

Clunie Loch meeting 3

2nd March 2021

1930 hours

Nature Scot visited and were concerned about vandalism around the loch. They want to restrict the number of tents, especially near the bridge where the outflow of the loch is and the promontory where three bins are. This is due to the damage to trees.

In order to restrict the number of tents it is thought that signage is unlikely to work and is not enforceable by police or community wardens. The plan is for local land owners to continue making physical barriers with large rocks and leaving spaces where tents could go.

They want to restrict the number of fishing boats on the loch to three and ban any motorised boats, due to aquatic flora, such as Slender Naiad (*Najas Flexilis*).

There was discussion about sealing off the beach area with a gate. This could be managed for kayaks and paddleboards but prevent motorised boats access. This is being organised.

With regard to fishing there is a local man who is prepared to police this. Permission is required from Nature Scotland for land owners to fish on the loch and this is in process. The plan is to use basic fishing guidelines similar to that used on Lake of Menteith, which includes a simple code of practice.

Also Nature Scot want to specifically look at education regarding the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Historic Environment Scotland visited and looked at designated sites and updated their records which had not been done for ten years. Along with Perth and Kinross Council they say they can stop fires on designated sites.

Policing the local hotspots will be increased until we leave tier 4 of Covid restrictions. Visitor management spoke with Sergeant with Blairgowrie Police. She said police will be stricter and so reduce the antisocial behaviour. There will also be the community wardens and volunteers at the lochside.

Visitor Management have been asked to speak with the sergeant what we can do about fires, not damaging trees and motor boats use.

Signage by primary school children is being organised by a community council volunteer. This would be as a competition and an opportunity for some education about the way the loch and heritage is treated. Calum Mclean is a wild swimmer who makes films. He is happy to do a short educational film. Contact has been made with the Royal Geographical Society who would also like to do a piece on the competition.

We were asked for three topics on the sign. Topics discussed were litter, human waste, fires, tree damage and impact on nature. Some of the phrases used elsewhere were Take your litter home, Leave no trace and Love it like a local. It was thought that the children should come up with their own phrases and pictures though. It was decided that the volunteer would speak to the Greenspace team for some ideas and then come back to the group with some drafts.

Car parking is being planned with visitor management. This considers where about 16 parking spaces will be placed, as well as the road and verge works involved. Also includes the signage of parking areas and the clearway. The aim is to fit in sympathetically with the natural habitat.

One landowner plans to scrape away parking areas and then put down hardcore. Visitor management will organise delivery of the hardcore when ready. The individuals involved in roads department and signage will be followed up. The aim is to get it done before or just after Easter.

Portaloos have been discussed with some local residents as well as at the meeting. People were not keen, with concerns about how they look, cleanliness and the possible vandalism of them. Equally people want to stop the human waste left by the loch. It was decided to go ahead with portaloos but as a trial for the season. Clunie Loch can have 2 which would be serviced twice a week. They would be put down for the season from the beginning of April. Three places were discussed and relevant land owners would be contacted regarding this. There is also a requirement of a small area of hardstanding which is above the water level when flooding. Hopes were that the Clearway will also reduce numbers and therefore the volume of waste.

Discussion then moved to other longer term solutions such as composting toilets. Then it was thought that this could be difficult to manage as just one camper van emptying their chemical waste would damage it. Toilets as a permanent facility could be potentially funded by the government, however, it was pointed out that SEPA would likely object to a septic tank. Also locals have not been keen on permanent toilets and so it would be for future discussion.

Fires will still be as planned. To trial large metal wheel inners as fire pits. People would be asked to bring their own wood. It was discussed that it is difficult to police and some people will always have fires even with signs. With the pits then it is easier to clean and less likely to spread as a fire risk. One land owner has been planning this.

Alcohol Byelaw was spoken of and the plan is to continue to go through the process even if it takes time. Until it goes to public consultation we won't know if there will be any problems in implementing it.

A **Community** update is now required. So an overview will be typed up for local residents and also for the Blairgowrie Advertiser.