

## Commonty Pinewoods

In the last six months, BCT has completed two major improvements on the North Hill of the Forest of Birse Commonty.

In the spring, 6,500 native broadleaved trees grown from local seed were planted as part of BCT's on-going programme to restore more broadleaves to the Commonty Pinewoods.

Over the summer, BCT also upgraded 3 kilometres of track on the North Hill. This is a major step in BCT's longstanding plan to tackle all of the 7.5 kms (4.6 miles) of tracks in use on the North Hill when BCT took over managing the area in 1999. At that time, all the tracks were in very poor condition and eroding badly in many places.

BCT has been working in stages since then, re-making each length of track to give them a good surface and adequate drainage. This stops further environmental damage and makes the tracks useful for management purposes, including deer control, fire protection and tree planting.

Most of the tracks are traditional routes across the hill associated with the area's history as the Forest of Birse Commonty and the improvements by BCT also provides a good network of paths on the North Hill for walkers.

BCT's work to upgrade the tracks started in 2001/02 with the 2 kms from the Bogturk Bridge on the Forest of Birse road up to Corriebeg. In 2003, BCT then upgraded another kilometre by doing the track down the east side of the Finlets. This summer, BCT has done the 3 kms of the West Bogturk track from the Forest of Birse road at Auchbrack up to Lamahip and along the back of the Bogturk area to join up with the previously upgraded track at Corriebeg.

The work has all been carried out for BCT to a very high standard by James Reid, who is exceptionally skilled with his JCB. The



Photo © Robin Callander

final 1.5 kms length that needs to be improved to complete BCT's track work on the North Hill, is the link between the West Bogturk track and the hill road between Balloch and Glencat. BCT hopes to do this final section in 2008.

## Wet Summer – a blessing for some!

Normally the water-powered sawmill at Finzean is unable to operate from approximately May to September each year because the water flow in the River Feugh is not strong enough to produce sufficient power through the water-wheel to the sawbench. The heavy rainfall this summer has meant that it has been possible to keep the Mill working to process several large & small orders. David Duncan, who operates the sawmill, has said that he cannot remember seeing so much sawn timber stacked outside the mill during summer months.

## Brownies at the Bucket Mill

Aboyne Brownies, who have recently been working for a Cultural Heritage badge, paid a visit to the Finzean Water-powered Mills. They were shown the water-wheel and machinery of the Saw Mill and Turning Mill and the way in which water from the River Feugh powered the machinery was explained. After learning the secret of the "magic porridge spurtle", they followed the walkway from the Saw Mill to the Bucket Mill where they then saw the stages of preparing and assembling the parts which go into creating a pine wood bucket. Before returning to Aboyne, the Brownies and Leaders had a quick picnic while the Finzean midges tried to join in the fun.



### Tae The Soup Kitchen

Fae aw the airts the wind did blaw  
An' rain an' hail an' sleet an' snaw  
Till Doug Gray an' his team o' helpers  
Biggit BCT this fine big shelter  
Nae mair the door blawn tae the wa'  
An' in the toilet drifts o' snaw  
This porch in good auld Deeside style  
Will proudly staud fur mony a while

**A poem written in appreciation of the work of those involved in building a porch on to "The Soup Kitchen" at the Old School has been framed and displayed there.**

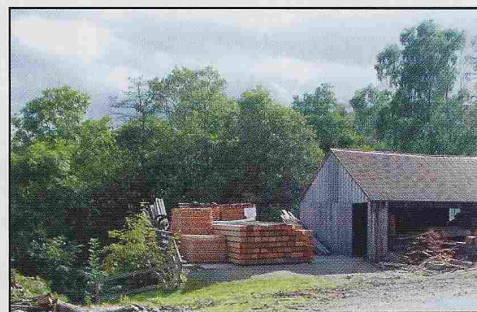


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