

## **BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST**

### **Minutes of BCT's Fifth AGM 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2003 Finzean Hall**

*Ordinary Members Present: John & Anke Addy, Maree Anderson, Nicolette Austin, John & Jane Bellchamber, Alan & Jane Bennett, Jacqui Blackwood, Jim Buchan, Robin & Rita Callander, Paul Chapman, George Christie, Billy Christie, Elsie Christie, Louise Counsell, Isabel Cumming, Neil Dey, Robert & Dorothy Dinnie, David & Annie Duncan, Andrew Farquharson, Angus & Alison Farquharson, Sandra Forster, Tricia Frampton-Heldman, Jim & Gillian Gordon, Lynne Gordon, Douglas & Elizabeth Gray, Sheila & Ron Harper, Guy Haslam, Evelyn Hall, Ian Hector, Jack & Sandra Holt, Martin Johnson, Steve Kew, Andrea Littlejohn, Elizabeth McConnach, Neil & Meg McConnach, Gereldine McGowan, Jill MacGregor, Fiona MacKenzie, Frieda Morrison, Andrew Nicol, Malcolm Nicol, Joanna Strachan, Ken & Pam Taylor, David Thow, Jimmy Valentine, Richard Wright, Margaret Young; Associate Members Present: Les Allan (Aberdeenshire Council), Peter Argyll (local councilor), Thomas Hall, Alison Harper, Patrick Heron, David Jenkins, Mary Levie, Alistair & Mary McGregor, Jim & Jean Shirer, Ben & Lize Strachan, Charlie & Barbara Wood, In Attendance: Alistair Macrae (Ritson Smith), Niki Rafferty, Sieona Dey,*

#### **1. Welcome**

Jim Gordon, BCT Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged the good turnout. BCT had received 37 apologies and a further 5 were received on the night making a total of 42 apologies received with 72 members present.

#### **2. Formal Business of the AGM**

##### **2.1 Minutes of the Fourth AGM on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2002**

The Chairman introduced the Minutes of the last AGM. As there were no questions or comments, the Chairman proposed the approval of the Minutes and this was unanimously agreed by all present at the meeting.

##### **2.2 Chairman's Report on the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002**

The Chairman gave his Report for 2002, a copy of which was printed in the front of the Annual report.

##### **2.3 Company Accounts for the Year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002**

The Chairman introduced Alistair McCrae from Ritson Smith, the Auditors, who presented the Annual Accounts and Financial Report for 2002, both of which had been circulated previously. An amendment to these accounts, which was a reallocation of Forest Enterprise Partnership income of £1554 from grants to Other Goods and Services, had been made and circulated at the meeting. As there were no questions or comments, the Chairman proposed the approval of the Accounts and this was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

##### **2.4 Appointment of Auditors & Fixing of Auditor's Remuneration**

The Chairman commended Ritson Smith's work on BCT's Accounts and mentioned that BCT had undergone a thorough audit of the accounts, which had been approved. He proposed that Ritson Smith be re-appointed as auditors for 2003 and that the auditor's fee should be fixed subject to negotiation between the BCT and Ritson Smith. Both these proposals were approved unanimously by the meeting.

##### **2.5 Fixing of Annual Subscription for Associate Members**

The Chairman reported that BCT appreciated the valuable support provided by the Associate Members. He noted that for the night of the AGM only, there was a special

discount membership of £15 for UK members in the hope that those present should buy a membership as a gift for family or friends. He proposed that the current subscription levels of £20 within the UK and £25 overseas should be continued for another year. This proposal was approved unanimously by the meeting.

## **2.6 Election of Trustees**

The Chairman paid tribute to Robert Dinnie and Pam Taylor as the Trustees who were standing down at this meeting. He described Robert Dinnie's invaluable down to earth advice and support over the years that had contributed to the success of the Trust. The Chairman also thanked Pam Taylor for her support and wished her luck in her new job. Both these Trustees would be missed on the board. The Chairman then reported that two nominations had been received: Neil McConnach, proposed by Gillian Gordon and seconded by Dorothy Dinnie, and Fiona MacKenzie, proposed by Dorothy Dinnie and seconded by Frieda Morrison. Both these two candidates were unopposed, he therefore declared Neil McConnach and Fiona MacKenzie duly elected as Trustees of BCT. The Chairman gave a brief introduction of both the individuals to the meeting, noting the skills and interests each would bring to their role as a BCT Trustee.

*The Chairman then introduced Louise Jolly and Sieonaid Dey who played several local tunes on the fiddle.*

## **3. Discussion Session**

The Chairman introduced the Session, which covered three topics:-

(i) Robin Callander- project manager gave a presentation on two topics:

- a. Purchase of Birse Kirk Hall and Birse Kirk. He described how the bid from BCT to purchase the Hall had been accepted in November 2002. However BCT was still awaiting confirmation of boundaries from the Church of Scotland. Completion would take place once excumbian had been agreed. Although BCT would be the owner of the building, Birse Area Community Association would maintain, manage and finance the Hall. RC explained that Birse Kirk went on the market in January 2003 and BCT put in a bid on 4<sup>th</sup> April and that it was only on the very day of the AGM that he had received official confirmation of the Church of Scotland's acceptance of the BCT bid. BCT will lease the Kirk to the Ecumenical Trust for Birse Kirk who will manage and maintain the church. He thanked Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Land Fund who had provided grants towards the cost of the Hall. He reported that the total cost of buying both buildings was over £100,000, BCT contributing 70% of funds, ETBK 27% and BACA 3%.

Robin invited Andrew Nicol, representing ETBK, to say a few words. Andrew thanked BCT for their help and input and described how the Kirk would be used for ecumenical purposes for different denominations and community purposes, such as art and music.

- b. West Bogturk Fire. On 10<sup>th</sup> April 2003 a fire started west of Bogturk and burned for almost 12 hours. The fire was apparently started by a cigarette at the roadside, but this is still subject to police inquiries. 160 acres of land, including 50 acres of native pinewood and 60 acres of natural regeneration woodlands and moorland were affected. Cones and seeds have since been collected to aid natural regeneration. Robin thanked Ballogie, Finzean, Dunecht and Glen Tanar Estates and others who helped at the fire.

(ii) Tricia Heldman, Co-ordinator, gave a brief presentation on initiatives that were ongoing, including the Public Internet Site and evening classes. She invited any suggestions for future evening classes and for anyone wishing to train as a volunteer guide. She described the continuing Old School Development and invited everyone to visit BCT and provide suggestions for projects.

- (iii) The Chairman then invited John Addy to describe a new project. John detailed how BCT has almost secured funding from the Energy Saving Trust to carry out a feasibility study for putting a micro-hydro scheme on the Feugh at Finzean Saw Mill that might be able to provide a source of income from selling electricity.

There were two further questions from the floor concerning BCT accounting procedures, after which the Chairman brought the discussion to a close.

*The Chairman then introduced David Duncan to recite "The Cremation of Sam McGee"*

#### **4. Closing Remarks**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and all those who had made it such an excellent and most enjoyable, relaxed occasion. He stated that the coming year was going to be a challenge for BCT in terms of funding as several funds were coming to an end in current year. Finally, the Chairman hoped that the membership would continue to support the Trust in all its work and looked forward to hearing from the members regarding local initiatives in the community.

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