

The LLNTPA needs to learn from the Lake District about camping provision

Description

I was in the Lake District last weekend, camping in Borrowdale, where there are at least 8 campsites in the 12 kilometres south of Keswick with not a holiday chalet or caravan in site. The contrast with the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, where the National Park Authority has granted provision for much of the far more limited provision to convert to caravan parks could not be more striking.

Over the years I have enjoyed staying in a number of the campsites in Borrowdale and elsewhere in the Lakes. While there is no legal right to camp as such in England, in practice its as hard to stop people as it was in Scotland before our access laws and you will see people camping all over the fells. There are very few attempts to “wild camp” in the valley bottoms in the popular areas of the National Park simply because there are so many campsites. Because of this the Lake District National Park Authority does not have to waste its resources “policing” campers – which is what the LLTNPA is now proposing.

I took a few photos which demonstrate some other things the LLNTPA could learn from the Lake District about the provision of campsites.



Part of the campsite at Stonethwaite.

I have never seen any fixed “pitches” in the Lake District campsites I have stayed. You can camp where you like. Contrast this with the LLTNPA proposed campsite at Loch Chon where they are creating 30 fixed places. The LLTNPA acts like big brother and decides where you can camp. Now I appreciate the terrain is different but so is the attitude of mind in the people running the LLTNPA.



Camping overspill field Stonethwaite

One of the points a number of people made to the LLTNPA during the Your Park consultation was that all you needed to do to address the lack of facilities in the National Park was to install portaloos at times of peak demand. Add a tap and you have a basic campsite. The cost of this is tiny but instead of this the LLTNPA is spending £345k to develop just one totally overspecified campsite at Loch Chon where there is no demand. It should have learned from its experience of developing the campsite at Loch Lubnaig where it spent a fortune. Its beautifully done of course but if the LLTNPA spends its resources in this way it will take 50 years to create anything like adequate camping provision. It needs

a total re-think.



This sign indicates that anti-social behaviour is not just a problem in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. Indeed I have been in Lake District campsites when being camped near people drinking under Union Jack gazebo a very unpleasant experience. The campsite owners and operators however have by



and large groups have learned how to manage this – and that’s the answer, they **manage** people rather than **banning** them completely.

Category

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2. National Parks

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