

BIRSE TRADING COMPANY¹

Directors' Annual Report 2021

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.

2021 was BTCo's fourteenth year of operation. BTCo is managed by its Directors. During 2021, they were Paul Chapman (Chair), Toby Rider and Jane Winton. Doug Boyle resigned as a Director in 2021. 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 2021.

Forest Management

2021 was another year of just holding steady whilst we continued to recover from the pandemic.

Activity in the forests was limited to essential maintenance and the management of the deer population to allow natural regeneration to continue.

Both Forests

The winter storms took their toll on the forests with over 150 trees down across the tracks. In Balfour we were able to quickly get the access opened up and the bike track in action. Thank you to Doug Boyle and the Aberdeenshire Trails Association for their hard work on this. In Slewdrum there remain some significant fallen trees to be addressed. As these require large forestry machines they will be part of activity that we hope will progress later in 2022.

Slewdrum

Our focus now is approval of the submitted Long Term Forest Plans and then getting back to our planned felling programme in Slewdrum Forest. This will deliver some much needed management of the trees and generate income for Birse Trading Company, allowing resumption of donations to BCT.

Balfour

We continue to work with the mountain biking community to develop the tracks in Balfour and ensure it is a top class destination for the community and wider users.

Administration

In 2021, BTCo Directors held their AGM in July. The Directors also undertook a schedule of monthly monitoring visits to the Forests.

BTCo maintained its established pattern of administration, including its Site Works Report and Annual Report on 2020 together with its Annual Accounts for 2020. BTCo also updated the Fire Plans for each Forest and continued to update its Tree Planting, Timber Harvesting, Firewood Distribution and other sets of records.

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.

During the year, BTCo continued to retain Jane Winton as Administrator, Scottish Woodlands as forestry agent.

Finance

In 2021, BTCo's total income was £nil and its total expenditure was £8,114, giving a deficit of £8,114.²

BTCo's expenditure in 2021 included payment of £6,000 annual rent for the two Forests to BCT. The remaining expenditure was £500 on managing the Forests and £1,614 on administration and bank charges.

As a result of BTCo's loss, the balance of funds held by BTCo decreased over the year from £24,594 to £16,480. The Directors consider that BTCo ended the year sufficiently well placed to take forward its responsibilities and plans in 2022.

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