

DUNKELD AND BIRNAM COMMUNITY GROWING
SC042496

Also known as DUNKELD AND BIRNAM@THE FIELD

14th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Duchess Anne Dunkeld

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 7th 2025

SECRETARY'S REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

This has been our fourteen year of growing vegetables but has been the fifteen year we have all been working together to grow food organically locally for the people of Dunkeld and Birnam. As ever, we have had a dedicated team of volunteers, variable numbers at times because of the weather and holidays We have gained some new working members whose skills and enthusiasm are much appreciated.

The weather as usual has been a challenge but then we have enjoyed a hot summer but it has made us even more aware of the issues around climate change everywhere in the world.

We have many people who have skills that we have become to rely on during the year from planning, designing, purchasing, organising, and planting. David Bee will cover all this in his report.

2 THE ORGANISATION

We are a Scottish Charitable Incorporation Organisation (SCIO) and it is useful to remind ourselves of our Charitable Objectives.

- To advance citizenship and community development by encouraging cooperation and mutual support to produce food organically for local consumption in a changing economic and physical environment
- To achieve this by managing a sustainable and environmentally responsible growing project for the benefit of all
- To promote education within in the community in organic food growing, care and harvest and distribution and ensure a better understanding of the connections between what we eat and how it is produced, delivered and prepared.

We still have much work to do to meet all these objectives but we see it all as a long term project which evolves in a flexible way and allows us all to learn as we go along. At the present time, the Trustees meet regularly (in the open air at the field and then with the colder weather inside) to oversee activities on and off the field and set the general direction but we are always thinking that we need to do

more to involve members and volunteers and are looking at ways in which we can do this. We would particularly like to thank Zoe Mcneil-Wilkie for her superb work in keeping the Instagram page updated.

But there is always more we can do to listen and learn. We are always open to suggestions., please let us know if you have any ideas

3 THE TRUSTEES

As SCIO we are required to have trustees who are responsible for running the Organisation and managing its assets. From 1st November 2024 there were 10 Trustees elected at the AGM. At the following Trustees Meeting the following officers were agreed.

David Bee	Chair
Dave Roberts	Secretary
Dave Amos	Membership Secretary
Jim Cockburn	Treasurer
Linda Simpson	
Raymond Simpson	
Elsbeth Baillie	
Jane Bremner	
Sally Bee	
Alan Dobie	

4. MEMBERS

Members are a key part of the field, and we would like to thank you all for being here this evening.

Each member can contribute in many different ways, and we are delighted that so many of you have decided to join and take a role, from supporter through buying and using the produce, to active volunteering and selling at our stalls. The many hours spent in the field really do make a difference. Our members are our strength and we would like to thank each and every one of you for your participation.

We have also been lucky to welcome many new active members who certainly have youth on their side and have joined in with much enthusiasm.

On a sad note, one of the first members of the field and an enthusiastic supporter from the very beginning,. She was, not only a regular visitor to the stalls, even walking up Brae Street whilst she was able but was a regular participant at the harvest suppers.

She will be fondly remembered by many people but I will remember her for her Hedgerow jelly which was superb.

5 PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS WHO HAVE HELPED US.

We have been lucky enough to have several different groups and individuals over and above our core group who have helped out and every little bit of help has made a big difference. Here are just some of the people who have helped out.

Geordie Ness and Dave Muirhead for their wonderful vintage tractors and equipment. Also, the time they have devoted to ploughing and harvesting and giving advice to us.

Birnam Arts for the Thursday stalls.

The Church for use of space for our AGM and Harvest supper.

The Bridge and Atholl Quair for regularly publishing our articles

Our neighbours to the field who keep us well informed about comings and goings at the field

And last but no means least those who have given us anonymous donations.

6. OTHER RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

We have received visits from other similar organisations through out Scotland., David Bee covers these in his wonderful annual report

We have a Facebook page thanks to the efforts of Sally Small and website thanks to John Small. We would welcome people who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about IT to help us with our social media presence as mentioned earlier.

7. KEY ACTIONS.

The following actions have been undertaken during 2025 and have hopefully kept us on the straight and narrow

- The lease –We have continued with our lease with the Soil Association for 3.2 Acres. The rest of the field will continue to be leased to the horse owners and we would like them for their support and all the horse dung!
- The Buildings –We have 4 buildings, a general purpose shed, a machinery and produce storage shed and 3 polytunnels. In addition we have three storage sheds.
- Insurances- We have taken out and regularly renew insurances for public liability, product liability, volunteers, and capital equipment
- We review Notifiable events and Safeguarding on a monthly basis
- Risk Assessments-we have carried out risk assessments
- Health and Safety – we have a Health and Safety Policy.
- Child Protection- we have continued to implement our child protection policy
- Completed all our OSCR reports.

8 THE GROWING

All this background work was to allow us to grow and sell produce and so much has been achieved here. I will not cover this in any detail as it is in the Chairs report but I have been so impressed by what has been achieved literally on the ground. It is impressive and the food is fantastic.

9. THE FUTURE.

I have really enjoyed my time in the field and behind the scenes and there is a time when you begin to plan for the future. A key element of this is succession planning and it is essential for the future of the field that we begin to put into place people with the key skills and abilities. These will be different from the attributes that people involved in the setting up of the field had. I have been Secretary since the beginning and now is the time to plan for the future. I would therefore like to stand down as Secretary at this AGM But if elected would like to continue as a Trustee. Similarly, David Bee is standing down as Chair but would like to continue as a Trustee .I think that we do have strength in depth and from the Trustees I know,we have people with the skills to take us into the future. The elections for the Officer positions take place at the first Trustees meeting after the AGM.

10. THANK YOU

It is not possible to list everyone who has helped us in so many ways but without you and all our volunteers nothing like this could have happened. I am sure there are omissions in this report but it has been a particularly active, enjoyable, but challenging year and it is difficult to document everything!

David Bee and the other Chairs I have worked with, Linda Simpson, Raymond Simpson and John Small have all been wonderful to work with. They have all been available for advice and guidance and have made themselves available for everything from meeting and greeting people through a wide range of both important and mundane tasks to working in the field in all weathers, their hands on experience and knowledge has been invaluable

But from a personal point of view, yet again I would particularly like to thank all my fellow trustees. Each one has individually contributed so much. I am constantly amazed by how much gets done behind the scenes and at the field. It is rare to go to the field and not see the results of someone's hard work. It can be hard work but also fun and friendly. The end result, wonderful fresh food which tastes fantastic available for all locally has made it very worthwhile. Food from the field to your plate on the same day with no food miles, no fertilisers; it is tasty and looks so good.

Thank you to each and every one of you, it has been a good journey so far, we continue to learn, and I look forward to the future

Dave Roberts
Secretary Dunkeld and Birnam Community Growing

November 2025

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