

Artwork planned for North Berwick carries environmental message

Work to begin on eight-metre installation with vital environmental message

A mural made up of 27,000 pieces of plastic collected from East Lothian beaches to illustrate the concerning levels of marine waste along Scotland's coastline is going through the planning process.

In partnership with [North Berwick Harbour Trust](#), local businesses [Jerba Campervans](#) and [Caledonia Horticulture](#) have enrolled Julie Barnes – an award-winning local artist from Aberlady – to create the educational mural.

The intricate artwork – which will depict a beach scene and image of Bass Rock – will span eight-metres along North Berwick's harbour wall and will be accompanied by an interpretation board explaining the meaning behind the artwork and urging people to act now.

Both the family-run campervan convertor and the horticultural products producer are the main financial contributors towards the project, inspiring other local business to also make donations.



Simon Poole, co-founder of [Jerba Campervans](#) said: “The planned mural will not only be visually breath taking, but will also send a clear message about the real harm that waste plastic is causing to our seas and beaches.

“We’re delighted to have Julia on board with this project as it is an important message that hopefully will chime with a range of audiences, locally and also out with the area.

“As a company that is enthusiastic about all things outdoors, these initiatives are so important to us as we strive to preserve the beautiful coastlines and natural land. A plastic-free beach shouldn’t be a novelty, but should be something that is standard.

“East Lothian is becoming increasingly popular with tourists, with so many visiting North Berwick’s Harbour, so the visual

representation will be seen by hundreds. We expect it to very quickly become a local talking point and quite possibly a tourist attraction in its own right.”

In addition to being one of the primary sponsors, Jerba has also helped Julia prepare eight individual panels required for the base of the artwork which have been treated and cut to size before being delivered to the artist.

The 27,000 fragments of plastic were collected by one dedicated local who spent 100 days gathering the pieces along Longniddry Bents and the intricate artwork is expected to take Julia over two months to produce.

Kate Miller, Marketing, Communications and Environmental Manager at Caledonian Horticulture said: “We are committed to being a business with a positive environmental and social impact, as we’ve seen first-hand the damage marine waste is causing to our wildlife.

“Simon from Jerba got in touch after being inspired by another educational marine plastic mural and reading about our beach cleans. It was suggested we create something similar in East Lothian – it was an opportunity we couldn’t turn down!

“An East Lothian local, Lil Vischer, who was just about to complete a challenge she had set herself over lockdown to achieve 100 beach cleans on a 200m stretch of beach at Longniddry Bents removed around 27,000 pieces of plastic over her challenge. Her collection of marine plastic is being used to create the mural, raising awareness of the issue that is so close to our hearts.”

The planned artwork will last for many years in the sea spray environment and its impact is hoped to be maximised as tourists flock to the hotspot.

Julie Barnes, whose most recent project comprised a life-sized seal structure made from waste plastic for an environmental

competition, said: “Art can speak a thousand words and I hope that this important mural will make a connection with the viewer.

“Alongside my regular work as a painter, I use the power of art to provoke emotional and practical responses to environmental issues facing us all.

“It’s an honour to do the installation and the visual power of art is an incredible way to inspire, educate and bring about vital behaviour change across society as a whole.”

The North Berwick Harbour Trust, a small local charity that aims to maintain, conserve and improve North Berwick Harbour commissioned the co-operative project across the supporting companies, Jerba Campervans and Caledonia Horticulture and the artist, Julie Barnes. The charity believes that all participants in the project are enhancing the Harbour and enlightening the massive numbers of visitors and locals at the community asset.

Current additional sponsors who have each pledged a donation towards the artwork include Peppermint Beach, Turnbolls Home Hardware, North Berwick Trust, Steampunk, Meg Maitland, Fidra Charity and The Lobster Shack & Rocketeer.

www.caledonianhorticulture.co.uk/the-scottish-coastal-clean-up

