

Mablethorpe Leader

& SUTTON ON SEA

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BEACH HUTS PUT TOWN ON TOURIST MAP

Bathing Beauties event to have international flavour

MABLETHORPE is set for 'huge' international interest at this year's Bathing Beauties festival - with double the funding of last year's event.

The beach hut festival, which debuted in Mablethorpe and Sutton last September, was hailed as a success for attracting international attention to the area and benefitting local businesses with the extra trade from visitors.

Helen Matthews, chair of the Mablethorpe and Sutton Tourism Forum which is behind the event, said: "It's really going to be amazing this year - I hope the town's going to be prepared for it!"

This year's festival will see the added bonus of a stage on the beach along with more contemporary performance art, art trails, workshops and a big parade.

Helen confirmed the BBC's One Show will be visiting the new beach huts tomorrow (Thursday) and plans to film there on May 15.

She said: "The festival is putting Mablethorpe on the cultural tourist map, such is its uniqueness. Thousands of people came last year and it was the busiest Mablethorpe has ever been."

The Bathing Beauties Contest held

By Gemma Gadd

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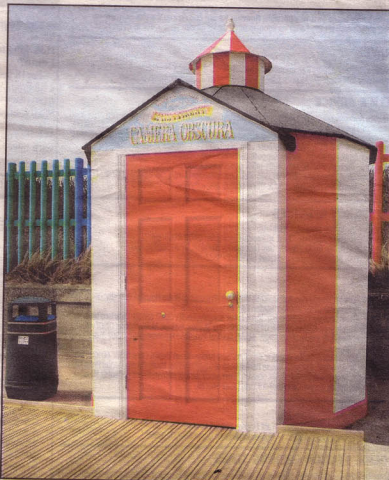
before the festival, saw architects from across the globe submit their designs to 're-imagine the beach hut for the 21st century'.

Five of the winning huts have been built and installed along the coast from Mablethorpe to Sutton on Sea, including one in the shape of a glass of gin and tonic.

Two more designs are planned for Mablethorpe this summer, with a further two structures from the contest - a bird hide and a cloud viewing platform - set for Anderby Creek.

The Forum said they are now working on a funding bid to develop the festival over the next three years, with the hope of extending it into a week-long event.

● If you are interested in investing in the festival or wish to take part contact Helen Matthews on 07894 292641 or e-mail helen.mathews9@btopenworld.com.
● Do you like the new beach huts? Email your views to gemma.gadd@jpress.co.uk.



The beach hut Camera Obscura - installed recently along Mablethorpe's South promenade. Photo: Ian Holmes.