



# BCT UPDATE

## Birse Community Trust

ISSUE 12

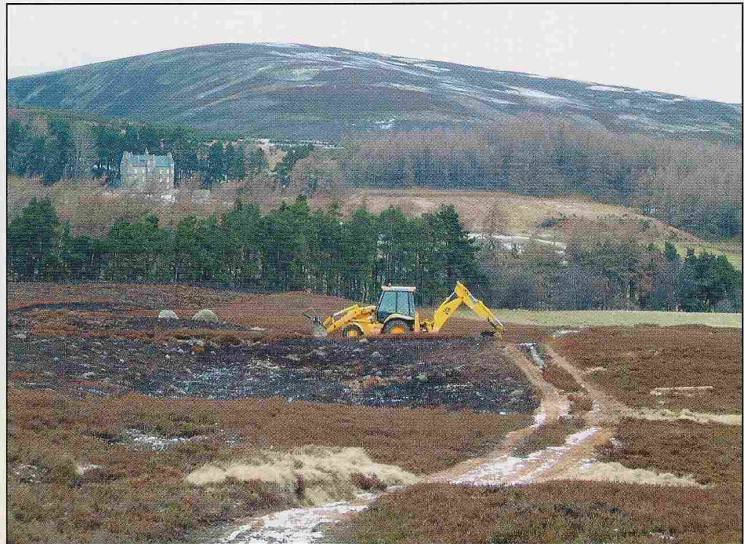
Spring 2005

### Fungle Repairs

In January, BCT started work on repairs to the Fungle, the historic route between Deeside to the Angus Glens that passes through the Forest of Birse. The Fungle was once amongst the main Mounth crossings and used for cattle droving and other trade and travel.

This major project to improve the route for walkers is funded by the Eastern Cairngorms Access Project and involves the 4.5 kilometres of the Fungle south of Balloch Farm to the watershed with Angus. Some of the lower sections of the route have needed to be entirely reconstructed. However, most of the work on these lengths has been fairly straightforward repairs to existing land rover tracks, particularly drainage improvements.

At the head of the Glen where the route rises steeply to the watershed at the county boundary, the task is more challenging. Over the years, the line of the original narrow cart-track had become extremely hard to see or follow and as a result, walkers have had to more or less find their own way across very difficult terrain. However, as part of this project, the original line has been re-located and a detailed survey and path design report produced. The work to



Looking north along the Fungle towards Birse Castle.  
Photo © John Addy

restore this section is scheduled for summer 2005 and will be carried out for BCT by specialist upland path contractors using similar techniques to recent path projects in the Cairngorms.

In all the work on the Fungle, BCT is taking care to achieve as 'light' a touch as possible to minimise any visual or other environmental impacts.

### BCT

BCT exists "to promote the common good of the inhabitants of Birse parish and deliver wider public benefits".

Everyone on the Electoral Registers for the parish is a member of BCT and responsible for electing the Trustees who run BCT on behalf of the community. The Trust is a limited company, Scottish charity (SC28220) and government approved Local Rural Partnership.

The Trust has been going 6 years and undertakes a wide range of projects on behalf of the local community. BCT's role in developing and implementing projects as a community business complements the roles of the local Community Associations and Community Councils that cover the parish. BCT is guided by the issues identified by them and works in full partnership with them on its projects.



Capercaillie.

Photo © Desmond Dugan.

### Capercaillie in Birse Parish

Capercaillie are one of Scotland's endangered bird species and Birse Parish remains an important area for them. In February, BCT hosted a seminar on the conservation of capercaillie in the parish.

The event was jointly organised with the RSPB and attended by around 30 participants. These included representatives from Finzean, Birse and Ballogie Estates, Forestry Commission Scotland and BCT, all of which are now involved in land management projects to promote the conservation of capercaillie locally. BCT has, for example, recently felled non-native species from a stand of old pine in Balfour Wood and created brush piles as ground cover.

BCT's work on capercaillie conservation is just one of the projects of BCT's Natural Heritage Group. If you would like to be involved, please contact the BCT office.



One of the Site Visits.

Photo © David Bale. SNH.

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