

BCT UPDATE

Birse Community Trust

ISSUE 2 DECEMBER 1999

Progress to Report ...

BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST, BCT, has now been fully up and running for nine months as a new community enterprise "to promote the common good of the inhabitants of Birse parish and deliver wider public benefits".

The Trust has been very busy since the first issue of BCT Update in June. Amongst an expanding number of other initiatives, BCT is now involved in managing over 500 ha (1,250 acres) of native pinewood, three water mills, 12 ha (30 acres) of community woods, a school wood and the area around the parish War Memorial.

The Trust is managing these sites and its other projects to produce benefits for the local community. Everyone on the Electoral Registers for Birse parish is a member of BCT and, as the voting membership, responsible for electing the Trustees who run BCT on behalf of the community.

BCT's approach is to develop and implement projects that address local issues and capitalise on local opportunities. The early focus on woodland related projects reflects that the impetus to establish BCT came from the need to safeguard ancient shared rights over the extensive Forest of Birse Community and to secure the management of the native pinewoods there.

The Trust's role as a community company is distinct from, but

complementary to, the role of the Finzean, Ballogie and Birse Area Community Associations that cover the parish. They represent the democratic views of the community. BCT will therefore always be guided by the issues identified by them and work in full partnership with them over all its projects.

BCT is a company limited by guarantee, a recognised Scottish charity (SC28220) and also a government approved Local Rural Partnership.

The Trustees elected at BCT's inaugural AGM in February are: Reverend Jack Holt (Chair), Robert Dinnie, Alison Farquharson, Ken Hall and Liz McConnach. The Trust's part time manager is Robin Callander.

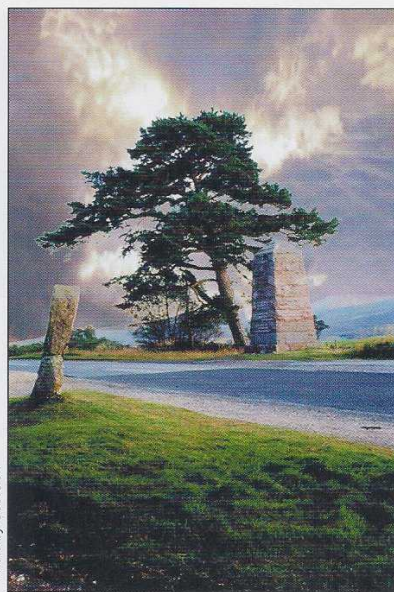


Photo by ScotGen

A spectacular perspective on the Corsedarder War Memorial with the ancient Dardanus Standing Stone in the foreground (see page 2).

Chairman's Welcome

'OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW'. A remark full of significance for BCT as we approach the new millennium.

The historic settlement for the millennium over the ancient rights in the Forest of Birse Community has enabled BCT to access Millennium Forest grants and to take forward the types of community projects described in this newsletter.

And as a new concept in the parish – still less than a year old at the time of writing – BCT continues to build its relationships with its members and other local groups to work with them for the common good in the new millennium.

The Birse Millennium Stone to be dedicated on Corsedarder on 1st January 2000 will be a symbol around which the community can gather, it unites our gratitude and remembrance of the old with our hopes and dreams for the new age to come.

Reverend Jack Holt



Photo by Derek Ironside Photography

BCT Chairman, the Reverend Jack Holt (right) with Cairngorms Partnership Chairman Ian Grant at Finzean Sawmill. Speaking at BCT's public launch in June, Ian Grant said "BCT provides a model of the type of community enterprise and achievement that the Cairngorms Partnership wants to see throughout the Cairngorms".