**COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP OF ALFORD AND DONSIDE HERITAGE ASSOCIATION (SCIO)**

We hope that the information below will help to clarify the situation regarding membership.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Who can become Community Members of Alford and Donside Heritage Association ?

*Members can be anyone over 16 years of age living in the Alford Academy School Zone who supports the aims of the Association.*

How do people join ?

*By filling in a simple form agreeing to the Purposes of the Association.*

Is there a charge ?

*There is no charge to become a Community Member.*

What rights do Community Members have ?

*Community Members are entitled to vote at Association meetings, including the AGM, and to elect Trustees.*

Why should the wider community have these voting rights ?

*By involving the local community as members, this gives the community oversight of the charity’s operations and is an opportunity for Community Members to elect charity trustees, scrutinise accounts and vote on particular matters.*

I am already a member, why do I need to fill in another form ?

*OSCR, The Scottish Charity Regulator, requires us to keep an up to date register of all Community Members of the Association. To maintain your voting rights you must be a Community Member.*

What about my current annual membership status ?

*From 2022, all current members will be asked to subscribe as Friends of Alford Heritage Museum. Friends will be entitled to free entry to the museum as before, and any other discounts or benefits decided by the Trustees.*

Are Friends entitled to vote at Association meetings and the AGM ?

*Friends are not entitled to vote unless they have also joined as Community Members. This simply means you have to complete a Community Member form at no extra cost.*

Why have you decided to change the way membership is run ?

*When the Association changed its status to SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) these obligations were placed upon us by Scottish charity law.*

Why did you do this ?

*A SCIO is a legal form unique to Scottish charities and enables the Association to enter into contracts, employ staff, incur debts, own property, sue and be sued.  It also provides a high degree of protection against liability.*