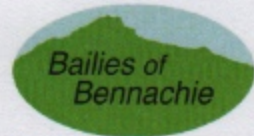


8/1/63



Attn: Calum Murray  
Communities, Recreation & Tourism Mgr  
Forestry Commission Scotland  
Moray & Aberdeenshire District Office  
Ordiquhill  
Portsoy Road  
Huntly  
Aberdeenshire  
AB54 5SJ

Charity SC 013298

PO Box 11535  
Huntly  
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18 Mar 2011

Dear Calum,

PROPOSAL TO CHARGE FOR CAR PARKING AT BENNACHIE: VIEWS OF BAILIES OF BENNACHIE

Thank you for attending our meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February reviewing the reasoning behind the Forestry Commission Scotland's (FCS's) proposal to charge for car parking at the Bennachie Centre and the Back o' Bennachie.

As a voluntary organisation we do wish to work in partnership with the FCS to maintain, improve and safeguard Bennachie for future generations and are fully aware of the unfortunate cut-backs being implemented at present. We feel that implementing car parking fees does not address the real issues of making sure that Bennachie and the facilities around it like the Bennachie Centre are sustainably managed and we need to look at other funding possibilities and ideas. We would welcome further discussions on this subject.

Below are our collective thoughts on the proposal and we would welcome your comments.

We were disappointed to learn that money raised from the car parking fees would not directly benefit Bennachie. Can you possibly quantify the expected benefit to Bennachie in any way, for example the number of FCS staff-days devoted to Bennachie now versus what they would be after implementation of charging?

We feel that at present the proposal may not be costed thoroughly as there will be significant installation, maintenance and administration costs in putting in the machines, as well as car park improvements which will be expected by those paying a fee. It is also not clear how fair ticketing could be implemented, eg for frequent users and different cases like volunteers/pensioners/horse riders etc. What consideration have you given to an honesty box?

The car parking meter system might encourage dishonesty, vandalism and robbery and we are concerned that the car parking charges will cause nearby nuisance parking and associated safety hazards.

The first vision of the Scottish Government for Scottish forestry is that it should provide "improved health and well-being of people and their communities". We believe that implementing car parking fees runs counter to this and is not a good inducement for people to exercise in, and enjoy, the outdoors more. If you need more money to maintain facilities, we would back you in any pleas you made to the Scottish Government for more funding.

We look forward to your reply on the above issues.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Cornock  
Clerk  
Baillies of Bennachie  
Charity SC 013298