

Move to scrap overnight bays for camper vans in Dunbar

Overnight parking bays for camper vans at an East Lothian beauty spot are set to be scrapped after complaints visitors use the area as a 'toilet', leave their rubbish and abuse the rules.

The three spaces at Shore Road, Belhaven, brought in over £3,500 in revenue for East Lothian Council last year but local residents say it has ruined their views and has had no policing since it was introduced as a 'summer trial' two years ago.

And they point out there is an official private campsite less than 500 yards from the car park where people could book in.

Anger over the impact the overnight bays have had on residents living in the area has now led council officers to recommend the spaces are scrapped.

A report due to go before the council's Labour administration next week updating them on the use of the bays says the level of concern from locals means they should remove the bays and return the car park to its previous use which would mean overnight parking would be banned.

It asks councillors to "agree that the designated self-contained motorhome bays are removed due to the level of objection from the local community and the site be returned to its previous condition."

The report which asks councillors to agree to keep three motorhome bays which have also been trialled at Yellowcraig car park, at North Berwick, as well as giving final approval to plans to ban overnight parking, outwith the bays in coastal car parks across the county from 11pm to 4am, reveals the bays at Shore Road brought in £3,570 last year while those at Yellowcraig had a revenue of £1,490.

It adds that there were no objections to the Yellowcraig bays during a public consultation period by nine objections were received for the Belhaven bays with three letters of support.

Both Dunbar and West Barns Community Councils raised their objections to the Belhaven overnight bays saying the council had made no attempts to police the use of the bays.

In their objections they said promises the situation would be reviewed after a 'summer trial' were not met by the council and claims the bays would be monitored by a pre-booking system did not happen with people paying the £10 nightly charge through the Ringo app or at cash machines onsite.

Several residents claimed up to ten motorhomes could be found in the car park on any given night with people also parking in cars and vans.

One said: "I have witnessed people using the dunes as a toilet, lots of different rubbish being left and barbecues being lit in the long grass/dunes even when signs are up saying not to in dry weather."

Another added: "They are arriving at all hours and some of them are not self-sufficient as in having toilets in them, so can imagine they are doing the toilet in surrounding grass area.

"There is no one around to police the campervans and they seem to do as they like."

Dunbar Community Council said: "The once very peaceful enjoyment that local residents had of this place has been lost to them. They do not need and do not want the addition of a campsite right in front of their homes."

And they added that the neighbouring camp site already provided a place for motorhomes to stop.

The future of the bays will be decided at cabinet next week.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter