

Derrydarroch hydro track obstruction – the LLTNPA takes action

Description



The new stile next to the locked gates between the West Highland Way and Derrydarroch Power sta

Back in February I reported the locked gates and signs ([see here](#)) on either side of Derrydarroch powerhouse and bridge over the River Falloch to Simon Jones, the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority senior manager responsible for access. Walking past last Sunday I noticed that a new stile had been put in enabling walkers to cross the fence (the gate was still locked).

Not only that but along the hydro track up by the Allt a' Chuillinn, on the north east side of Ben Glas, a further two stiles had been erected to enable walkers to get by locked gates and deer fencing.



This was how walkers were expected to get past the upper Allt Chuilinn gate in 2016



The new stile with the animal flap and locked gate June 2018. Beinn Chabhair in distance.

The LLTNPA access team had not informed me that stiles had been installed and I had assumed this was because they had been forbidden from speaking to me ([see here](#)). That post, which mentioned the Invertrossachs Drive signs, seems to have done the trick because on Thursday I received a brief email saying that *“the issues that you had previously raised at Invertrossachs Road and also at Derrydarroch have now been resolved”*. Had I not visited I would not have known HOW the Derrydarroch issues had been resolved (and I have had to ask for details about how Invertrossachs

has been resolved) and can only assume LLTNPA staff are still banned from providing me with useful information. That is not their fault!

The LLTNPA and Simon Jones deserve public thanks not just for addressing the obstructions at Derrydarroch (and I assume the no access sign on the A82 side has been removed) but also the two locked gates on the Allt a' Chuillinn track above which I had not reported. This shows that once alerted to the problems they have done a very thorough and professional job. Well done them! (And at the Board Meeting on Thursday it was also reported they are getting a new gate installed at Drumlean to comply with the Drumlean judgement [\(see here\)](#).)

Its just a pity that the LLTNPA planning team ever allowed the Glen Falloch estate to put up lockable gates across the new hydro tracks without making proper provision for outdoor recreation.

I do also have some concerns about using stiles as a preferred solution to getting past locked gates. Some people find it hard to use stiles and lifting bikes over can be pretty difficult, even on substantial stiles such as those pictured. If you are a wheelchair user, however, you are stuck – which is why pedestrian gates are now generally used in preference to stiles.

While I believe the new tracks in Glen Falloch are a disaster in landscape terms and should never have been allowed, having created them and the new bridge, wheelchair users could have for the first time been provided with easy access to the south side of the River Falloch. A missed opportunity. I hope both the Planning and the Access Team at the LLTNPA will give more consideration to access for people with disabilities in similar situations in future.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. Governance
3. LLTNPA
4. secrecy

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