

National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 7

Your Park 2nd Annual Update 2018



Paper for decision

1. Purpose

To present Members with the annual update on the second season of operation of The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017 for approval to submit to Scottish Ministers.

2. Recommendations

Board members are asked to:

- (i) **Approve** the annual update report attached as Appendix 1; and
- (ii) **Agree** that it be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan and Our 5-year Plan

The Camping Management Byelaws 2017 and the associated activities outlined in this annual update contribute to the following elements of Our 5-Year Plan and National Park Partnership Plan:

Our 5-Year Plan:

Priority 7: Policy-making

We explicitly connect and align our key strategy documents alongside the National Park Partnership Plan to deliver against our four aims of conservation, sustainability, enjoyment, and social and economic development.

Your Park - Camping Development Strategy - Identifies the priorities for camping management infrastructure developments.

National Park Partnership Plan:

Outcome 8: Visitor Management

The most popular parts of the National Park which experience pressures are managed to ensure that the quality of environment, visitor experience and community life are protected and enhanced.

4. Background

- 4.1 The East Loch Lomond Camping Byelaws introduced in 2011 successfully helped to tackle the historic problems of antisocial behaviour and over-use associated with wild camping on the busy lochshore sites in this area. In the light of this experience, a twelve-week consultation was carried out in late 2014 to seek the views of

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stakeholders on a similar package of measures to cover other areas of the National Park facing these pressures. The results of this consultation, combined with the experience of the East Loch Lomond byelaws, informed the proposals for a wider set of camping management and associated byelaws that the National Park Authority submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval.

4.2 On the 15th May 2015 a letter of application was submitted by the National Park Authority to Scottish Ministers. This sought confirmation of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws, using powers conferred upon the Authority in Paragraph 8 of Section 2 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The proposals submitted to the Scottish Ministers included:

- The implementation of seasonal camping byelaws across four Camping Management Zones covering less than 4% of the Park's 720 square miles
- The creation of a permit scheme to support the byelaws allowing informal camping in defined areas of the Camping Management Zones
- The creation of campsites with low cost bookable pitches and basic facilities
- Delivering 300 camping spaces in the first year of the byelaws operating, with more to be added in subsequent years
- Powers to deal with irresponsible fire-lighting (including damaging collection of firewood)
- The simultaneous revocation of the East Loch Lomond byelaws to coincide with the introduction of the new byelaws

4.3 Following a period of ministerial consideration the proposed Camping Management Byelaws were approved by Scottish Ministers on 26th January 2016 with two administrative conditions:

- 1) *'Ministers should be provided with a formal report of a review of the operation of the byelaws no later than 3 years after implementation. The report should consider how effective the new camping management measures have been in reducing the instances of environmental damage and irresponsible behaviour as a direct result of implementation.'*
- 2) *'The National Park will provide Scottish Ministers with an annual update on the implementation of the byelaws.'*

This report attached as Appendix 1 has been prepared as the second of these annual updates.

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- 4.4 Following an Executive Summary in Section 1, the purpose of the report is outlined within Section 2, with background context on the Camping Management Byelaws in Section 3. The annual update has been prepared as an account of the experiences of operating the byelaws in the second season, taking into account those of the first season in 2017. It sets out, in Section 4, all of the areas of work undertaken to prepare for the second season of byelaw operation, in order to ensure their effective operation and that the specific undertakings made to Scottish Ministers are being met. The experiences of implementing the byelaws during the season are set out in Section 5 with the feedback received from people who used Loch Chon campsites and permit areas in report Appendices 4 and 5. Section 6 gives detail on the environmental and socio-economic data and frameworks being developed and collected in order to monitor the impacts of the camping byelaws. Section 7 outlines the key challenges and areas for improvement moving forward, which have been identified by operational review, feedback and monitoring. It also lists areas for further focus in 2019.
- 4.5 The report does not draw conclusions as to the impacts of the byelaws, as these will be outlined fully in the formal three year report to Scottish Ministers in early 2020. Board are asked to note however that the Your Park programme is progressing on track, with useful monitoring data being collected, high levels of compliance with the camping byelaws and a welcome increase in families enjoying camping in the National Park. Challenges still remain, but the National Park Authority is working in partnership with others to tackle these and seek further improvements.
- 4.6 Board are also advised that the Camping Development Strategy, which was approved by Board on 24th October 2016 is currently undergoing review. The Strategy set out how 300 places for camping within the Camping Management Zones were to be delivered, along with how the Park Authority would invest in camping related facilities within 2017 and in subsequent years. Much of this strategy has now been delivered with over 300 places available for campers and motorhome users over 45 permit areas, including the development of the Three Lochs Forest Drive as a public camping destination, and the construction of the Loch Chon and Loch Achray campsites.
- 4.7 The revised Camping Development Strategy will shift its focus from the creation of new infrastructure to working with others to refine what has been developed and improving the quality of infrastructure that supports the experience of all visitors including campers. This will include looking at opportunities in areas of the National Park outwith the Camping Management Zones.

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4.8 Conclusion

Board Members are asked to approve Appendix 1 as the second annual update on the implementation of the Camping Management Byelaws 2017 and agree that it is submitted to Scottish Ministers to fulfil one of the conditions of approval.

Appendix 1 – The Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Camping Management Byelaws 2017 Second Annual Update to Scottish Ministers, 2018

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