



onal Park

Recently, Forest and Land

Scotland have been flailing trees on Forest Drive in the Trossachs.

Flailing is much cheaper than cutting trees manually but is a very destructive practice. It might be acceptable for clearing scrub from roadside verges, but little else. Its impact on hedges, for example, is disastrous, destroying their structure and ecological integrity. Just what was Forest and Land Scotland trying to achieve in the photo above? Part of the tree has been mangled, the other left. The mangled part leaves the remaining parts of the tree vulnerable to infection and insect infestation, spreading

disease. It looks bad and sets a terrible example.

Five years ago the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority used photos of chopped tree branches to attack campers and justify the creation of a new criminal offence under the camping byelaws. . Byelaw 8 (b) made it an offence *“to collect or use wood in a camping management zone that causes damage or is likely to cause damage”*. (This wasn’t needed because it already was a criminal offence for anyone acting without a landowner’s permission to damage trees).

What does the photo show if it is not damage? And worse than that done by any camper, however mindless. To rub salt into the wound, its in a camping management zone, i.e an area in which the Park claimed campers needed to be controlled because of all the damage they do. Moreover its in a zone where I revealed yesterday that Forest and Land Scotland and the LLTNPA have failed to re-open their *“camping permit”* areas for the start of the camping byelaw season ([see here](#)). Perhaps FLS and the LLTNPA didn’t want their hypocrisy exposed to too many people?

There is NOT a single reference to flailing in the LLTNPA’s Trees and Woodland Strategy that was approved last year ([see here](#)). That Strategy said almost nothing about what forestry techniques might be appropriate for a National Park but instead adopted the UK Forestry Standard, lock, stock and barrel. Parkswatch has already argued that the UK Forestry Standard is totally inappropriate for National Parks because, for example, it endorses 7m wide forestry tracks and that as a consequence we need a new forestry standard for Scotland. In that context its interesting to note that there is just one reference to flailing in the 232 pages of the UK Forestry Standard:

*“An alternative to grazing is mowing, cutting or flailing.”*

That’s it! This provides further evidence that the UK Forestry Standard is a hopeless document, particularly as far as National Parks and other protected areas are concerned, and should be scrapped. Rather than its meaningless Trees and Woodland Strategy, the LLTNPA would have been far better developing new forestry standards appropriate for a National Park. That would have been an opportunity for it to use its conservation byelaw making powers to ban flailing and put an end to the many other damaging industrial forestry practices that go on in the National Park. Instead, the LLTNPA averts its eyes and prefers to abuse its powers and waste its resources trying to enforce the unjust camping byelaws.

## Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

## Tags

1. conservation
2. forestry
3. forestry land scotland
4. LLTNPA
5. Scottish Government

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