



The Camping Management Byelaw Review 2027

Agenda Item 5

National Park Authority Board Meeting Monday 8 June 2026

Paper for Decision

Contents

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Recommendation(s).....	2
3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan / Corporate Plan	3
4. An introduction to the Camping Management Byelaws.....	3
5. The context for the Review	4
6. Developing the Review	6
7. Positive impacts of the Camping Management Byelaws.....	7
8. Proposals for changes to the Camping Management Byelaws	8
9. Other matters considered.....	9
10. Other changes to the Camping Management Byelaws	11
11. Public consultation and ongoing engagement.....	11
12. Next steps following public consultation.....	13
13. Conclusions.....	13
14. Appendices	14

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper outlines the purpose of the Camping Management Byelaws, the statutory context for a review, the work undertaken to date and the draft proposals for change.
- 1.2. Appendix 1 accompanies the paper and demonstrates the draft consultation document recommended for the required 12-week statutory public consultation to ensure the review is as considered as possible.
- 1.3. Appendix 2 provides proposed changes to the Camping Management Byelaws
- 1.4. Appendix 3 provides proposed Byelaws to take to public consultation
- 1.5. Appendix 4 provides Consumer Duty Assessment

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Board are asked to:

- I. **Note** the informal engagement that has taken place with significant stakeholders to date in respect of gauging views on the impact of the byelaws and on any areas of change that should be considered.
- II. **Agree** that the Byelaws continue to be required and the review should primarily focus on any amendments deemed necessary to improve their effectiveness.
- III. **Agree** that (for the reasons set out in this report) the National Park Authority does not at this stage propose additional areas to be covered by the Byelaws but continues to listen to stakeholder views on the merits of any inclusions or deletions during the consultation.
- IV. **Agree** that the Byelaw amendments as set out in Appendix 2 (and summarised in this report) are appropriate proposed draft improvements to use for the purposes of consultation.
- V. **Approve** the attached draft consultation document for the purposes of carrying out a 12-week consultation.
- VI. **Note** that officers may undertake further minor editorial amendments to the document and associated digitally accessible version prior to publication.
- VII. **Note** that the outcome of the consultation and final proposed amendments will be presented to the Board at a later date and prior to submission to Scottish Ministers by no later than 28th February 2027.

3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan / Corporate Plan

3.1. The requirement to review the Camping Management Byelaws every 10yrs is a statutory responsibility, however the process and objectives of the exercise link into two key outcomes within our current National Park Partnership Plan and Corporate Plan:

NPPP 2.1 Connecting Everyone with Nature and Climate

- 2045 Outcome - A place for all to enjoy safely and responsibly. Opportunities for everyone to value and enjoy the special qualities / benefits of the National Park safely
- Objective 4 - Support Safe, Responsible Access. A wide range of enjoyable and safe visitor experiences which are managed in a way which is compatible with nature and climate considerations and supporting thriving communities.
- Action - Operating and keeping under review the Loch Lomond and Camping Byelaws to encourage positive behaviour and protect the National Park's sensitive environment.

Corporate Plan - Our Approach is Effective and Influential

- Outcome 1 - By 2030 we will have increased our influence with others and delivered our organisational and statutory responsibilities in an effective and efficient way that helps achieve the NPPP vision.
- Objective 1.1 - Deliver our organisational and statutory responsibilities as effective, efficient cornerstones focused on delivering the NPPP
- Action - Complete the camping byelaw review by the end of February 2027.

4. An introduction to the Camping Management Byelaws

4.1. Seasonal Camping Management Byelaws were introduced across Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park in 2017. This followed similar byelaws that were introduced on East Loch Lomond in 2011 and had been shown to be effective. The Byelaws aim to protect the environment, ensure that there are a wide range of opportunities for people of all backgrounds to camp at accessible locations within the National Park and minimise incidents

of anti-social behaviour and disturbance to communities, businesses, and other visitors.

- 4.2. The Byelaws are seasonal, in effect from 1st March to 30th September every year, and cover popular lochshore areas called 'Camping Management Zones'. They do not cover the whole National Park.
- 4.3. Between March and September people wishing to camp within the Camping Management Zones need to book into a camping permit area or stay at a campsite.
- 4.4. The Byelaws also manage the responsible use of fires and inappropriate collection of wood in these areas.
- 4.5. The Byelaws are part of a wider package of measures and approaches used to manage visitor pressures in popular areas of the National Park. Positive engagement with visitors is always a primary focus for National Park Rangers, alongside the provision of visitor infrastructure and services, before considering enforcement measures.

The National Park's provision of camping services is supported through a range of public and private partners who offer camping facilities within the Park, but the management of the Byelaws is the sole responsibility of the National Park Authority.

An earlier report, completed as a review of the first three years of operation of the Byelaws (which was a condition of Scottish Ministers' approval), showed that the Camping Management Byelaws had delivered improvements in reducing environmental damage and antisocial behaviour. We have remained committed to ensuring that camping in the National Park remains sustainable, enjoyable and inclusive through the ongoing management of the Byelaws.

5. The context for the Review

- 5.1. Paragraph 8 of Schedule 2 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 ("2000 Act") provides for the Park Authority's powers to make byelaws, for the purposes of:

- 1) protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park,*
- 2) preventing damage to the land or anything in, on or under it,*
- 3) securing the public's enjoyment of, and safety in, the National Park*

5.2. In particular, a National Park Authority may make byelaws:

- 1) *to regulate or prohibit the lighting of fires,*
- 2) *to prohibit the depositing of rubbish and the leaving of litter,*
- 3) *for the prevention or suppression of nuisances,*
- 4) *to regulate the use of vehicles (other than the use of vehicles on a road within the meaning of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (c.50)),*
- 5) *to regulate the exercise of recreational activities.*

5.3. The National Park Authority has a duty to review the Byelaws in line with the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Civic Government Act (Scotland) 1982. This means that a National Park Authority needs to review byelaws at intervals of not more than 10 years and in the case of the Camping Management Byelaws 2027, no later than the 28th of February 2027.

The review looks at:

- how the Byelaws have worked over the last ten years;
- their impact on the environment, communities and visitors;
- whether they need to adapt to changing trends or new issues since their implementation.

It should make recommendations for any necessary changes to the Byelaws, be this removing Byelaws, adding new ones or making amendments to the existing Byelaws.

5.4. The review is completed when the final proposed Byelaws have been submitted to Scottish Government Ministers ('Scottish Ministers'). This means that the implementation date of any proposed changes to the Byelaws can come into effect after the 28th of February 2027, subject to the direction and approval of Scottish Ministers. If a review has been completed, the existing Byelaws can remain active until such date as Scottish Ministers decide that changes to the Byelaws should come into force.

5.5. Priority has been given to completing the Byelaw review within the prescribed timeframe. At this stage, no specific implementation date has been proposed. Should Scottish Ministers be minded to approve the proposed changes when they are submitted to them, then sufficient time will be required to ensure the following preparations can be made:

- Communicating the changes to campers and motorhome users to ensure that any new byelaws and procedures are fully understood in advance,

- Implementing any new physical measures (signage, infrastructure, etc) and operating procedures (including staff training) required to enforce the byelaws.

6. Developing the Review

6.1. In 2025 an internal project team was set up to begin the process of reviewing the Camping Management Byelaws. The team consists of experienced staff responsible for managing the existing byelaws, legal experts and other specialist staff as required.

6.2. The team analysed the bank of evidence gathered since 2017 on the operation/management of the Byelaws. This initial analysis identified five key topics to investigate further in addition to several minor technical procedural issues (see section 9 - Other Changes to the Byelaws). These five key topics included:

- **Geographical area covered by the Byelaws**
- **Time period that the Byelaws are in effect**
- **Impacts of fires**
- **Motorhomes and campervans**
- **Protections for staff**

6.3. After identifying these topics, several draft proposals (with associated Byelaw changes and amendments) were developed. When considering the proposals, six principles were applied to each of them to test their viability. These tests included:

- **Evidence base:** the availability of sufficient data and human experience;
- **Proportionality:** the balance of a restriction imposed by a corrective measure and the severity of the nature of the prohibited act;
- **Enforceability:** the capability of a proposal and associated byelaws to be enforced;
- **Practicability:** the capability of the National Park Authority to resource the management of any proposed changes;
- **Impact:** ensuring that proposals will not only address an issue sufficiently to justify changes but do not themselves cause additional issues;

- **Alternatives:** ensuring that there are not other ways of addressing these issues that are more suitable than the legal recourse such as educational campaigns or infrastructure improvements.

These principles were applied to sift potential Byelaw changes into a set of proposals deemed practical and proportionate to take forward to wider consultation.

An initial informal stage of engagement allowed these ideas and proposals to be explored with key stakeholders to help refine what is now being recommended to Board members as a basis for public consultation.

135 stakeholders were engaged in this pre-consultation phase, including:

- Local recreation groups
- Businesses and landowners
- Community Councils
- Emergency services
- National recreation groups
- Environmental NGOs
- Local Authorities

6.4. This engagement included holding dedicated workshops and one-to-one discussions. These discussions involved a broad range of views and provided useful insights and clarity on topics being considered. Generally, stakeholders were supportive of the existing Byelaws, giving officers comfort that no major alterations were needed to the proposals ahead of the public consultation. Any more detailed comments gathered will be discussed and considered further during the public consultation and assessed as part of the analysis of that process.

7. Positive impacts of the Camping Management Byelaws

7.1. The initial proposals discussed with stakeholders, and those proposed for the public consultation have been developed based on the continuous monitoring of camping-related issues by our officers and evidence gathered since 2017 through the management of the Byelaws. Key evidence and insights are presented within the draft consultation document (Appendix 1) to provide context for the proposals.

7.2. These show that the camping permit areas and low-cost campsites, introduced alongside the Byelaws to support accessible and responsible

camping at popular lochshores, have been extremely popular with consistently high satisfaction scores from campers.

- 7.3. The Byelaws do not appear to be excluding those from more deprived areas from camping, with an equal spread of people coming to camp from all Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) categories. Over 400 groups from organised charities, education and inclusion groups have been supported to camp for free through a camping authorisation scheme.
- 7.4. Within the Camping Management Zones, camping mainly takes place in permit areas and campsites which has reduced pressure on other locations in these Zones. Complaints about camping have also significantly reduced and there has only been a very small number of complaints about negative camping behaviours in other areas of the National Park since the Byelaws were introduced. Other popular lochshore recreation activities also do not appear to have been negatively impacted by the Byelaws.
- 7.5. The vast majority of people have camped responsibly with a very small number having had their details taken in relation to a breach of the Byelaws.
- 7.6. Although not all environmental impacts can be directly attributed to camping, data recorded by National Park rangers indicates that damage to the environment has reduced both in permit areas and in the wider Camping Management Zones.
- 7.7. Overall, the Byelaws, combined with proactive engagement, information and infrastructure to support responsible camping have had a positive impact.

8. Proposals for changes to the Camping Management Byelaws

While there have been several positive impacts, two key issues have been identified that could be addressed more effectively through potential changes to the Byelaws:

- Increasing number of fires
- Increasing incidence of aggressive behaviour towards staff

Based on evidence gathered and through the initial engagement, the following proposals and the associated Byelaw changes are recommended to be taken forward to public consultation.

- 8.1. **Proposal 1 - Fires and barbecues**: it is proposed that the Byelaws be adjusted to make it an offence to have a fire or barbecue directly on the

ground within a Camping Management Zone. A contained fire off the ground, for example in a portable fire pit or bowl, would reduce the impact on the environment and the risk of fires getting out of control. An additional change would make it an offence not to extinguish a fire if asked to do so by a Ranger where the fire is either not compliant or deemed to pose a risk to the wider environment.

This would be a proportionate approach to reduce environmental damage and allow appropriate responses at times of high wildfire risk and provides clarity to campers and to the Rangers that are enforcing the byelaw. With the changing climate, high wildfire risk warnings are becoming more frequent and this would allow the National Park Authority to restrict campfires and barbecues within the CMZs when warnings have been issued. The byelaw will continue to address irresponsible fires for instance at the base of a tree but will additionally prevent damage from fires on the ground. It should be noted that the Scottish Government recently introduced a Strategic Wildfire Action Plan to encourage public bodies and land managers to proactively prevent wildfires.

- 8.2. **Proposal 2 - Protection of staff:** it is proposed that an addition is made to the Byelaws making it an offence not only to obstruct an officer in the proper execution of their duties but to behave in an aggressive manner, threaten or be abusive towards a National Park officer.

This would give additional weight to any case that was taken forward to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal where this behaviour had been experienced by a staff member.

- 8.3. The draft consultation document (Appendix 1) sets out fully these two proposals being recommended to be taken forward for public consultation in detail with supporting evidence.

9. Other matters considered

- 9.1. After further consideration three of the key topics discussed with stakeholders did not result in any proposed changes (other than minor amendments) to the Camping Management Byelaws. This is either because they did not meet the evidence threshold or alternative visitor management measures would be more suited to addressing the issue.

These topics are:

- Areas covered by the Byelaws

- Timing of the Byelaws
- Motorhomes and campervans

These issues and the rationale for not taking forward any related to proposals for changes to the Byelaws are presented in more detail in the draft consultation document (Appendix 1).

- 9.2. During the Byelaw Review process to date, a range of other potential proposals have also been explored by the National Park Authority and in discussion with stakeholders. These topics are not proposed to be taken forward at this stage due to either failing the six principles outlined in section 6.3 or not being within the scope of the Byelaw Review. Some of these issues are not specific to camping or localised to just the National Park where a national approach is required.

Matters discussed but not being taken forward as part of this process include:

- Increasing camping provision
- Addressing littering using a Byelaw
- Addressing irresponsible toileting using a Byelaw
- Banning fires and disposable barbecues in the Camping Management Zones or across the whole National Park, or making any fire-related changes cover the whole year
- Removing the offence of sleeping in a vehicle overnight
- Amending the existing Byelaw relating to restricting overnight sleep in a vehicle to make it more easily enforceable
- Introducing a Byelaw to make causing nuisance to communities or other campers an offence

- 9.3. Currently, if an alleged byelaw contravention is assessed to be worthy of charging an individual, the only way to do this is to report the case directly to the Crown Office. An alternative to this would be to introduce disposal methods such as Fixed Penalty Notices, which are currently available to designated National Park staff for offences such as littering under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Having this type of alternative for more straightforward byelaw breaches could assist with both the efficiency and the proportionality of enforcing the byelaws.

Discussions with stakeholders suggested there would be general support for this concept. The Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2026 has created an enabling power for National Park Authorities to use Fixed Penalty Notices for defined categories of byelaw breach. Secondary legislation (yet to be

developed) will set out how a fixed penalty notice system will operate in practice, and this will require to be approved by the Scottish Parliament (expected in 2027). It is also worth noting that the same Act has given local authorities byelaw making powers to help prevent wildfires.

10. Other changes to the Camping Management Byelaws

- 10.1. As well as the two key proposed changes to the Byelaws outlined above, several other minor changes and amendments are being recommended as part of this review.
- 10.2. These include new Byelaws addressing wilful damage to signage and water safety equipment, amendments to some definitions, removal of some definitions, amendments to existing byelaws and removal of some existing Byelaws.
- 10.3. These changes are to ensure the Byelaws are clear, consistent and both easier to follow and to implement. Details of these proposed changes can be found in the full table of proposed changes to the byelaws (**Appendix 2**) and the set of the proposed Byelaws to take to public consultation (**Appendix 3**).

11. Public consultation and ongoing engagement

- 11.1. Subject to Board approval, the public consultation on the proposed updates to the Byelaws will run for 12 weeks from the week commencing Monday 29th June. The consultation document (**Appendix 1**) will be made available on the National Park Authority website and in hard copy on request at the following locations:

National Park buildings:

- National Park HQ,
- Balloch Duncan Mills Memorial Slipway
- Balmaha Visitor Centre

Public Libraries:

- Balloch Library
- Callander Library
- Dunoon Library

- Helensburgh Library
- Killin Library
- West Dunbartonshire Council Office, Dumbarton
- Stirling Council Customer First Office

11.2. Responses to the consultation will be collected via an online survey on the National Park Authority website. The survey will be designed to be easy to complete and will be tested internally to ensure this. Paper copies of this survey will also be available at the locations listed above.

11.3. The consultation will be supported through a full communications and engagement plan. It will be advertised through local newspapers, the National Park Authority website and social media channels. Physical posters with QR codes directing people to the survey will also be distributed to key visitor sites including the campsites. All campers who use the campsites or permit areas during the consultation period will receive this follow up link promoting the consultation too.

We are also appointing a consultant to support the promotion of the consultation as well as analysis of the results. They will host an in-person and online briefing during the consultation period for members of the public to learn more about the consultation and how they can respond.

National Park Rangers and Volunteer Rangers will be briefed and will be able to answer common questions on the Review and encourage visitors to complete the survey. A slide deck and briefing materials will be available for wider National Park staff to promote the consultation through existing National Park stakeholder networks. We will continue to engage with those key stakeholders who joined the preliminary workshops to ensure that we receive a full consultation response from them, and also host a session with the National Park Youth Committee to encourage them to complete the consultation.

11.4. The public consultation exercise has been fully assessed through an Equalities Impact Assessment to ensure that all audiences are able to engage in the consultation, and no one is excluded from the process. Alongside use of digital tools to enhance accessibility, we are seeking the support of a consultant to translate the consultation document into an easy read version, which will be available online and on request on paper.

11.5 The results of the consultation will be analysed by an independent external consultant and collated in a report to inform any changes to the proposed

draft byelaws before they are presented to the National Park Authority Board and if approved, subsequently Scottish Government Ministers for approval.

12. Next steps following public consultation

- 12.1. Once the public consultation is closed, the project team will be refining the proposals and core review elements based on analysis of the consultation responses. A draft of the Camping Management Byelaws 2027 will then be presented to the National Park Authority Board for approval in December 2026.
- 12.2. Subject to Board approval, the proposed Byelaws will be published online and made available at National Park Authority Offices for a period of one month before they are submitted to Scottish Ministers for comment and approval by 28/02/2027.
- 12.3. Once submitted to Scottish Ministers, officers will liaise with Scottish Government to answer any questions, secure final approval of the new Byelaws and agree a proposed implementation date.
- 12.4. Once approved by Scottish Ministers, officers will continue to liaise with key stakeholders to ensure campers and other stakeholders are fully aware of any changes before the new Byelaws are implemented. We will undertake any physical and procedural measures, such as the installation signage for example, required to implement the new Byelaws and ensure staff are adequately trained. The scope of this work will determine the proposed appropriate date for the new byelaws coming into force.

13. Conclusions

- 13.1. This paper and the accompanying appendices outline the analysis and consideration which have led officers to conclude on the proposals for changes to the Camping Management Byelaws recommended for the purposes of consultation. This has been drawn from the experiences of our staff operating the existing byelaws, the data and learning we have gathered and the informal engagement to date with stakeholders.
- 13.2. The informal stakeholder engagement undertaken to date has given comfort that there is general consensus across the core issues that the Byelaw review needs to address and has helped officers develop pragmatic solutions.
- 13.3. Given that the wide range of user groups all have their own interests and priorities it is unrealistic to expect that all will agree on the specifics of the

proposals we are proposing to consult on. The forthcoming 12-week public consultation will provide an important sounding board for the proposals and help us gather more valuable insights to help make improvements. It is also likely to bring forward consultation responses advocating more radical approaches and the Board will have to consider all views as part of finalising the Byelaw changes before submitting them to Scottish Ministers for approval by the end of February 2027.

13.4. The proposals presented in this report draw on the in-depth experience of our staff who operate the current Byelaws and observe behaviours in the Camping Management Zones, the rich data we have and the insights of various recreation groups and stakeholders. The proposed changes are proportionate, balanced and critically have the potential to reduce the negative impacts associated with camping whilst ensuring an accessible, enjoyable experience for all visitors and campers alike.

13.5. The draft consultation document attached to this report (Appendix 1) and the consultation process ahead are designed to be as inclusive and informative as possible. To make the information in the document fully accessible online, the contents of the consultation document will be broken down into fully accessible HTML webpages too. We have endeavoured to present complex data and experience in a digestible and accessible format to help illicit informed and engaged response to the key issues we are seeking to address. Board members are therefore asked to approve the recommendations in Section 2 of this report.

14. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft consultation document
- Appendix 2 – Table of changes to the Camping Management Byelaws
- Appendix 3 – Proposed Camping Management Byelaws in full
- Appendix 4 – Consumer Duty Impact Assessment

Author(s): *James Downie, Ranger Service Manager
Matt Buckland, Visitor Operations Manager
Kenny Auld, Head of Visitor Services*

Executive Sponsor: Gordon Watson, Chief executive Officer