



Press Release

Issued: **Wednesday 14 April 2021**

Beach combers invited to make their mark in exhibition archive

People living near Scotland's vulnerable coasts can add to a growing archive of objects that will feature in an upcoming exhibition.

Eye-catching items spotted in places at risk from rising seas will form a key part of the show, which seeks to address key environmental concerns.

Exhibition curators hope that people living in endangered areas such as the Hebrides, the Northern Isles and the Firths of Forth and Clyde will take up the challenge.

A People's Archive of Sinking and Melting – begun by American artist Amy Balkin in 2011 – is a poignant, constantly evolving record of the approaching threats posed by climate change.

The crowdsourced collection of objects will be part of an exhibition called *The Normal*, which opens at the University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery on 18 May. Objects should be submitted by 30 April.

Among the items already sent in is a section of fired clay brick retrieved by Moray Heggie-Milne from the beach at Whitehills, Banffshire. It was made nearby at Blackpots Tileworks, which was demolished in 1978 and is now the site of a caravan park.

The sea habitually washes up broken bricks and tiles after bad weather, and layers of discarded debris are now visible next to the shore as soil becomes increasingly eroded.

Christina Riley, of Troon, Ayrshire – concerned about the increased likelihood of coastal flooding in her area – has contributed a striking beige pebble, possibly sandstone, with a layer of white quartz running through it, which was found close to her home.

Mike and Bernie Bell, of Rendall, Orkney, have donated tags from fish and lobster traps that have made their way from Newfoundland to the Bay of Hinderayre.

The Rendall shore is relatively sheltered, but the couple say it is being gradually eroded by waves and tides that appear to be exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

People can send the gallery any object that they find at a threatened location – debris, flotsam or jetsam – as long as it *weighs less than 8oz (225g)*. A contribution form is available on the gallery's website.

Gallery staff will arrange and present the objects with guidance from the artist. Once the exhibition closes on 29 August, the items will be forwarded to Balkin, who will add them to the archive, which now contains items from six continents.

The gallery will continue to collect objects for the archive in the run up to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), to be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November.

The Normal showcases a range of perspectives from established artists on pressing global concerns. It has been developed in response to what the curators describe as the 'wake-up call' of Covid-19.

To get involved with the Talbot Rice exhibition, please go to: <https://bit.ly/3nYvUMy>

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