

Location: Aberdeenshire

Finzean Bucket Mill CIC

Impact: Growing an inclusive economy



Background

The Finzean Bucket Mill CIC was founded in 2024 to help conserve the historic A-Grade listed water-powered bucket mill, in the Forest of Birse in Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

‘The Bucket Mill’ makes up one of three historic mills in the area which are no longer operational due to disrepair and skills shortage, which is exacerbated by its rural location and lack of accommodation.

The group work closely with The Birse Community Trust (BCT) to protect the heritage of the mills by redeveloping the buildings and reintroducing traditional milling practice to the Finzean/Birse area.

Need for Support

The Bucket Mill is currently owned by BCT, who have granted Finzean Bucket Mill CIC a 25-year lease to maintain and operate it.

The group required support to create a business plan that would build a foundation for them to commence their work, including repairs, restarting milling and manufacturing work, and establishing activities for volunteers and students.

“Community Enterprise helped us unpick a tangle of complex factors, helped us understand clearly what our goals were and how we could go about achieving them.”

How did Accelerate support the process?

The Accelerate advisor supported the group with their business planning, focusing particularly on financial planning. This included developing a strategic plan and providing financial projections to help the group achieve their goals.

What is the economic and social impact of the support?

With Accelerate’s support, Finzean Bucket Mill CIC is progressing toward its ambition of preserving, protecting and promoting the heritage of the mills in the Forest of Birse.

The development of the Bucket Mill will:

- Support Finzean Bucket Mill CIC in realising its long-term ambition to be self-sustaining financially as an operating mill
- Create new job opportunities in the area
- Provide training and skills development in the traditional craft of wooden bucket-making
- Offer a range of community activities that will enable local people to gain new skills, reconnect with local heritage and reduce social isolation
- Increase opportunities for volunteering
- Contribute to the wider redevelopment of all three mills, by sharing skills from the operating Bucket Mill to build capacity across the other sites