

National Parks week, litter and the history of access rights

Description



Why do none of the LLTNP's new landscaped parking areas in the Trossachs have litter bins?

Following my post on the LLTNPA's unfortunate decision to use National Park's week to launch its new litter enforcement powers, when other National Parks across the UK were celebrating the theme of adventure, there was an excellent [letter](#) in the Herald today from James Fraser, Chair of the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs. (While I have got to know James over the last year as we now both sit on the Executive of the Scottish Campaign for National Parks my post and his letter were written independently). He made a number of points that are worth repeating:

- the contrast between provision of litter bins in laybys on the A82 and A9 (both major arterial routes) is striking. That the laybys along the A9 have much less litter is not a coincidence.
- asking visitors at busy attractions to take litter home does not work (this was one of main themes of the Park's press release covered in my post)
- there are significant inefficiencies in litter collection with different authorities emptying different bins even with the bounds of one location

Yet more arguments for why the National Park, following its paper to the last Board Meeting on litter, needs a proper litter strategy in which all four constituent local authorities and Forestry Commission Scotland play their part. The good thing though is that both the Park's publicity and the public debate has moved on from campers being the source of all litter.

38 Degrees and National Parks week

Yesterday I received an email from 38 Degrees about National Parks week. Now I think its great 38 Degrees are trying to support National Park's week, and I have every sympathy for what is going on in England where the Government is threatening to turn National Parks into fully commercial organisations which have to fully fund themselves.

38 Degrees, which have a Scotland team, don't seem to realise though what is actually going on in the LLTNP and instead put out the type of spin that they should be trying to combat:

"It was amazing! From all over Scotland, 38 Degrees members were out enjoying our national parks in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and the Cairngorms yesterday"

Well yes they were, as people on every day of the week, but not thanks to National Parks week. The comment that followed "with events happening in every single national park in England and Wales" said it all. They could not include Scotland in the message as LLTNPA, unlike CNPA, had not done anything to encourage people out adventuring.

I am delighted though that 38 Degrees have set a new challenge for themselves with the following quote:

“My parents met during the great trespass of Kinder Scout. So if it wasn’t for the campaign that created national parks, me, my sons and my grandchildren – we wouldn’t have existed!” – Trina, at Loch Lomond & the Trossachs

I don’t know whether 38 Degrees have quoted Trina correctly but the Kinder Scout mass trespass in 1932 was not about creating National Parks but rather about securing access to open countryside. It was pressure for access that created the demand in England for National Parks – places where access would be secure. Its therefore rather ironic that Trina stated this in LLTNP where the National Park Authority has been leading the charge to reverse access rights in Scotland with its proposed camping ban. But then, perhaps like many other people, she was simply unaware of what the Park has been proposing. I was reminded of this today when I asked someone at work what they had done at the weekend – I was surprised to hear she had gone camping on Loch Arklet. There was only one other tent there – quite predictable from the Park’s own data. She had no idea Loch Arklet was included in the camping ban and her response on hearing this was “that’s rubbish”.

The challenge for 38 Degrees I think is help make their members aware of the serious restrictions to access rights being proposed by the LLTNPA and to help mobilise their members to get these reversed. I hope this includes a mass campaign of civil disobedience as at Kinder Scout if necessary.

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