

Teaming up to clean the sea

"We are fortunate on Waiheke to have teams that clean our beaches every morning and that our restaurants and cafes are very environmentally conscious," Mudbrick Vineyard floor manager Poppy Watson-Brooks says.

"Being surrounded by the ocean is amazing but the rubbish that gets swept away by the tides is also hidden away."

it would be a great way to put their skills to use while having fun.

"Living and working on Waiheke Island involves being much more conscious of what we consume, how we treat our environment and how we each impact our surroundings. We are conservative with water use, recycle and generally try to consume fewer single-use items,"

something good for the island and community that we have made our home; a very special place we all love."

But the dive shop usually holds these dives over the weekend, where it is impossible for vineyard staff - especially this time of year - to take time off.

Poppy says the team at Waiheke Dive and Snorkel was amazing when they suggested to do an extra clean-up on a weekday.

"[Owner] Adam Whatton was really enthusiastic and got the ball rolling right away."

So on Tuesday 22 January, six divers and one snorkeller from Mudbrick Vineyard split into two groups and dived into the water at Enclosure Bay. They cleared a heap of fishing line and small plastics, glass bottles and some larger pieces of fibreglass and metal sheets from boat wrecks that have sunk.

"There are a couple of small boats off the bay that would be great to get out of the ocean," Poppy says.

"As the fibreglass breaks down, the small fibres can cause real problems for marine life and the metal pieces can be dangerous for swimmers."

The group had about an hour in the water and have already planned a second one to take place on Tuesday 19 February with the location to be confirmed. Anyone working in hospitality interested in joining can contact Waiheke Dive and Snorkel.

The dive shop, located in Oneroa, runs regular clean-up dives around the island's coastline. For more information, see waihekedive.co.nz •



From left - Jannes Pahl, Janine Mears, Jenna Batchelor, Jean-Benoit Fortin, Poppy Watson-Brooks, Maddy Lyons and Sarah Bousquet.

Some vineyard employees noticed that Waiheke Dive and Snorkel offered clean-up dives, and with many of them holding a diver certificate, they thought

says Poppy. "Most of us are travelling on our year - or years - abroad and wanted to give something back. We wanted to do

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