Art Partners are heading to West Yorkshire this September to visit the Hepworth Wakefield. Winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017, the gallery is just one outstanding venue in an area renowned for celebrating its artists and heritage through sculpture parks, unique public art collections and spectacular historic houses.

We’ve selected three unmissable destinations close to the Hepworth that have all benefited in lasting and varied ways from Art Fund support.

Between them, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Leeds Art Gallery and the historic site of Nostell have received over £1.3m of Art Fund support – towards securing or commissioning works of art, towards the professional development of curators, and more. This is a measure of our continued commitment to supporting museums and galleries across the country (85% of our activity is outside London), and recognises the vital role played by these organisations in bringing extraordinarily rich national collections to as wide an audience as possible.
This year marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Chippendale, Britain’s foremost 18th-century designer, so it’s the perfect time to visit Nostell, the site of his most lucrative and extravagant commissions. Alongside its own focused exhibitions, Nostell has collaborated with the Hepworth Wakefield and artist Giles Round to explore Chippendale’s legacy. Exhibitions by Round at both venues examine the way art, design and entrepreneurship have met and informed each other within the home. While enjoying interiors that remain much as they were in the 18th century, look out for works by William Hogarth and Pieter Brueghel the Younger acquired with Art Fund support.

Leeds Art Gallery

This Grade II-listed building is home to internationally renowned works including an extensive collection of British sculpture. (It’s no coincidence that the Henry Moore Institute is right next door – also well worth a visit.). During a major renovation project completed in 2017, the building revealed treasures of its own – a stunning Victorian glazed glass ceiling now floods the first floor with natural light for the first time in 40 years. And thanks to 220 funders through Art Happens, our crowdfunding platform, a vibrant new wall painting by Lothar Götz, Xanadu (2017), now brightens the entrance staircase leading up to the new galleries. New acquisitions for the gallery’s reopening also include the Art Fund-supported film installation Movie (2015), by Halifax-born artist Hilary Lloyd.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2014, Yorkshire Sculpture Park showcases modern and contemporary art across the beautiful Bretton Estate. Here you can find Art Fund’s first ever contemporary commission, Deer Shelter (2006) by James Turrell, purchased to address the poor representation in UK collections of living artists from overseas. This immersive work harnesses the changing light of the Yorkshire sky within an 18th-century building. Also, don’t miss Katrina Palmer’s The Coffin Jump (2018), one of the major works in the final season of 14-18 NOW, the UK’s arts programme for the First World War centenary. Supported by Art Fund, the work pays tribute to the heroism of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, which is still in operation today. If you’re lucky, you’ll see the work ‘activated’ by a horse and rider.