

New recruits for baaaarmy army

Thirty artists have already signed up to decorate Herdwick sheep models for display in the Lake District next year. The flock – dispersed along the 555 bus route – will raise funds for a £1.3 million Calvert Trust scheme

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Keswick artist Jonathan Hunter with Paul Wensley, of sponsor Wensley Mackay of Cockermouth

Keswick's Moot Hall and the Derwentwater boat landings are two instantly recognisable local scenes recreated by artist Jonathan Hunter for his Herdwick ewe model.

Christine Hurford's sheep, meanwhile, features maps of Skiddaw and Blencathra,

two mountains that represent Herdwick country for the artist.

Jonathan and Christine's sheep are among the first to be completed for the Go Herdwick public art project, launched earlier this year to raise money for the Lake District Calvert Trust.

Cumbria Life is the media partner for the project, which will see 50 decorated ewes displayed at key locations in the Lake

District next spring.

To date, 35 sheep have been sponsored and about 30 artists have signed up. There are no more sponsorship slots or locations available in Keswick but sponsors in Windermere, Bowness and Grasmere are being sought.

Jonathan Hunter, of Keswick, is known for his detailed local scenes, which always feature sheep. He was delighted when



Artist Christine Hurford with her Herdwick at the foot of Blease Fell, Blencathra, with Andy Airey and Eileen Cartmel of sponsor George Fisher of Keswick

sponsors Paul and Jayne Wensley, of Wensley Mackay in Cockermouth, selected him as the artist to decorate their sheep.

"I thought this is right up my street as there is a theme of Herdwick sheep running through my paintings," he says.

Having moved from a coal mining village in Wales 34 years ago, where everything seemed to him to be coal dust-black and grey, Jonathan embraces colour in his work. Jonathan, who works as a chef and an artist and exhibits at Thornthwaite and Sharp Edge Galleries in Keswick, likes to include everything he can see in his work, including hikers, dog walkers, couples holding hands and children playing games.

Jonathan's ewe includes local scenes such as Friar's Crag, The Pencil Museum, Castlerigg Stone Circle, Ullswater with a 'Steamer', Cockermouth Main Street, Coniston Water, Napes Needle, Dove Cottage in Grasmere and Bridge House in Ambleside.

Penrith-based artist Christine Hurford has also chosen local landscapes for her ewe but represented as maps. Christine, whose ewe is sponsored by George Fisher of

Keswick, has designed a map of Skiddaw for one side and Blencathra for the other.

The former teacher, who has a degree in ceramics and was shortlisted for visual artist of the year at the Cumbria Life Culture Awards 2015, focuses mainly on installations. Her work *Death and Life*, featuring hundreds of bone china flies, was staged at Carlisle Cathedral earlier this year.

The Fix the Fells volunteer, who loves maps, says her design for the ewe brings all her interests together: "I'm often up on the fells in all weathers and I love maps and it just seems right to put a map of Skiddaw on one side of this sheep and Blencathra on the other as the places associated with Herdwick."

The ewe is sponsored by George Fisher outdoor specialists of Keswick. Company director Andy Airey says the firm has been involved with Calvert Trust for many years. In addition, staff member Eileen Cartmel's family is from Gategill Farm at Threlkeld, which Christine is to include in the Blencathra map design.

Andy says: "It was such a good fun idea it was impossible to say no."

When the sheep arrive on route 555...

Go Herdwick was launched in September to help raise £1.3 million for the Lake District Calvert Trust.

The project will see 50 life-sized Herdwick ewe models, each sponsored by a business, organisation or school and decorated by a different artist, displayed in the Lake District.

From next Easter and running through to the end of the school summer holidays, the ewes will be placed in accessible public spaces and outside business premises. The Go Herdwick trail will follow the route of the 555 bus service and include Keswick, Grasmere, Rydal, Ambleside and Windermere.

Herdwick-spotting is expected to take off among locals and visitors. Finally the flock will be rounded up for a grand gala auction.

The proceeds are to help fund a £1.3 million redevelopment of Old Windebrowe, the Calvert Trust's Grade-II listed farmhouse and tithe barn in Keswick. The charity, which provides adventure holidays for people with disabilities, hopes to use the centre to provide specialist accommodation, therapy and rehabilitation for people who have had strokes or acquired brain injuries.

Cumbria Life is proud to be media partner for Go Herdwick, which is also supported by patron James Rebanks, the bestselling author and Herdwick farmer. Cumbria Life commissioned internationally renowned conceptual artist Conrad Atkinson to create one of the first sheep, called the Golden Fleece. Conrad, who has homes in Cumbria and California, was inspired by the importance of wool in the history of world trade and commerce.

See www.goherdwick.co.uk or tel: 017687 72255.

