

## Adopt a Bonnie Banks Bin Scheme Launched

Thursday 2 June, 2022

Following the runaway success of the A82 Loch Lomondside layby litter bin scheme piloted by the conservation charity, Friends of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs last summer and continued through to March this year, steps have been taken to place this on a more sustainable footing with the introduction of an imaginative *Adopt a Bonnie Banks Bin Scheme* modelled partly on the roundabout sponsorship schemes introduced widely by local authorities throughout the UK.

The scheme is being coordinated by the Friends, but now enjoys the financial backing of 9 local tourism businesses, Luss Estates, the Park Authority, Argyll & Bute Council and ENVVA, who are our waste disposal and recycling partner. It is costing £26,000 to fund the 20 bin scheme for a full 12 months, including twice weekly lifts during busy holiday periods and once weekly collections at quieter times. Along with some other measures, the scheme is helping to transform the overall appearance of the busy 13 mile tourist corridor between Arden and Tarbet on the lochside.

Over the original 9 month pilot period 25 tonnes of litter was collected and an impressive 97% of this waste was recycled with much of it being baled to help fuel steelworks. This equates to the equivalent of a staggering 6,500 bin bags of litter collected overall (200,000 litres) with 6,300 bags of litter being recycled. It is anticipated over the first full year of the new *Adopt a Bonnie Banks Bin Scheme* an estimated 10,000 bags of litter will be removed from the lochside.

### More Respect

James Fraser, Chair of the Friends said: "We were convinced the introduction of bins in busy lochside laybys with regular emptying and monitoring would greatly improve the situation and this has proved to be the case with more visitors now treating the area with more respect and helping to keep the bonnie banks almost litter free.

We are delighted that so many partners have come on board to sponsor bins and ensure the continuing success of the bin scheme. It is to the great credit of local tourism business owners that they have stepped in to help with funding at a time that they are in an early stage of business recovery, following the loss of substantial trading income due to Covid 19 closures and trading restrictions, but it reinforces how strongly they feel about ensuring the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond are kept that way for the benefit of visitors and local residents."

Sir Malcolm Colquhoun of Luss Estates said: "When I made a plea early last year for urgent action to be taken to tackle the scourge of litter on the lochside, and in particular along the A82, I hadn't anticipated the Friends would rise to the challenge and step in with the delivery of such a successful pilot bin project that has exceeded expectations. I am very pleased, along with other local businesses, to be supporting the Adopt a Bonnie Banks Bin Scheme and it is encouraging that both the Park Authority and Argyll & Bute Council are contributing some funding too and are augmenting the scheme with some other practical litter clearance efforts."

Jackie Baillie, MSP, said: "I wish to congratulate the Friends of Loch Lomond on this scheme which has already produced such positive results. I also wish to thank the partners who have provided their wholehearted support.

"Sadly, litter on the A82 at the lochside is a serious problem and has been for a number of years. It is exacerbated during the summer months when we welcome tourists from home and abroad to see our beautiful area and I am hopeful that, with 20 new bins in the area this summer, we will see a huge benefit and the area will be at its' best for visitors and residents alike to enjoy."

National Park Authority Chief Executive, Gordon Watson added: "We welcome this initiative which is helping bring about a truly collaborative approach to tackling an issue that continues to plague our busiest tourist route. As well as providing funding to support to the Friends initiative, we have recruited additional seasonal Environment Officers, invested in more effective bins at our sites and will undertake regular litter picks at camping permit areas and car parks beside the Loch. We will also continue our high profile litter campaigns as part of the wider effort to get on top of the litter problem and encouraging people to respect the special scenic and landscape qualities of our National Park."

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