

Your Park Update for Community Councils & Stakeholder Forum Members



30th June 2017

Feedback

Since the 1st March we have been gathering feedback from communities, visitors, partners and our Rangers to help us understand and refine how the byelaws are working in practice. We have been gathering input from visitors through online surveys that are sent to everyone who has stayed in a permit area or at our new Loch Chon campsite and we have received a good response rate. The results from the permit area survey show that 85% of respondents would recommend staying in one of the new permit areas and 91% found it easy to buy a permit. As of this morning, we have had 518 responses to this survey so far, out of the total of 2440 bookings. For the Loch Chon campsite 94% of respondents to the campsite survey would recommend staying there and 93% found it easy to book their pitch. These figures are based on 74 responses to the survey, out of 331 bookings at the campsite so far.*

Our Rangers are also experiencing a largely positive response from visitors to the new byelaws and communities in some areas have let us know that they are seeing positive change on the ground and increases in day visitors. The thousands of conversations that the Ranger Service has with people out and about in the National Park, help us to better understand the various views and experiences across a range of audiences.

This combined feedback is being used to help us inform improvements to the camping experience and we are taking proactive steps to address any teething issues and concerns raised.

Booking Numbers

Since the byelaws came into effect on the 1st March we have had 2440 bookings in permit areas and 331 for our new campsite at Loch Chon.*

Permit Areas:	March	April	May	June	Total
Loch Achray	4	20	11	8	43
Loch Ard	2	11	14	17	44
Loch Earn	55	162	219	159	595
Loch Lomond (tents)	36	131	257	208	632
Loch Lomond (motorhomes)	21	69	105	118	313
Loch Long	3	23	18	11	55
Loch Lubnaig	0	10	10	20	40
Loch Venachar	7	42	60	72	181
Loch Voil	0	18	26	10	54
3LFD (tents)	11	87	107	130	335
3LFD (motorhomes)	8	40	51	49	148
TOTAL	147	613	878	802	2440
Loch Chon Campsite	3	78	142	108	331

Adjustments

As well as inviting and acting on the feedback from visitors throughout the first four months, the National Park Authority has been continuing dialogue with key partners on the operation of the byelaws.

This feedback and dialogue is being used to help us fine tune visitors' experience, and where necessary, make adjustments. This includes:

- Moving some permit areas within the Three Lochs Forest Drive in The Trossachs away from forestry operations, increasing the number of places for motorhomes on the Drive and continuing to work on developing signage.
- Improving visitor information and advice on camping areas on the online booking system.
- Collaboration with Police Scotland to further develop our joint enforcement approach to the management of encampments and anti-social behaviour in some lochshore laybys, while promoting the enjoyment and appropriate use of these environmentally sensitive spots.

As our communities know, going back over a number of years, some lochshore laybys have had issues with longer term encampments of motorhomes and caravans creating negative impacts, damaging the environment and preventing access for other visitors.

Ongoing discussions on how best to manage these issues have agreed that Police Scotland will use roads legislation to deal with unlawful encampments and irresponsible use of motor vehicles in laybys. People with campervans and motorhomes can use lochshore laybys to stop and rest (including sleeping overnight if necessary), but encampment on a road (including laybys) is an offence under road traffic legislation and will be managed by Police Scotland accordingly, in cooperation with land owners. Camping permit areas for tents adjacent to some lochshore laybys are unaffected.

As a result the National Park Authority will no longer need to issue permits for motorhomes to stay in laybys, but will focus on continuing to provide great locations for overnight motorhome stays at key off-road visitor areas around the National Park. These include Inveruglas and Firkin Point and new additional motorhome permits in the popular Three Lochs Forest Drive in the Trossachs. The Park Authority will continue to closely monitoring how the byelaws are working and gathering feedback from campers and other visitors, as well as local communities.

For communities concerned about unlawful encampments, this means that our Ranger patrols will continue to keep an eye out for any motorhome or caravan encampments and will report concerns to the police, and we would also recommend that if communities have concerns that they do the same.

Included with this update is updated information of the following Q&A's for reference and for you to share with your communities.

- Camping & Motorhomes Q&A
- Angling & Camping Q&A

We will continue to provide Community Councils in the Park with updates as the season progresses. We would like to thank Community Councils for your feedback and help as we bed-in the new byelaws.