

Dawn photographers win early lifting of car park ban

Wildlife photographers have persuaded East Lothian Council to end an overnight coastal car park ban earlier in the morning so they can capture the dawn, it has been revealed.

Councillors today approved a permanent ban on parking along the county's coast line at night apart from in pre-booked designated motor home spaces.

But while the initial ban was proposed to run between 10pm and 6am, they approved a shorter shut down which will keep the car parks open until 11pm and allow people back in from 4am.

Provost John McMillan said the change had been made after officers had taken on board public comments about the ban, which has been trialled since last year.

He said: "I welcome the 4am deadline change which followed a request from local photographers who want to see an early dawn, capturing the interesting lights and wildlife that is there."

A report to cabinet said that since the Covid pandemic coastal car parks in the county had seen an increase in the number of vehicles visiting and the overnight ban was trialled to protect the area.

Visitor numbers to East Lothian's coast have surged since the Covid pandemic leading to extra patrols being sent out to oversee campers and a crackdown on overnight stays.

Last month the countryside rangers reported an 'alarming amount of human waste' being found at its sites, in particular at the most popular beach Yellowcraig.

Council leader Norman Hampshire said: "As a council we have a

duty to try and protect our coast line. We welcome visitors but need to find a balance between letting people have as much access as possible while protecting the area.”

The overnight ban and a plan to investigate introducing more motor home spaces were approved by cabinet.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter