# Residents and council tackle rising antisocial behaviour at Loch of Clunie amid visitor surge



Residents of Perthshire are grappling with the less savoury repercussions of increased tourism as visitors flock to the picturesque Loch of Clunie, near Blairgowrie. The recent warm weather has prompted a surge in visitors, leading to a resurgence of issues reminiscent of the height of the Covid pandemic. Local inhabitants report an alarming rise in antisocial behaviour, including noisy gatherings, littering, illegal camping, and dangerous parking, which have begun to overshadow the natural beauty of the area.

In a region renowned for its tranquil surroundings, residents now find themselves in distressing situations, feeling unsafe during busy periods. Instances of trespassing, alcohol-fuelled parties, and even theft have forced many to reconsider their outdoor routines. Janice Willsher of the Loch of Clunie Preservation Group illustrated the community's frustrations, stating, “People are pretty fed up, to be honest. But most visitors aren’t coming here to cause problems. It’s the minority who are ruining it for everyone else.”

The Loch of Clunie Preservation Group, founded in June 2020 during a surge of public concern regarding crime and antisocial behaviour, has grown into a registered charity determined to protect the loch and its surroundings. This initiative was particularly sparked by a stabbing incident that led to increased calls for intervention from local authorities. Over the years, the group has collaborated with Perth and Kinross Council to implement various protective measures, such as installing portable toilets and bins, and constructing clear signage. They have also secured funding for an educational sign that highlights the loch’s status as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, underlining its ecological importance.

Despite the local council's reassurances that the tasks undertaken by the seasonal visitor rangers will continue—with some rangers remaining in place—the community's anxieties persist. The responsibilities have now been integrated into the council’s Community Support and Enforcement Service, a shift that residents hope will maintain the protective efforts while addressing the challenges posed by increased visitor numbers and irresponsible behaviours.

Residents remain proactive in their efforts to mitigate problems. The Preservation Group has effectively organised community-driven initiatives, coordinating efforts to combat littering and ensuring safety through volunteer patrols. “It’s not that we don’t want people to come,” remarked local visitor Theresa Crichton. “We just need to deal with the ones who abuse it and spoil it for everyone else.” Efforts like these are bolstered by a community WhatsApp group, where local issues are quickly reported and escalated to the relevant authorities.

The situation at Loch of Clunie has also brought to light broader concerns regarding the rising trend of wild camping in the area, with local officials advocating for stricter regulations. Reports of vandalism have surfaced, including incidents where visitors have unlawfully chopped down trees for firewood, a scenario that underscores the need for responsible behaviour. Authorities have since implemented measures to curb such activities and protect the area’s natural beauty, such as fast-tracking traffic orders to manage road access and prevent obstruction of emergency vehicles.

Furthermore, residents are voicing calls for a comprehensive review of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, which has not kept pace with the current challenges of environmental preservation amid rising visitor numbers. Adjustments to these regulations are deemed essential in facilitating local councils’ capabilities to enforce necessary measures effectively.

As the debate continues, it remains crucial for both authorities and visitors to strike a balance where the serene beauty of Loch of Clunie can be preserved while accommodating the influx of tourists eager to experience its splendour. With ongoing community initiatives and the support of local authorities, there is hope that the initiatives will help restore a sense of safety and enjoyment for both residents and respectful visitors alike.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9
2. Paragraphs 2, 4, 6
3. Paragraph 6
4. Paragraph 5
5. Paragraph 7
6. Paragraph 6
7. Paragraphs 4, 5

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5251060/loch-of-clunie-visitor-problems/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/perth-kinross/1468187/three-charged-with-vandalism-as-police-scotland-gets-tough-on-wild-campers-in-perthshire/> - Three men were charged with vandalism after chopping down trees for firewood at Clunie Loch, near Blairgowrie. This incident is part of a broader crackdown on irresponsible visitors in Perthshire, where campers have been reported for damaging the environment and blocking access to emergency vehicles. Authorities have implemented measures such as fast-tracked traffic orders to clear country roads and warned that vehicles blocking access could be fined or towed. Local officials emphasize the need for responsible behavior to protect the area's natural beauty.
3. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/perth-kinross/1383398/perthshire-residents-call-for-camping-ban-after-alleged-stabbing-at-lochside-beauty-spot/> - Following an alleged stabbing incident at Clunie Loch, residents are calling for a camping ban to ensure safety. The incident has highlighted concerns over increased wild camping, drinking, and littering at the site. In response, residents are advocating for basic signage with contact information for reporting unacceptable behavior, campaigning for a total ban on overnight camping, and urging Perth and Kinross Council to consider introducing bylaws to prohibit drinking at the lochside.
4. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/perth-kinross/1440317/police-called-to-beauty-spot-near-blairgowrie-amid-wild-camping-fears/> - Police were called to Clunie Loch amid concerns over wild camping, fires, and blocked access to emergency vehicles. While wild camping is generally accepted, strict rules about overnight parking and campfires exist. Residents reported overcrowding and congested roads, with about 20 tents along the east side of the loch. Authorities are considering additional signage and measures to prevent parking that obstructs emergency access.
5. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/perth-kinross/3586855/access-laws-camping-perthshire/> - Perth and Kinross councillors have called for a review of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code to better protect rural beauty spots like Clunie Loch. They argue that the current code, established nearly 20 years ago, does not address modern issues such as irresponsible camping and littering. The proposed review aims to update regulations to allow local councils to enforce rules more effectively and address the challenges posed by increased visitor numbers.
6. <https://www.lochofclunie.org.uk/index.php/who-are-we.html> - The Loch of Clunie Preservation Group is dedicated to safeguarding the loch's natural beauty and history. Formed by a group of individuals concerned about environmental degradation, the group focuses on education and encouraging respect for the area. They aim to prevent issues like littering and damage to trees and wildlife, emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior to maintain the loch's pristine condition.
7. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/perth-kinross/5218120/perthshire-visitor-rangers-rumours-dismissed/> - Perth and Kinross Council has clarified that the Visitor Management Service, including visitor rangers, will continue despite rumors of cuts. The service is being integrated into a new team with parking and community safety wardens, ensuring fully trained officers will conduct rural patrols and engage with communities. The council is also exploring options to continue providing portable toilets at popular tourist spots to manage the impact of increased visitors.