

This year's local meeting at Finzean Old School about management to conserve capercaillie in Birse parish.

Forest of Birse Commonty

BCT works together with Ballogie, Birse and Finzean Estates on a number of land management topics. An example of this is the very positive local cooperation to try and conserve the parish's populations of capercaillie and black grouse.

BCT and Ballogie, Birse and Finzean Estates each manage extensive and expanding areas of native pine woodland that are good for caper and black grouse and which can be made more suitable habitat by appropriate management. In November, BCT and the Estates held their annual meeting to discuss this. Representatives of three public agencies and the RSPB also attend these meetings to share information about the caper and black grouse populations and how local management could be further improved to support them.

In the coming weeks, BCT plans to thin the trees on the south side of Forest of Birse road just before the road reaches the Forest of Birse Kirk car park. This



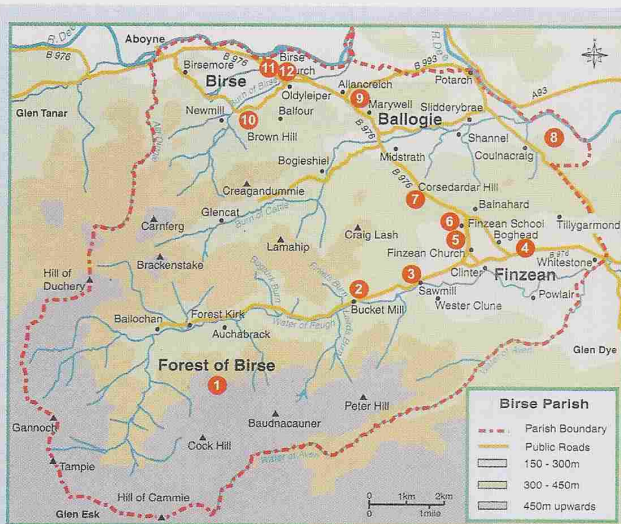
This area of expanding native pinewood in Birse parish includes areas managed by Finzean Estate, Ballogie Estate and BCT respectively.

small area (1 ha.) of non-native conifers was planted on the Commonty in 1964. The trees are very spindly because they have never been thinned before and the operation will be difficult because the trees are on a steep slope. The location is also very exposed and the trees left after the thinning may snap or blow over. If this happens, BCT will clear the remaining conifers and allow the site to regenerate naturally.



Finzean Community Woods:

There was a good turn out for BCT's bat and moth night in the Woods in July. This event, other surveys and recording by local residents have shown that the Woods support a rich diversity of wildlife, including a number of rare species.



Birse Parish covers over 125 sq.kms. (50 sq.mls.) of Mid Deeside. The four main parts of the parish are the three local communities of Finzean, Ballogie and Birse and the largely uninhabited Forest of Birse. The total population is nearly 750 in around 280 households, with half of the parish's population and households in Finzean.

BCT is directly involved in managing twelve sites in Birse parish on behalf of the community. The sites are marked on the map and the legal basis of BCT's involvement in each is listed below.

1. **Forest of Birse Commonty**, ancient rights (> 3,750 ha.)
2. **The Bucket Mill**, ownership
3. **Finzean Sawmill**, ownership
4. **Finzean Community Woods**, long term lease (15 ha)
5. **Finzean School Wood**, long term lease (< 1 ha)
6. **Finzean Old School**, ownership
7. **Corsedarder**, long term lease (< 1 ha)
8. **Slewdrum Forest**, ownership (168 ha.)
9. **Ballogie Soutar's Shop**, ownership (building only)
10. **Balfour Wood**, long term agreement (241 ha)
11. **Birse Community Hall**, ownership
12. **Birse Kirk**, ownership