Public transport and our National Parks (1)

Description

When I was out on Monday on west Loch Lomondside I was struck by the number of cyclists. It was a lovely sunny day and lots of people were out on the main National Cycle route. Get the West Highland Line to Tarbert and cycle back to Glasgow or Dumbarton- a great day out.

The Cycle Campaigns, Spokes and Go Bike, are now both protesting against the design of the trains that are being refitted for the the West Highland Line Scenic route. They will have only two places for bikes instead of six as at present (which are often fully booked) or as they put it a 66% reduction in cycling capacity http://www.spokes.org.uk/2016/03/cuts-coming-to-train-bike-spaces/. The cycling campaigns have highlighted the impact for tourism in Fort William and Oban but there will probably be as significant an impact on Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and the ability of people from the Glasgow conurbation to get out for a day cycling. Coupled with the camping ban, which will make cycle touring along west Loch Lomond much harder, this is not good news for cyclists in the National Park.

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There is also huge potential to cut down on car use in our National Parks through promoting travel by train and then bike (the A82 on a holiday weekend is a nightmare). Lots of people drive out to the head of Loch Long to walk up the Cobbler but the Arrochar/Tarbert station is not close enough to make this an attractive walk. Make it easy to put the bike on the train and increase the number of trains and we could open up these hills to many more people. I believe this is something the National Park should be advocating.

I have emailed Gordon Watson, the Chief Executive of LLTNP today, asking him if the Park has made representations to the Minister about the impact of reducing cycle places on the West Highland Line. The Park sits on the A83 landslip group that is chaired by the Minister so they should have plenty of opportunities to get the message across and the importance of looking at public transport and cycling as well as roads on the western side of the National Park.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. cycling
2. LLTNPA

3. public transport
4. Tourism

Date Created
March 18, 2016
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