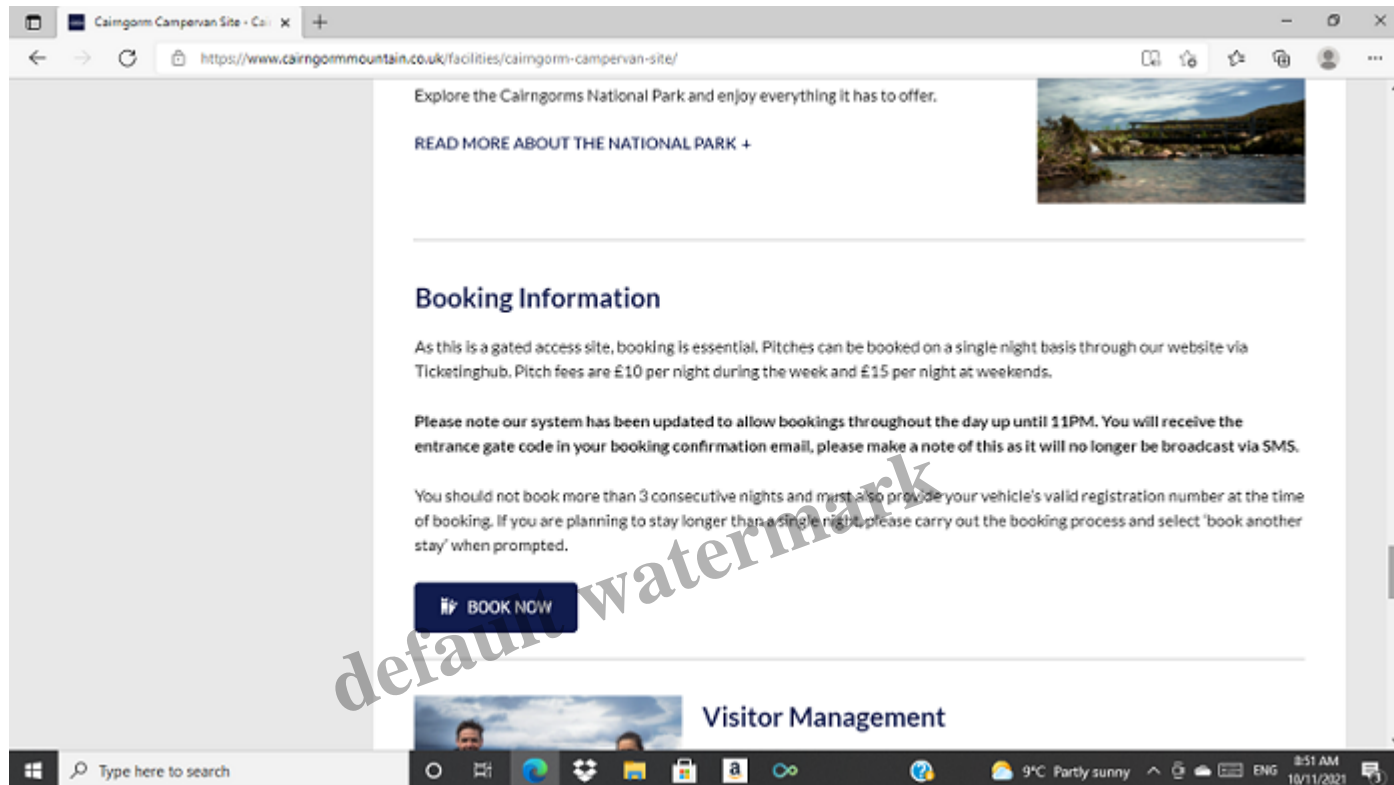


Coire na Ciste campervan park – HIE/CMSL lift their restrictions on access

Description



The statement in bold about changes in the entry system appears to have been added sometime between 6th and 10th October

Following my post which highlighted how Highlands and Island Enterprise (HIE) and Cairngorm Mountain Scotland Ltd (CMSL) were restricting access to the campervan park at Coire na Ciste to three time slots a day ([see here](#)), I am pleased to report that HIE/CMSL appear to have changed tack. According to the CMSL website (above) it appears that as long as campervanners pre-book, they can now gain access to the Ciste campervan parking area at any time up until 11pm each day.



Parkswatch can also report that there has been something of a clear-up and the apparently abandoned wooden railings which featured in my last post (see above) have now been removed

Unfortunately, this about turn has received very little publicity. The last news release on the CMSL website was dated 9th September and was advertising for an “inspirational” Chief Executive to “grow the business sustainably”. Parkwatch rather hopes that the reader who drew attention to the locked gates and who continued to press HIE after my last post drives her campervan into the ring!

On 6th October I was copied into an email from outgoing Chief Executive, Susan Smith, to that reader which stated:

“Please be assured that we will be reviewing all feedback received following this initial trial period of the facility and plan to implement any changes for the site reopening next season”.

Four days later the booking system has been changed – public pressure sometimes works!



Ciste campervan park 11th October. There were two campervans compared to three in the Cas car park and four on the downroad. Photo Credit Alan Bratney

What HIE doesn't appear to have appreciated yet is how information circulates around the campervanning world and unless they publicise the changes, they are unlikely to see increased bookings before the park closes for the "season" in two weeks time. Reducing the fees further – £5 is generally regarded as a fair charge for waste disposal – might help.

Meantime, I am very grateful to George Paton who has shared with me CMSL's response to a freedom of information request asking for a breakdown of the costs incurred in creating the campervan park:

Ciste Car Park Campervan Project

Date	Supplier	Description	Project	Net	Gross
01/04/2021	The Highland Council	Ciste Car park camper van planning app	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£1,125.00	£1,350.00
01/04/2021		Advertising Planning	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£147.00	£147.00
05/08/2021		Wood for recycling point	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£343.37	£412.04
04/08/2021		Goods construction for recycling point	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£279.30	£335.14
25/08/2021		Ciste Chemical Waste Facility	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£49,705.10	£59,646.12
18/08/2021		Orange Wrap for gate	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£121.80	£146.16
24/08/2021		Bins for waste recycling point	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£336.36	£403.63
31/08/2021		Signage	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£364.10	£436.92
17/08/2021		Code Lock	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£225.97	£271.16
31/08/2021		Hire of Drum Roller for Ciste Surfacing	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£354.55	£425.46
14/09/2021		Steel fabrication	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£801.23	£961.48
02/09/2021		Hanson Fast Set Aggregate for marking Bays	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£65.88	£79.06
07/09/2021		Everbuild for laying slabs	Campervan facility at Ciste car park	£118.04	£141.65

£53,987.70 £64,755.82

This shows that the creation of the chemical waste facility – much needed – incurred by far the largest expense. Apart from CMSL staff time, the cost of which is not shown, other costs are minimal and demonstrate that it should not be difficult to create basic sites for campervans, without chemical waste disposal points, across the Highlands. That would assist in managing visitor pressures in every local community. Where Government and HIE clearly require to take a lead is in paying for a strategic network of chemical disposal points. £2,400,000, a fraction of the cost of repairing the funicular, would pay for the installation of 40 across the Highlands. Let's hope that, whatever CMSL does, HIE really do learn from their experience of trying to create a campervan facility at Coire na Ciste for next year.

Category

1. Cairngorms

Tags

1. Cairn Gorm
2. HIE
3. Tourism
4. visitor management

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