

Yorkshire's hidden treasures revealed

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Despite its many historic and artistic visitor attractions, there is so much more of Yorkshire's fascinating heritage that goes unnoticed, or is completely unknown, to the public. There is a wealth of artistic and architectural gems, rare manuscripts, books, and ceramics to be discovered.

A university library, two wonderful cathedrals and an art collection: all contain precious examples from the region's varied and colourful history. Now, thanks to Lottery players, this hidden heritage will be revealed through new HLF projects.

Take, for example, the Brotherton Library at Leeds University, which holds an exceptional collection ranging from rare books and manuscripts – some dating from the earliest days of printing - to the 20th century's most influential poets and writers. Access to these literary gems has hitherto been limited but a new gallery is now being created where permanent and temporary displays will be featured, supported by a programme of workshops, talks, discussions and activities.

Barnsley - a powerhouse during the industrial revolution – saw many of its wealthy entrepreneurs and businessmen amassing fine works of art that went on to form the basis of the collection at the town's Cooper Gallery. Until now, limited space has meant that only five percent of these artworks have been on display to the public but soon a far greater proportion will be on show in new gallery spaces. Thanks to an HLF grant, much-needed conservation work will also be carried out and better storage facilities provided.

Over in Wakefield, visitors to the Cathedral have already been able to enjoy the restored nave (pictured). Now, once restoration works have been carried out, it will be possible to discover the equally impressive medieval Quire and Edwardian East End of the Grade I listed building. The physical improvements are being matched by a comprehensive activities programme, including drama and storytelling events, that aims to encourage more people to visit the Cathedral.

Finally, Sheffield, with its long history of metal working, boasts two cathedrals. In addition to the Anglican Sheffield Cathedral, visitors can also explore the Roman Catholic Cathedral, St Marie's. Dating from 1850, it features beautiful and rare Victorian tilework as well as the last remaining unaltered Lewis organ in the UK. For sculpture fans, this historic building also contains rare 15th-century alabaster sculptures that survived the English Reformation, and visitors and worshippers will be soon be able to appreciate them in all their glory backed up by a wealth of historic information once the HLF project is complete.

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