

BIRSE TRADING COMPANY¹

Directors' Annual Report 2020

Introduction

The Birse Trading Company (BTCo) is a subsidiary company of Birse Community Trust (BCT). BTCo leases Slewdrum and Balfour Forests from BCT and manages the Forests to implement BCT's Forest Plans 2011-30 for each Forest. BTCo's current leases run until the end of 2022.

2020 was BTCo's thirteenth year of operation. BTCo is managed by its Directors. During 2020, they were Paul Chapman (Chair), Doug Boyle, Tody Rider and Jane Winton. The Directors are all local members of BCT and include a director who is also a BCT Trustee.

This report provides an account of BTCo's operations during a difficult year due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

Forest Management

In 2020, BTCo carried out improvements to both forests. Balfour Forest saw the final phase of the Baudylace Track completed. Slewdrum Forest saw no major siteworks.

Balfour Forest

The final phase of the Baudylace Track was completed, and hardwood trees were planted in protective tubes at the start and end of the track.

Directors liaised with the ATA over improvements to the mountain bike tracks in the Forest.

An information sign was produced and erected at the main entrance to the Forest showing tracks, paths and view points.

Slewdrum Forest

Overgrown broom was removed from track edges using a flail mower and Directors liaised with Aberdeenshire Council regarding removal of broom encroaching onto the Deeside way.

Piri Piri was picked and disposed of along all the tracks and paths in the Forest.

The lower Kettock deer fence was inspected and cleared of fallen trees.

¹ The Birse Trading Company (BTCo) is a company limited by guarantee (SC327196) which was set up by Birse Community Trust (BCT) in 2007. The company is owned by BCT as the only shareholder and the appointment of the Directors who manage BTCo requires BCT's approval.

Administration

In 2020, Due to the ongoing restrictions during the pandemic, BCo Directors were limited with the number of meetings they could hold. BCo's AGM was due to be held in April but was delayed until September where it was held outdoors in Slewdrum Forest. The Directors still undertook a schedule of monthly monitoring visits to the Forests, with six to each Forest over the year.

BCo maintained its established pattern of administration, including its Site Works Report and Annual Report on 2019 and its Site Work Proposals and Annual Plan for 2020, together with its Annual Accounts for 2019 and Annual Budget for 2020. BCo continued to update its Tree Planting, Timber Harvesting, Firewood Distribution and other sets of records.

During the year, BCo continued to retain Jane Winton as Administrator and appointed Scottish Woodlands as their forestry agent.

Finance

In 2020, BCo's total income was £nil and its total expenditure was £18,759, giving a deficit of £18,759.²

BCo's expenditure in 2020 included payment of £6,000 annual rent for the two Forests to BCT. The remaining expenditure was £10,914 on managing and improving the Forests and £1,845 on administration and bank charges.

As a result of BCo's loss, the balance of funds held by BCo decreased over the year from £43,353 to £24,594. The Directors consider that BCo ended the year sufficiently well placed to take forward its responsibilities and plans in 2021.

² BCo's Annual Accounts are submitted to Companies House, reported in BCT's Annual Accounts and published on BCT's website.