

FRIENDS OF HOI HA
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LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Refuse Collection and Resource Recovery

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Submission of Friends of Hoi Ha

I have been attempting to get the Government to install animal-proof rubbish bins in Sai Kung Country Park for over a year. I have contacted my Village Representatives, the Sai Kung North Rural Committee, Tai Po District Office, FEHD and AFCD but nothing is being done about the problem.

The following is the text of a letter which I sent to the Tai Po District Office in September 2015, which explains the problem and offers solutions:

There is an increasing problem in Sai Kung Country Park with animals tipping over waste bins and spreading rubbish all over the roads (see enclosed photos taken at Hoi Ha and Uk Tau on 12th/15th September 2015). The problem appears to be particularly concentrated at Hoi Ha, Ko Tong and Uk Tau, and rubbish is being strewn all over the Country Park roads on a daily basis. However, this is a problem which, probably, affects all the villages within Sai Kung Country Park to a greater or lesser extent. The culprits appear to be a mixture of cows, wild boar and monkeys, all of which have been seen eating rubbish from the bins. The wild boar tip over the bins and monkeys and cows then assist in spreading the rubbish over the surrounding areas. The monkeys, in particular, are getting much more aggressive at Hoi Ha and are stealing food from visitors and even from inside private cars belonging to residents.

This problem presents a health hazard, a road safety hazard and has the effect of making the animals concerned more intrusive in the villages – they associate human beings with food. The food they eat is probably detrimental to the health of the animals and the visual impact in front of our many visitors is not complementary – rubbish is not only strewn all over the road but, also, up into the forest where the monkeys take it. I must add that the cleaning operatives do a truly excellent job of cleaning up the mess left by these animals but I think it unfair that they should have to do this in addition to their other duties.

The problem is not with the animals, who have every right to be within the Country Park, but with having readily available food for them in and around the villages in the shape of easily overturned and/or opened rubbish bins.

The solution is to be found in many other national parks throughout the world – animal-proof rubbish bins. Bins in US national parks can be made bear-proof, so I am sure that we can make rubbish bins inaccessible to the animals we find in HK. Either a new design of bin has to be found or the bins put inside a small compound (sympathetically designed to fit in with the environment). Please can you assist in getting the relevant Government departments (FEHD/AFCD) together with village residents in order to find a solution to this problem?

It is important that the villagers living in the Country Park are consulted about any new bin designs – they are the people who know the issues and who will have to live with and use any solution to the problem. I am more than happy to assist.

David NEWBERY

Resident, Hoi Ha Village
Secretary, Friends of Hoi Ha

Encs.





