



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01751

Name of petitioner

Kirsteen Currie

Petition title

Create no wild camp zones in Scotland

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to create legislation to enable local authorities to create no wild camp zones in Scotland.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I have been campaigning for behavioural change since 2017, a campaign which has been taken up by national newspapers and news broadcasts on TV. I have raised the issue with the creators of the NC500 organisation, my constituency MSP and Police Scotland.

I have raised the issue with local councillors in the Western Isles, who reported the same concerns and noted that there was little that they could do within current legislation.

I have received letters and emails from people throughout Scotland and the UK, offering their support to my campaign and highlighting that this is a serious issue in their area too.

In March 2019, I travelled to the Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest to speak to people from throughout Europe who have similar issues to ours but who have enacted many different forms of legislation to counter the negative impact that wild camping is having on their environment.

Petition background information

Currently there is no legislation that local authorities can utilise to allow them to prohibit wild camping.

The action I am calling for in my petition would allow local authorities, in consultation with the relevant public bodies and subject to public consultation, to create zones where wild camping is prohibited to protect the environment and infrastructure of an area.

The issue of wild camping has been apparent since the inception of the popular NC500 route around the north of Scotland. Its impact on our environment and infrastructure has been considerable and it is becoming exceptionally problematic for local authorities and public bodies to deal with at great expense to the public purse. It is clear from my initial campaign that this is an issue affecting all parts of Scotland and that informal encouragement has not been sufficient to stop the degradation of our infrastructure and environment. Even with increased focus on responsible camping from public authorities and the NC500 organisation the situation appears to be getting worse rather than better.

The route of the NC500 is becoming totally unsustainable for small rural communities in the North of Scotland. The infrastructure is showing signs of overuse and disrepair, with the local authority unable to pay for improvements and repairs. Fragile roadsides and passing places are being used by campervans and tents as free overnight pitches and this is not only having a negative impact on the physical infrastructure, but also on road safety.

Many locations also have problems with litter and campervan toilets being emptied at the side of the road. Environmentally speaking, many places that are not appropriate for wild camping are suffering and there is little that the local authority or any public agency can do to prevent people from camping in inappropriate places.

Any legislation which limited wild camping would also require to be flexible enough to allow local authorities to impose wild camping bans during periods of extreme dry weather. There have been many devastating wildfires throughout Scotland ignited as a result of careless camping.

Introducing no camp zones would allow local authorities to encourage responsible tourism and limit the burden that is currently placed upon them by repairs and environmental work to rectify the problems created by wild campers. It would also bolster the local economy of fragile areas by encouraging campers to use campsites and dispose of their waste responsibly there.

Unique web address

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/wildcamping>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

24 / 09 / 2019

Comments to stimulate online discussion

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Do you agree that having legislation in place for local authorities to create no wild camp zones would provide the ideal compromise to protect the environment and infrastructure and encourage responsible tourism?