

Early Luton Town Football Club supporters at a home match

People in Luton will share their memories of love, work and sport thanks to National Lottery players.

Three projects will share nearly £200,000 of National Lottery funding to explore the heritage of Luton Town Football Club, how the car industry has changed the town and the ways different cultures celebrate weddings.

"Together, these projects prove how the heritage around us in our memories and cultures can be used to start new conversations about the places we live.”

Luton Town Football Club

There are over 30,000 objects charting the 133-year history of Luton Town Football Club, but most are hidden in people’s homes or the club’s storeroom.

Hatter’s Heritage, a society dedicated to the club’s history, has been awarded £99,300 to catalogue and digitise these objects for the very first time.

Through a new website, community events and exhibitions, the project will share some fascinating stories including:

- The club’s foundation in 1885 and move to Kenilworth Road in 1903 where it has remained ever since
- Gaining the title of the first professional football team in the South of England in 1891

- A 1936 women's match, which took place against strict F.A rules banning the playing of women's football at professional grounds.

Car industry

The car industry has played a big part in the development of Luton as a major employer in the town.

Community Interest Luton has been awarded £42,500 to enable young people to explore the impact the industry has had and how it has changed from the 1960s to today.

They will collect first-hand stories from people who worked, or still work, in the car industry, with a particular focus on Vauxhall, which has its headquarters in Luton. Their stories will be central to a public exhibition in 2019.

Wedding traditions

A shared milestone for many different cultures, weddings are the focus of a project bringing Luton's diverse communities together.

One Stop Advice and Training Centre has been awarded £38,800 to lead the project alongside a group of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

They will interview people from different cultures, religions and generations to collect oral histories, memories and stories about weddings.

A special wedding fair will celebrate the completion of the project – complete with bridal couture, examples of traditions and food.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, three exciting community projects will be exploring the heritage of Luton through stories about work, sporting life and love. Together, they prove how the heritage around us in our memories and cultures can be used to start new conversations about the places we live."



A 1960s Market Place event in Fenland Babylon ARTS



Museum Makers volunteers have been working hard

Luton’s Wardown House reopens thanks to National Lottery players