



Alford and Donside Heritage Association Business Plan – Alford Heritage Museum

Preserving the rich heritage of Alford and Donside for future generations

**Renovation, Regeneration and Reinterpretation:
A Five-Year Journey**

June 2024 V3

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Auction Mart full complex showing buildings fronting Mart Road and adjacent yard and field

1. Executive Summary

Alford and Donside Heritage Association (AHDA) aim to engage with the present-day community to create an awareness of the heritage of Alford and surrounding area and its influence on present day life.

The Heritage Museum opened to the public in 1991 when the action group defined their aim for the building as being *“vital to preserve it as a living monument to the past. It is a tremendous old building, full of character and history. We hope to preserve the lively atmosphere of the mart, while depicting the farming story of the past.”* In 2021 the building was awarded a Category A listed building status (see Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Report - Appendix 1), continuing the original aim to preserve it as a living monument to the past.

In February 2020 a structural pre-acquisition survey by Ryden was undertaken with a view to applying to Aberdeenshire Council for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the Council owned building and field to ADHA. The survey highlighted some necessary repairs and, in Autumn 2020, funded by Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS), ADHA engaged a team of consultants, SKS Scotland CIC, including business planners, architect, heritage adviser and market research/engagement specialist, to undertake a feasibility and business planning study, to determine the best way forward for the Museum.

Subsequently, in 2022/23, with project viability funding from Architectural Heritage Fund, and financial support from Aberdeenshire Council (Marr Area), ADHA engaged LDN Architects (Forres) to carry out further in-depth surveys, create a design concept, and proposals and costs for building repairs and design improvements. Their Feasibility Report forms Appendix 2.

From both the survey and feasibility discussions, the board of trustees identified the following actions:

- Application to Council and transfer of building and adjoining field to ADHA via CAT.
- Large scale project for repairs and improvements (See [Section 3](#))
- Improved community engagement via a wider range of activities and events

The estimated timescale for the project is:

- Completion of CAT – by late 2024 early 2025
- Initial funding for architect and surveyor – 2023 (completed)
- Funding application for Project Development Officer – 2024
- Funding applications for RIBA Stages 3-4 work – 2024
- Commencement of capital works 2025

The timescale involved for the whole project, including CAT, is approximately five years.

The capital project will require external funding from relevant national, local and commercial bodies (see Appendix 8). The organisation has, over the years, demonstrated its ability to manage recurrent income and funding; attract external grant funding; file audited annual accounts to OSCR in a timely manner; and our financial projections demonstrate sustainable income streams.

The project will benefit the communities of Alford and Donside in several ways:-

Firstly, the repair and conservation of the Mart building and site will preserve the historic structure as part of the cultural heritage of the village of Alford and the local area.

Secondly, the project will provide an additional local venue and meeting place, offering a range of activities to the local community and wider visitor base.

Thirdly, it will continue to preserve a sense of place, culture and belonging. As thirty years have passed since the opening of the Museum, the focus of the collections (see [Appendix 3](#)) has broadened out beyond purely agricultural to encompass wider representation of rural life – both social and cultural – and therefore the project is relevant to all sectors of the local communities.

Fourthly, the retention of the Museum Field as a green space in the middle of Alford will:

- Provide a green space in an urban environment which will be good for the wellbeing of the residents.
- Provide a space for activities at the museum but also for other village groups to use.
- Help improve the biodiversity in the centre of the village.

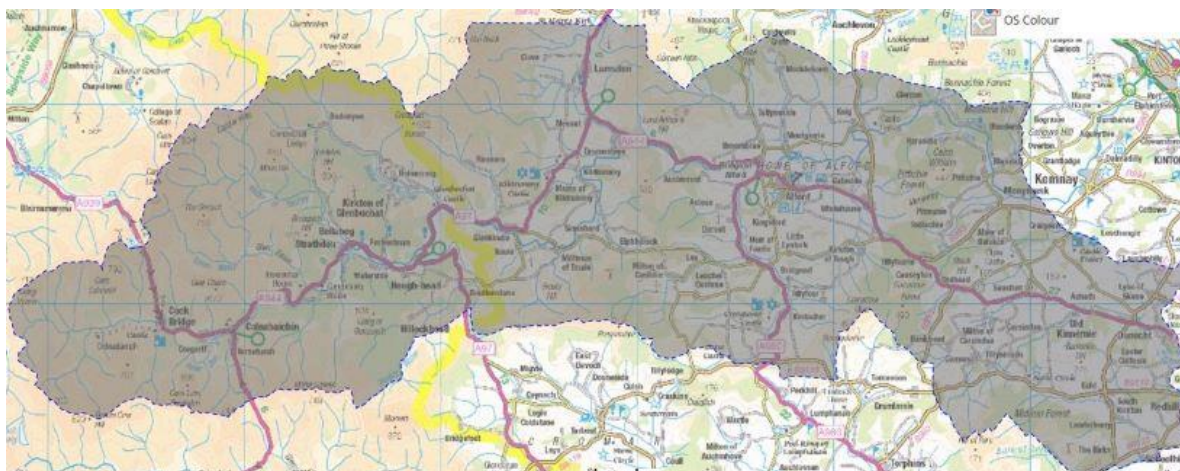
The main stakeholders in the project are the community and our SCIO members who are represented by the Board. There are no plans to develop any financial interest or shareholding offers to support the project as the organisation is community led. Other organisations who will have key involvement in the project include Aberdeenshire Council; Donside Community Council; Marr Area Partnership; schools; other local tourist attractions; heritage funding bodies; and museum and heritage organisations.

2. Organisation and Management

The organisation is Alford and Donside Heritage Association, established in 1991 as an unincorporated charity (SC020212). Our mission statement is: *Preserving the rich heritage of Alford and Donside for future generations.*

The organisation became a two-tier SCIO (SC050799) on 25 February 2021. The terminology used in this business plan is “Alford Heritage Museum” (AHM) referring to the SCIO as well as the Museum being operated by the SCIO.

The area of the SCIO is coterminous with the catchment area of Alford Academy (secondary school) and covers the feeder primaries. The catchment map is shown below (shaded area round Alford).



The financial year end is December, and the organisation is not currently VAT registered.

The organisation is managed by a board of trustees and is actively recruiting members in line with the new two-tier governing document (see Appendix 4). The current community membership is just under 100. Members are entitled to vote at the AGM and to stand for election to the Board.

Key Board Members

Chairman: Thomas Jackson has been a trustee for three years. He has a good knowledge of agricultural objects with a special interest in implements of the horse era. Thomas manages the

agricultural collection and has been involved with setting up working days and events, some of which have been at museums. He has been a volunteer at Grampian Transport Museum and also runs his own business.

Treasurer: Brenda Glass has been involved with the Museum for around eleven years. She has held various posts in administration - mainly College of Agriculture, Aberdeenshire Council and various other part time posts with local Estates, such as Castle Fraser and Monymusk Estate. Having lived in the Alford area for many years, she has many contacts with local organisations and people.

Biographies of all current board members and selected volunteers form [Appendix 5](#). There are around thirty regular volunteers.

As many of the voluntary workforce are new, steps are being taken to ensure the support, development and upskilling of individuals to ensure a more robust organisational structure as the project progresses. Training has been provided by ADHA to volunteers in fire safety and first aid, as well as in use of social media, collections management and conservation, marketing, and architectural heritage projects.

The Association is an active member of several heritage and tourism organisations, all of whom provide training and networking opportunities. Board members have used contacts within these networks to seek practical advice and Trustees and volunteers have visited other museums to seek ideas and best practice.

The majority of items in the collection are owned by the Association, along with fixtures and fittings, with some artefacts on long-term loan from local families. The building is leased from Aberdeenshire Council.

Work on a four-year lease for the Mart field from Aberdeenshire Council is currently in progress, it is hoped that before the end of the four years the CAT will be in place making the need for a lease redundant.

3. Project Background

An options appraisal was carried out as part of the feasibility study and business planning work in 2021. It considered a range of options which are detailed in [Appendix 6](#).

Following this exercise and considering the future of the building and museum collection, a number of factors were identified and prioritised in order of importance and collectively are termed the "Project":

- The work with LDN Architects in 2023, identified that a number of large-scale repairs, improvements and upgrades were required.
- The toilet block and catering facilities are out-dated and need upgraded to facilitate organised events and community use.
- There is a requirement for an internal, smaller, all year round, heated area, which could be used for fundraising and community events.
- More appropriate rehousing of archival material and research/volunteer facilities.
- Reconstruction of 1990s front porch area (or alternative option) to create a more welcoming visitor area, and to allow better display facilities.
- Environmental improvements to the building where practical.
- Improved workshop and storage facilities.

The project will help achieve preservation of the historic Alford Mart building and its museum collection, while acknowledging its uniqueness and authenticity, and its place at the centre of Alford life for most

of the 20th century. The listed building status was the first step in securing the future of this important asset.

AHM has concluded the way forward over the next five years is to:

- Secure community asset transfer of the building and adjoining field from Aberdeenshire Council (ownership or long-term lease).
- Raise project funding for:
 - conservation and repair of the building;
 - review, reorganisation, re-display and re-interpretation of the collection; and
 - development of an outward facing and engaging programme to share the heritage with local people and visitors, including significantly raising visitor numbers.
- Build the capacity of the organisation to carry out the project and a sustainable future.
- Develop strong working partnerships with other local organisations.

Environmental Considerations

The building was last assessed for an Energy Performance Certificate in October 2020. Unsurprisingly, it received the lowest grade G, as it was originally designed as an unheated building for the sale of livestock, with many external exits. Apart from small areas, such as offices and toilets, no attempts have been made to install any heating system, and there is no insulation. The project will attempt to address the issue of heated space by creating, within the structure, a medium sized heated area for meetings, exhibitions and events, thus providing year-round opportunities for generating income.

In 2022, at the request of ADHA, Visit Aberdeenshire through Green Tourism carried out a sustainability audit of both building and business. Their subsequent report provided us with future guidance and suggestions for ongoing consideration and, where possible, implementation.

Architect advice has been sought on environmental improvements, such as improved insulation; environmentally sound heating; and motion sensitive lighting. Within the site there may be opportunities for the installation of other renewable energy devices, such as solar panels.

The organisation is currently a recycling centre for ink cartridges and manages collection points throughout the village which raise around £151 per annum for the museum. This is an area which one of our volunteers plans to develop. In 2022 our electricity supply was switched to an SSE Green Tariff from renewable sources.

4. Proposal

Organisation Aims, Vision, and Objectives

Aims

The preservation of the historic Alford Mart building and its museum collection into the future. By using the building and collection we aim to inspire both the community and visitors through sharing stories and experiences of rural life in Alford and Donside and NE Scotland, past and present, thus creating a sense of identity and place.

Vision

- Enhance local sense of community by maintaining both a historic and living collection of artefacts, archives, memories and activities, including digital access.
- Provide a central village location for cultural, social and traditional activities and events.
- Work together with other local attractions to ensure that Alford, and the Heritage Museum in particular, are key destinations for tourists.

- Provide meaningful volunteering, learning and social networking opportunities for local people leading to improved health and wellbeing.
- Provide modern, accessible, flexible and comfortable facilities for visitors and volunteers.
- Provide appropriate storage for, and access to collections for visiting groups, researchers and family historians.
- Achieve financial sustainability.

Recent Achievements 2022-2023

- Strengthened team of volunteers, including creating volunteer policies and procedures.
- Listed status for the building (Historic Environment Scotland).
- Improved our Visit Scotland quality assurance rating to 3 stars.
- Launch of “Friends of Alford Heritage Museum”.
- Successful funding bid to Architectural Heritage Fund for Project Viability Grant.
- Appointed LDN Associates to provide building and architectural professional support.
- Successful programme of events and fundraising in 2023.

Objectives (Development Phase) 2023-2024

- Progress Community Asset Transfer negotiations with Aberdeenshire Council.
- Conclude lease negotiations with Aberdeenshire Council for Mart field.
- Conduct a collections review and prepare a collections plan including steps towards accreditation with MGS.
- Provide interesting and inspiring opportunities for volunteers.
- Initial fundraising and grant applications to continue project development in 2024.
- Increase income from visitor numbers, events, sponsorship and retail offer.
- Hold public and members’ consultation event over proposed project plans.

Objectives (Capital Project) 2024-2028

- Prepare and submit a series of major bids to secure grant funding for the project, including appointment of a project manager.
- Secure planning permission and listed building consent.
- Capital works to conserve and repair the building and improve public and volunteer facilities.
- Launch an ambitious programme to raise footfall and participation in order to share the heritage effectively in line with funder expectations.
- Deliver a year-round programme of activities suitable for a wide range of users.
- Improved storage facilities for all collections.
- Create a flexible social space for group activities.

Alignment with Council and Community Priorities

Aberdeenshire Council’s Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 notes that Alford “*supports a number of heritage assets which contributes to its character*”. The transfer of the Grade A-listed Mart building to Community ownership and the implementation of this project plan will support that statement.

The project also supports some of the Council’s strategic priorities 2020-2022. **Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2020-2022** states:

- The priorities under Our People are **Education** and **Health and Wellbeing**.
- The priorities under Our Environment are **Infrastructure** and **Resilient Communities**.
- The priorities under Our Economy are **Economy and Enterprise** and **Estate Modernisation**.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITY	RESPONSE
Our People	

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITY	RESPONSE
Education	Providing services and activities for schools, children and young people. Providing opportunities for lifelong learning and self-development for adults. Providing educational talks and visits for all ages and abilities.
Health and Wellbeing	Supporting community physical and mental health by offering a range of community activities and volunteering opportunities. Community involvement in management and running of organisation.
Our Environment	
Infrastructure	Safeguarding the built environment and preserving a nationally important listed building. Seeking opportunities for environmental improvements and cost savings through building renovation.
Resilient Communities	Asset Transfer of the building to community management, thus supporting communities to help themselves, enabling community wealth building through local economic and cultural opportunities. Developing existing partnerships and building new ones with our key stakeholders. Developing the digital presence of the organisation to communicate with users and facilitate remote access to collections and volunteer working from home.
Our Economy	
Economy and Enterprise	Providing an attractive tourism offer to attract visitors to the area. Offering retail opportunities to local craft workers and small businesses. Attracting national grant funding to the Alford and Donside economy.
Estate Modernisation	Upgrading the building to make it sustainable and fit for purpose. Seeking opportunities for environmental improvements and cost savings through building renovation.

Theme 5 of the **Howe of Alford Community Action Plan 2018**, *Alford Village Amenities*, recognised that activities and events at Grampian Transport Museum and the Heritage Centre were attractive to both visitors and residents. Both organisations are working together to co-ordinate their events programmes. Aesthetic improvements to the visual impact of the village were also recommended, and the renovation of the Mart building, with its central location, would contribute greatly to this.

The **Marr Community Plan 2023-2026 (Draft)** identifies 5 priorities. This plan demonstrates support for these:

MARR COMMUNITY PLAN PRIORITY	RESPONSE
1. Empowered and confident communities	The organisation is already a self-directed community organisation. Our proposals are for a community enhancement project which would draw in external funding for the area.
2. Economically vibrant communities	The organisation contributes to the tourism offer for the area. It works in partnership with

	other local attractions to attract visitors to Marr.
3. Healthy, safe and vibrant communities	Volunteering provides opportunities for self-development and a sense of worth.
4. Connected communities	There are opportunities for volunteers to work digitally from home.
5. Enhanced natural heritage and environment	The museum and Mart building with its adjoining field (which was originally used for extra livestock pens) form part of the local built heritage and should be preserved.

5. Stakeholders, Community Support, and Visitor Trends

The following groups have been identified as potential stakeholders in the project. Our relationship with each group will differ slightly in order to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

TARGET AUDIENCE	WHAT IS THEIR IMPORTANCE TO US?	WHAT DO THEY NEED?
General visitors, tourists	Income – both to us and Alford Reputation – word of mouth	Engaging, unique and stimulating experience. Events and activities. Value for money.
School and community groups	Income; grow community support; potential involvement; volunteers.	Engaging, educational and stimulating experience. Events and activities. Possible future involvement.
Students	Grow community support; potential involvement; volunteers; new pool of skills; links to educational institutions.	Possible future involvement. Career and learning development. CV.
Community members	Constitutional accountability, reputation – word of mouth, financial and in-kind support, potential volunteers, donations.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; community activities; AGM and members' meetings.
Friends of the Museum	Income by regular membership payments; reputation – word of mouth; potential volunteers; donations.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; special Friends' activities.
Volunteers	Staffing; time; expertise; peer group interaction; loyalty; word of mouth.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; recognition of their worth.
Donside Community Council	Access to local support and groups; support for funding and development; connections to other influencers.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; community activities.
Councillors; MPs; MSPs and other political influencers	Access to support, local and national; support for funding and development; connections to other influencers.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; community activities.
Local authority	Currently landlords; local services; access to support and expertise; community support.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; community activities.
Other local attractions and museums	Peer group support; access to funding and expertise.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; community activities;

TARGET AUDIENCE	WHAT IS THEIR IMPORTANCE TO US?	WHAT DO THEY NEED?
Museum and heritage sector	Income – both to us and Alford. Mutually beneficial activities.	involvement in sector activities.
Local businesses	Sponsorship; additional skills and services; advertising.	Visitors to Alford; community activities; retail opportunities; commissioned work.
Museums Galleries Scotland	National body supporting museum and heritage sector; access to funding and expertise; accrediting body; mentoring.	Regular updates on what we are doing; our ambitions; grant applications; involvement in accreditation process.

Evidence of Community Support

An on-line community survey was undertaken in 2021, which was shared via social media, by promotional posters in key local spots, and available on request in hard copy. The surveys were collated and analysed as follows (full details in Appendix 7):

A total of 234 surveys were collected, which is a strong sample of the Alford and surrounding area's population of approximately 2,500.

Key findings from the survey were:

- 98% of respondents are aware of the Museum and where it is situated in the village, showing that it is a significant and recognised landmark.
- Most respondents viewed the building and collection in a positive light and felt that the museum was an asset; and
- Interest in participating in, or attending, future activities and events in the Museum e.g. song, poetry, music, dance, talks/lectures, educational events etc.

Question Options	Strongly Agree		Agree	
	%	No.	%	No.
Should have more activities/events within it	42.78%	83	40.72%	79
Is in an historic building that should be preserved	62.89%	122	28.35%	55
Is an important asset for the village and surrounding area	61.86%	120	33.51%	65
Contains important collections and items that should be preserved	69.07%	134	25.26%	49
Should promote itself to a wider audience, including tourists	77.84%	151	20.62%	40
Question Option	Agree		Disagree	
	%	No.	%	No.
In principle would you support a community asset transfer?	94.25%	164	5.75%	10

The high response rate to the community survey, and the resulting list of suggestions and comments in Appendix 7, indicate a high level of interest in the work of the organisation and the preservation of the museum, albeit with a wider range of community activities and engagement.

The need for upgrading and renovation (both the building and displays) was mentioned by many respondents, and so the proposed project is in accord with the views of the community. The Board have already recognised the need to develop a wider range of community activities and events and the organisation began to address this during the 2022 season. Survey responses included:

- *Accessible, direct connection with rural heritage. Great location. Potential to achieve more activities and visitors.*
- *Excellent resource providing a valuable insight into life in the past in our local area. Also invaluable historical information for schools in area with a wealth of knowledge from volunteers.*
- *Think it just looks a bit run down. It's very educational and good to see our history.*
- *Possibly a little out of date. Could do with a makeover to brighten it up and make it more appealing.*

Visitor Trends

The state of the visitor market is a key driver on admission income, whether this is by entry fees or donations. Visitor attractions of all kinds are focusing much more on connecting with people in their local area. Visitor figure projections are included in [Section 10](#).

Visit Scotland Insights team have highlighted the following new opportunities post-pandemic:

- Localism and authentic experiences
- Adaptable adventure
- Workcations
- Artisanal retail and food and drink
- Voluntourism
- Wellness

Of the above trends, the first – localism and authentic experiences - is relevant to the development of Alford Heritage Museum. Younger visitors are searching for inspiration, connection and meaning and therefore the organisation will need to consider how to address the needs of the younger market. The museum offers visits and activities to local schools and groups and has also hosted work experience placements and award-related placements. Young people are also a valuable pool of potential future volunteers who will be required to continue to support the organisation going forward.

We have already responded to the attraction of craft and artisan retail by resuming outdoor markets which will continue in 2024. The availability of the yard and field space behind the museum offers further opportunities for larger outdoor and experiential events which will generate income for the museum and will take the museum collection outside of its physical walls, highlighting its role as a community resource.

In support of wellness, museum volunteers have taken collection items out to local care homes, engaging with residents suffering from dementia and other conditions in reminiscence sessions. Free and low-cost storytelling sessions have been provided for young families as part of the 2023 programme and continue in 2024.

The Association has good relationships with other local attractions, groups and organisations such as Grampian Transport Museum; Alford Valley Community Railway; The Bus Collection@ Alford; Friends of Haughton Park; Haughton Holiday Park; Alford Local History Group; Donside Camera Club and the

local Gaelic Group. The aim of the current Board is to develop collaborative working with these local groups to improve the collective visitor offering for Alford and Donside to boost the local economy.

Accessibility

As it is all on one level, apart from the tiered auction seating, the building is generally accessible to all mobilities. The proposed capital works would take into consideration any upgrades to facilities which might benefit disabled visitors and Visit Scotland have provided advice and recommendations as part of their quality assurance service.

6. Project Resources

Staffing Resources

ADHA relies upon the efforts of a dedicated team of around 30 active volunteers eight of whom are Trustees. In 2021, with external funding, it was decided to employ a part-time Museum and Community Development Officer. Their main focus was the recruitment, training and retention of a larger pool of volunteers, and volunteer numbers have consequently almost doubled. The benefits of having this part-time post led the Board to offer and fund a continued temporary contract until October 2023 with a wider community development remit. In order to conserve funds for the building project, the Board have not filled this post in the meantime.

As part of the initial project funding, we will be seeking to appoint a project manager, with experience of heritage projects, to support the Board and relieve Trustees of the day-to-day administration of the project. We are aware of heritage funders who support this type of post, whilst being aware that match funding may be required.

To augment the skill set of the current Board, an Advisory Panel has been established comprising members and local people with expertise in areas such as construction, marketing, museums, project and business management. They indicated their willingness to support the Board whilst not currently wishing to become elected Trustees and have provided advice and comment on the business plan, grant applications and collections care. It will be essential to broaden the skills base of this panel for future developments.

Financial Resources

The current and projected financial situation of the organisation is covered by [Section 10](#) and Appendix 10. These demonstrate a financially stable organisation with the ability to raise funds externally whilst preserving modest but healthy reserves. Project costs can be found in [Section 9](#).

To fund a project of this scale, almost all costs will be externally funded through grants from a wide range of bodies. There are several potential large heritage funders who are listed in [Appendix 9](#), along with some smaller organisations who may fund specific aspects of the work. Further research on grant giving bodies will be required and we may require bought-in expertise from consultants conversant with heritage and environment projects to identify the most appropriate potential sources.

In order to effectively manage the finances of the project it will be necessary to develop, or buy-in, expertise in areas such as project accounting and VAT, of which the organisation currently has no experience, although one of our trustees has a background in this type of work.

7. Asset

ADHA have used the building and adjacent land as a Heritage Museum (or Centre) since 1991. Its importance to the local community was recognised by the founders of the organisation, who wanted to

develop a record of farming and the heritage and rural life of the area. Having fulfilled this purpose for over 30 years, the site has now been awarded national listed building status by HES (see Appendix 1) and its collections are believed to be of national importance. It is therefore vital that the complete mart complex which includes the paddock is preserved for future generations.

In September 2021, an Expression of Interest (EOI) application was submitted for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the old Auction Mart building and adjoining field via a long-term lease of between 20-40 years or ownership.

ADHA have been responsible for the upkeep of the building since it opened in 1991, and have achieved this through volunteer labour, sponsorship and grant funding. The field was originally used by the Auction Mart, and subsequently by the Museum, for events. The continuing use of the field (currently by lease agreement) is a key asset to the Museum, it is used to hold the majority of our fund-raising activities such as the fairs as well as allowing agricultural displays and other outdoor events, we propose to allow occasional use by other local organisations when it is not being used by ourselves for events. The field will provide possible space for expansion as we hope to remove the current temporary storage in containers and replace it with a purpose-built store with workshop attached, it is also hoped to establish a small arboretum of Native Scottish trees and a picnic area for visitors in the field as well as retaining a green space in the middle of the village.

In their description of the Auction Mart building, HES advised: “The mart is adjacent to some later housing development, but the setting has not altered considerably since the early part of the 20th century. The large grassed area of ground to the west was initially used for additional cattle pens and display. The open ground and proximity to the former railway station are important aspects of the setting, demonstrating how the building was used, and contribute to the special interest under this heading.”

8. Risk Analysis

RISK	Probability 1=unlikely 5=very likely	Impact 1=minor 5=catastrophic	Mitigation	Notes/Possible Consequences
Asset transfer not progressed. No long lease in place	1	5	Continuous engagement and strong application request	Large funders unlikely to make grant offer
Unsuccessful grant applications e.g. from Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, trusts and foundations	3	5	Obtain feedback, build relationships with funders, and make further applications	Project could not proceed without full package of external funding
AHM not able to raise sufficient funding to match external funding applications	2	5	Seek specialist fund-raising skills	
AHM unable to scale up heritage activity and people outcomes.	2	4	Programme of attractive heritage activities to suit all categories of visitor	Large funders unlikely to make grant offer unless they see people outcomes and financial sustainability.

RISK	Probability 1=unlikely 5=very likely	Impact 1=minor 5=catastrophic	Mitigation	Notes/Possible Consequences
Organisation unable to identify how to significantly raise footfall and income	2	4	Listen to feedback from visitor experience and develop marketing strategy	Large funders unlikely to make grant offer unless they see people outcomes and financial sustainability.
Board members do not have a sufficient range of business or professional skills or capacity to manage project	3	4	Build capacity in the organisation through new board members, paid project support and advisory sub-group	Advisory sub-group already in existence.
Insufficient cohesion for board to move forward as a team.	3	4	Continuous board development and engagement	May not look “investment ready” to potential funders.
Unable to attract or retain volunteers	1	4	Continuous community engagement and activities to attract and retain volunteers	
Full building plans and permissions not approved	2	4	Obtain feedback, revise, and make further applications	
Organisation not strong enough to deliver the project including ongoing building conservation and maintenance	3	4	Build capacity in the organisation through new board members, paid project support and advisory sub-group	Large funders will not make grant offer
Fire (or other devastating) damage to wooden A-listed building	2	5	Appropriate insurance policy and avoid use of hazardous equipment. Regular inspection of electrical and fire safety equipment.	

9. Project Costs

Potential Project Costs and Possible Sources of Funding

Project costs in the following table are based on survey work, repair schedule, and concept designs prepared in 2023 by LDN Architects. Their feasibility study report forms Appendix 2. Indicative costs of these works were supplied by Morham & Brotchie Partnership (Appendix 8)

Potential large-scale funders and their expected outcomes are listed in [Appendix 9](#).

The table below shows the estimated project costs for fabric repairs and Option D improvements which are in the range of £4m. It is proposed to approach the project in two phases, with urgent repairs to the fabric of the building, drainage and services improvements as Phase 1. The Option D improvements would then follow as Phase 2. We believe this would allow sections of the museum building to remain open to the public, thus generating income, whilst other parts would be closed for several months.

Project Cost Summary for Capital Costs of Fabric Repairs & Option D Improvements

Reference	Description	Works	Amount	Total
A	Preparatory Works			£25,000
B	Builderwork	Fabric Repairs	£964,000	
		New Workshop & Store	£188,000	
		Option D - Alteration & Entrance Extension	£838,000	
		Option D - Thermal Upgrades	£546,000	
		Utilities	£72,000	
		Landscaping / Siteworks	£73,000	
		Inflation provision	£270,600	
		Builderwork Sub Total		£2,976,600
C	Professional Fees & Expenses	(allow 16%)		£476,256
D	VAT	Builder Work - 20%		£541,200
		Professional Fees - 20%		£95,251
		Total Estimated Project Cost:		£4,089,307
		(Rounded Total)		£4,100,000

In addition, there will be costs associated with staffing, collections storage, redisplay and reinterpretation. New furniture will also be required to complete the renovation work to an acceptable standard. To some extent these costs are more flexible with regard to funding, timescales and implementation, but should be added to the above capital costs.

Option D additional costs		
Project management (staff costs 2 years)	£40,000.00	to manage building project
Planning / warrants / legal fees	£15,000.00	
Decant/temporary storage	£15,000.00	
Racking and storage	£5,000.00	assume basic Dexion type
Collection care / redisplay costs	£10,000.00	
Soft furnishings, furniture etc	£10,000.00	chairs, white goods, reception desk
Post reopening activity budget 2 years (including staff costs)	£25,000.00	activity / events co-ordinator
Project evaluation	£10,000.00	required by funding bodies
Digital interpretation, digital resources and website	£10,000.00	
	£140,000.00	

It is assumed that there is no acquisition cost for the building.

Total project costs are therefore estimated to be **£4,240,000**

10. Financial Appraisal

Potential Sources of Sustainable/Trading Income

Following conservation and repair of the mart building, including improvements in volunteer and visitor facilities, we anticipate increased opportunities for income generation from, for example, venue hire. At this stage exact charges are not specified but will be affordable and in line with other local community venues.

Income streams will be as follows (note there is no provision within the project to operate a café):

- Admission fees
- “Friends” regular donations (as opposed to formal organisation membership which is free)
- Donations from visitors and members of public
- Activity and event entrance fees
- Hire out of meeting room
- Hire out of mart ring and heated space
- Charge for access to archives etc.
- Retail
- Sponsorship
- Government funded training, apprenticeships or subsidised work for young people (income from this source is not built into the cash flow as it is not currently in place).

Visitor Figure Projections 2023 – 2024

The figures in the table below represent both daily visitors paying the entrance fee and, from 2022, those attending additional paid or free events. Historical data pre-2022 relating to event attendance is not available, but events held in 2021 - 2023 were well supported, and the community survey indicates an appetite for an increase in events and activities which will substantially increase the figures given below. The programme for 2024 has been planned to include several large-scale income generating events.

After benchmarking other local attractions, ticket prices were raised for 2023 to increase income and are now:

Adult £7.50 Concession £6 Child £4 Family £20

For 2024 we have increased the cost per child for volunteer led pre-booked museum events (e.g. school visits) from £2 per child to £4 per child.

Full opening hours resumed post pandemic in 2022. More proactive marketing and engagement activities saw a dramatic increase of 53% in daily visitor numbers. The full event schedule for 2022 saw the total number of on-site visitors rise by 145%, with additional off-site outreach activity providing additional potential visitor interactions.

Visitor numbers for 2023 showed a modest increase of 7% which was more in line with our expectations. This is in line with national trends for 2023 as calculated by the Scottish Visitor Attraction Barometer (Glasgow Caledonian University) who stated in November 2023 *“the number of visits to Scottish attractions is up by 6.9% when comparing September 2023 with September 2019 (based on 539 comparable attractions)”*.

As part of our community engagement, we offered free and reduced entry to some of our storytelling and craft sessions for young families; outreach activities in care homes; and two free open days as part of national Doors Open Days. These free/reduced fee events explain why ticket income for 2023 has remained relatively static whilst visitor numbers have risen. However, an increase in donation monies received in 2023 has compensated for this, indicating that visitors appreciate efforts to keep activities affordable and value for money. These donations have not been included in the figures below, but the cash flow shows a healthy increase year on year. An increase in both admission income and donations must continue to be achieved from 2024 onwards to ensure sustainability.

Analysis of visitor numbers, admission prices and retail sales 2019 - 2025

YEAR	VISITOR NUMBERS		TICKET INCOME (incl. events from 2022)	RETAIL SPEND	AV. RETAIL SPEND / ADULT	TOTAL VISITOR INCOME (excludes donations)
2019	1445		£6,132	£1,427	£1.25	£7,559
2020	0		£0	£0	£0	£0
2021	1194	<i>Free entry in July Part year</i>	£2,225	£805	£0.95	£3,030
2022	1824 indoor 1154 outdoor	Daily admission up by 53%. Overall incl. events up by 145% No price increase	£11,956	£1,594	£1.94 (daily visitor) £1.15 (incl. indoor events)	£13,550
2023	2352 indoor 837 outdoor	Overall incl. events 7% increase. £1.50 price increase for adults	£11,542	£1,498	£1.59 (daily visitor) £1.13 (incl. indoor events)	£13,040
2024	2517 indoor 896 outdoor	<i>Projected 7% increase in visitors. No admission price increase. Review of event pricing. Projected 10% income increase.</i>	£12,350	£1,603	£1.63 (Based on 986 daily adult visitors)	£13,953
2025		<i>No increase forecast as building project commences.</i>	£12,350	£1,603	£1.63	£13,953

Income

The cashflow forecast ([Appendix 9](#)) covers 2021–2024 and is based on the actual figures from 2021-2023. The large surplus at the start is accounted for by several Covid related grant awards in 2020 which carried over into 2021. Figures for 2024 are projections based on 2023, with another 7% increase, and ‘business as usual’, prior to commencement of the renovation project.

The cashflow forecast shows the main sources of recurrent income for the organisation as:

- Project grants (restricted funds)
- Donations and sponsorship
- Entrance fees and event income
- Annual membership fees from Friends of the Museum
- Retail activities
- Gift Aid

In 2023 a new sponsorship scheme was successfully introduced and this has continued in 2024. Income from this scheme was used to offset the costs of, for example, printing the museum leaflet and paying the costs of concert musicians. Local businesses demonstrated that they are willing to support our activities.

In 2022 and 2023 the retail space and stock were upgraded prior to reopening. An analysis of retail sales took place and it showed that branded items related to the museum (such as fridge magnets and bags) were popular souvenirs. Locally produced goods such as CDs by local singers; Doric language books; and craft items made by museum volunteers also sold well. (Appendix 10) The range of retail goods was reviewed for both 2023 and 2024 and developed in line with the findings of this review.

It is anticipated that small grant opportunities will arise to cover some revenue costs, but projections have been conservative as these figures are unknown and not guaranteed.

The assumption is that project work begins at end of 2024 and so major capital costs from the tables in section 9 have not been included in the cashflow as these costs will occur in 2025 and 2026. With a phased approach to the project, part of the museum is likely to be closed for at least part of 2025 and 2026 with consequent drop in trading income. The cashflow figures assume some project start-up grant funding and planning work in 2024 with a focus on fundraising and preliminary legal and technical matters.

Expenditure

Historically one of the largest areas of expenditure has been repairs to the fabric of the building, together with maintaining statutory safety systems and insurance. The proposed project will carry out long-term remedial works to fabric of the building to a standard which should ensure its stability for the foreseeable future. The repairs budget should then be of a maintenance level which can be budgeted for in advance. It has always been the practice to hold funds in reserve to cover such ongoing repairs. The organisation's Finance Policy requires that we hold 12 months operating costs as reserves, currently £15,000.

Summary Cashflow Forecast 2021-2024

INCOME	2021	2022	2023	2024
Budget/actual?	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
Project Grants	13,522	1,500	15,820	47,000
Covid-19 Related Grants	30,147	4,146	0	0
Trading income - entrance fees	2,225	5,134	7,032	7,500
Trading Income - other	1,456	1,904	1,506	2,400
One off fundraising events	0	6,822	4,510	7,400
Membership Subscriptions	1,014	1,047	1,027	1,350
Donations/gifts	5,400	4,790	6,732	6,610

Bank Interest	25	0	0	5
Gift Aid	79	624	1,000	3,000
Recycling	114	124	63	180
Other	334	192	192	200
TOTAL INCOME	54,316	26,283	37,882	75,645
EXPENDITURE	2021	2022	2023	2024
Budget/actual?	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
Training	896	0	120	200
Volunteer Expenses	137	273	136	200
Rent	300	0	300	150
Rates	0	0	600	1,200
Heat/Light/Water	986	2,176	1,379	2,513
Insurance	2,244	2,404	1,262	4,200
Fire	314	582	524	700
Telephone & internet	867	696	727	800
Print/Post/Stationery	651	947	340	1,800
Subscriptions	20	196	316	50
Licences	99	0	266	99
Office equipment	2,854	1,460	154	800
Legal & Professional	0	0	1,030	9,000
Bank Charges	27	62	87	60
Consultants Fees	27,810	11,359	6,064	14,000
Marketing	416	520	640	1,000
Collections Care	165	328	1,693	10,200
Education	0	215	0	0
Display	478	460	740	0
Events	1,508	1,442	968	600
Maintenance/Repairs	32,574	2,287	273	7,050
Cleaning	795	1,281	900	1,050
Projects	5,154	103	19,208	9,000
Shop Stock	942	1,323	711	400
Miscellaneous	394	1,500	0	500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	79,631	29,614	38,438	65,572
BALANCE B/F	57,022	31,707	28,376	27,820
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	-25,315	-3,331	-556	10,073
BALANCE C/F	31,707	28,376	27,820	37,893

11. Marketing

The Board of Trustees recognise the importance of marketing and promotion of activities post-pandemic. Investment in part-time staffing for season 2023 was agreed as a first step towards a more proactive marketing and awareness raising campaign. This included organisation of a wide range of indoor and outdoor events which contributed to raising the profile of the museum. A suite of documentary templates, such as risk assessments, for future events is now in place.

In season 2022 we achieved good press and media coverage including a slot on BBC Radio Scotland Out of Doors. For season 2023 we built upon this and have used a blended approach to marketing using social media, press and media and in-person presence at other events in the local area. We also benefitted from advisory sessions from Business Gateway and Visit Aberdeenshire in the areas of digital presence and customer insights. Web sites, such as Enjoy Alford and Donside; Visit Scotland; Visit Aberdeenshire and the Art Fund, are used to promote events. We will continue to seek opportunities to work with other local attractions to identify shared and mutually beneficial marketing opportunities.

From season 2022 onwards a more structured approach has been taken to the collection of visitor data, demographics and performance indicators to monitor and evaluate the impact of our marketing and the services and activities we provide.

12. Conclusion

The Business Plan summarises the Alford Heritage Museum project and timescale for the building, including CAT, project development and capital works. During the last three years, the Trustees have shown their resilience, despite Covid pandemic, to realise significant first-step achievements and our financial reports demonstrate our ability to consistently maintain a surplus. External bodies at national level have also demonstrated their support for our plans with financial grant awards.

The project will benefit the communities of Alford and Donside. The repair and conservation of the mart building and site will preserve the historic structure as part of the heritage of the village Alford and the local area. Its recently recognised uniqueness makes its preservation of national importance. On completion, the project will also provide an additional local venue and meeting place, offering a range of activities to the local community and wider visitor base. Although accepting that there will be many challenges, we remain confident, with the guidance of the Business Plan, for full completion of the project in approximately five years' time.

13. AHM Contact Details

Alford Heritage Museum
3 Mart Road
Alford
Aberdeenshire
AB33 8BZ

Phone: 019755 62906

E-mail: info@alfordheritagemuseum.com



Visualisation of Option D with new entrance to building (LDN Associates, 2023)

14. APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Historic Environment Scotland Report (separate file attachment)

Appendix 2 – LDN Architects – Feasibility Study Report 2023 (separate file attachment)

[Appendix 3 – The Museum Collection](#) (attached)

Appendix 4 – ADHA SCIO Constitution (separate file attachment)

[Appendix 5 – Board Member and Volunteer Biographies](#) (attached)

[Appendix 6 – Options Appraisal Summary](#) (attached)

Appendix 7 – Community Survey (separate file attachment)

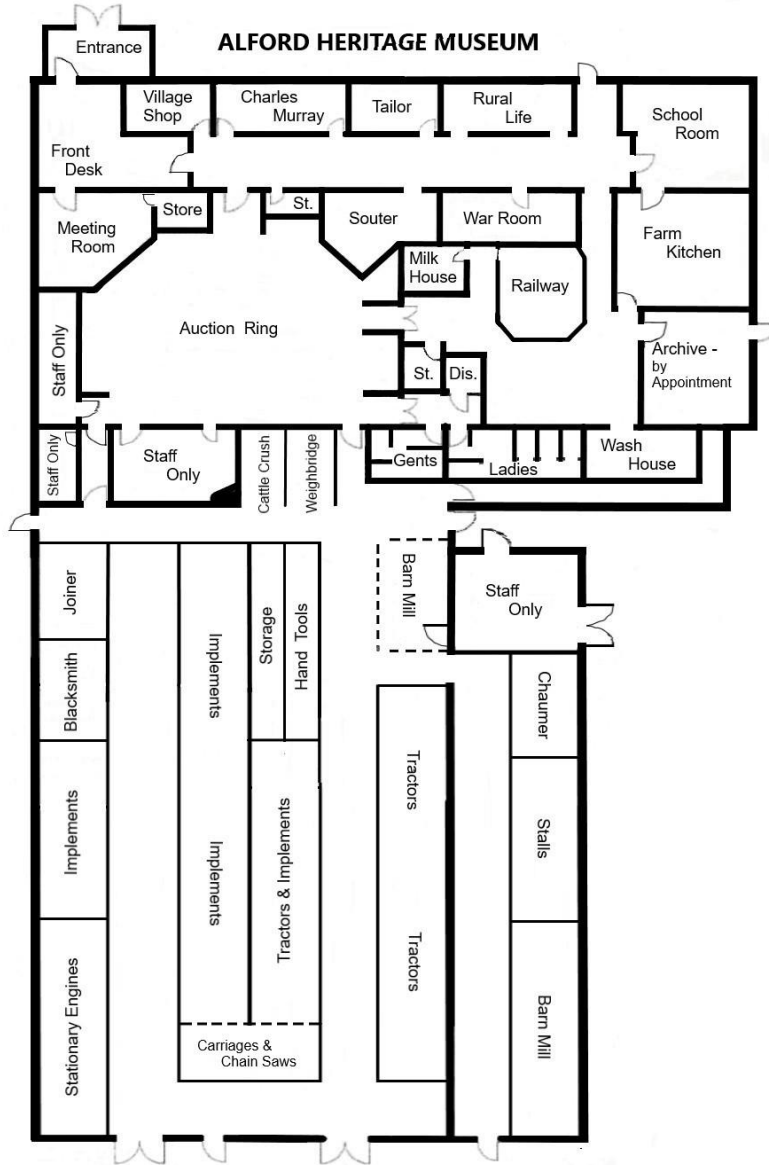
Appendix 8 – Morham & Brotchie Partnership Indicative Costs 2023 (separate file attachment)

Appendix 9 – [Summary of Potential Key Funders](#) (attached)

Appendix 10 – Cashflow Forecast (see separate attachment)

APPENDIX 3 - THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

The internal layout of the building and key themes of the collection are indicated in the plan below. The top section is the street frontage including the original auction ring and the offices of the agricultural merchants, now used to display various thematic areas of the collection including social history. The bottom half of the plan is the three bays of the original lairage (animal holding areas), now mainly used for the display of the larger items including agricultural tools and machinery.



The collection is not currently documented to recognised standards but work has begun to create an online inventory to Spectrum standards. Additional items are currently in external storage containers. Below is a brief outline of the scope of the collection, which is an important comparative collection of rural life in NE Scotland and beyond.

Where in Museum	What Items
Old Auction Mart building	Original mart building built 1905.

Where in Museum	What Items
External – front of building	c.1840s Waterwheel – working, with electric pump for water, from disused mill at Crathes, Banchory. Miscellaneous farm implements; stone cheese press.
Entry/Reception Area	Juke box; old clocks by front desk; display of Andrew Lawson (1834-1938), joiner, postman and inventor of the 1895 Craigievar Express steam vehicle, with his Imperial Service Medal awarded for forty years' service as postman.
Merchant's Corridor	Two late 19th–early 20th C. organs and an early 20th C. Aeolian pianola. Various items incl. old washtub and washing machine; pharmaceutical display (from Torphins chemist); collection of old horse harness. Doctor's desk and associated items. Display of Henry Gray (1929-2017) a local farmer, heavyweight and Highland Games athlete. Working model of trades and leisure activities. Weighing machine (W.&T. Avery, Glasgow), with height measure for people. Medical and pharmaceutical objects.
Village Shop	Traditional village shop, with packaging, old tills, weighing scales, telephone, stone jars, etc.
Charles Murray Room	Interpretation displays and photographs of 19th century local Doric poet, Charles Murray; Doric language and music.
Soutar (Shoemaker) Workshop	Shoemaking display - recreated workshop of Alexander Ingram (1902-1995) with collection of shoemakers tools and examples of work.
Tailor's Workshop	Recreated workshop of Tom Rearie (1896-1990) – history of shop and examples of textiles in early 20th C.
Rural Life	History of Aberdeen Angus cattle; display of Wm. McCombie of Tillyfour, farmer, Aberdeen Angus cattle breeder and dealer, and local M.P.; details of other local farms; trophies and medals from local agricultural and sporting events and Royal Highland Society. Horse brasses and small harness decorations. Football memorabilia, trophies and archives of Donside Summer Football League and Alford Curling Club. Memorabilia from Alford Round Table.
The Alford Royal Observer Corps Station	Reconstruction of underground ROC post with working air raid siren. Various items relating to World War II, incl. local Women's Land Army archive material, books, medals and photographs. Home Guard items.
Alcove in Corridor	History of Alford Project - incl. old maps of area, timelines of events, and growth of village displays. Samplers.
Schoolroom	Reconstruction of old 1930s village schoolroom. Collection of old Indian Exercise Clubs used by headmaster of Tullynessle School. Sterndale, early 20th century piano. Collection of school text books, wall charts and reading and arithmetic aids; games and school bags. Stove from Cairncoullie School. Log box.
Farmhouse Kitchen	Eclectic mix and match of kitchen farmhouse items up to 1950s. Recreated kitchen space for multiple activities, with Rayburn range and other cookers, kitchen equipment, sewing machines etc. Child's pram with doll.
Library and Archive	Library of books, not unique, however good collection of local ephemera and pamphlets; tractor manuals and advertising materials; local photographs etc.

Where in Museum	What Items
	<p>Agricultural journals; government agricultural advice pamphlets; sale catalogues from agricultural shows.</p> <p>Auction records and farm sale details from Alford Mart (Aberdeen & Northern Marts).</p> <p>Old maps of Alford area; Auchindoir estate; valuation roll.</p> <p>Archives of the Masson Family (farm near Elgin); Moir Family (Alford); Ross Family (Edinburgh and Lumsden); Donside Summer Football League; Alford Mart.</p> <p>Sound and video tapes and 45 rpm / 78 rpm records.</p>
Exhibition/Display Area	<p>General display area with model railway.</p> <p>Collections of various radios, and old local glass bottles.</p> <p>Display of models showing a harvest/threshing scene.</p> <p>Local Legends (local famous people) exhibition area.</p> <p>Display case with collection of cameras and photographic equipment.</p>
Wash-house	<p>Domestic items illustrating historical laundry practices from hand washing and ironing through to early washing machines.</p>
Dairy	<p>Examples of how milk was stored, transported, and processed in the domestic and farm setting.</p>
Auction Ring	<p>Original staged tiered seating around auction ring.</p> <p>Auctioneer's rostrum.</p> <p>Egg washing machine</p> <p>Spinning wheel, carding machine and treadle sewing machines</p> <p>Display of old paraffin stoves.</p> <p>Collection of old agricultural signs.</p> <p>Childrens' toys.</p>
Back Shed	<p>Chaumer (sleeping quarters for farm workers in north-east Scotland) from local farm.</p> <p>Old mart cattle weighbridge (Pooley of Birmingham). Original mart cattle crush.</p> <p>Bee keeping equipment.</p> <p>Lawnmowers (various).</p> <p>Threshing Mills (several examples all by local makers).</p> <p>Tractors – including Ferguson, Fordson, John Deere, David Brown.</p> <p>Horse carts/gigs.</p> <p>Hand Tools – selection of various old small hand tools associated with farming activities.</p> <p>Chainsaws.</p> <p>Stationary engines.</p> <p>Winnowing machines.</p> <p>Farming machinery attachments (various).</p> <p>Horse era implements and harness.</p> <p>Whitefield Smiddy - blacksmith's workshop with various examples of implements.</p> <p>Harper Joinery - joiner's workshop with various examples of implements.</p> <p>Various examples of items from local butcher's shop – sausage machine, bacon slicer, etc., and collection of weighing scales.</p> <p>Snowmobile; and Kayaks.</p>

APPENDIX 5 - TRUSTEE AND VOLUNTEER BIOGRAPHIES (November 2023)

TRUSTEES

John Christelow. John lives in Alford and has been a volunteer and trustee for just over a year. His background is in the civil service, mainly based around tax audit – VAT analysis and investigation. He is a collector of social history ephemera and enjoys researching the background to objects. He has previous committee experience with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust Committee.

Frances Dorow. Frances has been a volunteer at the museum for around eight years. Formerly a committee member, she is now responsible for managing the volunteer rota during opening hours. Frances has extensive experience of education, having taught in Scotland, Nigeria and Kenya. She also taught and examined English as a Foreign Language. She holds an MA in History and English and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education as well as additional language qualifications. Locally, Frances is a committee member of Alford and Donside Local History Group.

Keith Edmunds. Keith has been volunteering at the museum in varying capacities since 2021. He is a retired financial adviser and driving instructor; and prior to this had many years in the building industry, specialising in electrical installation and design, together with plumbing and joinery. He has spent some of his earlier years in Orkney, during which he had hands on use of some of the agricultural and domestic equipment and machinery currently on display in the museum. Keith has owned and sailed various boats, so enjoys being on, or under, the water. He is currently enjoying trekking in the beautiful local countryside and meeting the general public who visit the museum.

Brenda Glass. Brenda has been Involved with the Museum for at least eight years. She is currently Treasurer of the organisation and has held various posts in administration - mainly College of Agriculture, Aberdeenshire Council and various other part time posts with local Estates e.g. Castle Fraser and Monymusk Estate. Brenda describes herself as moderately conversant with most administrative and digital skills. Having lived in the Alford area for many years, she has many contacts with local organisations and people.

Dr Paul Lawson. Paul Lawson is an experienced commercial manager working in the energy sector. Prior to EnQuest, Paul worked at BP for over 30 years, as a chartered chemical engineer on global projects and latterly on the business side of the company. He is an experienced commercial negotiator with experience in developing business strategies and delivering negotiated agreements in complex scenarios.

Paul has recently stood down from the Board of the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford where he was Chair for four years spanning Covid and a period of significant change in staffing. Paul is a member of the steering committee for NEOS (North East Open Studios) and delivered the commercial strategy and selection process for delivery of a new website. Paul is a member of Rotary and enjoys volunteering opportunities. He joined the board of Alford Heritage Museum in 2024 although he was previously on the advisory panel.

Paul owns a couple of classic cars which he enjoys driving and tinkering with.

Thomas Jackson. Thomas has been a trustee for three years but has been visiting the museum for over 9 years. He has collected agricultural tools and implements since he was young, so has a good knowledge of agricultural objects with a special interest in implements of the horse era. Currently Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Thomas manages the agricultural collection and has been involved with setting up working days and events (mostly horse based) some of which have been at museums. He has been a volunteer at Grampian Transport Museum and has been involved helping run clubs and other organisations for over 40 years and also runs his own business.

Jill Noble. A retired professional librarian working with schools and the community, Jill has been involved with the museum for three years. She is a front desk volunteer and manages the retail aspect of the museum. Since 2022 Jill has led the small team offering children's storytelling and craft sessions. Jill has an MA degree. She is enjoying researching the history of her home and Haughton Estate to which it belonged until 1925. Other interests include visiting antiques auctions, gardening, walking and looking after her flock of chickens.

Dr Alan Rowe. Born in Hampshire Alan trained as a chemist, specialising in the structure of polymers. He gained his first and second degrees at Loughborough University.

He joined BP Chemicals Ltd in 1982 and undertook research. In 1984 to join Polymer Laboratories Ltd (PL), a high-tech start-up specialising in specialised measuring equipment. Here he was Product Manager for two of the company's lead products and led on development. Alan left PL in 1987 to join University of Warwick in their newly established Technology Transfer Office. Here he was responsible identifying and exploiting commercially important research from across the university. He was also responsible for developing and building relationships with key industrial and public sector groups and for promoting the role of universities in wealth creation. Amongst other duties he was a member of the Steering Group for management of West Midlands EU Objective 2 Regional Development Fund and representative for the University on a number of EU Working Groups on innovation including the creation of the European Consortium of Entrepreneurial Universities and EU- Latin America initiatives on innovation and economic development.

Alan moved to Aberdeen in 1999 to become Chief Executive Officer of Rowett Research Services Ltd, the commercial arm of the Rowett Institute. Here he quickly transformed the company from a low value-added service provider to an added value developer of technology in the food, drink and life sciences. Alan negotiated and secured technology licenses and exploitation agreements with a wide range of UK and international producers, manufacturers and retail companies. He was responsible for the creation of six new companies and provided essential business training and Directorial support to academic colleagues to successfully launch and run businesses. Four remain active and have grown either to Stock Market listings or have been acquired by global players.

Following the merger of Rowett with The University of Aberdeen Alan continued his entrepreneurial role as a specialist Food and Drink Innovation Ambassador for the wider university. He also developed the wider role that research must play in economic development, especially in the agri-food sector. He worked closely with Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise and was involved in fact finding reviews of European best practice in the sector. He was a key figure in the pioneer £5M Food and Health Innovation Service, a joint Scottish Enterprise / Highlands Enterprise initiative to encourage economic diversification. In 2007 he became a founding Director of Scotland Drink, the sector leadership and strategy organisation. He was SF&D lead for Innovation from 2009 to 2019. From 2015 -2019 Alan was Food and Drink

sector lead for SEFARI, a Scottish Government initiative to promote wider uptake of agri-food research in the public and private sector.

Alan is a past Director of the Genomia Seed Fund, a Scottish based seed and early-stage investment fund supporting start-ups and young companies in the life sciences and agri-food sectors.

Alan was a Director for Opportunity North East (ONE) Agri Food Board from 2015 -2019. ONE is a public-private partnership created to promote economic development and diversification in North East Scotland. Since 2019 he has been a director and innovation advisor for ONE Seedpod Ltd, a £20M project to create a business incubator and innovation hub in Aberdeen for start-up and young food and drink companies. The 2000 Sq M facility with 12 business units is currently under construction and due to open early 2025.

Alan retired from full time work in 2019 but has continued his consultancy interests, advising smaller companies on innovation. He is active in the Men's Shed movement, promoting better physical and mental health and is a Trustee of Alford Men's Shed. He is a regular volunteer at Alford Heritage Museum, working mainly on conservation and restoration of larger exhibits. He is also developing the Museum's Social Media platform.

Alan lives with his wife Eleanor in Alford and has two fully grown children. The rest of his time is spent walking with their four dogs and with a wide range of craft projects including wood carving, weaving and drawing. He has a thirst to learn new things. He also enjoys travel, music of all forms and reading.

CO-OPTED TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS

Jenny Brown was, until recently, Lead Curator, History, at Aberdeen City Council, Museums & Galleries, responsible for their local history collections. She has previously worked at Beamish open air museum. She is acting as our mentor with regard to collections management and possible registration for museum accreditation and is now studying for a PhD with National Museums Scotland.

William Lippe

Chartered architect (retired 2023)

B Sc hons arch, Dip Arch RIAS majored in history of architecture

4 year's experience in local authority followed by 40 years in private practice working on a diverse range of projects from inception through to completion, including extensions, refurbishments, new build residential, industrial and commercial , offshore accommodation , housing developments for major developers in UK

Numerous projects involving conservation areas, in Oldmeldrum and Aberdeen as well as many listed buildings including:

Aberdeen Northern Hotel A listed.

Tivoli Theatre A listed.

The Stables, Keithhall Estate B listed.

Meldrum House Hotel A and B listed.

Thainstone House Hotel A listed.

Manar Home Farm B listed.

plus many C listed projects

Bob Powell. Bob is a graduate of Sheffield University (Prehistory and Archaeology Hons) but his principal interest is historic agriculture. Latterly he worked at the Highland Folk Museum at Kingussie starting as Assistant Curator in 1997 before becoming Curator and Highlife Highland Principal Museums Officer before taking retirement in 2014. Prior to this he was Curator at the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum for 7 years. He is an expert on the working horse, it's use and the customs associated with it and has been involved with museums for the whole of his career. He continues his interest as a member of the Rural Museums Network, the International Association of Museums of Agriculture and the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums.

He has written over 200 publications ranging from articles to books primarily agricultural including on Working horses, The Womans Land Army and antique farm equipment.

Jim Young is a key member of the working group supporting the renovation project. With a career background at management level in the building and construction industry, he brings additional expertise as a Board Adviser. He is currently also a Trustee of Grampian Transport Museum.

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF VOLUNTEERS

Sandra Collett. Sandra recently moved to Alford and decided she would like to volunteer in the Museum. She has previously volunteered in a Heritage Museum in a village in Dumfries and Galloway, but it was extremely small in comparison. Although she doesn't have specific museum skills, she is practical and always willing to help where I can. Being fairly sociable she enjoys working on the front desk and helping at any social events. She also helps to maintain and clean exhibits and displays around the museum. She says, "I've been made very welcome and it's an amazing Museum".

Val Lyons. Val has been volunteering at Alford Heritage Museum since 2017 - mostly at reception, which has been almost a continuation of pre-retirement employment with health services. Val enjoys explaining to visitors that there is a wealth of exhibits which appeal to farmers, housewives, children, and railway enthusiasts as there is something for everyone to enjoy. She has a background in admin and has also done local history and family history research which comes in useful if visitors have questions about local names and places. Her Genealogy Group hosted an exhibition in 2014 about the Alford Valley Railway and its influence on the village and its development, and this is a good knowledge to have if questions are asked. She enjoys meeting people and can sympathise when they find familiar items from their past (and current use) that qualify as "museum exhibits"! Most visitors are very complementary about their time at the museum and she has some great chats with encouragement to pass on their visitor experience to friends and relatives.

APPENDIX 6 - OPTIONS APPRAISAL SUMMARY

Options	Commentary	Outcome
Do nothing	The Ryden report signalled need for significant repairs to mart within 2-5 years. Risk of building becoming unusable or unsafe for public use and risk of water ingress affecting collection. Risk of general decline, including inability to recruit more Trustees and volunteers, threatening ability to manage the museum and to raise income from supporters and visitors.	Ruled out.
Hand back building to Council and walk-away from collection	Does not achieve aims or deliver care for significant building and significant collection. In any event collection is not owned by Council.	Ruled out.
Move collection somewhere else	The collection closely relates to the previous operation of the mart and the lives of the surrounding farming community. This was the original aim of ADHA. Inseparable.	Keep collection and building together.
Address building deterioration by small scale fundraising and continued patching	Advice received indicated it would become difficult to raise ever increasing grant funds for patching in the absence of a coherent plan for building conservation and repair.	Need to plan and fundraise for overall conservation and repair project.
Conservation and repair of only part of the building	No obvious way to phase remaining repairs; likely to require full decant in any event; cross-building works needed e.g. roof repairs, wooden timber treatment and repair. Partial project would make it difficult to achieve the steps changes required in visitor numbers, engagement and people outcomes.	Need single coherent project including conservation and repair of whole building.
New extensions to building creating meeting rooms and other visitor facilities	Examined and rejected on ground of capital cost and existence of public meeting spaces elsewhere in Alford.	Stay within existing footprint of building (apart from re-modelling of front entrance).
Carry out significant interior developments to create warm multi-purpose public space for income generation purposes	Currently difficult to heat large or multiple spaces (auction ring and back shed) without excessive energy usage. Listed building will limit potential change to character of building. General purpose heated space required in Museum for activities, groups and exhibitions. This was the Trustees' preferred option.	Plan identifies one main area to create warm space for volunteers, meetings and school or community activities. This would mean that some year-round use of museum would become possible. Also consider space heating for events in the historic auction ring.

APPENDIX 9 - SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL KEY FUNDERS

This section gives examples of some of the potential key funding organisations and their relevant grant streams. Further research for relevant grants will be required and we are likely to require bought-in expertise from consultants conversant with heritage projects to identify the most appropriate potential sources.

1. ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE FUND

In 2022 the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) awarded us their maximum Project Viability Grant of £10,000. Our intention is to apply to this body again to enable us to take the project to the next stage.

Project Development Grant - £15,000 - £40,000

The AHF can provide grants to help with assessing the viability of a project, or to help fund development costs for historic building related regeneration projects based in Scotland.

The Project Development Grant (PDG) scheme is intended to assist an organisation to cover some of the costs of developing and co-ordinating a project and taking it towards the start of work on site.

To qualify, an organisation must have established that the end use of the project is likely to be viable and have decided to take the project forward.

[Architectural Heritage Fund - Scotland Grant Programmes](#)

2. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT GRANTS PROGRAMME

Historic Environment Grants Programme (HEG) can support a wide range of projects which clearly relate to and will benefit Scotland's historic environment. We are likely to apply for their Large Grants Fund.

To be eligible, all projects will need to:

- clearly relate to a Scottish historic environment asset (tangible or intangible);
- be able to demonstrate how they will contribute to HES Grants Priorities
- offer good value for money;
- be able to demonstrate that they are deliverable;
- have not started (unless discussed and agreed by HES Grants Team); and
- not already be funded by a City Heritage Trust or through any of our other funding programmes.

Projects that can be supported through the HEG programme should be focussed on an aspect of Scotland's historic environment, from the tangible (e.g. historic buildings, ancient monuments and archaeology, designed or cultural landscapes and historic gardens and battlefields) to the intangible (e.g. historic environment skills, stories and traditions).

There are three different funding streams under the Historic Environment Grants (HEG) which are:

- Express Grants (£1,000 to £25,000)
- Small Grants (£25,001 to £100,000)
- Large Grants (£100,001 to £500,000)

Grants in excess of £500,000 may also be considered.

[Historic Environment Scotland Grants Programme](#)

3. NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND – GRANTS FROM £10,000 TO £10 MILLION

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's 10-year strategy, [Heritage 2033](#), sets out their ambitions to make a decisive difference for people, places and communities as they invest an anticipated £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players over the next decade.

The long-term strategy is supported by three-year delivery plans, setting out how the aims of the strategy will be delivered. These will allow taking a flexible approach, adapting to heritage sector needs and responding to external events or opportunities over the 10 years.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future.

The four investment principles which guide all their decision making are:

- [Saving heritage](#): conserving and valuing heritage, for now and the future.
- [Protecting the environment](#): supporting nature recovery and environmental sustainability.
- [Inclusion, access and participation](#): supporting greater inclusion, diversity, access and participation in heritage.
- [Organisational sustainability](#): strengthening heritage to be adaptive and financially resilient, contributing to communities and economies.

Projects they fund must take all four investment principles into account in their applications.

[National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

4. THE WOLFSON FOUNDATION

Usual Grant range: £15,000 - £100,000

The Wolfson Foundation supports organisations managing sites of outstanding historic, architectural and cultural significance and that have a clear emphasis on public access and engagement. They award grants towards conservation and restoration work, interpretation, and education spaces.

Applicable sites should:

- be a registered charity or a local authority
- be open and accessible to the public for the majority of the year, with a reasonable number of visitors. They appreciate COVID-19 continues to affect visitor numbers and understand the environment for many public sites has changed.
- be listed as:
 - Grade I, II* or a Scheduled Monument (England and Wales)
 - Category A, B or a Scheduled Monument (Scotland)
 - Grade A, B+ or a Scheduled Monument (Northern Ireland).

When they receive a high level of interest in this programme, they will prioritise applications from sites which are listed as Grade I, Category A, Grade A or a Scheduled Monument.

Projects should involve one or more of the following elements:

- restoration or conservation work to the historic fabric of the building
- excellent interpretation of historic buildings, landscapes and collections and also have at least one of the following aims:
- increased numbers of visitors to historic sites
- better public engagement with and understanding of sites of historical and cultural significance
- improved future sustainability of the organisation.

[The Wolfson Foundation - Funding for Historic Buildings & Landscapes](#)

5. MUSEUMS GALLERIES SCOTLAND

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) is the national development body for Scotland's museums and galleries. They support museums through strategic investment, advice, workforce development and advocacy. Their funding would be unlikely to support the capital works but could assist with Option D improvements. It is probable that the museum would be required to register on their accreditation scheme to access many of their funds.

Their criteria for grant awards are measured against a set of six outcomes which will lead to improvements for museums. These are:

- Outcome 1 – Funded organisations will be more resilient.
- Outcome 2 – Funded organisations will be more environmentally sustainable.
- Outcome 3 – Collections will be better cared for and managed and more accessible.
- Outcome 4 – The museum workforce will be more skilled, confident and diverse.
- Outcome 5 – A wider range of people will be engaging with and represented in museums.
- Outcome 6 – Museums will enhance quality of life for people by improving wellbeing, supporting learning, and contributing to place-making.

[Homepage - Museums Galleries Scotland](#)

6. OTHER FUNDERS

We would approach a range of smaller funders throughout the project, such as the Pilgrim Trust; Garfield Weston Foundation; MacRobert Trust (Local Community); Aberdeenshire Council (Marr Area); local business concerns, both large and small; and environmental funders, including landfill and windfarm funds.