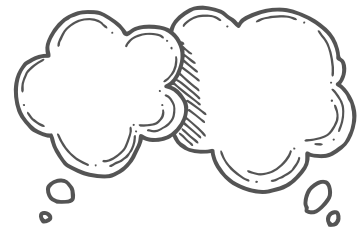


# ON REFLECTION



Memorialising... The Lost Community of Culbin

Nowadays, Culbin Forest on the south side of the Moray Firth appears peaceful and beautiful, planted with pine trees. But during the seventeenth century, Culbin was fertile farmland known as the 'Granary of Moray'.

But in 1694 a great storm brought disaster and devastation to Culbin. The farms were covered by the 'Great Sand Drift'. People's homes were lost under the sand forever.

1

## EXPLORE

Explore the Marram Grass Thatch from Nairn Museum on the site.

Marram grass was often used to thatch houses in Nairn and the Fishertown and was also burnt for fuel. Much of the marram was uprooted from the dunes near Culbin Sands. This activity is now known to have loosened the sands.

Do you think this disaster could have been avoided?



2

## TRY IT YOURSELF

John Martin from Elgin described the scene of a sandstorm, writing at the time:

"Nothing can be seen but sand above, sand below and sand everywhere. You dare not open your eyes but must grope your way about as if blindfolded."

Working in pairs, try getting around a building with your eyes closed. Make sure you have a partner to stop you walking into things.

3

## TALK ABOUT IT

The storms took place during a period called The Little Ice Age which lasted around seventy years. At that time, Britain experienced more extreme weather and was two degrees cooler.

In the seventeenth century, many people blamed storms on magic or even divine intervention. Some people believed that the disaster at Culbin was an act of divine punishment. They thought the victims were being punished for things like whisky smuggling or even for playing cards on a Sunday.

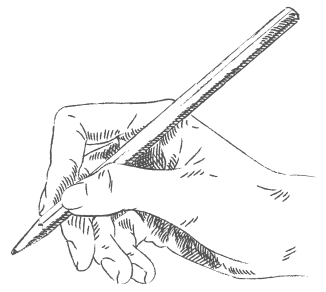
- How would you feel if you were blamed for your home being buried?
- Why do most people no longer blame divine punishment for misfortunes?
- Where you would go if you had to leave your home quickly – do you have relatives who could take you in?



4

## CREATE A COMMEMORATION

Use this page to plan your ideas.



Who do you want to commemorate?

Why do you want to remember what happened to them?

What could your design look like? What shapes or pictures could you include?

What message could you write?

