

LOHCARRON WESTER ROSS



At the foot of Glen Carron, beside Loch Carron in Wester Ross in the Scottish Highlands.

There are three routes to Lochcarron by road: west from Inverness (63 miles); north from Fort William (82 miles); or south from Ullapool (102 miles via the spectacular coast road). Alternatively, you can come by train, on the world-famous line from Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh (station at Strathcarron); or you can sail into Loch Carron from the Atlantic.

Lohcarron: an ideal base for the exploration of this beautiful part of the west coast of Scotland, its mountains and sea lochs, its forests and wildlife.

The village hugs the loch side with fine views across to the hills at Attadale and Stromeferry from most of its houses. There is a variety of accommodation: three hotels in the vicinity, numerous bed-and-breakfast houses and ample self-catering. There are shops to cater for most of your needs, from groceries to locally-produced art, craft goods & souvenirs.

Outdoors, there's plenty to do: hill loch, river or sea fishing; golf on Lochcarron's own nine-hole course; bicycles can be hired; and it's a paradise for people who like messing about in boats.

Lohcarron also provides an excellent starting-point for off-road walking: routes range from easy to the very challenging. The essential, local walks guide, can be bought in the village. And if your interests are in natural beauty and wildlife there is much here to reward you - a free Natural History guide can be obtained locally.



Getting to **Lohcarron** is comparatively easy these days - see the box, left - but it used to be harder. The village began to develop into its present form in 1800 - as an ill-fated imitation of the Government-sponsored fishing villages like Ullapool - but it was another twenty years before a track suitable for carts connected **Lohcarron** with the east coast. Until then the only choice was between mountain

paths and the sea. As for a road south, not until the 1960s was a motor road built round the loch. Until then travellers had to cross it via a ferry at Strome - as they had since time immemorial. Strome has been important for other reasons: originally, for about forty years, it was the railway terminus, trains connecting there with sea-going vessels to and from the Hebrides.

It was also where, some 400 years ago, the MacDonalDs of Glen Garry sought to control shipping entering and leaving Loch Carron, until the MacKenzies



gained the upper hand; the ruins of their castle can be seen at North Strome - as can the mountains of Skye.





ROUND AND ABOUT LOCHCARRON

Of the several settlements near Lochcarron, N. Strome has already been mentioned, as has Strathcarron, once a far busier station than today. Passengers, goods, the post and livestock all embarked (or disembarked) in quantities we would now find surprising. To the north of the station is what is now known as New Kelso, where an attempt was once made to grow flax, with expertise imported from Kelso in the Scottish borders. Visit **The Smiddy Heritage Centre** to learn more.

Kishorn, to the west of **Lochcarron**, has become the collective name for a group of little villages along the loch of that name, facing the Applecross Hills. Here you can see the remains of the oil industry rig-building yard of the 1970s and '80s - yet it is also a good place to watch birds, particularly waders. Courthill House is now a ruin apart from its chapel which remains in use. Nearby is a branch of Inverness College where rural skills and fish farming techniques are taught. A little



way beyond **Tornapress**, where the road branches to Applecross, there is the **Rassal** ash wood which, for naturalists, is a very special place.

FURTHER AFIELD

Lochcarron is a perfect base from which to explore, particularly by car. Popular destinations include **Eilean Donan Castle** at Dornie (18 miles S.), **The Island of Skye** (ca 25miles) & **Applecross** (18 miles W).

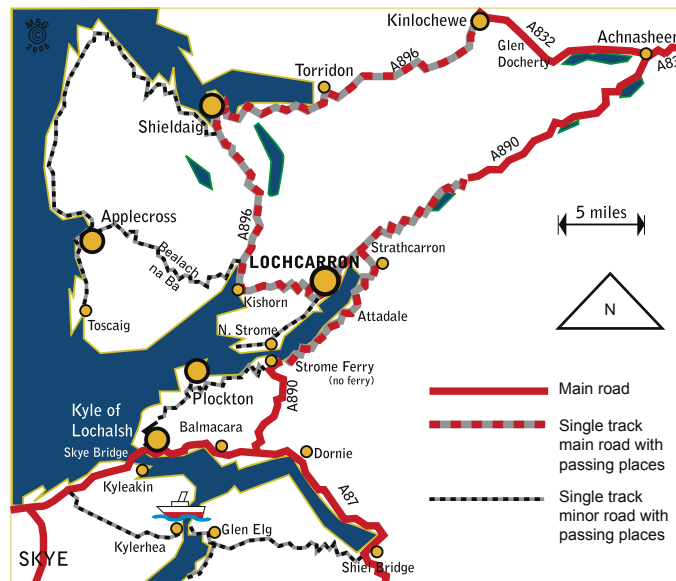
MOTOR TRIPS FROM LOCHCARRON

There are several extremely varied and exciting half-day and day trips from **Lochcarron**. Three of the best are de-

scribed below and see map also. They all take in a considerable area and provide world class views, some on a grand scale, others quite intimate. Remember that in this part of Scotland petrol filling stations are often hard to find; and look out too for places to eat, especially those where **seafood**, the local speciality, is served.

Half day: a round trip through Kishorn, Shildaig, Torridon, Kinlochewe and Achnasheen returning down Glen Carron back to the village. Look out for the view-point overlooking Loch Torridon and another in Glen Docherty, east of Kinlochewe.

Half day: head for Kishorn, take the Applecross turn-off and the Bealach na Bà: view-



point at the top. Turn left at the T-junction in Applecross towards Toscaig for classic seascapes. Go back through Applecross and take the coast road Shildaig. Return to **Lochcarron** via Kishorn.

Day tour: an adventurous, summer route to Skye via Strathcarron, Dornie (for Eilean Donan Castle), Shiel Bridge, Glen Elg (famous for its brochs), Kyle Rhea ferry on to Skye (check with the Tourist Information Centre for ferry times). Return via the Skye Bridge, Balmacara and the road North at Auchtertyre, back through Strathcarron and hence to Lochcarron. Take a good supply of film: there are photo opportunities by the hundred.

Short trips may be made to: **Plockton**, for seal-spotting, pubs, seascapes and boats; **Kyle of Lochalsh**, for glass-bottomed boat trips & indoor swimming pool, both good for wet days; **Ardaneaskin**, for Strome Castle + wonderful views of Skye; and **Attadale** for its memorable **Gardens**.

ON THE LOCH

Loch Carron is one of the most useful and beautiful sea-lochs on the west coast. Five miles by $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, it is suitable for all water sports - depending on the weather. There is a very active sailing club; a slipway for launching 6ft to 20ft craft; and three visitor moorings off the slipway for cruising boats up to 38ft and 6ft draught. Small boats and canoes can be hired in the village.

Lochcarron & District Business Association
<http://www.lochcarron.org.uk>

Our guides for visitors are available locally:
 Fishing: *Lochcarron Angling* £3.50.
 Walking: *A Guide to Local Walks* £3.60.
 Natural History:

Golden Eagles, Red Deer & Wild Otters
 free.

Design, photographs & text:
 Michael Stuart Green Design, Lochcarron.
 Text revised and this new pdf edition Nov. 2005