

The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority's war on campervans and motorhomes

Description



The two "new" motorhome places the LLTNPA has created at Tarbet with waste disposal facilities on the right. The campervan appears to have ignored the signs indicating it should park in front of the post to the right. Photo January 2026



Photo credit Parkswatch reader

[This post was updated late on 14th April to reflect the fact the Slanj restaurant business no longer exists. The new business is called Kirk of the Lochs and no longer allows campervans to stay in their car park overnight]

The large car park owned by the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) at Tarbet had long been a popular overnight stopping off point for campervans and motorhomes. It was spacious and, for those wanting a meal or a drink, close to local hostelryes. The LLTNPA then added to the attraction of the site by adding a waste disposal point in 2020 ([see here](#)), still the only one in the National Park outside of formal sites.



Motorhomes in the Tarbet car park at 08.52 am on 14th August 2016 – prime holiday season and plenty of space

It all then started to go wrong. In 2022 the LLTNPA announced [\(see here\)](#) – Improved motorhome facilities including better parking and waste disposal. The LLTNPA’s initial plan for revamping the car park, however, ignored the potential to improve infrastructure for outdoor recreation and provided just four places for campervans/motorhomes [\(see here\)](#). Provision was then halved to two bays and the waste disposal point then moved from its ‘drive by’ location to one where motorhomes had to reverse either in or out – as show by the first photo.



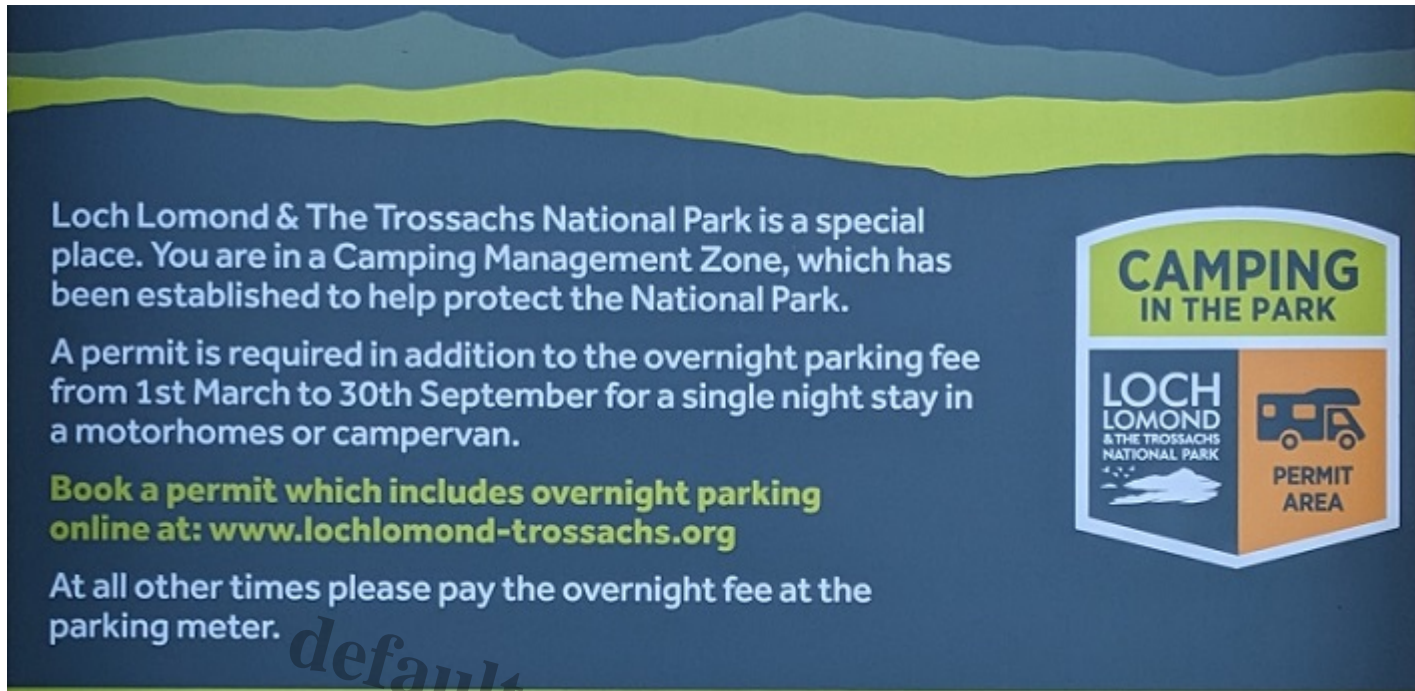
Part of the lower car parking area January 2026

Back in 2022-23 the LLTNPA had considered creating 'aires' for campervans and motorhomes as exist all over Europe ([see here](#)). Their site at Tarbet, with lots of space for parking large vehicles and reasonable facilities, would have been the ideal place to initiate this. Instead, the LLTNPA decided to restrict the numbers of campervans and motorhomes to a minimum and redirect them to other places with less good facilities.



Forest and Land Scotland's Honeymoon Bridge site is currently closed for forestry work and the Slanj restaurant overnight stopping off location no longer exists.

The now defunct Slanj restaurant, which had a much smaller car park, used to offer five overnight places for motorhomes for free. Compare that to the LLTNPA's car park which currently charges £11.50 a night. This is made up of a £4.50 camping permit fee:



Sign at Tarbet motorhome bay

and "Holiday Extras":

Holiday Extras

Optional extras

Vehicle Access Charge (Tarbet Motorhome)

There's a vehicle access charge of £7 per vehicle payable at the time of booking your camping means you can access the drive with your permit and won't need to pay at the machine on arriving by foot or by bike, or are a Blue Badge holder, access is free. Please display your Blue

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The LLTNPA also owns the nearby car parks at Firkin Point and Inveruglas. These are each larger than the former Slanj car park but only offer three and four overnight spaces for campervans respectively. During the camping byelaw "season" (1st March to 30th September), the LLTNPA only appears to charge £4.50 for a camping permit. The "Vehicle Access Charge" at Tarbet therefore appears of creating different charges for motorhomes at Tarbet than for other LLTNPA sites and from other vehicles there.

Forest and Land Scotland charges campervans £10 at Ardgarten (three places) under its Stay the Night scheme but without requiring a camping permit ([see here](#)). How can all these different charges be justified by two organisations who are supposed to be working together on visitor management?

The even more significant problem, however, is that the scale of provision along the A82, the most important route into to the western Highlands. This is completely inadequate to meet demand. As a consequence the laybys along the A82 are more often than not thronged overnight with campervans and motorhomes which have nowhere else to stop off. This has environmental and economic consequences. Since Covid the Friends of Loch Lomond and Trossachs had provided litter bins in 40 of the laybys but they have now lost all funding for this and the service collapsed at the start of March ([see here](#)). It only takes a few people to do the wrong thing and they end up in a horrible state. In terms of the rural economy it makes no sense to force campervans and motorhomes away from places like Tarbet where they could spend their money.

The problem is from the perspective of the LLTNPA Board and senior management, its cheaper for them to force campervans and motorhomes elsewhere where they become someone else's problem.

The LLTNPA's campervan and motorhome provision and the camping byelaws

The framework for this botched approach to managing campervans and motorhomes was created by the camping byelaws. The LLTNPA had initially intended to use the byelaws to restrict campervans and motorhomes throughout the four camping management zones, like tents, and instead create a few campervan permit areas in places like the laybys the north shore of Loch Earn. In doing so they unlawfully ignored ([see here](#)) byelaw 7 (b):

- (7) It shall be an offence for any person to sleep overnight in a stationary **vehicle** within a **Management Zone** unless:
- (a) they have been authorised to do so by the **Authority** under byelaw 11; or
 - (b) the vehicle is on a road.

The exemption in byelaw 7 (b) was included at the insistence of Transport Scotland to enable people to pull off a public road and sleep in a vehicle overnight for safety reasons. Its consequence was that campervans and motorhomes could stop off without a permit in every formal layby in the camping management zones and anywhere else it was possible for vehicles to pull off the road lawfully (since in law roads include an area on either side). That completely undermined the original rationale for including campervans in the camping byelaws ([see here](#)).

The LLTNPA has, however, never come clean on what happened. Nor have its senior management ever abandoned their wish to reduce the number of campervans and motorhomes stopping off overnight in the camping management zones.

One of the ways they have tried to get round Byelaw 7 (b) is by persuading partners, like Transport Scotland, to gradually block off places where people used to pull off the road, whether to enjoy the view

or stay the night. All this has done is concentrate more and more vehicles into formal laybys and undermined the ability of the public to enjoy the countryside..

But the LLTNPA have also specifically used the camping byelaws to to restrict the number of campervans and motorhomes using their own car parks:.

Motorhomes and campervan National Park

Camping Management Byelaws cover popular lochshore areas of the National Park from 1st to 30th September every year. During this time if you want to camp in these Management Zones, you will need to book a permit. Camping permit areas are now open for bookings 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](#), [Inchcraigs](#) are now open for bookings, with availability up to 4 weeks in advance.

Spot the errors ??? screenshot April 2026 . The reference to campervans and motorhomes will can't be used under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code NOT the Scottish Outdoor Access Code which applies to vehicles. And there are no places for them mentioned!

This information from the LLTNPA website on the camping byelaws is completely wrong. Campervanners and motorhomers don't need to book a permit to stay overnight in the camping management zones so long as it is by a road. Under Byelaw 7 campervanners and caravanners only need a permit when they are away from the road, such as on private drives and car parks, and where under clause (a) the LLTNPA has granted no exemption for overnight stays.

The LLTNPA does not publish maps of what land it consider to be part of the road network or the places off this network where it has granted exemptions for campervans and motorhomes to stay overnight. Visitors just have to assume that it has granted exemptions for the Slanj car park and the car parks provided by the FLS at Ardgarten and Honeymoon Bridge. (I have asked the LLTNPA for a complete list of exemptions).

Whatever exemptions it has granted to others, the LLTNPA has not exempted its own land for use by campervans and motorhomes but has using the byelaws to prevent them from stopping off overnight. The £500 fine and criminal record incurred for breaking the camping byelaws is far far greater than the

Fixed Penalty Notices that Police Scotland are now issuing for parking infringements by Loch Lubnaig and the Falls of Falloch ([see here](#)). The threat is explicitly referred to in the terms and conditions for use of the motorhome places at Tarbet ([see here](#)):

â??If you breach these permit conditions you also breach of byelaw 11 of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017. You may receive a warning or be reported for potential prosecution. You may also be required to leave the site.is is stateâ??

In respect of campervans and motorhomes, the camping byelaws have simply become a means of the LLTNPA protecting its own selfish interests. They represent another abuse of power by a National Park Authority which is completely unaccountable to the public who pay for it. The LLTNPA is due to consult on the review of the camping byelaws in July. It will be interesting to see what information they provide in that review to explain how they have been managing campervans and motorhomes and what, if any recommendations they make to improve current provision.

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Tags

1. Camping bye laws
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