming to chart change from the 1950s to the present day, will then see a permanent exhibition stage in the bantamspast museum, accompanied by a DVD, radio broadcasts available via MP3 players, and educational resource pack for local schools.

Paula Helliwell of Bantams Community Programme said:

"We know that there are many stories and memories just waiting to be told. We are very excited to be able to discover these and create the exhibition which will then preserve them for all communities to share. We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has chosen to fund the Bantams Memories project and are grateful for all their support."

Rotherham United Community Sports Trust (RUCST) has also been awarded a grant of £50,000 for an 18 month project called From Coal to Goal, which will explore the History of Rotherham United Football Club (RUFC) in the 1940s and 1950s. In particular it will engage young and older people in the community to look at the intrinsic link between work and play in the former mining communities of the area.

The intergenerational project will capture people's memories and experiences of the era, and record them in pictorial and written format. Training workshops will be provided to enable young people to learn about interview techniques and

how to undertake primary and secondary research and collate and transcribe the information. The interviews with former miners and RUFC players and fans undertaken will be filmed and transcribed, with the outcomes produced into a teaching pack which will be distributed to primary schools in Rotherham and all participants and volunteers.

Zanib Rasool, Community Manager at Rotherham United Community Sports Trust, said:

“I am delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has decided to support the project. I have already talked to people and have heard some fantastic stories that need to be told. After all, it is an important part of our town's history.”

And finally, it’s not just football that’s receiving HLF funds in the region to explore sporting heritage, the Doncaster Rugby League Heritage Project is also set to benefit with the news that they have been awarded a £37,200 HLF grant for a 12 month project that will focus on the history of Doncaster Rugby League Football Club (DRLC). Known as ‘The Dons’, their heady days of top division delight at spiritual home Tattersfield will be looked at by The Lakers Community Foundation, a charitable trust aiming to promote community participation through healthy recreation, as part of the era between the 1950s – 1990s. The Bentley Road Stadium was later renamed Tatters Field, or Tattersfield as a mark of respect for the former Chairman Len Tattersfield.

The project will provide learning opportunities for young people while researching the ‘Tattersfield Era’. A Project Manager will be recruited to deliver the project, which will involve interviews with former players and supporters, the collection of stories and memories, alongside artefacts and memorabilia. The research and materials will then be used to deliver a series of workshops in local schools, which will produce a touring exhibition around Doncaster to eventually be based at the club’s new ground Keepmoat Stadium.

Carl Hall General Manager at DRLC, said:

“This is fantastic news and a project I’m really looking forward to as I have very fond memories of Tattersfield as does the Doncaster public. I would like to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting this project.”

Notes to editors:

Lakers Community Foundation
The Lakers Community Foundation is a charitable trust whose main aim is to promote community participation in healthy recreation. The foundation provides facilities to make this possible and delivers a variety of activities in schools and the wider community including sports coaching and classroom based education sessions.