Coal mining was first recorded at Blairadam by Dunfermline monks in 1291. They describe shallow workings dug into the sides of the Keil Burn. Similar workings are still discernible on the sides of the Pieries Burn.

When William Adam bought the estate there was one coal mine located at Loutenstane Wood. A number of coal seams on the estate were exploited as the years progressed. William Adam noted in the Blairadam Book that the lawn in front of Blairadam House had often been covered in coal.

The Blairen bathie Colliery was owned by the Fife Coal Company and at its peak employed 300 men. The pit opened in 1895 when 2 shafts were sunk to a depth of 112 fathoms (672 feet). A new railway was built over the Glen and many trees were felled. As well as transporting coal, the railway carried miners to and from the pit.

The Blairen bathie Drift Mine was opened in 1945. This was a sloped railway to the upper seams. Coal production only lasted until 1962. Due to difficult geology and water the mine was not as productive as expected. At its peak 150 men were employed at this mine.
Blairadam Forest

A Designed Landscape

There was just one tree when William Adam bought the estate of Blair Crambeth in 1733. A great ash, known as “The Tree”, it survived near Blairadam House until the early 20th century.

William Adam’s son John began to extend the plantings in 1750. By 1784, he had planted 540 acres with larches, spruces and silver firs. Fake classical ruins were planned, although never built, to make an attractive but natural looking landscape which moved away from the formal designs of his fathers.

The Right Honourable William Adam continued his grandfather’s work. Sir Walter Scott asked him to write a book on the creation of the wood and its management. Published in 1834, the book describes the estate in great detail and develops William Adam’s philosophy of tree planting which was to create a “terre ornée” or “admired estate”, to combine “usefulness and profit with enjoyment and ornament”.

The estate was sold to the Forestry Commission in 1925 for £2,500. Many of John Adam's plantings were felled for both world wars.

Keltyhill & Glen Trails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keltyhill Glen</td>
<td>0.5 miles</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Glen</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Keltyhill Glen Trail

A gentle stroll alongside the Drummagoil Burn through the mixed woodland of Keltyhill Glen. A good time to visit is after a period of heavy rain when the burn tumbles over the waterfall at the west-end of the Glen.

The Glen Trail

The Glen was one of the scenic highlights of the Blairadam estate in its hey day and is still delightful to stroll through today. The path meanders through the Glen, criss-crossing over the Kelty Burn on stone bridges. The brick foundations halfway along the Glen are all that remains of the “100 Foot Bridge” which carried the railway over the Glen to the Blairenbathie pit. Although the Glen is dominated by massive spruce trees, which tower above the path, beech, pine and sycamore add variety to the landscape. The Kiery Craigs can be seen at the east end of the Glen.

Blairenbathie Mine Trail

The now peaceful forest was once a busy industrial area. This route passes by the remains of the two Blairenbathie pits. The first is the modern mine, close to the start of the trail. It opened in 1945 but closed in 1962 and has been reclaimed by the forest. Further on the path crosses the recently restored Lochornie Burn bridge with its tall narrow arch, characteristic of the Adam style. Before reaching the old Blairenbathie Pit there is an attractive area of mature broadleaved woodland with oak, beech and birch. The remains of the pit and the associated pit bing can be found amongst the trees.