

The review of the camping byelaws (1) â?? the LLTNPAâ??s failure to deliver the camping places it promised

## Description



Tent by no LLTNPA no camping sign at Rowardennan 20th March

The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires byelaws to be reviewed every ten years. Currently, the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) is secretly preparing a review of the camping bye laws, which prompted the creation of this blog, prior to a public consultation later this year. The review should start with some facts.

On 26th January 2016 the then Minister responsible for National Parks, Aileen McLeod, approved the the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) camping byelaws ([see here](#) for her letter). Ms McLeod, however, also delayed the implementation of the byelaws for a year, until 1st March 2017. This was to give more time to the LLTNPA (which had spent over two years secretly planning the byelaws [see here](#)) to increase camping provision in the National Park:

**Implementation Date.** In addition, I have decided that the byelaws should not be implemented until 1 March 2017 and this date will be specified on the face of the byelaws. I welcome the Park's assurances on the provision of an initial 300 camping places by this date and the addition of more provision in subsequent years which forms part of the Park's Camping Development Plan. This implementation date provides more than a year from the date of approval for the Park to complete this initial phase of camping provision.

Ten years later on 24th January 2026, I submitted a Freedom of Information request to the LLTNPA asking how many camping and campervan places they had provided in 2024. The LLTNPA's response [EIR 2026-003 Response](#) shows that not only have they failed to deliver on their commitment to increase the number of camping places after the initial 300, but they appear to have actually reduced the number of places people can lawfully camp with a camping permit.

### **Your Request**

You asked us to provide:

- a) the total number of camping places provided under the permit system created by the camping byelaws for the 2024/25 season as this was not stated in Gordon Watson's Visitor Season review 2025 given to the Board at its December meeting. If the number of permits/camping places varied during the season other than for temporary reasons (e.g. flooding) please provide me the number of camping places that were available all season, any new camping places added during the seasons and any camping places removed during the season.
- b) the total number of campervan places provided under the permit system for the 2024/25 season.

### **Our Response**

- a) Our records show that there was a maximum of 182 permits allocated for tent camping during the 2024/25 season. The precise number fluctuated for the following reasons:

- Coilessan (6 permits) closed in March and did not reopen.
- Inveruglas (5 tents and 4 motorhome permits) did not open until August.
- Balquhiddier Glen was reduced from 8 to 5 permits following reassessment of site's capacity.
- Loch Venachar North shore B was increased from 6 to 8 permits after similar reassessment.

Please also note that Tarbet Isle (5 permits) was closed this season due to the site being unsuitable after forestry operations. Its suitability will be reassessed in advance of the 2026 season.

- b) During season 2024-25, 30 permits were allocated to Motorhome camping, once the 3 Lochs Forest Drive and Inveruglas sites were fully operational.

As I pointed out in 2020 ([see here](#)) the LLTNPA resorted to jiggery-pokery to claim they had delivered 327 low cost camping places in their Annual Report to Scottish Ministers for 2019, a claim they repeated in the three year review of the camping management byelaws in March 2020:

#### Appendix 5(b): Low cost camping provision by Camping Management Zone (2019)

Area	Permit Areas and Informal Campsites (2019)	
	Tents	Motorhome
East Loch Lomond	43	0
West Loch Lomond	37	7
Trossachs West	32	0
Trossachs North	188	20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>27</b>
	<b>327</b>	

**Note:** Includes all permit areas; Loch Chon campsite; Loch Achray campsite; Loch Lubnaig campsite; Sallochy campsite; Hostelling Scotland Rowardennan camping provision.

Motorhome permits also cover campervans, for simplicity the word 'motorhome' is used.

Twenty-seven campervan places were included compared to the 30 claimed for last year. This was despite the LLTNPA's original intention to ban campervans from stopping off overnight in laybys in

the camping management zones proving unenforceable because everyone has a legal stop off overnight in a vehicle by the side of a public road ([see here](#)). In 2020 the 27 campervan places were shown to be over and above those required to meet the 300 target.

Of the campsites included in the 300 target, Loch Chon now offers 26 places, Loch Achray 17 and Salloch 20. The nine places at the Cabin on Loch Lubnaig ([see here](#)) and the camping area at Rowardennan no longer exist. That means there are now a total of 63 low cost places offered by the LLTNPA in the camping management zones on top of the 182 permits on offer last year, a grand total of 245. This is 55 places LESS than the target set by Scottish Ministers 10 years ago.

The LLTNPA's campsites, however, only open on 1st April, whereas the byelaws come into effect on 1st March. This means that this month the LLTNPA has fallen 118 places short of the minimum target set by Scottish Ministers:

## Get a permit

**Camping Management Byelaws cover popular lochshore areas of the National Park from 1st March to 30<sup>th</sup> September every year. During this time if you want to camp in these zones, you will need to book a permit. Camping permit areas are now open for bookings up to four weeks in advance.**

**If you are wild camping in the National Park outside of the Camping Management zones, remember to follow the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#).**

**The National Park Authority's campsites at [Loch Chon](#), [Loch Achray](#), [Inchcailloch](#) are now open for bookings, with availability up to 4 weeks in advance. Sites will re-open for bookings in early April.**

**Please Note: Coilessan will be closed for the season. Inveruglas toilets will be closed from 1st of March to the 20th of March. The Three Lochs Forest Drive remains closed for the season. Scottish Forestry Scotland carry out work.**

Screenshot 22nd March 2026. NB the Inchcailloch campsite is not in any Camping Management zones. Total..

Along with these campsites, no less than thirteen camping permit areas on Forest Drive are currently closed. These were created by FLS to enable the LLTNPA to reach their target, albeit several are unfit for camping ([see here](#)).

In summary it appears that at present the LLTNPA is now offering under half the minimum number of camping and camping permit places it promised Scottish Ministers it would deliver 10 years ago. Has the current responsible Minister, Mairi Gougeon, been told by the LLTNPA and here civil servants?

If the public consultation on the review of the camping byelaws is to be worth anything it would start with these facts, explore why the LLTNPA has failed to deliver its promises and then examine in detail the consequences. I am fairly confident that this won't happen but, meantime, a few more Freedom of Information requests to establish what LLTNPA staff and board members have been doing behind the scenes to manipulate the consultation process won't come amiss.

### **Category**

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

### **Tags**

1. camping
2. Camping bye laws
3. Forest and Land Scotland
4. Governance
5. LLTNPA
6. Scottish Government
7. visitor management

*default watermark*

### **Date Created**

March 24, 2026

### **Author**

nickkempe