

Counting sheep

Artists and sponsors are flocking to sign up for Go Herdwick, a major public art trail being staged in the Lake District next year. The project was launched in September to raise funds for a £1.3 million Calvert Trust initiative

WORDS MICHAELA ROBINSON-TATE PHOTOGRAPHY PHIL RIGBY



Livestock auctioneer Grant Anderson brings down the gavel at Carlisle auction mart on one of two Go Herdwick ewes sponsored by H&H Group. Below, Conrad Atkinson working on his 'Golden Fleece' for September's launch for Cumbria Life

Dozens of artists and sponsors have already signed up to take part in Go Herdwick, a public art trail raising funds for the Lake District Calvert Trust. More creative and financial support is sought for the project which runs for six months in 2016 and is expected to spark a new sport of Herwick spotting, when 50 decorated life-sized ewes appear across the central Lake District.

The ewes will be sited along the approximate route of the 555 bus service, which takes in Keswick, Grasmere, Rydal,

Ambleside and Windermere.

Cumbria Life is proud to be media partner for the project, which was launched in spectacular style at a Calvert Trust fundraising ball in September, when internationally renowned artist Conrad Atkinson unveiled his work, The Golden Fleece.

Cumbria Life had invited Conrad – who has homes on the Solway and in California – to transform the first of the blank ewes into a piece of his distinctive art.

Each ewe will be sponsored by a business or organisation and decorated by an artist or designer before being auctioned off.

The cash raised will go towards the £1.3

million redevelopment of Old Windebrowe at Keswick to provide specialist accommodation, therapy and rehabilitation for people recovering from strokes or who have acquired brain injuries.

Artists who take part will be actively supporting the appeal and will be able to promote their work through their association with the project. They can also earn 25 per cent of the auction price – although some have agreed to waive the payment.

About 30 artists have expressed an interest with 23 signed up. Libby and Nigel Edmondson, of Levens near Kendal, are each designing a Herdwick. Nigel specialises in ceramics and Libby is known for her

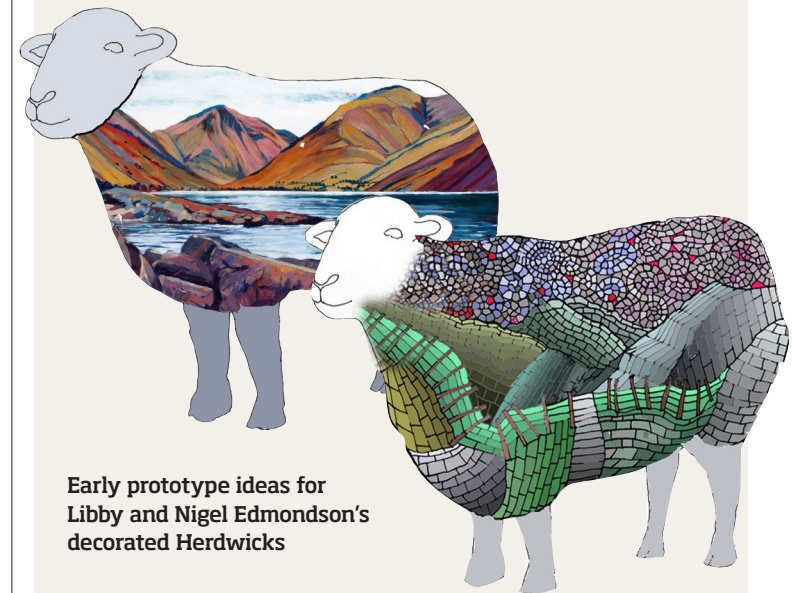


vibrant landscapes.

Nigel says: "We think that the Calvert Trust does very valuable work so we were both keen to be supportive. We like the challenge of something we've never done before."

Northumberland-based artist Mary Ann Rogers, who specialises in wildlife and animal watercolours, has agreed to decorate one of two Herdwick ewes being sponsored by H&H Group. Mary Ann, who has worked with H&H on a number of projects, says she's pleased to support the Calvert Trust and is looking forward to tackling the blank Herdwick model: "It's a useful, white, appealing surface."

'Wow, that would be brilliant for Cumbria' – why sponsors are backing Go Herdwick



Early prototype ideas for Libby and Nigel Edmondson's decorated Herdwick

Businesses and other organisations are proving keen to sponsor the decorated Herdwick with 26 sheep already taken.

Newlands Adventure Centre and Keswick Climbing Wall is sponsoring a sheep. Director Debbie Beament visited Bristol earlier this year and saw the Shaun in the City fundraising art trail featuring large figures of the popular character. She thought a similar trail would work well in Cumbria and coincidentally, shortly afterwards, she received a letter from the Calvert Trust outlining the Go Herdwick project.

Debbie previously worked for the Calvert Trust and wants to support the scheme: "We thought that it ticked all the boxes for us. When we were walking round Bristol, just watching people, they were getting hugely excited. We thought, 'wow, that would

be brilliant for Cumbria'."

Paul and Dawn Titley of West View Guest House in Keswick decided to sponsor a ewe after learning about the scheme at the Calvert Trust's fundraising ball earlier this year.

Paul, who is mayor of Keswick, says the plan is to site the Herdwick at Keswick Museum, where he is chairman of trustees.

"Having heard about what Calvert Trust does, we thought it was an amazing charity but also it was a very smart marketing idea which fits the Lake District National Park like a glove and we just thought it was good fun."

Cumbrian company H&H Group is sponsoring two Herdwick ewes. Group marketing manager Nina Oxley said the firm had wanted to support Calvert Trust for some time and the opportunity to be involved in a public art trail that celebrates the Lake District's iconic sheep couldn't be missed.

For information see www.goherdwick.co.uk or Tel: 017687 72255

Cumbria Life is proud to be media partner for the Go Herdwick campaign

