Birse Community Trust

Minutes of Board Meeting

15th September 2026

Trustees present: Robert Dinnie, Roy Cowie, Eleanor Craig, Nancy Davidson, Simon Lindsey.

Also present: Toni Watt (Manager), Rick Paul (Secretary).

1.**Introduction**.

1.1 RD welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted three items for A.O.B.

2. **Minutes of previous Board Meetings**.

2.1 The minutes from the meetings of 18th August 2026 were approved and signed.

3. **Matters arising.**

3.1 The smoke detector and emergency lighting checks were completed for August 2026.

4. **Finance**

4.1 Accounts: EC to include the best available estimate of the VAT overclaim in the 2025 accounts, which are anticipated to be approved by the end of the month.

4.2 Trustee remuneration: This matter will require careful consideration, as any remuneration may have implications for BCT's eligibility for grant funding.

4.3 H.E.S Grant: TW to follow up regarding receipt of the outstanding 50% payment.

5. **Administration**.

5.1 AGM. A tentative date of the first week in November was agreed dependant on the 2025 accounts being finalised.

5.2 Trustee nominations. SL to contact Alison Kerlogue to progress her nomination. RC was confirmed as Chair. Trustees welcomed the significant improvement in BCT's position over the past year and noted that the organisation is continuing to move in the right direction.

5.3 Toni leaving. TW was asked to compile a comprehensive list of her current duties and responsibilities to facilitate the appointment of a replacement manager. It was noted that, should the incoming manager also be a Trustee, this may in certain circumstances give rise to potential conflicts of interest.

5.4 Trustee invitation: ECs invitation was enthusiastically received, and trustees agreed to post it on all the local groups, plus BCT's website. It will also be added to the AGM mail postings for Birse.

5.5 Fishings boundary. RC reported that a meeting has been arranged for this coming Saturday between Andrew Farquharson, Alice Nicol and Robin Callander.

5.6 Bucket Mill. Good progress is being made. The new weir is complete and new bridges are under construction, all using locally sourced timber donated by BTCo/BCT. There is an open weekend this coming Saturday and Sunday. TW is voluntarily involving Branching Out Plus in work at the Bucket and Turning Mills. Owen Bushell intends to apply for a grant to refurbish the Bus Garage to act as an information centre.

5.7 Turning Mill: TW to share the draft Deed of Gift and Renunciation with Roddy Duncan.

5.8 Souter's Shop. The cleaning of the collection is now more than halfway complete and remains on schedule for completion by the end of October. Stuart Wilson is undertaking repairs to furniture, installing blinds, and constructing a frame for the stained-glass panel on a voluntary basis.

5.9 BTCo. The TransCaledonia race through Balfour was noted, as was the notification of harvesting in Slewdrum. RP reported that he had not received a reply to his email of 23/7/26 regarding MTB insurance and was asked to send a follow up email.
5.10 The Ord: Trustees agreed to hold firm on the advertised price of £125k.
5.11 North Hill. RC reported that he had spoken with Stuart Young, who undertook to provide a further update the following week.
5.12 Fire Risk Assessments. The FRAs were approved. RP to purchase equipment.

6. **Manager's Report.**
6.1 Rabbit: TW to prepare an article on the Souter's Shop and Bucket Mill for consideration by the trustees prior to publication in the Rabbit.

7. **A.O.B.**
7.1 Strengthening Communities Programme. TW to note an expression of interest.
7.2 Electricity: EC to investigate options for reducing the standing charge and/or identify an alternative supplier.
7.3 Muckle Ord Path: Trustees agreed to further investigation into the possibility of a new path up to the Muckle Ord, championed by Guy Haslam.

8. **Future Meetings.**
8.1 Trustees agreed to meet on:

Tuesday 13th October 2026 Old School 7:00pm SL to chair.

Signed…… Date……..