

National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 6

Your Park Annual Update



Paper for decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present Members with the annual update on the first season of operation of The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017 for approval to submit to Scottish Ministers.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board members are asked to:

- (i) **Approve** the annual update report attached as Appendix 1; and
- (ii) **Agree** that it be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

3. Background

- 3.1 The East Loch Lomond Camping Byelaws introduced in 2011 successfully tackled the historic problems of antisocial behaviour and over-use associated with wild camping. In the light of this experience, a twelve-week consultation was carried out in late 2014 to seek the views of stakeholders on a similar package of measures to cover other areas of the National Park facing these pressures. The results of this consultation, combined with the experience of the East Loch Lomond byelaws, informed the proposals that the National Park Authority submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval.

- 3.2 On the 15th May 2015 a letter of application was submitted by the National Park Authority to Scottish Ministers. This sought confirmation of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws, using powers conferred upon the Authority in Paragraph 8 of Section 2 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The proposals submitted to the Scottish Ministers included:

- The implementation of camping byelaws across four Camping Management Zones covering less than 4% of the Park's 720 square miles
- The creation of a permit scheme to support the byelaws allowing informal camping in defined areas of the Camping Management Zones
- The creation of campsites with low cost bookable pitches and basic facilities
- Delivering 300 camping spaces in the first year of the byelaws operating, with more to be added in subsequent years

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- The simultaneous revocation of the East Loch Lomond byelaws to coincide with the introduction of the new byelaws
- 3.3 Following a period of ministerial consideration the proposed Camping Management Byelaws were approved by Scottish Ministers on 26th January 2016 with two administrative conditions:
- 1) *'Ministers should be provided with a formal report of a review of the operation of the byelaws no later than 3 years after implementation. The report should consider how effective the new camping management measures have been in reducing the instances of environmental damage and irresponsible behaviour as a direct result of implementation.'*
 - 2) *'The National Park will provide Scottish Ministers with an annual update on the implementation of the byelaws.'*

This report attached as Appendix 1 has been prepared as the first of these annual updates.

- 3.4 The annual update has been prepared as an account of the experiences of operating the byelaws in the first season. It sets out, in Section 3, all of the areas of work undertaken to prepare for the byelaws coming into force to ensure their effective operation and that the specific undertakings made to Scottish Ministers were met. The experiences of operating the byelaws during the season are set out in Section 4 as is the feedback received from people who used the campsites and permit areas. As would be expected there were improvements that required to be made as the season progressed in response to operational experiences, visitor feedback or local intelligence about how things were working on the ground. Section 6 sets out the improvements that will be a focus for the 2018 season, both to improve operations and enhance the camping experience, including providing additional facilities.
- 3.5 It would be inappropriate and premature to draw conclusions on the effects that the byelaws are having after only one season of operation. Section 5 of the report sets out the measures that are in place to monitor changes in the Camping Management Zones. The formal report to be submitted to Scottish Ministers after three years of implementation will provide the first opportunity to draw any conclusions regarding the effects of the byelaws.

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4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Board Members are asked to approve Appendix 1 as the first annual update on the implementation of the Camping Management Byelaws 2017 and agree that it is submitted to Scottish Ministers to fulfil one of the conditions of approval.

Appendix 1 – The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017 First Annual Update to Scottish Ministers

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