

## Birse Kirk and Hall

It is now over a year since BCT successfully purchased Birse Kirk and Church Hall on behalf of the community. BCT and the Birse Area Community Association have recently completed the improvement scheme to the Hall grounds which included tarring the access road, a new road end sign and creating a link to the graveyard.

At the same time, the Ecumenical Trust for Birse Kirk, which leases the Kirk from BCT, continues to make very positive progress in its conservation and use of this historic church.



Timber for the Mills being extracted recently from the Commonly Pinewoods. Photo © W Bailey

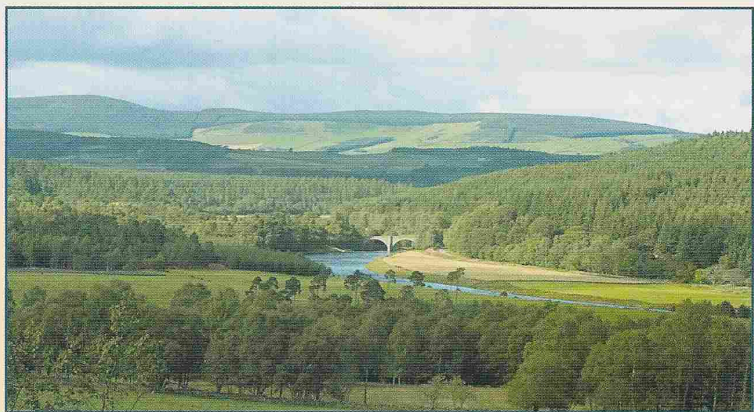
## Annual Reception

In November, over 40 people attended the BCT Trustees' Annual Reception for those most closely involved in working for the Trust and representatives of the Trust's main partners. In a short address at the Reception, Councillor Peter Argyle (below) noted that "BCT is widely recognised as an excellent model" and praised BCT's Trustees and those working for BCT for all that they have achieved despite the difficulties of obtaining core funding and meeting all the other challenges involved in running community bodies like BCT.



## Slewdrum Forest

BCT's community backed project to buy Slewdrum Forest received a major boost in November when the Scottish Executive Minister Lewis MacDonald singled out BCT for mention at the launch of the National Forest Land Scheme. It is now hoped that BCT's purchase of Slewdrum will be the first project under this Scheme when it becomes operational this summer and that it will then be possible to secure all the local benefits that could result from bringing this former local common into community management.



View from Slewdrum Forest towards Potarch Bridge.

Photo © W Bailey

## Cultural Heritage Archive

Major progress continues to be made with BCT Cultural Heritage Project based at the Archive at Finzean Old School. A number of parts of the Project have been completed including: a computer database for the Archive collections; Catalogues of the contents of Birse Kirk and the Bucket Mill; an Inventory of the Historic Buildings in the parish; a map based record of all the recorded archaeological sites in the parish and an archaeological survey of Glenat.

Work still in progress includes a Local Placename Study; developing a Collection of Birse Music, Songs and Poetry; research into the Forest of Birse and Slewdrum Commonities and producing a History of Birse Kirk.



Birse Kirk.

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