

## A NATIONAL PARK FOR EVERYONE

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park covers 720 square miles (1,865 square kilometres) of varied countryside, from the rolling hills of the Lowlands to the mountains and lochs of the Highlands. The National Park Authority aims to care for the area's natural and cultural heritage and use its resources wisely. Through our visitor facilities, publications and programmes, we help people understand the Park and enjoy it; and we work with the Park's communities to sustain their economic and social development.

The National Park embraces four very different areas – Loch Lomond, The Trossachs, Breadalbane and the Argyll Forest – each with its own distinctive character, shape and colour. Balloch Castle Country Park is just one of our visitor facilities in the Loch Lomond Area. As you travel around the area, enjoy our other centres, walks, picnic areas and boat launch sites.



## Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Pàirc Nàiseanta Loch Laomann  
is nan Tròisichean

## Balloch Castle Country Park



## NATIONAL PARK VISITOR FACILITIES IN LOCH LOMOND AREA

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## GETTING HERE IS EASY

### BY TRAIN, BUS, BICYCLE OR CAR

A regular train service is available to Balloch from Glasgow Queen Street.

The pedestrian entrance to the Country Park is just opposite Balloch Bus Station. For information on bus and train services and timetables pick up a copy of 'Exploring the National Park by ferry, bus or train' or contact Traveline Scotland on 0870 608 2 608.

You can walk or cycle to Balloch on NCN Route 7, which runs from Glasgow to Inverness.

Balloch is on the A811, just off the A82 from Glasgow to Crianlarich.

### HAPPY TO HELP

National Park staff are available in our visitor centres and area offices. Look out for staff wearing the National Park badge.

### IN THE COUNTRY PARK

- Keep dogs under control at all times
- Take your litter home
- Avoid all risk of fire
- Don't pick flowers - leave them for others to enjoy

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information visit the Balloch Castle Visitor Centre or the National Park Gateway Centre at Loch Lomond Shores (open all year except Dec 25/26).

Tel: 0845 345 4978

[www.lochlomond-trossachs.org](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org)

email: [info@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:info@lochlomond-trossachs.org)



Text by Fiona Price; designed and produced by Shaw Marketing and Design; Edinburgh; all photos by Laurie Campbell; ALLIST Tourist Board; LLTNP



### WALKS

from 15 minutes to 1 hour

### VISITOR CENTRE

### LOCHSIDE PATHS

### WOODLANDS

### WALLED GARDEN

### FAIRY GLEN



# Welcome to Balloch Castle Country Park

*By von Bonnie Banks...*

**On the banks of Loch Lomond, just a short hop from Glasgow, lies one of Scotland's best-loved gardens.**

Balloch Castle Country Park is steeped in history and was the stronghold of one of Scotland's most powerful medieval families. Almost 200 years ago a gothic-style mansion replaced the ancient castle and gardeners tamed the wild landscape. Now it's a Country Park for everyone to enjoy.



Explore the paths through the gardens, woods and meadows – many are suitable for buggies and wheelchairs. Enjoy a picnic by the loch or stroll into Balloch where you'll find a good selection of cafés and restaurants. Throughout the year National Park Rangers run events for all ages – pick up a copy of the National Park's Events Programme for more information.

To find out more about the grounds and what life was like for the people who lived and worked in the castle, drop into the Visitor Centre on the ground floor of the castle.

**Please take care if you're walking alone, especially after dusk.**



## BUILT TO BE SEEN

At the end of the 18th century, John Buchanan of Ardoch, a wealthy Glasgow businessman, bought Balloch Estate and commissioned celebrity-architect, Robert Lugar, to build his new gothic-style mansion.

The castle is set in a commanding position overlooking the loch. It's enclosed by woodlands and borrows the surrounding landscape as part of its design. Everything was designed to impress.

Look around and you'll see that Buchanan was not alone. His neighbours also invested in grand houses and designed landscapes. Just across the loch you can see Cameron, Auchendennan, Arden and Rossdhu Houses; each had its own designed landscape. As you travel around, look out for avenues of trees, gatehouses, boundary walls, follies, and graceful parkland – all telltale signs of 18th and 19th century designed landscapes like this one.

## GLASGOW'S GARDEN

Early in the 1900s, Glasgow Corporation bought Balloch Estate and created Loch Lomond Park. It became a popular day trip for Glasgow people and soon became known as Glasgow's Garden. In 1980 it became Balloch Castle Country Park and in 2002 it became the only country park in Scotland's first national park.



## CROWNING GLORY

While the garden owes its form to Buchanan and Lugar, much of its colour is down to the Dennistoun-Brown's, who bought the estate in 1851.

Like many Victorians, they were keen plants collectors. Their relations owned other estates in the area and it's likely that they passed on cuttings and seeds, just as we do with our neighbours today. Balloch gained a handsome array of exotic trees and shrubs.

Victorian plant hunters were the Indiana Joneses of their day – suffering unimaginable hardships, shipwrecks, and encounters with hostile tribes in their quest for new species. One of the stars of Balloch's woodlands is the Monkey Puzzle tree. When Archibald Menzies, a famous Scot's-born plant hunter, was dining in Chile, he noticed some nuts on the table that he didn't recognise. He popped some in his pocket and they sprouted on his way back to Scotland, where they grew into these weird and wonderful trees.