

Dr Jeremy Brock
President
Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society



Dear Dr Brock

I am writing with an urgent request for you to support our campaign to give the magnificent Galloway Viking Hoard a permanent or regular home in Dumfries and Galloway where it was found. Vital decisions are due to be made in March and your voice, as evidence of community support, could make a real difference.

Unearthed in 2014, after over 1,000 years buried in the soil of Galloway, the hoard is one of the finest discoveries of its kind. It includes a unique gold bird-shaped pin, an enamelled Christian cross, decorated Anglo-Saxon brooches, armbands and an engraved Carolingian silver vessel. The items come from across Europe – there are even fragments of Byzantine silk.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has an exciting vision to give it pride of place in a dedicated exhibition area at the new Kirkcudbright Art Gallery. Visitors from far and wide could discover the story of a remarkable find from a region with a highly distinctive past.

However, National Museums Scotland (NMS) is making a rival bid and wants sole ownership of the hoard. In discussions to date, no clear guarantees about how much, or how often, any of the collection would be loaned to the region, have been offered.

There has been an unfortunate tendency for important discoveries to be taken to large museums in capital cities where they become one small exhibit among many. We fear this may happen again. This year has been designated as 2017 The Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology, and should be a moment when Scotland shows bold imagination.

In Kirkcudbright, the hoard would be set within its correct geographical and historical context. It would boost cultural tourism and draw in more people to enjoy our many historic sites – as well as the region's existing important archaeological collections. Agreement could also be reached for the hoard to be displayed at other times in the NMS in Edinburgh and beyond.

The council would very much appreciate an expression of your support. I attach a suggested pro-forma statement which I urge you to send to Harry.Thomson@dumgal.gov.uk by 7 March when the Communities Committee will make its final decision on how to progress the council's bid. The Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel (SAFAP) is due to decide the hoard's future on 23 March. **Please also consider emailing your statement to Stuart Campbell, who advises and provides administrative support to SAFAP at s.campbell@nms.ac.uk.** We would also be delighted if you registered on [our website](#) as a GVH supporter.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Agnew, Chair of the Galloway Viking Hoard Campaign