

Loch Arklet Campaign has Motion lodged in Scottish Parliament

Local campaigners attempting to save an iconic Scottish landscape are delighted that their campaign has been brought to national attention by the lodging of a Motion in the Scottish Parliament by Christopher Harvie MSP (Mid Scotland and Fife - SNP). There has been cross-party support for the Motion and among those signing are Iain Gray, Leader of the Labour group in Holyrood and Murdo Fraser, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Conservatives. Stirling MSP and Scottish Government Minister Bruce Crawford recently visited the Loch Arklet area to meet and discuss the issue with members of the local community, and shares their concerns that the current planting proposals are unacceptable.

Motion

That the Parliament expresses concern about plans by Forestry Commission Scotland to plant trees in Glen Arklet as part of the Great Trossachs Forest despite the fact that this landscape of loch, heather, moorland and blanket bog has lasted for almost as long as human life in Scotland; notes that the open moorland with its spectacular views across Loch Lomond to the Arrochar Alps has been valued by the local population, tourists, photographers, historians, filmmakers, artists and writers, from Sir Walter Scott to Jules Verne, and that the glen, the loch and the burn that flows out of them to Loch Lomond also flow in Gerard Manley Hopkins's Inversnaid, one of the greatest nature poems in the English language, graven on the walls of Holyrood and as iconic as Wordsworth's daffodils at Grasmere, "O let them be left, wildness and wet; Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet", and hopes that other ways to manage the land and control natural regeneration will be explored fully and used at Loch Arklet to preserve the views and natural environment.

The tiny local community represented by Strathard Community Council and Loch Katrine Community Trust already has around 1700 signatures on a petition to relocate the trees elsewhere. A representative for the campaign said "Preserving this historic landscape is of huge importance to our local people and economy, and combatting climate change would best be achieved by relocating the proposed planting to another area. Heather moorland and blanket bog environments such as Glen Arklet also have an important environmental role. Like trees, moorland contributes effectively by sequestering carbon to tackle global warming. So why destroy this habitat to replace it with another when saving moorland areas is a priority throughout the rest of the UK and in other National Parks? Our local area is already heavily forested and Glen Arklet provides a stunning contrast which attracts worldwide visitors, especially photographers. Time is running out now before FCS (*Forestry Commission Scotland*) makes a decision and we are hopeful it will take account of the strong public opinion and support by MSPs as well as the good environmental reasons for keeping the moorland. There should be public scrutiny of the fact that one part of FCS takes the decision on such major proposals when they are made by another branch of the same organisation."

Details of the campaign can be found on website www.locharkletview.org.uk . See also:

[Campaign details](#)

[Press releases](#)

[Photographs](#)

[Comments from the public](#)

Notes:

1. The e-petition link with 667 signatures to date is:

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-the-loch-arklet-view.html>

1026 signatures have also been collected on paper petitions held locally, with many being from visitors to the area.

2. Link to the Scottish Parliament Motion [here](#)