

# BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

## Minutes of Board Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Trustees: Jean McLeod (Chair), Doug Boyle, Anita Stutter, John Hector;  
Apologies: Jonathan Kitching  
In Attendance: Robert Dinnie (Patron), Jane Winton (Book-keeper), Robin Callander (Adviser), Rick Paul (Secretary to Board);

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Agenda was confirmed, one apology noted and two items noted for AOB.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting

The Minutes of Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 were approved and signed.

### 3. Matters Arising from Last Minutes

3 (3.1) Old School: It was noted the fire safety check has been done for December

3 (6.4) Old School Roof Repairs: It was noted that the work had been done by Denis Welch and confirmed that his invoice matched the quote.

6.1 Finzean Community Woods: It was noted that RC had sent an email and map to Finzean Estate about the area of woodland east of the Finzean Hall car park.

6.4 Corsedardar: It was noted that RC is still due to contact AS to discuss this year's Remembrance Event.

6.5 Deer Management: It was noted that BP DMG had agreed that JW will represent other farming interests at the autumn meeting and in the DMG more generally.

### 4. Finances

4.1 Management Accounts: JW reported that income to date during the year had been c.£25.5K and expenditure c.£36K. It was noted that the main potential incomes by the year end are the FCS planting grant and a BTCo donation.

4.2 Endowment Fund: JW reported that she is in the final stages of setting up the investment account, and then transferring the money from the Fund to it.

### 5. Administration

5.1 Birse Parish Liaison Group: The previously circulated Record of Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November was noted, including the agreement of the new Terms of Reference and the agreement that each Member Group will be 'officially' represented at the annual Corsedardar Remembrance Event.

5.2 Local Land Management: The previously circulated Record of Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November was noted, including the confirmation of the independent status of the Birse Parish Deer Management Group, the Group's positive outcome in SNH's DMG Assessment, and the progress at the meeting in discussing species other than deer.

5.3 Feugh Riparian Woodlands: It was noted that BCT has heard from the Dee District Salmon Fisheries Board that they plan to start felling trees soon along four lengths of the Feugh in Finzean. It was recalled that BCT had intervened the last time that the DDSFB did this in 2007 and had involved Forestry Commission Scotland, due to the excessive felling being carried out which did not even conform to the DDSFB's own proposals. It was noted that RC had asked for details of their proposals this time, but the DDSFB is only willing to provide details once they have felling licence approval from FCS. It was agreed that RC should liaise with DB and Paul Chapman in commenting for BCT on the proposals once the details are known.

5.4 Land Acquisitions: RC report that BCT had received the District Valuer's report for the land at Finzean Sawmill and for South Quithel. After discussion of the DV's valuation for each site, it was agreed that RC should follow up discussions with the respective owners of the sites to try to negotiate BCT's potential acquisition of each site, taking account of the points made in the Board's discussion.

5.5 Annual Plan 2015: RC circulated the Contents page from the Annual Plan 2013 and noted some of the tasks that would be under some headings in the 2015 Plan. It was confirmed that RC, JW and RP intend to produce a draft Plan and outline Budget for 2015 before the end of January. It was noted that BCT should also be developing its next Strategic Plan and agreed in principle that Trustees, RP, JW and RC should meet some time for an informal discussion about BCT's future development. In that context, RC referred to some of the work BCT has started analysing changes in the local community and also illustrated some of the mapping work on the woodlands in parish.

## 6. Properties

6.1 Member Site Visits: It was noted that Aidan Bell has reported on the four visits that he organised, listing those who had attended (20 local members + 5 others) and also those from the AGM lists that had not been on any of the visits. It was agreed that BCT's aim in 2015 is to increase the number of visits and significantly increase the number of local members going on them.

6.2 Forest of Birse Commonty: RC reported that Jim Reid has completed the maintenance work on Fungle south of Balloch and that, at the same time, the 'Welcome to the Moorland' sign near the Allanstank Burn had been removed with Birse Estate's permission. It was noted, however, that BCT's proposal to remove the two redundant signs from north of the Castle at the same time had been stalled by the Estate. It was also noted that one of the proposals to be considered as a tribute to John Forster, involves re-building the ruined Wind Shelter beside the West Bogturk track in the Commonty Pinewoods.

6.3 School Wood: It was noted that the 5 pupils leaving Finzean School in 2015, had each planted a tree in the School Wood and that BCT has offered to provide an opportunity for this to happen each year.

## 7. Any Other Business

7.1 Ministerial Invite: It was agreed that RC should write on behalf of the Trustees to invite the new Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Dr Aileen McLeod MSP, to visit BCT some time in 2015.

7.2 Place Names: It was noted that BCT is in discussion with the Cairngorms National Park Authority about potentially jointly organising a meeting in Finzean in 2015, on the derivation and meaning of Gaelic / Doric place names in the landscape.

## 8. Board Meetings

Board Meetings: It was confirmed that the next meetings will be on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January and on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, both at 7:15 pm in Birse Hall. It was also agreed that the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting might be changed to 26<sup>th</sup> February to suit JK.

Signed..... Date.....