

Fly tipping, access and councils within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

Description



Photo from LLTNPA news release 17th September – Photo Credit LLTNPA

On 17th September the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Parks Authority issued a [News Release](#) to say they had investigated a case of fly tipping, issued a notice and that a £200 fine had been paid as a result. This is welcome. Its evidence for what I and others have long been saying, that the LLTNPA was totally wrong to claim that the main problems of litter in the National Park were caused by campers and to then use this to con Scottish Ministers into agreeing the camping byelaws.

It will be interesting to see, therefore, if the LLTNPA's report to Ministers on the camping byelaws this year describe the extensive problems with fly-tipping in the National Park and what they have done about it. Was the incident described in the News Release a one-off, the start of a new initiative or part of a concerted programme of action over the last year? And if the latter is the case why has the LLTNPA been so quiet about it up till now?

This post will take a look at what has been happening at one of the Park's flytipping hot spots, the Culeag layby on the A82 on the west shore of Loch Lomond, to illustrate the real problem.



Burnt out mattress Cuileag June 2017. Its possible but unlikely that campers dumped a spring mattress here. Photo Credit Nick Halls

Cuileag is also the location for one of the LLTNPA's camping permit areas which, back in March 2017, was totally unfit for camping ([see here](#)). In that post Nick Halls noted that the parking area adjacent to the beach was being used for fly tipping. It still was in June 2017 (see above and below)



Fly tipping in burn at Cuileag May 2017 – Photo Credit Nick Halls

While some of the rubbish may have been dumped by irresponsible campers, it was clear that most of it came from other “irresponsible” sources.



Photo Credit Nick Halls

Since then the parking area has been blocked off with boulders – presumably in an attempt to stop the fly-tipping .

Culag (beach) Cùileag



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is a special place. You are in a Camping Management Zone, which has been established to help protect the National Park.

Camping in this area from March to September requires a permit, which can be bought online at www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

For more information call 01389 722001



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2017. This map has been created to illustrate the extent of the permit area and should not be assumed to be exact or relied upon for any other purpose.

Failure to comply with the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017, between March and September, can result in a fine of up to £500.



The sign showing the Culag camping permit area had designated the space that is now blocked off as a parking area for campers.

Note how the fine for camping without a permit, however responsibly, is far greater (and incurs a criminal record) compared to the £200 (civil) fixed penalty notices the LLTNPA can issue for fly-tipping. There is something badly wrong here.



Large heap of recently dumped garden refuse, including flower pots and bags October 2018 – Photo Credit Nick Halls

Neither the boulders nor the fixed penalty notices have prevented fly-tipping from continuing to take place here. There is no sign to warn people about fly tipping penalties despite the history of fly-tipping on this site. Meanwhile the LLTNPA has spent significant further sums on signage about the camping byelaws, including “repeater” signs ([see here](#)). These warn people of the penalties for camping responsibly in places where they used to have the right to camp over the summer. The camping byelaws continue to divert the LLTNPA from the real problems.



There is evidence of chopped trees all round the blocked off parking area.- note the post top right which is by the path down to the beach where camping is allowed and takes places when not under water. Photo Credit Nick Halls.

By allowing the former parking area to be blocked off – its not clear if the LLTNPA or the landowner did this – the LLTNPA has in effect allowed a derelict area to be created beside the loch shore. Some, maybe all , of the chopped trees appear to have come from the site but whoever has done the work has dumped piles of branches on the tarmac. Maybe the plan was to remove them?

The blocking off of parking areas which appears to be the LLTNPA's main strategy when it comes to dealing with the many problems the camping bye-laws have failed to address. In this case there has been little impact on access because, whether a camper or not, you can still park in the main A82 layby. However, if there was an argument for cutting off access here, why not dig up the tarmac and let vegetation reclaim it rather than leaving it to become derelict (and attract yet more fly tipping)?

Is this the sort of high quality visitor infrastructure that our National Parks should be creating and managing in such a beautiful location?



View from Cuileag beach, October 2018. Photo Credit Nick Halls.

What needs to be done?

The unspoken issue and problem with fly-tipping is that much of it is likely to be done by local residents who are residents of the National Park (people don't go any further than necessary to fly tip). Just like campers, these irresponsible people are a small minority, but the LLTNPA needs to understand why they dump rubbish. I would suggest it has something to do with the refuse disposal services of local authorities in the area and that, if faced with charges for rubbish disposal, people simply dump it. That is what drives fly-tipping. So, rather than cordoning areas off, the LLTNPA would be far better talking to local councils and asking them to take a look at how they contribute to the issue.

Its precisely because of issues such as this that a third of our National Park Boards are made up of local councillors. Its time Argyll and Bute in particular started to address the real issues instead of punishing visitors with access taxes ([see here](#)), camping bye-laws and the like.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. camping
3. Camping bye laws
4. LLTNPA

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Author

nickkempe

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