

FISHING FOR LITTER SCOTLAND

PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday 18th August 2015

PARTNERS AT JOHN LEWIS ABERDEEN GIVE FISHING FOR LITTER SCOTLAND ITS FIRST FUNDS FROM THE SCOTTISH BAG CHARGE

Marine litter kills thousands of sea birds, fish and mammals every year and is an eyesore on our beaches. Plastic bags are a particular problem because turtles mistake them for jelly fish and once eaten they can have dire consequence for the turtle.

Fishing for Litter Scotland has been assisting fishermen to remove litter from our seas for 10 years. With more 850 hundred tonnes of marine litter from Scotland's seas and landed at participating ports around the coast, the project has already made a significant difference. As well helping the fishermen to land the litter that they catch, the project aims to raise awareness of the problems created by marine litter.

Partners at the John Lewis store in Aberdeen have voted to give Fishing for Litter Scotland £2772 from funds raised from the 5p/bag charge to help them with their efforts. Part of the money will be used to purchase education



materials for use in local primary schools and to set up a pilot programme to encourage litter removal from beaches.

At an event in the store to present the cheque, Robert Garnish, Head of Branch at John Lewis Aberdeen commented *"being a coastal city, I think the link between money raised by charging for carrier bags and working to reduce marine litter is*

something we can all relate to so I am delighted that Partners (staff) in Aberdeen have chosen to support Fishing for Litter Scotland. Whilst there will be a tangible benefit as a result of the funds raised, from an environmental perspective it has also been great to see a significant drop in the purchasing of new carrier bags over the past 9 months."

Graham Humphries – the project Coordinator from KIMO UK – said “*we are delighted to receive the support of the John Lewis Partners and will make good use of the funds. Plastic bags have been a real problem as all too often they get blown into the sea where they cause real harm. Using the funds collected from the 5p bag charge is an excellent idea and I hope that other retailers will follow in John Lewis’s footsteps.*”

850 tonnes is the equivalent of more than two Olympic sized swimming pools¹ full of litter. The litter originates from a number of sources, including a significant amount from the general public. Much of it is plastic that, if left in the sea, would spend many years in the environment slowly breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces that have the potential to affect the marine food chain².

The Fishing for Litter project was introduced to Scottish waters by KIMO UK in 2005. It encourages skippers of fishing vessels to land litter they catch in their nets during their normal fishing activities by removing barriers to landing the litter at participating harbours.

John Lewis have just joined Scottish Natural Heritage, The Crown Estate, the Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council, Seagreen Wind Energy, Beatrice Offshore Wind LTD, Total E&P UK Ltd, the Scottish Fishermen’s Trust, UK Fisheries Offshore Oil & Gas Legacy Trust Fund Limited (FLTC), Tarbert Harbour Authority, Lerwick Port Authority, Peterhead Port Authority, Scrabster Harbour Trust, and Ullapool Harbour Trust in sponsoring Fishing for Litter Scotland.

For more information contact; Graham Humphries, Project Coordinator, Email: KIMOUK@aberdeenshire.gov.uk Mob: 07789790775

Notes to Editors:

Fishing for Litter is an active environmental response to the increase of marine litters in the seas around Great Britain, Scandinavia and Western Europe. Through the participation of local fishermen, this project is designed to recover marine litter, whilst raising awareness of the significant detrimental impact such waste can have on the marine environment..

KIMO (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) is an association of coastal local authorities whose goal is to eliminate pollution from the Northern Seas. The organisation’s members include 75 member authorities in 10 countries representing more than 6 million inhabitants. KIMO UK is the United Kingdom network of the organisation representing the UK members.

¹ The average density of litter collected during 2014 is 160kg/m³ - KIMO UK

² Arthur et al. 2009, Teuten et al. 2009, Thompson et al. 2009, GESAMP 2010

Sponsors



