

The camping byelaw conspiracy – divide and rule

## Description

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## 4.16 Loch Lomond Islands

As Members are aware the previous consultation provoked very vocal criticism and polarised responses. Some have rejected the need for any management at all and others have been highly critical of the NPA ever since. The NPA wishes to see a highly restrictive approach on one island and an outright ban on the other.

The Loch Lomond Island situation is in contrast to the mainland where in the vast majority there is strong support for stronger management of camping. This is not to say there is a strong risk that what could otherwise be a successful Park area will be derailed by controversy over the islands.

Early meetings have been held with both the Loch Lomond Estates to explore potential common ground and to reach any consensus.

As things stand it is strongly recommended that the islands be excluded from the forthcoming camping management plan, the enforcement of the existing Loch Lomond Islands (No Camping) Order (islands) and the continued deployment of Rangers to enforce the solution for camping on the islands would not be a realistic process.

Extract from decision paper written by Gordon Watson, current Chief Executive, and presented at se  
Information Commissioner.

The above extract speaks for itself and confirms what most people already knew, the LLTNPA deliberately omitted the Loch Lomond Islands from the camping byelaw consultation because they thought if they did so, this might stop their attempt to undermine access rights because of the opposition it would create. This extract and the minute of the Board Meeting of April 2015 both record that the islands will be next.

The LLTNPA is picking off recreational groups one by one. The boating interests on the loch were first and they have just been told that the boat launching facility at Milarrochy will be closed from 1st April. That leaves just one place to launch boats onto Loch Lomond – and this is meant to be a National Park that serves the people on the west of Scotland. It appears likely that the Rangers that were deployed to help boats get onto the loch are to be redeployed in order to enforce the camping byelaws. In other words, the various attempts to control recreational use are all connected, and people need to set aside their own recreational perspectives (which tends to divide motor boats from dinghy sailors and campervans from campers) and see the wider picture. I would like to see recreational organisations unite against what is happening and not allow themselves to be divided by their differences. This ultimately is about people retaining their rights to enjoy the countryside.

The extract is also significant because it provides yet more proof that the LLTNPA's claim that the secret "Board Briefings" did not take decisions is complete rubbish. Recommendations were clearly made and approved in a meeting that was not open to the public. This is not how public authorities should operate and I will repeat my call that the new Convener, James Stuart, should abolish this practice as soon as he takes up post on 1st March.

## Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

## Tags

1. access rights
2. Camping bye laws
3. Freedom of Information
4. Governance
5. LLTNPA
6. secrecy

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