







Crookston Heritage Trail



CROOKSTON HERITAGE TRAIL

Welcome to Crookston! We hope you enjoy finding out about the area and experiencing some unique and fascinating sites.

The map (inside the back cover) shows the trail, which is about 4.2km (2.6 miles) long and should take about 2 hours, allowing for stops at points of interest. You can join the trail wherever it suits you.

Crookston and the House of Stewart.

When Walter Fitz Alan (c1114-c1177) was appointed to the post of Hereditary High Steward of Scotland by David I in around 1150 it would begin a long association between the House of Stewart and Crookston. It is from this Walter Fitz Alan that the Royal House of Stewart is descended. One of his direct descendants would become the first Stewart monarch, King Robert II of Scotland (1316-1390). Eventually the Stewart Royal dynasty would become monarchs of all Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales.

On his appointment to High Steward Walter Fitz Alan was made a gift of almost all the lands of Renfrewshire which he immediately began to distribute amongst his friends and followers. Prominent among those followers was Sir Robert Croc to whom he gave the lands of Crookston and Neilston.

The lands of Crookston remained within the Croc family until the daughter and heiress of a later Robert Croc, Lord of Crookston and Darnley, married Sir Robert Stewart, son of Walter II, 3rd High Steward of Scotland. It is from this marriage that the Stewart line of Lennox is descended.

It was Walter II, 3rd High Steward of Scotland who adopted the title of his office as his surname in preference to his given name and so became the first bearer of the Stewart surname. It is from this Walter Stewart that all other bearers of the Stewart surname are descended.

In 1330, the lands of Crookston were purchased by Sir Alan Stewart, cousin to the first Stewart monarch Robert II. In 1361 they were granted to John Stewart of Darnley and through successive generations descended to Henry Lord Darnley (1545-1567), uncrowned King of Scots and husband of Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587), who are said to have been married beneath a Yew tree in the castle grounds. It was later passed on to Charles Stewart younger brother of Henry Lord Darnley.

The lands and estate of Crookston, were now firmly established as a part of the larger estate of Darnley, Neilston, Inchinnan and Tarbolton and passed through various ownership until around 1710 when it was said to be in the possession of the Duke

of Montrose (1682-1742). In 1757, the next Duke of Montrose sold part of the lands to the Earl of Glasgow and Sir John Maxwell of Pollok (1720-1758).

The estate remained in the hands of the Maxwell family until 1931 when Sir John Stirling Maxwell (1866-1956) donated the castle and grounds to the newly established National Trust for Scotland of which he was a founding member. The castle became the Trust's first property.

In August 2006 a concordat agreement was signed between the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland to work together to protect, promote and enhance Scotland's historic environment. Historic Scotland has since taken over the care and management of Crookston Castle.

INTRODUCTION

With its vistas of two-storey villas, bungalows, and terraced housing, Crookston is a classic example of suburban Glasgow. The housing is little more than a hundred years old, and for most of its history, the area would have been a peaceful and even majestic, rural landscape.

A closer inspection would reveal that the open valleys of the White Cart and the Levern Water were intensively farmed and the hilltops were dominated by baronial centres, each with its castle, woods, and gardens. Cardonald was the oldest of these estates – it dates back to the Dark Ages. Crookston was not the only hilltop castle in the area; it was challenged by an elegant stone castle at Ingleston (the modern Cronberry Quadrant), and another at Hawkhead, the seat of the Lords Ross. These old estates were part of the Barony of Renfrew (later Renfrewshire).

The modern railway station may be named 'Crookston', but it lies between the old medieval estates of Cardonald and Ingleston (later called Rosshall). Crookston 'proper' begins on the other side of the White Cart Water, where it faced Hawkhead. By the 18th century the castles were replaced by mansions. Parts of the medieval estates were sold to wealthy local businessmen, but local

lairds such as the Stirling-Maxwells of Pollok and the Earls of Glasgow stayed on and continued to exert considerable influence in the area.

Crookston is a residential suburb 4 miles (6.5 km) south west of Glasgow city centre. The area was originally located in part of the historic Abbey parish which included part of the town of Paisley, all of the town of Johnstone and several neighbouring villages. The parish was essentially rural in character and largely dependent on agriculture although a number of collieries and ironstone mines were opened in the Parish in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Sandstone, limestone, fireclay, and potter's-clay were also extensively worked in the locality.

The area is drained by the White Cart Water which meanders from east to west through undulating countryside on its way to join the River Clyde at Renfrew and is joined by the Levern Water in the shadow of Crookston Castle. The area was extremely fertile with the principal produce being fruit, vegetables and grain while local game was also abundant.

Crookston boasts the only surviving medieval castle within the Glasgow city boundary. In 1170 King David I granted lands in the valley of the Levern Water to the Norman knight Sir Robert Croc who built a timber and clay castle on a

hilltop here, surrounded by a deep ditch and strong earthworks. It is from this Sir Robert that Crookston (Crocis toune) takes its name.



***Seal of Sir Robert Croc
with 3 foresters crooks for pruning trees
(Friends of Crookston Castle)***

The castle later became the property of the Stewart family and has strong royal connections. Mary, Queen of Scots is said to have become betrothed to the young Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley beneath an ancient yew tree here and the pair are thought to have honeymooned at Crookston; events celebrated by the Glasgow poet William Motherwell following a visit to the ruined castle:—

*“Beneath yon tree—
Now bare and blasted—so our annals tell
The martyr Queen, ere that her fortunes
knew
A darker shade than cast her favourite
yew,
Loved Darnley passing well—
Loved him with tender woman’s generous
love,
And bade farewell awhile to courtly state
And pageantry for yon o’ershadowing
grove—
For the lone river’s banks whose small
birds sing,
Their little hearth with summer joys elate—
Where tall broom blossoms, flowers
profusely spring;
There he, the most exalted of the land,
Pressed with the grace of youth a
Sovereign’s peerless hand.”*

The ancient yew was felled in 1816. A model of Crookston Castle was made from its timber and can still be seen in Pollok House.

Apart from a number of farms, the castles remained the only buildings of note in the area for many years until the construction of the mansion houses of Hawkhead and Cardonald and later, Crookston House on the south bank of a loop of the White Cart.



The Glasgow, Paisley and Ardrossan canal was the first important transport link to cut through the area in 1810. It was eventually filled in and replaced by the Paisley Canal railway line which reached Cardonald in 1879 and Crookston in 1885.

Small settlements sprang up alongside the stations as businessmen took advantage of the quick rail service into the city centre and Paisley, and the arrival of tram lines along Paisley Road West in the early twentieth century helped to develop the area even further.

Crookston was part of the County of Renfrewshire until annexed by Glasgow in 1925 along with neighbouring Cardonald, Hillington and Halfway. The area now forms the city's present-day boundary with Ralston, Renfrewshire to the west. Today Paisley Road West is surrounded

on both sides by large areas of mainly interwar housing which have dwarfed the original settlements in the area. This Heritage Trail will take you on a journey back in time to the old heart of Crookston.

Listed Buildings

The majority of buildings on the trail are protected by inclusion in the Scottish Ministers List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are three categories of listed structures in Scotland.

Broadly speaking **Category A** buildings are those of national or international importance; **Category B** buildings are those of regional importance or major examples which have been altered and **Category C(S)** are buildings of local importance or lesser examples and simple traditional buildings.

If you are travelling to Crookston by rail then you are tracing the route of the ill-fated **Glasgow, Paisley and Ardrossan Canal** which was the first major transport artery to drive through this area in 1810.

The canal roughly followed the course of the White Cart Water as it snaked its way towards the Ayrshire coast to its planned destination at Ardrossan.



***Engraving of Canal Boat at Paisley 1839
(Courtesy of Renfrewshire Libraries)***

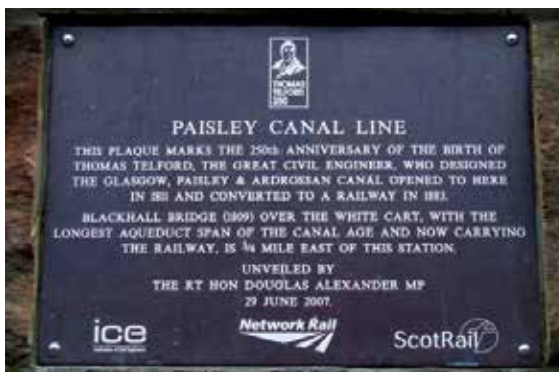
The canal was the brainchild of Hugh Montgomerie the 12th Earl of Eglinton who employed the eminent engineers John Rennie, John Ainslie and Thomas Telford to design a suitable route between Glasgow and his newly completed harbour at Ardrossan.



Hugh Montgomerie 12th Earl of Eglinton circa 1780

*Oil on canvas by John Singleton Copley,
National Gallery of Scotland .*

A plaque commemorating Telford's part in the project was erected at Paisley Canal Station in 2007.



Montgomerie intended that Ardrossan would become the principal port serving Glasgow so that ships could avoid having to negotiate the dangerous shallows of the River Clyde. The canal would also open up traffic between his family's Ayrshire coalfield and the principal centres of population in west central Scotland.

Only the stretch between Glasgow and Johnstone was ever realised mainly because it was the easiest to construct as it followed the natural contours of the land. The project foundered through lack of funding to complete the expensive locks necessary to descend to the coast. The Glasgow end terminated at Port Eglinton where an inn was built in 1816. Eglinton Street, on the south side of the city, is a permanent reminder of the Earl's grand scheme.



Port Eglinton terminus on the canal

This drawing of 1835 depicts Port Eglinton in Tradeston, the terminus of the Glasgow, Paisley & Ardrossan Canal

Reference: Mitchell Library 310408

Reproduced with the permission of Glasgow Life

Wharves were built on the north bank of the White Cart near Crookston Castle and canal basins were established at Paisley and Johnstone. The canal initially proved popular for passenger transport and was served by long shallow canal boats towed by teams of two horses which were changed every four miles. Each boat was capable of carrying between 60 and 90 passengers and by 1830 patrons were

able to travel the completed 12 miles in approximately 90 minutes including stoppages. In 1836 some 423,186 passengers were recorded.



Line of the canal and the River circa 1860

The passenger barges were designed for speed. They whisked the commuter through a rolling landscape of farms, forests, and wealthy estates, smoothly negotiating the many curves of the canal as fast as a horse could trot. At its peak (1839) the Glasgow-Paisley service carried a thousand passengers a day. However the railway companies had much bigger financial backing and the canal passenger service was bought out in 1843.



***Last passenger excursion on the canal 1882
(Courtesy of Renfrewshire Libraries)***

The canal claimed a few lives in its short existence, among them the weaver poet Robert Tannahill who drowned himself

in the canal basin at Paisley during a fit of depression after being rejected by a publisher.



Robert Tannahill (1774-1810)

By far the greatest disaster took place in November 1810 when over 80 people lost their lives as passengers jostled to get on and off the vessel *The Countess of Eglinton* at Paisley. The boat overturned throwing the passengers into the icy water of the canal. Despite the fact that the canal was not deep, its sheer sides and the fact that few people could swim led to such great loss of life.

The canal also carried freight and there were differing rates for different materials – stone, dung and earth were charged at 2 pence per mile per ton; coal, coke culm and lime were 3 pence per mile per ton; bricks, tiles, slates, ores, iron and metal

were rated at 5 pence per mile per ton; and all other goods were charged 2 pence per mile per ton. In 1840, the canal handled 76000 tons of goods. Basin dues were also charged at 2 pence per ton.

Despite being well used the canal never really recouped its huge construction costs and after 20 years of operations it was still in debt to the tune of £71,208, 17 shillings and 6 pence. It was then decided to complete the section from Ardrossan to Johnstone with a rail link but that too ran out of funds. Dredging of the Clyde and the opening up of other rail links meant that Eglinton's dream was never fully realised and the canal became derelict. In 1869, it was purchased by the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company and in 1881 it was closed by an Act of Parliament, drained, and much of the route then used to construct the Paisley Canal railway line.

Traces of the old canal are also visible in fields between Hawkhead and Rosshall.



Arms of the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company

The Paisley Canal railway line closed to passengers in 1983 and the rails between Elderslie and the original Paisley Canal Station were uplifted. In 1990, passenger services resumed on the section from Glasgow Central station to a new Paisley Canal station.

CROOKSTON HERITAGE TRAIL

The trail effectively begins at Crookston Railway Station. On leaving the station turn left onto Crookston Road. Cross the bridge over the railway line and turn left into Lochmaben Road. The first building on your left is

1. The former Crookston Station



Former Crookston Station

Crookston Station was built around 1884-85 on the Glasgow and South Western Railway's Paisley Canal Line which opened on 1 July 1885.

The building is a long, low, single-storey, rectangular-plan station which had the stationmaster's house incorporated into the eastern end of the structure. It was constructed in bull-faced, ashlar stonework with smooth polished dressings around the round-headed door and window openings. The stationmaster

in those later years of the 19th Century was John Beattie who was born in Ruthwell, Dumfriesshire around 1855.

The station fell into disuse when the line was closed in January 1983 and soon was in very poor condition. The building was saved from demolition and, in 1994-95, converted to three private houses (named The House, Ticket Office and The Waiting Room) with additional accommodation provided in the roof space. The former station building is listed at Category B.

In Lochmaben Road and Ralston Avenue there are a series of detached and semi-detached villas which were built for Crookston commuters shortly after the opening of the railway station. There is a degree of confusion as to when these properties were built. Historic Scotland places them at around 1870-1880 but the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, published in the 1890s, shows only one built at that time and the rest of the street undeveloped. As none are included in the 1891 Census but do appear ten years later it is safe to assume that they were all completed during that decade.

A number of the houses feature details similar to those used in the designs of the outstanding Glasgow architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson. As Thomson died in 1875 they can only have been designed by someone with an intimate knowledge

of his office and high regard for his work. In addition to these 'Thomsonesque' buildings there are, alongside them, a number of large villas displaying English Arts and Crafts influence. These are probably by the same architect since some of the half timbering details used in these properties also appear in the ones displaying Thomson's influence.

These buildings are all in private ownership - please respect the privacy of the owners.

Pass the station and continue down Lochmaben Road. On the right is...

2. 64 Lochmaben Road



64 Lochmaben Road

A powerful Arts and Crafts composition built around 1900 with its principal entrance on Lochmaben Road and a vehicular entrance on Ralston Avenue. The villa is built largely of red sandstone with black and white half timbered gables

at first floor level. Note the unusual triangular plan window on the Ralston Avenue elevation. The building is not listed.

On your left ...

3. 71 Lochmaben Road



71 Lochmaben Road

An Arts and Crafts design dating from around 1900 and is reminiscent of some of the works of the architect H.E. Clifford in Pollokshields. The ground floor level is of coursed sandstone while the upper level is a black and white half timbered arrangement. The ground floor has a round bay window on its eastern gable. The building is not listed.

Turn slightly left into Ralston Avenue.

4. 81 and 85 Ralston Avenue



81 and 85 Ralston Avenue

A large semi-detached, 2-storey double villa, with wide outer gables onto the street elevation. The gables are topped by large red fret-worked barge-boards, bearing a typical Thomson anthemion design, and are linked by a continuous iron-railed balcony. Each house has a timber porch located on the side elevation. No. 85 was, according to the Thomsonsque gatepiers, originally known as 'Struan'. These properties are listed at Category B.



'Thomsonsque' gatepiers at No 101

97 and 101 Ralston Avenue, 'Dunard' and 'Raeberry'



Dunard and Raeberry

Another 2-storey symmetrical double villa with a number of Thomson-like details. The group of five windows at first floor level on each house with their dividing pilasters is a common arrangement on larger Thomson warehouse buildings.



Pediment and Anthemion detail

Again the gatepiers are similar to those at Thomson's Ellisland (1871) in Pollokshields. The doors are set in an angle

on either side of the central bays and each has a timber-bracketed, canopied porch. On the west end of No 101 is one of the finest early, purpose-built domestic motor garages in the Glasgow area. The double villa is Listed at Category B.

Again the gatepiers are like those at Thomson's Ellisland (1871). Both houses originally had first floor conservatories on a sandstone base on either side of the main block but these have been substantially altered. The double villa is Listed at Category B.



Westfield' and 'Auldersyde'

Turn around and re-trace your steps along Ralston Avenue with the inter-war bungalows on your left and turn left at the fork

5. 50 Ralston Avenue

A delightful L-plan Arts and Crafts villa probably dating from the very late 19th Century. The principal range is two storeys high with the main ground floor features constructed of red sandstone while the upper storey is a black and white half timbered affair. The architect is unknown. Not listed.



50 Ralston Avenue

On your right you can see the other side of 64 Lochmaben Road described earlier. Follow Ralston Avenue round until it meets Crookston Drive.

On your left

6. 15 Crookston Drive (Buttons and Bows)



15 Crookston Drive

Is a very unusual villa now in use as a nursery. An article in the Observer Magazine in 1983 caused a stir locally when a customs officer suggested that this house may be the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Cold water was quickly poured on that suggestion but the house is an interesting building in its own right. The interior clearly displayed a number of Glasgow Style Art Nouveau features and the distinctive curving brackets to the front porch show that its architect was a skilled exponent of the style. Since the article appeared the villa has lost most of its original stained glass with the exception of the round-headed stair window. It may be the work of Glasgow architect James Chalmers.



Turn right onto Crookston Drive.

The two large villas on either side of you are among the earliest to be constructed in the area. These substantial houses, built of rock-faced sandstone, have simple classical details around the doorways and are mirror images of each other.



4 Crookston Drive

The one on the south side of the road has gathered numerous accretions over the years as the Crookston Hotel expanded on the site. The hotel is one of the few points on the trail where visitors can take a refreshment break.



Crookston Hotel

*Turn right again onto Crookston Road.
Cross the railway bridge again.*

*On the opposite side of the road is the
new Ross Hall Academy, cross at the
lights and follow the path alongside Ross
Hall Academy to the site of...*

7. Site of Cardonald or Crookston Mills.



Cardonald or Crookston Mill and Houses

*A postcard view of the mill and houses at Crookston on the
banks of the White Cart Water.*

The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of circa 1860 shows a small settlement named Cardonald Mill (described on an old postcard as Crookston Mill) immediately to the west of Cardonald Place. The mill was constructed in 1748 on a lade created by drawing off water from a bend in the White Cart Water. It was said to be the oldest water-wheel mill in Scotland, possessing a wheel 30 feet in diameter.

According to Frances Groome's Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland (1882-4), the small village which grew up around the mill,

“comprises a group of cottages and several grain mills; and has a public school, which, with accommodation for 135 children, had (in 1880) an average attendance of 74, and a grant of £64,1s.” The 1861 Census reveals that the miller was John Grieve, a 34-year old corn and flour miller, who was born in St. Andrews. He lived on the premises with his wife and four young children and had been resident in the area for around 2-3 years.

The lands of Cardonald were acquired by Glasgow Corporation in 1926 for a housing development although the mill buildings were still in use but latterly only for storage. The site of the mill is now submerged beneath the Council housing which was built on the Cardonald estate. The mill would have stood where Lade Terrace stands today.

A little further east of the mill is ...

8. Cardonald Place Farm



Cardonald Place Farm

Cardonald Place Farm was built in the 19th century on the site of the 'Place of Cardonald', a medieval manor house. In the 15th century the Norvals were lairds of Cardonald. One of them was given a hero's burial in France, fighting the English in the Hundred Years' War. The motto which appears on an armorial stone at Cardonald Place Farm 'Toujours Avant' (Always in the Front Line) probably records his exploits against the English. It was borrowed by one of his successors, James Stewart of Cardonald, who converted the old manor house into a massive 4-storey mansion in 1565.



It was later home to Walter Stewart (died 1617), knight of Cardonald, who was educated with King James VI under the eminent scholar George Buchanan. Walter occupied a number of important Scottish positions during James' reign including Keeper of the Privy Seal and Lord High Treasurer. He was eventually compelled to resign and was briefly imprisoned by King James in 1599. However he was soon back in favour and became a commissioner for the union with England in 1604 and was created Lord Blantyre in 1606.

The Place of Cardonald underwent a number of changes under the stewardship of different owners and was ultimately replaced by the present L-plan Cardonald Place Farmhouse around 1848. The replacement building was mindful of its ancient heritage and is very Scottish in character with traditional crowstepped gables, incorporating a 1565 Stewart family armorial panel set above the doorway. The present farmhouse is listed at Category C(S).

Return along the riverside path and through the lane between Ross Hall Academy and the river to the rear of...

9. Ross Hall Stables



Ross Hall Stables

Located close to a loop in the White Cart Water, the stables block for Ross Hall House is the only survivor of a series of buildings which may have accommodated a smithy and storehouses and was built at the same time as Ross Hall itself. Like the mansion house and the lodge house, this courtyard block was built in red sandstone with crow-stepped gables although to an altogether simpler, more functional design. The central courtyard was glass-roofed, with a steel frame and trusses, and was accessed through a round-arched carriage doorway in the south elevation beneath a sculptured armorial crest. The northern part of the courtyard would have originally contained accommodation for the grooms and stable lads employed on the estate.

After the City Council acquired Ross Hall Park in 1948, and opened it to the public in 1967, the stables block was used for many years as a Council Parks Depot. Like

the lodge, the stables lay semi-derelict for some time before being sold off by the Council for a very sensitive conversion to housing units in 1994. All of the historic features have been retained, including the round-arched, crow-stepped dormer windows with their ball finials, slate roofs, tall chimneys and the massive timber gates to the carriage doorway. The building is listed at Category C(S).

Return to Crookston Road, turn left and proceed up the hill. The next building on your left is...

10. Ross Hall Gate Lodge



Ross Hall Lodge

The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map reveals that this point on Crookston Road was the original entrance to the Rosshill House policies, although the present lodge was built as the gate lodge for the newly constructed mansion house of Ross Hall around 1877.

The single-storey, red sandstone gate lodge was originally L-shaped on plan with crowstepped gables to match the Scottish character of the mansion house itself and a square turret with a steep pyramidal roof. The lodge overlooks the elaborate gateway with its 2 massive central gatepiers, curved castellated quadrant walls, 2 arched pedestrian entrances and highly ornate wrought-iron gates. The roofs have an interesting band of slates in a fish-scale pattern and sport a powerful central chimney combining 4 circular flues. The building was listed at Category B by Historic Scotland in 1991. After lying vacant for some time, the lodge was sold by the City Council, in the early 1990s, to a private individual who extended the original building southwards behind the boundary wall. The lodge is now the property of Rosshall Hospital.

Enter Ross Hall Park through the gates and follow the footpath round to the right

11. Ross Hall



Ross Hall

Like Rosshill, Ross Hall takes its name from the original owners of nearby Hawkhead. The estate is contained within a loop of the White Cart Water which encloses it on three sides. The early layout of much of the grounds was the work of the Glasgow merchant Peter Murdoch (1734-1817) who acquired the estate in the late 18th Century, planting trees and creating “several straight and serpentine green walks”. He also created a small burn which trickled down to the river, planted an orchard opposite where Levern Water joins the White Cart and created an avenue of lime trees near the river. It was Murdoch who was responsible for the first house, Rosshill, to occupy the site.

James Cowan purchased the Rosshill estate in the 1870s and began work on his Scots Baronial style mansion in 1877. It was to remain his home until his death, aged 77, in 1907.



Lime Walk

Ross Hall is a tall, largely 3-storey mansion in red sandstone with Scots 17th Century revival detailing including crow-stepped gables, conical-roofed circular turrets

and a large square tower to the south west with an octagonal cap house. There are lower ranges around the central core and many modern accretions added after the building ceased to be a place of residence.



Ross Hall

Ross Hall's builder **James Cowan** was born in 1830, the son of Lachlan Cowan, a Barrhead saddler and Wine and Spirit Merchant who probably owned the Cowan Hotel in that town. James's wealth came from a highly successful carting business, Messrs Cowan & Co., serving a number of railway companies in England and Scotland and a number of shipping companies based on the Clyde; a major achievement for a man whose business began with one horse and cart.

Through his carting business Cowan became an excellent judge of horseflesh and began the breeding of Clydesdale horses at Ross Hall. He owned around 500 of the best draught horses in the country which he exhibited regularly and was much in demand as a judge at horse shows.

His great passion was art and his private collection was among the finest in the West of Scotland. His gallery above the hall, reached by a staircase lit by stained glass windows depicting the arts, was designed to display his huge collection of books, jewellery, silver, porcelain and paintings. Among his 205 oil paintings were works by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Constable, Turner, Landseer and his particular favourite, Corot.

Like many self-made men of the period he was energetic and active in a whole host of activities. He was a Justice of the Peace and for several years the Chairman of the West Renfrewshire Conservative Association. He was also interested in agricultural matters and was President of the Renfrewshire Agricultural Association in 1898 and 1899. He was the President of the Cronies Club, a dining club in Glasgow which organised first class musical recitals.



James Cowan (1830-1907)

When Cowan, who was unmarried, died in 1907 he left money to various hospital charities and £10,000 for the establishment of a public hall and park in his native Barrhead to be called Cowan Park.



Sir Frederick Lobnitz (1863-1932)

The next owner of Ross Hall was **Frederick Lobnitz**, the Renfrew-born son of a Danish immigrant who had founded the family shipbuilding business of Lobnitz & Co.

The firm specialised in building dredgers and rock cutting machinery breakers, which they supplied to the Clyde Navigation Trust and to customers around the world. Lobnitz & Co. were involved in the construction of both the Suez and the Panama canals.

Frederick served part of his apprenticeship at the Fairfield Shipyard in Govan before becoming a partner with his father in 1890. He worked in the Ministry of Munitions during World War I and was Director of Munitions in Scotland, a role that earned him his knighthood in 1919. The French government also honoured him with the Légion d'honneur for his efforts in increasing munitions production.

After the war Lobnitz returned to the family firm and became its chairman in 1920, a position he held until his death in 1932.

The firm remained in the hands of the family until 1959 when they were taken over by Weirs of Cathcart. Lady Lobnitz continued to be active in local affairs and remained in possession of Ross Hall until her death in 1947 when the estate was purchased by Glasgow Corporation for the princely sum of £17,000.

The Corporation intended to create a public park within the Ross Hall grounds but did not have any use for the mansion house which was leased out to the Glasgow and West of Scotland Commercial College for use as their Scottish Hotel School. It was during its time as the hotel school, from 1948 to 1981, that the mansion was added to several times to provide classrooms and residential accommodation for students.

The University of Strathclyde, as successors to the College, felt that the Ross Hall complex was too remote from their main campus and constructed a purpose-built facility in the city centre. The University then sold off the property in 1981 to Glasgow Independent Hospital, a group of consultants who wished to create a private medical service. Work began immediately on a new 100-bed extension and in 1983 the first patients were received into the new hospital. Ross Hall continues to function as an independent hospital, under the management of BMI Healthcare and has expanded its operation on the site.

The gardens surrounding the mansion were taken over by the Corporation Parks Department with a view to converting the grounds into a public park of some 33 acres. After the pathways were stabilised around the rock garden the park was opened to the public in 1965.

Pass Ross Hall on your right and take the opportunity to thoroughly investigate the fantastic and unique garden landscape created at the end of the 19th Century.

12. Ross Hall Gardens



Around 1890-91 James Cowan commissioned the landscaping firm of James Pulham & Son to create a series of garden structures around three sides of the large lawn in front of his mansion house. These features created, partly in natural stone and partly in artificial Pulhamite stone, include a grotto, rock gardens, pathways, passageways all centred on a series of linked ponds. These features were all designed to look like natural stone outcrops.



The Grotto

The Grotto is a magical enclosed space built around a sunken pool which has now been largely filled in for safety reasons.

A huge stone pillar created from massive boulders supports a covered walkway around the pool. The grotto is entered through a narrow passage between enormous overhanging rocks, reached by a series of stepping stones and slab bridges crossing the narrow stream which links the two smaller ponds.

The ornamental paths of large sunken boulders wind through the areas around the ponds and frame the large lawn in front of the house.



Rocks and pond

Pulham's gigantic boulders were often designed with shallow hollows to accept specially chosen plants. The aim of these troughs was to create a truly natural appearance to the artificial stone by encouraging natural plant growth on them. The rock garden consists of traditional rockery beds set between a series of large boulders.



The boathouse

Pulham's even created a remarkable, rectangular-shaped boathouse at the eastern end of the largest of the man-made ponds in the estate to house the punts used by the family during the summer months. The boathouse is still accessible but is now largely overgrown with vegetation.

The Ross Hall Garden features were listed by Historic Scotland on 23 November 2001 at Category B.



Woodland path



The boating pond

TAKE CARE WHEN WALKING ON THE STONE PATHWAYS AS THEIR SURFACE CAN BE SLIPPERY WHEN WET.

James Pulham & Son

The Ross Hall designed landscape is the finest surviving example in Scotland of the work of James Pulham & Son, a London-based family firm who had been landscape designers since the 18th century.

Pulham & Son had a host of wealthy and well connected clients, including the Royal family for whom they carried out work at Buckingham Palace, St. James Park and Sandringham. They did carry out some other work in Scotland; at the Rosehaugh estate on the Black Isle, in Kelvingrove Park, and at Ardross, near Alness. Their work at Ross Hall is the largest and best preserved.

The firm specialised in creating rock gardens, often a mixture of real and their own 'Pulhamite' stone material, so that

their creations appeared wholly natural strata within the client's landscape.



The works commissioned by James Cowan cost an estimated £20,000 in 1890-91; somewhere around £1.8m at today's prices.

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also H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, &c.*

Pulham Advertisement

The firm perfected a material they called 'Pulhamite', an artificial rock shaped into boulders. Huge brick shapes were sculpted on site with a covering of a special render mixed with local stones and often decorated with fossils to add to a natural sandstone effect.

The creation of these artificial boulders negated the problems and expense of transporting heavy loads across country. For further information on Pulham-designed landscapes and a detailed history of the firm see www.pulham.org.uk



13.197 Crookston Road, Ross Hall Park, Chimney Stalk at Walled Garden



Chimney stalk and remains of boiler house

At the north east of the lawn is a pathway leading through a massive boulder archway to the site of the former kitchen garden which provided Ross Hall with its fruit, vegetables and flowers. At the north western end of the kitchen garden James Cowan built a substantial range of glasshouses and a boiler house to heat them. A section of the walls of the red sandstone boiler house building survives in ruinous condition along with a highly decorative, octagonal chimney stalk. The chimney stalk and its associated structures were listed at Category B in 1992.

When the property was sold to the Lobnitz family in 1908 an inventory of the kitchen garden described it thus,

“The Garden, which is surrounded with a beautiful holly hedge and well stocked with fruit trees is situated a short distance from the Mansionhouse”. It contained, “Four conservatories, two vineries, two peach houses, a large palm or tropical house, fern house, large potting shed, gardener’s office, heating chamber, manure pit...the whole heated with hot water and all in excellent order”.



The Meadow

Part of the walls around the boiler house are clearly built of a different stone and are the last visible fragments of **Rosshill House**, the earliest building on this site.

The house was occupied in 1861 by the widow of a forester, probably a Hawkhead Estate employee, and in 1881 by a shepherd.

The Ross Hall kitchen garden and glasshouses appear on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map of the early 1890s and it is clear that Rosshill House

was, by that time, incorporated into the glasshouse complex.

The conversion involved blocking up all the window and door openings, removal of the roof and insertion of a glass roof to form a palm house.



Kitchen garden looking North

A red sandstone tower was built onto the southeast corner of the house and functioned as a boiler house serving both the mansion and the glasshouses.

When the estate was purchased by the Lobnitz family in 1908, the selling agents were aware of the gardens “uniqueness” and described them thus, “laid out regardless of expense with extensive artificial lakes and rockwork, with waterfalls, grottos, bridges, rustic arches and caves, furnished with masses of the finest Alpine, aquatic and other rare plants in endless profusion embellished with beautiful trees” and “laid out with beautiful walks, forming one of the finest gardens of their kind in Scotland”.

A visit to the gardens by members of the Glasgow Nursery and Seed Trade Association in 1909, remarked on the change of ownership and that the Lobnitz family were spending money on the garden so that it could be “brought back to its first excellence”.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Look about you and you will see a great variety of plants from large trees to mosses and ferns. In the woodland areas there are some veteran trees including several 150-180 year old beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) pre-dating the building of the Ross Hall mansion. Look out for a magnificent old oak tree; also the fantastically contorted weeping beech southwest of the biggest pond, and a red horse chestnut (*Aesculus 'Carnea'*) nearby. Other notable trees include a good range of mature Japanese maples (*Acer palmata* var.) of varying leaf shape and colour.

Below these are evergreen trees and shrubs including yew, holly, rhododendrons (flowering in May), and laurel.

The kitchen garden has largely disappeared although it is possible to find a few overgrown holly trees which were once part of a holly hedge, and to see the four original cypresses which formed an arbour in the centre of the garden.

On and around the Pulhamite rock features, particularly around the grotto, where it is damp and sheltered, mosses, bryophytes and ferns thrive, including hart's-tongue fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*), thaloid liverwort (*Conocephalum conicum*) and the leafy liverwort (*Plagiochila porelloides*).

The variety of habitats, woodland, grassland, river and pondside and that of the rock features each support their own fauna. You might be lucky to see a heron or a kingfisher feeding on the nearby river as well as mallards and moorhens around the ponds. The woodland supports a variety of songbirds and probably bats.

The park has suffered a little over the years through lack of regular maintenance and vandalism but its future now looks much more hopeful. In 2009 The Friends of Rosshall Park was established; an organisation made up of concerned local citizens and Council officers, pledged to support and promote all aspects of the site and to raise the profile of the Park within a local citywide and national context.

For further information on the Friends of Rosshall Park please contact Friends of Rosshall Park and Gardens c/o Crookston Hotel 90 G52 3ND.

Glasgow City Council, in 2009, undertook an extensive programme of repair work to the Pulhamite stone damaged over the years by root growth and vandalism.

Follow the path at the side of the kitchen garden along the river side to the footbridge over the River Cart. Cross over and turn immediately right onto Bonnyholm Avenue.

The flat field to the left was 'the Bonnyholm', a medieval water-meadow which was nourished by periodic flooding from the White Cart. A thousand years ago the hill to the right was capped by an open-air law court.

Follow Bonnyholm Avenue until you reach the busy dual carriageway. Turn right and cross the road bridge over the Levern Water and then turn first left onto Towerside Crescent. From there ascend to Crookston Castle via the footpath.

14. Crookston Castle



Crookston Castle

At Crookston you will find two castles, one inside the other. The bank and ditch which encircles the hilltop was the outer wall of one of the earliest castles in the west of Scotland, raised around 1140 by King David I.



Impression of how the castle started as a 'Motte and Bailey' Norman castle

The surrounding estate was named after one of his officers, 'Croc' (pronounced 'crook'), whose son, Sir Robert Croc, acquired most of the Levern valley.

In the 14th century a branch of the Stewarts purchased the Croc estate, now known as 'Darnley'. The new Lords of Darnley raised the stone tower around 1400 and rebuilt it extensively throughout the 15th century.

The castle's design is very unusual and it contains quite a few architectural puzzles. There is free access to the cellar, the great hall, the guard-room, and the lord's and lady's private rooms in the north-east tower.



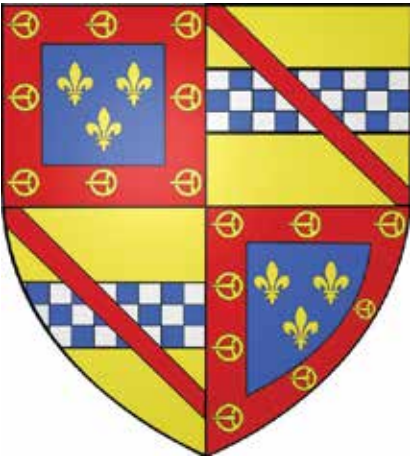
The Vault

The tower roof has a fine view of Glasgow and the Levern valley and, on a clear day Ben Lomond and Tinto Hill can be seen. The family's future was secured by Sir John Stewart of Darnley, who won a fortune in

France through his achievements in battle against the English during the 100 Years' War.

The French were so impressed that the men of Darnley became the royal bodyguard, and all Scotsmen were granted French citizenship! Sir John also married into the family of the Earls of Lennox. The Stewarts of Darnley acquired the title in 1488 and became a force in international politics.

The son of the 4th Earl, Henry, Lord Darnley married Mary, Queen of Scots and was proclaimed King of Scots (but not crowned) in 1565.



Arms of Sir John Stewart of Darnley

The castle was besieged three times. On the first occasion (1489) the southwest tower was destroyed by Mons Meg, the medieval cannon on display at Edinburgh Castle.



Crookston Castle by Robert Paul 1763

The Maxwells of Pollok purchased the castle in 1757 and began a partial restoration to coincide with Queen Victoria's visit to Glasgow in 1847. It was then that the north east tower was restored to its original height and the remains of the south east tower and west end of the castle were tidied up and the fragments of the western towers removed.

In 1931, Crookston Castle was gifted to the National Trust for Scotland, and became its first property. Although still owned by the NTS, the castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is today cared for by Historic Scotland. The castle is also a Category A listed building. Most of the castle trees were planted in the 19th century. They include a stand of beech enclosing a sycamore and a copse of sycamore around a beech. It is nice to think that the hawthorns in and around the ditch may be descended from the thorn hedge which formed the outer wall of the castle in the 13th century.



The castle is open to the public seven days a week from April to September. From October to March it is open from Saturday to Wednesday each week.

For visitor information, telephone 0141 883 9606.

To the east of Crookston Castle, and clearly visible from the tower itself, lies the gothic revival **Parish Church of St. James' (Pollok)**, frequently referred to as the church that moved.



The church, originally known as Titwood Established Church, was built between 1893-5 in Glencairn Drive in the garden suburb of Pollokshields by the eminent Glasgow-based architect Henry Edward Clifford (1852-1932).

The foundation stone was laid there by Lord Blythswood on the 18th November 1893.

Remarkably the church was dismantled stone by stone and re-erected in 1951 in its present location in Meiklerig Crescent as the sprawling Pollok housing estate began to be developed. It re-opened on this site on 2nd June 1951.



St. James' Church in its Pollokshields setting

The architects for this elaborate operation were the local practice of Thomson McCrae & Sanders who employed twenty skilled stonemasons for the task. This large structure is one of a number churches designed by architect H.E. Clifford in and around Glasgow to a similar pattern.

The church is the home of The Village Storytelling Centre and the Friends of Crookston Castle and Grounds.



The Village Storytelling Centre



*Impression of the castle in its heyday
(Friends of Crookston Castle and Grounds)*

For more information on the work of the
Friends of Crookston Castle
visit their website
www.thevillageonline.org.uk/castle
or phone
The Village Storytelling Centre
on 0141 882 3025.



*Leaving the castle turn left down the path
to Towerside Crescent and then right onto
Crookston Road. Cross the road at the
first set of traffic lights.*



***Malcolm Stark Jr.**
Architect of Hawkhead/Leverndale Hospital*

On your left is the site of **Leverndale Hospital**. The hospital was originally built as the Govan District Asylum on the lands of the Hawkhead estate and was originally known as Hawkhead Hospital.

The vast complex of buildings on the site was the result of an architectural competition set by the Govan District Lunacy Board and won by the Glasgow-based architect Malcolm Stark Jr.

The earliest group of buildings were opened in 1895 and had accommodation for 400 patients. By 1908, as the complex expanded, 520 patients could be

accommodated and at its peak in 1937 the resident population was over 1000. The hospital prided itself on its self sufficiency and boasted its own farm, providing fresh food for its patients, a laundry, a bakery, a chapel, its own fire service and even a nine-hole golf course, affording fresh air and exercise.

Hawkhead became a Glasgow Corporation hospital in 1930 and joined the National Health Service in 1948. In 1964 the name Leverndale was adopted in place of Hawkhead which, by then, had been used as the name of a hospital in nearby Paisley.

The hospital expanded further in the 1970s when a 120-bed unit was added but the original asylum buildings were taken out of use as more modern buildings were added in the 1980s and 1990s. The original asylum buildings, with some selective demolitions and new additions, now form part of an attractive housing development.

15. Leverndale Hospital Gate Lodge



Leverndale Hospital Lodge

Was designed as part of Malcolm Stark's competition-winning design for the asylum complex and is dated 1896. The little L-plan lodge is a single storey building which retains much of its Victorian charm.

The lodge originally stood beside grand curving quadrant walls with massive gatepiers and gates. These have been lost to allow modern vehicular traffic to enter the site. The lodge house is listed at Category C(S).

Visible from the roadway are the surviving parts of the original hospital complex.

16. Leverndale Hospital Female Nurses Home



Leverndale Hospital Female Nurses Home

The nurses' home was not part of the original complex but was built, probably, in the 1930s to accommodate female nursing staff on site when the number of patients in the hospital increased dramatically. This fairly utilitarian brown and cream render building with slate roofs was listed as Category B in 1992.

17. Leverndale Hospital Kelburne Unit



Leverndale Hospital Kelburne Unit

These five blocks are the survivors of the 1890s hospital unit and are nicely detailed with Scots Renaissance ornament. The

hospital block as originally built was a massive H-plan block, much added to over later years. The building was vacated in the 1980s as new facilities were added on the Leverndale site and the hospital block was converted to housing in 2003-04 with selective demolitions of some ranges. The surviving blocks retain their Category B status.

18. Leverndale Hospital Towerview Unit



Leverndale Hospital Towerview Unit with water tower behind

Probably one of the best local buildings designed by Malcolm Stark and his partner Fred Rowntree and was built between 1890 and 1895. The memorial stone is dated 3.10.1893. The Towerview unit was the grandest of the blocks in the whole hospital complex and sits on a hill-top location overlooking the valleys of the White Cart and the Lavern Water. The

style is also Scots Renaissance and, like the Kelburne Unit, it too was converted to residential use in 2003-06 with a number of elements demolished. It is now known as Parklands Oval.

The huge water tower has been retained as the centre piece of the residential development and is one of the most prominent landmarks in the area. The surviving parts of the Towerview Unit are listed at Category A.

Crookston House

On the opposite side of the road is Howford School which occupies the site of Crookston House which overlooked the spot where Levern Water enters the White Cart.

Crookston was the home, in the latter part of the 19th Century, to Richard Hotchkis, a retired army officer from the 3rd Renfrewshire Rifle Volunteers and his Madras-born wife who had settled in the area around 1880.

The house and its adjoining farmhouse were demolished when the school was built in the 1960s.

19. Howford Bridge, Crookston Road



***New Howford Bridge under construction 1933
with Ross Hall South Lodge***

The line of the major north-south roadway through the area, Crookston Road, is virtually unchanged since 1860 although the road was straightened slightly when the original Howford Bridge over the White Cart Water was replaced in 1933.

At the old Howford Bridge, on the south side of the river, stood the east lodge for the Hawkhead mansion house which was located some distance to the west of the bridge and reached by a long winding road along the banks of the White Cart Water.

On the north east side of the river, Ross Hall's south lodge was demolished to make way for a filling station on the site in the late 1960s. It stood just north of the entrance to the Park.

Hawkhead



Hawkhead Mansionhouse

The estate and mansion of Hawkhead stood on the left bank of the White Cart Water 2¼miles south east of Paisley. It dated back to at least the 15th Century when it was the home of Sir John Ross whose son, also John, was created the first Baron Ross of Hawkhead.

That title expired when the fourteenth lord died in 1754 and the estate passed to his sister, Mrs Ross Mackye and then her younger sister, Elizabeth, the widow of the third Earl of Glasgow. The fourth Earl, Elizabeth's son was created Baron Ross of Hawkhead in the United Kingdom peerage in 1815.

The mansion was still occupied by James Carr-Boyle, fifth Earl of Glasgow in 1861 when the 68-year old Earl and his Countess shared the vast building with nine house servants, a butler, cook and three footmen. Also on the estate were a groom, six stable lads and a gamekeeper.

At the East Lodge to the estate resided another gamekeeper and his daughter who was laundress to the Hawkhead mansion.

The original building was a large fortified tower which was expanded during the reign of Charles I to form a quadrangle. It was greatly repaired and improved around 1782 and was described by Groome in his Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland (1882-4) as “an irregular antique appearance, with gardens originally formed in the Dutch style, and a finely-wooded park”.

The Hawkhead estate was one of the biggest landowners in the area. On the death of the sixth Earl in 1890, the UK baronetcy Ross of Hawkhead became extinct.



Arms of the Earl of Glasgow

Continue north on Crookston Road

20. 'The Pines'



'The Pines'

210 Crookston Road. When James Cowan's Ross Hall estate was sold off at auction in 1908 it was broken up into 6 separate blocks. The block purchased by the Lobnitz family included the mansionhouse, the lodge, the stable and the villa known as "The Pines".

Obviously The Pines was originally built to house either a family member or a vital member of the Ross Hall household. The villa was probably built around the same time as the mansionhouse (1877) but by the turn of the century it was obviously not required by the Lobnitz family as it had been either sold or was being rented out.

The 1901 Census reveals the occupier to be William Watkinson, the 40-year old, English-born Professor of Engineering in

the Technical College at 38 Bath Street – the Mechanics’ Institute who was living there with his wife, 2 sons and a daughter along with 2 servants. The Pines is now a bar/restaurant and provides another point on the trail to break your journey for refreshments.

Return to start point at crookston station or continue on to paisley road west to travel back to the city centre.

2375 Paisley Road West / Crookston Road



On the south east corner at this important junction stands a single-storey red sandstone building, the offices of Grady & Co., Solicitors. This building was originally built as the Crookston branch of the British Linen Co. Bank and was designed in late 1932. The architects were Messrs R.A. Bryden, Robertson & Boyd of 278 St Vincent Street in the city. The shops on either side are slightly later additions.

This heritage trail was instigated by Councillor Alistair Watson and produced by Glasgow City Council working in conjunction with South Cardonald & Crookston Community Council and local historian John Mitchell.

Additional notes on the history of the area and on Crookston Castle by Alan Steel of the Friends of Crookston Castle and Grounds.

The publication was produced with the support of Glasgow City Council (Community Council Resource Centre).

*This Trail, including a large print version, can also be accessed on **www.glasgow.gov.uk/heritagetrails/***



FURTHER READING

Booklist:

Elizabeth Williamson, Anne Riches, Malcolm Higgs, *The Buildings of Scotland – Glasgow*, Penguin Books, 1990.

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Aileen Smart, *The Villages of Glasgow*, John Donald, 2002.

Greater Pollok Kist Community Museum, *Greater Pollok – A Picture History*, Glasgow City Council Libraries, Information & Learning, 2004.

Crookston Castle, *The Village Storytelling Centre & Historic Scotland*, 2006.

Alan Steel, *The Secret of Crookston Castle and Other Tales*, The Village Storytelling Centre, 2006.

Credits:

Photographs by Iain Paterson/Stephen Hosey

Historic photographs of Ross Hall Gardens courtesy of Martin Tabor of Land Use Consultants, 37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ

Funded by Craigton Area Committee

KEY

- 1 The former Crookston Station
- 2 64 Lochmaben Road
- 3 71 Lochmaben Road
- 4 81 and 85 Ralston Avenue
- 5 50 Ralston Avenue
- 6 15 Crookston Drive (Buttons and Bows)
- 7 Site of Cardonald or Crookston Mills
- 8 Cardonald Place Farm
- 9 RossHall Stables
- 10 Ross Hall Gate Lodge
- 11 Ross Hall
- 12 Ross Hall Gardens
- 13 197 Crookston Road, Ross Hall Park,
Chimney Stalk at Walled Garden
- 14 Crookston Castle
- 15 Leverndale Hospital Gate Lodge
- 16 Leverndale Hospital Female Nurses Home
- 17 Leverndale Hospital Kelburn Unit
- 18 Leverndale Hospital Towerview Unit
- 19 Howford Bridge, Crookston Road
- 20 'The Pines'

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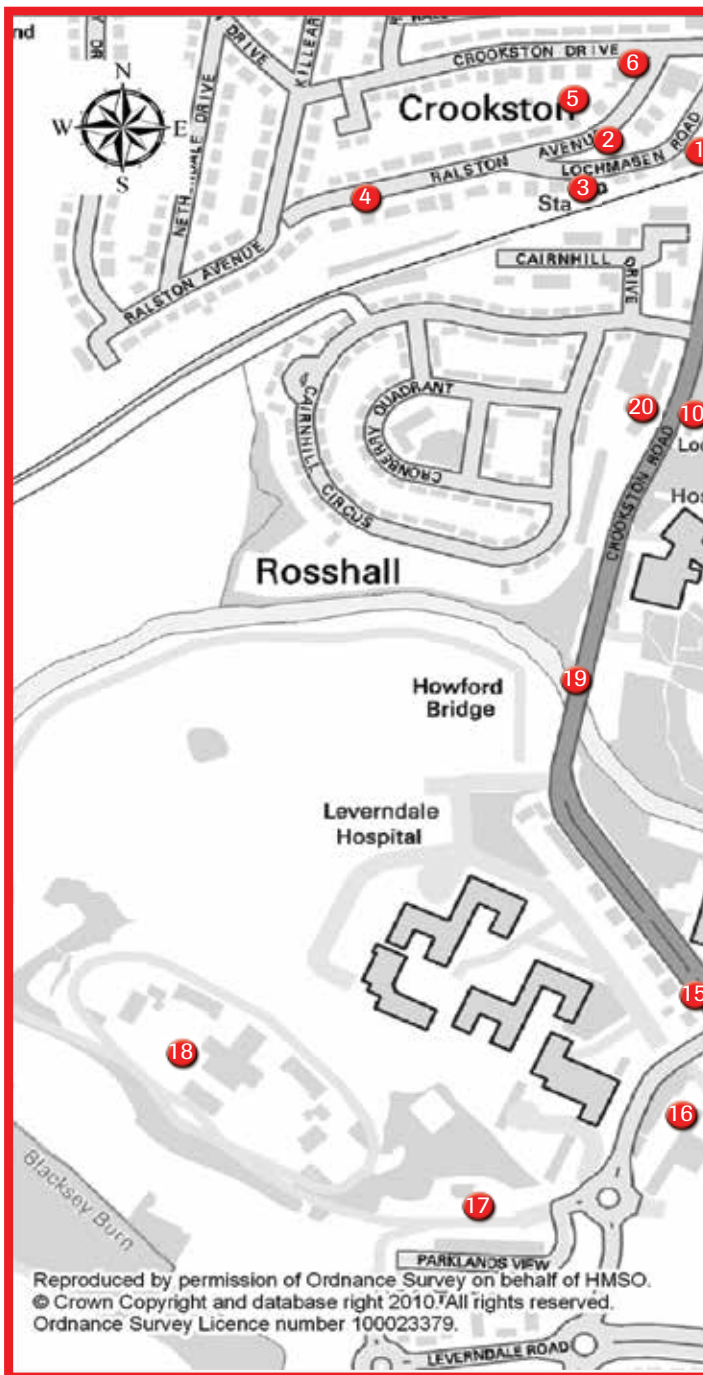
Phone 0871 200 22 33

<http://www.traveline.info>

Train Services:

Glasgow Central Station to Crookston on the Paisley Canal Line. Updated timetables are available online and at stations.

<http://www.traveline.info>



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