

The implications of the clean-up of the A82 on west Loch Lomondside

Description



Layby on northbound A82, verges spotless, bin visible in distance. 15th October

On Friday I travelled up the A82 to Lochaber where I am staying for a week. The transformation of the

verges and laybys that followed the installation of litter bins by the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs, which I had blogged on a month ago ([see here](#)), has continued.

All the laybys I could see in passing were practically litter free, although in-between there was some evidence of litter tossed out of moving vehicles onto the verges. Sadly, there are some people who will litter whether or not bins are provided, but bins make it much easier to keep on top of the problem.

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Looking back down the first layby north of Luss. Argyll and Bute employee visible in jacket.

The first layby north of Luss is quite secluded above the main road with several parking bays. Every time I have visited over the last few years it has been blighted by litter and quite often fly-tipping. This time it was almost spotless. That was not just due to the bins – there is one for each parking bay. On entering we passed an Argyll and Bute Council van with an employee picking up litter. This from the Council that has steadfastly refused to install bins in the laybys unlike West Dunbartonshire on the first

section of the A82 beyond Balloch! Perhaps the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs litter bins, funded through the Green Infrastructure fund, has shamed the Council into action?

Just after taking this photo, we were passed by another van:



I was tempted to go and speak to both staff, partly to congratulate them, but then I couldn't have said anything critical about their management without risking getting them into trouble. The question I wanted to ask is how is it that Argyll and Bute Council and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority are both sending vans and staff to the same layby on the same day of the week at the

same time? I am fairly certain its not their fault, they only do what they are told, and the answer is that Argyll and Bute and LLTNPA senior management are incapable of working together and don't care about wasting resources.

The presence of two Argyll and Bute Councillors on the LLTNPA Board has made no difference to the two organisations being prepared to work together. We would be far better off if the frontline staff in the LLTNPA and Argyll and Bute were allowed to meet and sort out how they might best work together and with other organisations like FOLLAT, BEAR, who manage Scotland's Trunk Road and do an annual clean up of the A82, and the Helensburgh Community Service who since August have been helping keep the verges clean.

Funding for the litter bin project runs out at the end of this month but FOLLAT have told me they are trying to get the scheme extended until next April. They shouldn't be having to do this. The LLTNPA should be responsible for ensuring proper visitor infrastructure is in place in the National Park – that is why it was set up – and for co-ordinating ongoing clear up work. If, having been shown how to fix the litter problem the LLTNPA don't act by next April, they don't deserve to exist



I didn't spot any flytipping on the way up Loch Lomond but, later in the day, having stopped for a run in Glen Loy north of Banavie, came across two beds in the forest. These were a few hundred metres from the public road and past a gate that is normally locked. They were so deliberately placed, I wondered whether two people had enjoyed a night out under the stars before leaving them? Or perhaps they are an artwork?

My first reaction was that this flytipping might be a consequence of the local council charging for household waste disposal, a self-defeating policy measure if there ever was one. But Highland Council's Recycling Centre at Fort William takes unwanted household items for free. Highland Council does however charge for collecting bulk uplifts from outside someone's home ([see here](#)) and the cost of collecting these two beds would have been £48.14, more than many people could afford.

While one can only guess at what prompted someone to dump two beds here, it's quite likely that the cost of removing them will cost more than £48. The moral? Make litter and rubbish disposal easy and convenient, as FOLLAT have been trying to do on west Loch Lomond.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. Litter
2. LLTNPA
3. visitor management

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