

#RocktheDock brightens up a corner of Newhaven

On Saturday around 80 artists took their spray cans and their beats and went to ocean Terminal to paint what is now the UK's longest graffiti wall.

The council organised the preparation of the wall which forms part of the proposed tram to Newhaven infrastructure, but the area had become a fly tippers' paradise.



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#RocktheDock to create the longest legal graffiti wall in the UK Photo Martin McAdam

Rock the Dock was organised by The State, roller rink and indoor skatepark The Boardwalk, Mainline and Spectrum Arts who are Scotland's graffiti, street art and mural specialists.

Lotte Walters Co-Director of The State Leith a hip hop education company and a grass roots community interest company

based in Leith explained to us what the painting of this wall involved. We spoke with a few of the artists yesterday at #RocktheDock, but it turned out that many were very camera shy and expressed a fervent wish for no publicity.



© Martin McAdam

Some artists were a little shy! #RocktheDock to create the longest legal graffiti wall in the UK Photo Martin McAdam

Lotte explained : “Graffiti is a kind of underground culture. A lot of people don’t want to be in the public eye. They like to let their art speak for them.

“They want their art to be seen but they just don’t want to be on camera themselves.

“It was an open application process so anyone could register, and artists were chosen on a first come first served basis.

“There is so much wall to cover! There were over 100 registrations and I think we have room for about 80 people.

“This wall is part of the tramworks. It’s a retaining wall for the ramp that the trams will run from Ocean Terminal up onto Lindsay Road if they get permission.

“We are a group of grass roots organisations who came together to reclaim a community space that was being disused and had become a fly tipping spot. We have brought it back to life.”

You can see both sides of the temporary graffiti wall any time on Melrose Drive or from the main road you can look down onto the south side of the wall.

Shona, one of the artists, told us that she is a freelance artist from Edinburgh. She had started using rollers and paintbrushes then realised that it was much quicker to use spray paint. She said : “I started working with guys at [The Too Much Fun](#) club and using much more spray paint. Then I started practising on legal walls and was having fun teaching myself and trying to figure out how things worked and what paint to use.

“I progressed from there and the guys at Mainline also showed me the ropes.”

Shona's part of the wall has a face on it. When we saw her on Saturday she was just beginning but the eyes were already the main attraction. Shona explained who it was based on.

"It is a friend of mine called Taylor who is an incredible illustrator, and who has moved to Arkansas from Edinburgh. I normally paint old people and looked for people with a great face. Well she has a great face and there will be clouds behind her all inspired by a Tibetan symbols book that I have been looking at recently."



Shona used her friend Taylor as a model for this part of #RocktheDock to create the longest legal graffiti wall in the UK Photo Martin McAdam

The area at Melrose Drive has been used as a dumping ground for years, so even after a mechanical digger smoothed out the ground in preparation for Saturday's event, there was still litter left lying around.

Leithers Don't Litter are coming to the rescue next weekend – and you can help. All volunteers are welcome



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