

# UK's largest marine plastic mural to be unveiled in North Berwick

## Eight-metre installation with vital message to launch this month

Locals are encouraged to attend North Berwick Harbour for the official launch of a highly anticipated mural which is made up of 13,000 pieces of plastic collected from East Lothian beaches.

The event will be taking place on Saturday 25 March between 1pm and 4pm and will involve educational workshops from the Scottish Coastal Clean Up.

Attendees will also be able to speak to the artist behind the mural – award-winning local artist, Julie Barnes – who created the installation to illustrate the concerning levels of marine waste along Scotland's coastline.

In partnership with [North Berwick Harbour Trust](#), local businesses [Jerba Campervans](#) and [Caledonia Horticulture](#) commissioned Julie to create the 8-metre-long mural which is believed to be the biggest of its kind in the UK.

Julie, said: "As a local artist who loves living in East Lothian, I care passionately about our beautiful environment.

"Each piece of plastic tells the story of today's culture and its obsession with convenience, despite the shocking consequences.

"It feels amazing to have been chosen to create this

educational artwork and I hope, like all my work, it will inspire viewers to stop, think and make a conscious effort to help preserve our planet.”

The mural has been made from approximately 13,000 bits of a 27,000-piece plastic collection that was gathered by East Lothian local, Elizabeth Vischer, from a 200m stretch of Longniddry Bents.

Over lockdown, Elizabeth set herself the task of completing 100 beach cleans and decided to document the process along the way – the images she took will be on display in the nearby Seabird Centre for a 3-month period.

Simon Poole, co-founder of Jerba Campervans said: “It’s fantastic to see the local community supporting this inspirational initiative.

“Not only does it send out a vital message about plastic waste in our seas but also brings a new and vibrant piece of wonderful art to North Berwick Harbour.

“To see the project grow from an initial idea into a large-scale physical depiction of such an important issue in today’s society has just been incredible.”

The intricate artwork – which will illustrate a beach scene and image of Bass Rock – will span North Berwick’s harbour wall and will be accompanied by an interpretation board explaining the meaning behind the mural, urging people to act now.

Kate Miller, Head of Communications and Environmental Projects at Caledonian Horticulture said: “When 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!

“Caledonian Horticulture started The Scottish Coastal Clean Up initiative in 2021 and through our beach cleaning work, we became aware of Elizabeth and the monumental task she had taken on.

“The mural seemed like the ideal use of the astonishing 27,000 pieces of plastic gathered off the East Lothian coast line and really drives home the issue of marine plastic.

“From a distance, the mural appears to depict a colourful beach scene, but as you get closer and the details become clearer, you can make out the sheer scale of everyday items that have sadly ended up in our seas.

“We want the illustration to make people question how these items ended up in our seas and on our beaches and think about what they can do to help stop that happening.”

The 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.

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.

The eight panels making up the mural have each been sponsored by a local business; Steampunk, Turnbulls Home Hardware, The Lobster Shack & Rocketeer, Meg Maitland, Peppermint Beach, Fidra Charity and North Berwick Trust.

<https://caledonianhorticulture.co.uk/the-scottish-coastal-clean-up/>

