

= Valley Parade =

Valley Parade , also known as the Coral Windows Stadium through sponsorship rights , is an all @-@ seater football stadium in Bradford , West Yorkshire , England . It was built in 1886 , and was the home of Manningham Rugby Football Club until 1903 , when they changed code from rugby football to association football and became Bradford City . It has been Bradford City 's home since , although it is now owned by former chairman Gordon Gibb 's pension fund . It has also been home to Bradford (Park Avenue) for one season , and Bradford Bulls rugby league side for two seasons , as well as host to a number of England youth team fixtures .

Football architect Archibald Leitch was commissioned to redevelop the ground when Bradford City were promoted to the First Division in 1908 . From then , the stadium underwent few changes until 1985 , when it was the scene of a fatal fire on 11 May 1985 , when 56 supporters were killed and at least 265 were injured . It underwent a £ 2 @. @ 6 million redevelopment and was re @-@ opened in December 1986 . The ground underwent significant changes in the 1990s and early 2000s and now has a capacity of 25 @, @ 136 . The record attendance of 39 @, @ 146 was set in 1911 for an FA Cup tie against Burnley , making it the oldest surviving attendance record at a Football League ground in the country .

= = History = =

Manningham Rugby Football Club , formed in 1876 , originally played games at Cardigan Fields , in the Carlisle Road area of Bradford . When their ground was sold to facilitate the construction of Drummond School , the club required a new home . Consequently , they bought one @-@ third of the Valley Parade site in Manningham , taking a short @-@ term lease out on the rest of the land in time to play there for the 1886 ? 87 season . The new ground and the road it was built upon both adopted the name of the local area , Valley Parade , a name deriving from the steep hillside below Manningham . The land was previously a quarry , and formed part of a greater site owned by Midland Railway Company .

The club spent £ 1 @, @ 400 appointing designers to oversee the excavation and levelling of the land , and moved a one @-@ year @-@ old stand from Carlisle Road to the highest part of the new ground . The original ground comprised the relocated stand , a 2 @, @ 000 @-@ capacity stepped enclosure with the players ' changing rooms beneath the stand , the playing area , a cinder athletics track and fencing to limit the total capacity to 18 @, @ 000 . The playing field was made of ballast , ashes , soil and sods . The ground was officially opened on 27 September 1886 for a game against Wakefield Trinity which was watched by a capacity crowd , but construction work meant most of Manningham 's early games were away fixtures .

Manningham RFC continued playing until 1903 , when financial difficulties , caused by relegation at the turn of the century , prompted club officials to change codes from rugby football to association football . The first association football game to be played at Valley Parade was a promotional fixture on 6 April 1903 between a side of West Yorkshire footballers and Sheffield United 's 1903 FA Cup winning side . The game had been organised to stimulate interest in the sport in Bradford and attracted 8 @, @ 000 fans . The new football club , Bradford City , were elected to The Football League 's Division Two the following month . Bradford City 's first game at Valley Parade came on 5 September 1903 against Gainsborough Trinity , drawing a crowd of 11 @, @ 000 . As a result of alterations first implemented in 1897 , City players originally changed in a shed behind one end of the ground , and visiting teams used the old rugby club dressing rooms at the back of the nearby Belle Vue Hotel . However , after City 's 5 ? 1 defeat by Manchester United on 10 February 1906 , United player Bob Bonthron was attacked as he left the ground . As a result , The Football Association closed the ground for 14 days , ordering City to switch its changing rooms to the nearby Artillery Barracks for the 1906 ? 07 season . Several supporters faced criminal proceedings for the incident .

After Bradford City won the Division Two championship in 1907 ? 08 , the club hurried through a reconstruction programme of the ground to prepare for the club 's first season in Division One .

Football architect Archibald Leitch was commissioned to design new terracing in the paddock ? a standing area in front of the 5 @, @ 300 @-@ seater main stand which was built in 1908 ? and build a Spion Kop at the north side of the ground and an 8 @, @ 000 @-@ capacity stand at the Midland Road end opposite the main stand . Further work was performed to lower the railings , erect barriers , move the pitch and add extra turnstiles . The changing rooms were also moved , with a tunnel leading from the rooms underneath the Kop along the main stand side of the ground . The total project cost £ 9 @, @ 958 , and raised the capacity to 40 @, @ 000 . The work was not completed until midway through the 1908 ? 09 season . The first match after work was finished took place on Christmas Day 1908 , when 36 @, @ 000 fans saw City host Bristol City . The improvements allowed Bradford City to set their record attendance of 39 @, @ 146 on 11 March 1911 against Burnley during the club 's FA Cup winning run . It is the longest surviving attendance record at any league ground in the country .

On 17 March 1932 , Bradford City paid Midland Railway Company £ 3 @, @ 750 for the remaining two @-@ thirds of the site to become outright owners of the ground , which was now 45 years old . The stadium had remained virtually unchanged since 1908 , and did so until 1952 , when the capacity of the ground was reduced after examinations of the foundations were ordered following the 1946 Burnden Park disaster . The investigation resulted in the closure of half the Midland Road stand . The stand 's steel frame was then sold to Berwick Rangers for £ 450 and a smaller replacement stand was built at Valley Parade in 1954 . Six years later , the stand had to be demolished for a second time because of continuing foundation problems . It was another six years before all four stands at Valley Parade were able to be opened for the first time . To enable construction of a new stand on the Midland Road side of the ground , the club directors moved the pitch 3 yards (2 @. @ 7 m) closer to the main stand . The new stand was then the narrowest stand in the league . Further improvements were made to the stand in 1969 , ready for the club 's FA Cup tie with Division One side Tottenham Hotspur on 3 January 1970 , which ended in a 2 ? 2 draw in front of 23 @, @ 000 fans . The cost of the work forced the club to sell Valley Parade to Bradford Corporation for £ 35 @, @ 000 , but it was bought back by 1979 for the same price .

During the period from 1908 to 1985 , the club carried out a number of other lesser work to the rest of the ground . It also included the introduction of floodlights in English football . Valley Parade 's first floodlights cost £ 3 @, @ 000 and were lamps mounted on telegraph poles running along each side of the ground . They were originally used against Hull City on 20 December 1954 . The floodlights were replaced in 1960 and again used for the first time against Hull City , but when one fell over in 1962 , an FA Cup game with Gateshead had to go ahead with only three pylons , prompting an FA inquiry . In 1985 , football ground writer Simon Inglis described the view from the main stand , which was still the same as when it was developed in 1908 , as " like watching football from the cockpit of a Sopwith Camel " because of its antiquated supports and struts .

On 11 May 1985 , one of the worst sporting disasters occurred at Valley Parade . Fifty @-@ six people died and at least 265 were injured when the main stand was engulfed by fire . The fire started 40 minutes into the club 's final game of the 1984 ? 85 season against Lincoln City and destroyed the main stand in just nine minutes . For the next season and the first five months of the 1986 ? 87 season , Bradford City played home games at Leeds United 's Elland Road , Huddersfield Town 's Leeds Road and Bradford Northern 's Odsal Stadium , while Valley Parade was rebuilt . Huddersfield @-@ based firm J Wimpenny carried out the £ 2 @. @ 6 million work , which included funding from insurance pay @-@ outs , Football League stadium grants , club funds and a £ 1 @. @ 46 million Government loan obtained by two Bradford MPs , Geoffrey Lawler and Max Madden . A new 5 @, @ 000 all @-@ seater main stand was built , longer than the structure which had burned down . The Kop was also covered for the first time and increased to a 7 @, @ 000 capacity . Other minor work was carried out to the ground 's other two stands . On 14 December 1986 , 582 days after the fire , The Hon Sir Oliver Popplewell , who had conducted the inquiry into the fire , opened the new stadium before an exhibition match against an England international XI . It was first used for a league game on Boxing Day when City lost 1 ? 0 to Derby County .

The two stands which were not altered after the fire were both improved during the 1990s . The Bradford end of the ground was made a double @-@ decker , all @-@ seater stand , with a new

scoreboard , in 1991 . City 's promotion to Division One in 1996 meant that chairman Geoffrey Richmond announced the construction of a 4 @, @ 500 seater stand on the Midland Road side . It was first used for a Yorkshire derby against Sheffield United on Boxing Day 1996 , before being officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II on 27 March 1997 . Richmond continued his plans to redevelop the ground as City continued to rise through the league . The roof of the Kop , which was the largest safe @-@ standing terrace in the country at the time , was removed and the capacity reduced during City 's 1998 ? 99 promotion season , to prepare for a summer £ 6 @. @ 5 million rebuilding programme . The Kop was converted into a two @-@ tier 7 @, @ 500 @-@ seat capacity stand . An additional 2 @, @ 300 @-@ seat capacity corner section was built , which filled in the corner between the main stand and Kop . When opened in December 2000 it took the capacity of Valley Parade to more than 20 @, @ 000 for the first time since 1970 . A suite of offices and a shop were added at the same time . Once the work was completed , a second tier was added to the main stand at the cost of £ 6 @. @ 5 million . It was opened in 2001 , increasing the main stand 's capacity to 11 @, @ 000 , and the ground 's capacity to 25 @, @ 000 .

Richmond also planned to increase the main stand 's capacity by a further 1 @, @ 800 seats by building new changing rooms and office blocks , and add a second tier to the Midland Road stand , to increase the ground capacity to more than 35 @, @ 000 . However , the club went into administration in May 2002 , and Richmond was replaced by new co @-@ owners Julian Rhodes and Gordon Gibb . The following year , Valley Parade was sold to Gibb 's pension fund for £ 5 million , with the club 's offices , shop and car park sold to London @-@ based Development Securities for an additional £ 2 @. @ 5 million . Bradford City 's annual rent bill in 2011 to Gibb 's pension fund is £ 370 @, @ 000 . The total budget for the year , including other rent payments , rates , maintenance and utility bills is £ 1 @. @ 25 million .

The ground has been renamed a number of times for sponsorship reasons . Sponsors have included The Pulse radio station , Bradford & Bingley and Intersonic . The ground has been named the Coral Windows Stadium since July 2007 in a three @-@ year deal , but is still commonly known throughout football as Valley Parade .

= = Structure and facilities = =

The stadium is divided into five all @-@ seater stands , the JCT600 Stand , the Kop , the Midland Road Stand , the North West Corner and the TL Dallas Stand . All five stands are covered except for a small part of the main stand , and all but the Midland Road Stand being two @-@ tiered . Most of the stands are cantilever structures , and because of the ground 's location on the hillside , the Midland Road Stand overhangs the road .

Many of the stands have more traditional names , but have since been renamed because of sponsorship deals . The JCT600 Stand is the ground 's main stand , and is often called the latter by fans , but is also known as the Sunwin stand owing to the former sponsor . The Kop , was the former standing area , and its name was derived , like at many stadia across the country , from the Battle of Spion Kop . The East Stand , sponsored by Northern Commercial , is also named the Midland Road stand , because of the road on that side of the ground . The TL Dallas Stand is also known as the Bradford end , because it is nearest to the city centre .

The total capacity of Valley Parade is 25 @, @ 136 . The largest stand is the JCT600 Stand , which holds 9 @, @ 004 supporters , followed by the Kop , which has a capacity of 7 @, @ 492 . The Midland Road Stand holds 4 @, @ 500 , and the North West Corner 2 @, @ 300 . The TL Dallas Stand is the smallest of the five stands with a capacity of 1 @, @ 840 . The stadium includes 134 seats for media representatives .

The Sunwin Stand has further room for expansion , and is unusual because it only runs three @-@ quarters of the length of the pitch . The rest of this side is taken up by a brick building , situated in the south west corner of the stadium , which houses the club changing rooms and the security offices . The Sunwin Stand also includes the ground 's 17 executive boxes and conference facilities , which have capacity for up to 700 people . A second function room , called the Bantams Bar , in the Kop , has room for another 300 people . There is also more office space , a club store , ticket office

and museum in the car park behind the Kop . From early 2010 , the area near the store will also include a dental surgery , which will be run by NHS Bradford and Airedale in partnership with the football club .

Visiting team fans sat in the TL Dallas Stand from 1995 to 2008 , but have also been given other parts of the ground for larger matches . In March 2008 , the club announced that the TL Dallas Stand would be made available for home fans for the 2008 ? 09 season . The decision came after an overwhelmingly positive text message poll from the club 's supporters to use the Bradford End of the ground . Visiting team fans have been accommodated in the end blocks of the East Stand since the start of the 2008 ? 09 season . Since the 2013 @-@ 14 Season away fans have moved back to the TL Dallas stand .

= = Fire disaster = =

On 11 May 1985 , a crowd of 11 @, @ 076 attended Bradford City 's final Division Three game of the 1984 ? 85 season against Lincoln City . The Bradford side had secured the Division Three title the week before when they defeated Bolton Wanderers 2 ? 0 . The league trophy was presented to City 's skipper Peter Jackson before the Lincoln game . The score was still 0 ? 0 after 40 minutes of the game , when a small fire was noticed three rows from the back of the ground 's main stand . The flames became more visible within minutes , and police started to evacuate people in the stand less than six minutes later . Club chairman Stafford Heginbotham , who was in the main stand , described the effect and his reaction to the disaster : " The fire just spread along the length of the stand in seconds . The smoke was choking . We couldn 't breathe . It was to be our day . " The game was stopped , and the wooden roof caught fire . The fire spread the length of the stand , and timber and the roof began to fall onto the crowds . Black smoke enveloped the rear passageways , where fans were trying to escape . Ultimately , the fire killed 56 spectators , ranging from 11 @-@ year @-@ old children to the 86 @-@ year @-@ old former chairman of the club , Sam Firth . At least 265 further supporters were injured . The few existing narrow escape routes led to locked doors in some cases , and the only escape for most spectators was directly onto the field . The match was abandoned and never replayed , with The Football League ordering the scoreline at the time of abandonment to stand .

Sir Oliver Popplewell published his inquiry into the fire in 1986 , which introduced new safety legislation for sports grounds across the country . Forensic scientist David Woolley believed the cause of the fire was from a discarded cigarette or match , which had dropped through gaps between the seating to a void below the stand where rubbish had built up . A number of police officers and 22 spectators were later awarded bravery awards for their deeds on the day .

The old wooden roof of the stand was due to be replaced the day after the Lincoln match , because it did not meet the safety regulations required for Division Two , where the team would be playing in the following season . Instead , it took until July 1986 for rebuilding work to begin . The ground was used for reserve team fixtures from September 1985 , but only journalists and club officials were present to watch . Bradford City 's senior team played home games at other grounds in West Yorkshire for 19 months while Valley Parade was rebuilt . The new ground cost £ 2 @. @ 6 million to rebuild , and was reopened in December 1986 .

More than £ 3 @. @ 5 million was raised for victims of the fire and their families through the Bradford Disaster Appeal Fund . Memorials have been erected at the ground and at Bradford City Hall , the latter of which was provided by Bradford 's twin town of Hamm , in Germany . The disaster is also marked by an annual remembrance ceremony on 11 May at Bradford City Hall , and an annual Easter @-@ weekend youth tournament , contested between Bradford , Lincoln and other teams from across Europe .

= = Other uses = =

Valley Parade hosted its first international football game just two months after its first Football League match . The game 's governing bodies wanted to promote the sport in the West Riding of

Yorkshire , so chose Valley Parade to host a game between an English League side and an Irish League side , despite the ground not being up to standard . An estimated 20 @, @ 000 spectators attended the match on 10 October 1903 , which the English League won 2 ? 1 . Over the next 20 years the ground hosted a number of other representative games , including an England international trial , the 1904 FA Amateur Cup Final and an under @-@ 15s schoolboy international between England and Scotland . But it was not until 6 April 1987 that the ground hosted another international when England under @-@ 18s drew 1 ? 1 with Switzerland . Other under @-@ 18 fixtures have been played since , the last of which was between England and Belgium in November 2000 . It hosted two England under @-@ 21 international friendlies . The first was against Denmark ? s under @-@ 21 ? s on 8 October 1999. The hosts thrashed the visitors 4 - 1 . The other was against Italy ? s under @-@ 21 ? s 26 March 2002 @. @ it ended in a 1 - 1 draw with 21 @, @ 642 in attendance . Valley Parade 's next international came seven years later when Bradford City hosted an under @-@ 19s European Championship qualifying game , in which England defeated Slovakia 4 ? 1 . The England women 's team have also played at Valley Parade , including their first home match under the auspices of The Football Association in 1994 against Spain .

Bradford (Park Avenue) have played 29 games at Valley Parade , including a 2 ? 0 friendly victory over Swiss side AC Lugano in 1962 , and all their home fixtures in 1973 ? 74 , their last season before extinction . Bradford 's rugby league side Bradford Northern played a number of fixtures at Valley Parade between 1920 and 1937 , as well as three games in the 1980s and 1990s . Northern became Bradford Bulls with the advent of the Super League , and played two seasons at Valley Parade in 2001 and 2002 during redevelopment of their home ground at Odsal .

During , before and after the years of the First World War the 1 / 2nd and 2 / 2nd West Riding Brigade Royal Field Artillery (Territorial Force) had its headquarters at Valley Parade .

= = Records = =

The record attendance at Valley Parade is 39 @, @ 146 , for Bradford City 's FA Cup fourth round tie against Burnley on 11 March 1911 . The highest league attendance of 37 @, @ 059 , was for a Bradford derby match between Bradford City and Bradford (Park Avenue) on 17 September 1927 in Division Three (North) . The record all @-@ seated attendance record at Valley Parade is 24 @, @ 321 , set on 7 March 2015 in the FA Cup Sixth Round draw with Reading , surpassing the previous record of 23 @, @ 971 , set on 10 December 2012 in the Football League Cup victory over Arsenal . The lowest attendance for a league home match at Valley Parade is 1 @, @ 249 , on 15 May 1981 , for a Division Four fixture with Hereford United . The record gate receipts that Bradford City have received are £ 181 @, @ 990 for the Premier League game with Manchester United on 13 January 2001 .

Official attendance figures for league games were not kept by The Football League until 1925 . City 's official highest average attendance at Valley Parade since then is 18 @, @ 551 for the 1928 ? 29 promotion season from Division Three (North) , although the club reported an average of 22 @, @ 585 in 1920 ? 21 . It was not until City were promoted to the Premier League in 1999 that the club again recorded average attendances of higher than 18 @, @ 000 . City recorded an average of 18 @, @ 030 in 1999 ? 2000 , and 18 @, @ 511 the following season .

During their two years at Valley Parade , the Bradford Bulls recorded their highest attendance on 4 March 2001 against St Helens with a crowd of 16 @, @ 572 . The Bulls averaged 11 @, @ 488 in 2002 for Super League VII . The highest crowd for a Bradford Northern fixture at Valley Parade was 20 @, @ 973 on 13 February 1926 for a Challenge Cup game against Keighley , which finished 2 ? 2 .

= = Transport = =

Bradford is served by two railway stations . They are Bradford Interchange , which is also the city 's main bus terminus , and 1 mile (2 km) away from the ground , and Bradford Forster Square , which is 0 @. @ 6 miles (1 km) away from the ground . Bradford Interchange connects to Leeds railway

station for Virgin Trains East Coast and CrossCountry train services , Grand Central provide a direct service to London , and provides First Bradford and Transdev in Keighley buses to the ground . Forster Square , which provides train services operated by Northern Rail , also connects to Leeds . The stadium has no parking facilities available to supporters on matchdays . In 2000 , as part of the expansion of Valley Parade , the club drew up a green transport plan in a bid to ease traffic congestion around the ground . Proposals included a new railway station on the line between Leeds and Bradford Forster Square , and a discounted bus service . No station has ever been built , and a discounted bus route was withdrawn because of low patronage .