

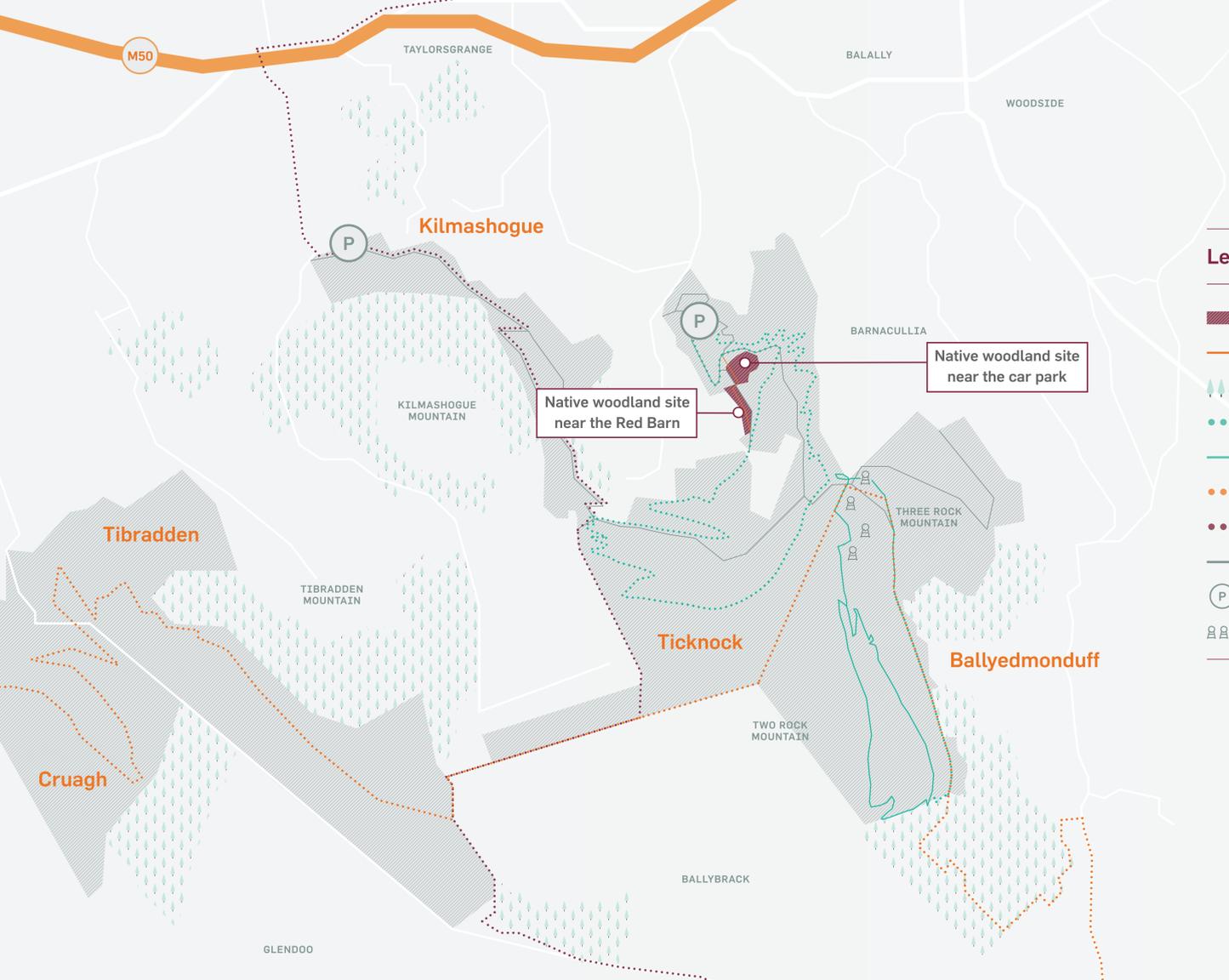


# What's going on in Ticknock?

Here in Ticknock, we are converting two small areas of primarily Sitka spruce forest into native woodland to enhance the habitat for wildlife, enrich the forest's recreational appeal and bring more autumn colour to the hills. We call this approach to forest management 'R&R': Removing the productive timber trees and Replanting with natives like Scots pine, birch, rowan, oak and holly.

We have already clearfelled two small areas of Sitka spruce: one near the upper car park where spruce and pine trees had blown over in the wind, and another near the Red Barn (you'll notice that we've saved the few scattered beech and oak trees that were mixed in with the spruce). Now, it's time to fence both of these areas and plant them with new native woodland.

This work is part of Phase 1 of the Dublin Mountains Makeover - a long-term plan to transform nine Dublin Mountains forests for people and nature. To stay up to date, sign up for our newsletter at [www.coillte.ie/coillte-nature/](http://www.coillte.ie/coillte-nature/)



### Legend

- R&R area
- New walking trail
- Private forest
- Ticknock MTB trails
- Ballyedmonduff MTB trails
- Dublin Mountains Way
- Wicklow Way
- Forest roads
- Car parks
- Masts

## What is R&R (Remove & Replant)?

In the 1950s, the first conifer trees were planted here to produce a home-grown supply of timber. At that time, Dublin was a smaller city and nobody thought much about outdoor recreation in forests. Today, these forests are among the most important recreational sites for a growing urban population: in summer 2020, Ticknock had 1,100 visits a day.

As well as enhanced recreation, there is also a strong call for more native woodlands to benefit nature. We've identified two R&R areas here in Ticknock for new native woodlands:

- The first (near the car park) is an area where trees have been blown down by storms.
- The second (near the Red Barn) already has a mature oak tree, which will provide a seed source for the future. It also features non-native beech trees, which bring lovely autumn colour to the hills.

This summer, we clearfelled these areas to remove the conifers (saving the oak and beech).

Now, it's time to replant these sites with new native woodland. We're starting by cultivating the site to give the new saplings the best possible start on these exposed mountain slopes.

Next, we'll erect deer fencing. Deer are very common in these forests, and they like to eat our native trees, so we have to protect them while they're young. Then we'll plant the trees and create a walking trail through them so that everyone can enjoy the new native woodlands.

Both of Ticknock's new native woodland sites have already been surveyed by an ecologist and forester to examine the soil type, ground flora and moisture regime. These factors determine the mix of tree species needed to develop the most appropriate native woodland community:

- For the site near the car park, we'll plant downy birch, Scots pine, sessile oak and rowan.
- Near the Red Barn, we'll plant sessile oak, Scots pine, downy birch and rowan. Holly will regenerate naturally across both sites.

## How is R&R good for biodiversity?

By planting assemblages of native **tree and shrub species that are ecologically appropriate** for the soil type, slope, altitude, ground flora and moisture regime on each site, we're creating a biodiverse habitat that will improve the area for insects, birds and mammals.

Along the little stream towards the Red Barn, we're planting fewer trees to create a more **open habitat with dappled shade**, which is better for aquatic life.

By leaving **standing and fallen deadwood** (old, broken trunks) on both sites to slowly decompose over time, we're providing habitat for a variety of invertebrates and fungi.

In turn, the deadwood provides **important feeding grounds for a host of birds and animals** such as tree creepers, woodpeckers and badgers, as well as elevated viewpoints for birds of prey out hunting in the forest.

The new native trees and shrubs will slowly develop into beautiful woodland, adding to the **diversity of the tree species, associated ground flora and habitats** already present in the Dublin Mountains.

We will be working with the Dublin Mountains Partnership to provide a **new walking trail** through this native woodland so you can experience it up close – but please remember to close the gates as you pass through.

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An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
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Step 1: Cultivate the site to help the woodland get off to the best start and erect fencing to keep hungry deer out.



Step 2: Plant an ecologically appropriate mix of native tree and shrub saplings.



Step 3: Enjoy the woodland as it grows and develops into a biodiverse habitat.

