



BIRSE TRADING COMPANY – A PROGRESS REPORT

The last three months have been extremely busy as we worked towards satisfying a recent legal requirement that all commercial timber operations in Slewdrum must be leased to a third party, on a commercial basis and at full market rent.

In order to ensure compliance with this edict, BCT will lease the whole of Slewdrum to a Trading Company, while retaining the power as landlord to resume control of the land if necessary.

We are pleased to report that a good deal of progress has been made in satisfying the requirement and the key milestones in forming the Trading Company are summarised as:

- The appointment of three Directors to manage the Trading Company – Brian Page, Chairman (and BCT Trustee Representative); Christine Wright (Finance Manager) and Dr Paul Chapman (Environmental Protection).
- A Memorandum and Articles of Association Document has been formally approved.
- A Certificate of Incorporation of a Private Limited Company has been lodged at Companies House in Edinburgh.
- The terms and conditions of a Lease between BCT and the Trading Company have been agreed and await formal approval from our Solicitors.
- BCT has been issued with and are the registered holders of Trading Company Share Certificates.
- The Registrar has agreed that the Trading Company's Accounting Reference date is 31st December annually.

The really good news is that having achieved our immediate objectives in forming the company, the Directors have appointed Irvine Ross of the Ross Partnership as our Consultant and Site Manager. This has enabled Irvine to send out Invitations to Tender for the sale of standing timber on our behalf.

In addition, we have developed a 10 year overview plan and for the first two years, our priority activities will be - clearing fallen trees, commercial thinning, re-stocking areas, signage, safe access, shared track use, way-marked routes and deer management; during the course of which, close cooperation will be maintained between the Trading Company and Forestry Commission Scotland.

Unfortunately we learn that there are yet further delays in the availability of forestry grants and the latest word from Forestry Commission Scotland is that new Land Management Contracts are unlikely to be open to applications until the spring of 2008, subject to approval by the EU.

However, despite all the setbacks - we are, as they say, 'in business'. As Chairman, I would like to pay tribute to the dedication of my fellow Directors and in particular to Robin Callander for his persistence in overcoming numerous legal and administrative problems.



Front row from left Paul Chapman, Donald Silcock (BCT Chairman) and Christine Wright.
Back row from left Brian Page and Steven Lindsay (BCT Trustee)

School Wood Extension



In the Spring of 2007, work began on preparing the area of ground prior to tree planting. As some trees became available shortly thereafter, these were planted out, staked and enclosed in protective tubes. In the next phase some wild cherry and willow trees will be purchased and each class at Finzean Primary School will be given the opportunity to plant one to complete the work.

Remembering the Fallen from Birse Parish

A special trip was undertaken in September by Doug & Betty Gray of Finzean. Carrying with them information about the names of the men from Birse who died and are buried in war graves or mentioned on memorials in France, Germany & Belgium, they visited each location and photographed gravestones and memorial panels. Included in their itinerary was the ceremony which takes place every evening at the Menin Gate in Ypres. It was a very poignant moment when they arrived at the grave of Corporal John Gordon at Mendingham Military Cemetery in Poperinge, Belgium and realised that it was exactly 90 years to the day when John died on 5th September 1917. Doug & Betty have donated their photographs and information to BCT Cultural Heritage Archive. We hope to produce it as a booklet in the near future.

