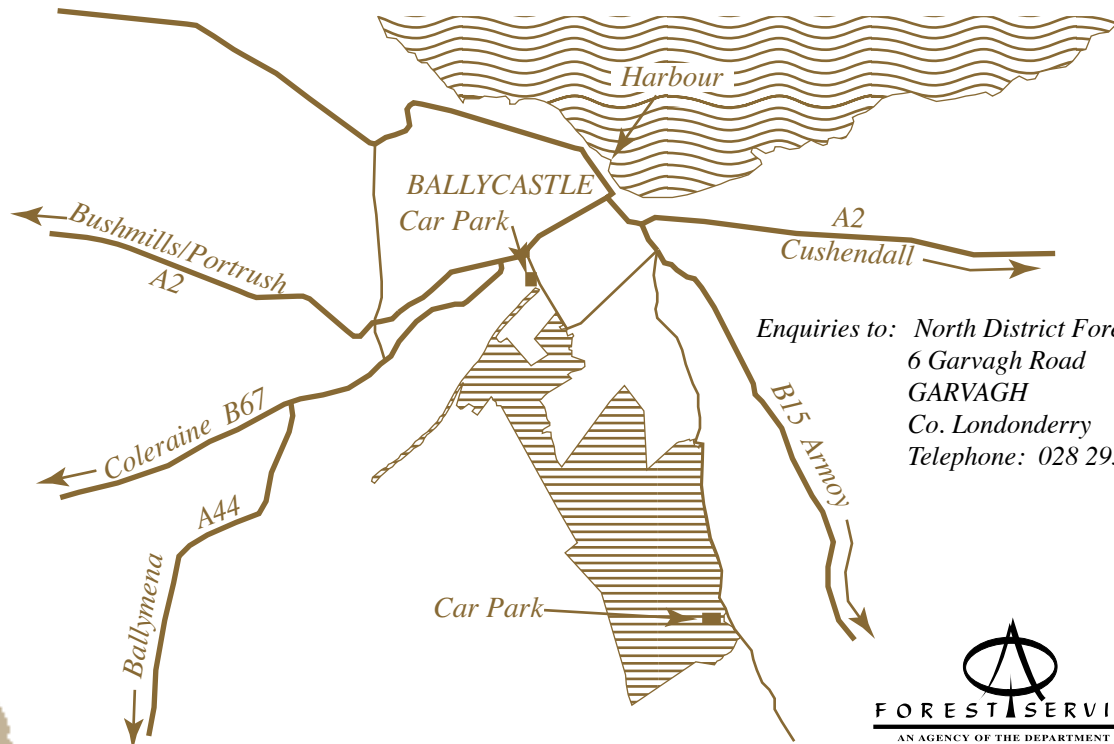


## T h e F o r e s t

The most prominent feature of north east Antrim is the round dome of Knocklayd mountain rising to over 500 m. Clothing the northern slopes of the mountain is Ballycastle forest, first planted in 1931. Most of this early woodland has now been clear felled. This process of cutting and replanting has produced a more diverse forest and greatly increased the range of wildlife habitats. In addition superlative views have been opened up that have been hidden by the trees for 50 years.

## T h e V i e w s

The way marked routes take full advantage of the new vistas revealed by clear felling. Rathlin Island can be seen just a short distance off shore while in the distance on a clear day the islands of Islay and Jura are visible. To the east the magnificent cliff of Fair Head stands in front of the Mull of Kintyre across the North Channel.



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## F O R E S T W A L K S I N C o u n t y A n t r i m



## B A L L Y C A S T L E

5 miles (8 Kms) of forest roads.  
Moderate walking.



**1. 'Glentaisie Trail'** (Yellow waymarkers).  
This route begins from the edge of town at the Fairhill and initially follows the now disused railway track which originally continued to Ballymoney.

**2.** Second rotation woodland replanted with a variety of broadleaved trees, oak, ash, beech, rowan and hazel. A small pond adds to the diversity of wildlife habitats.

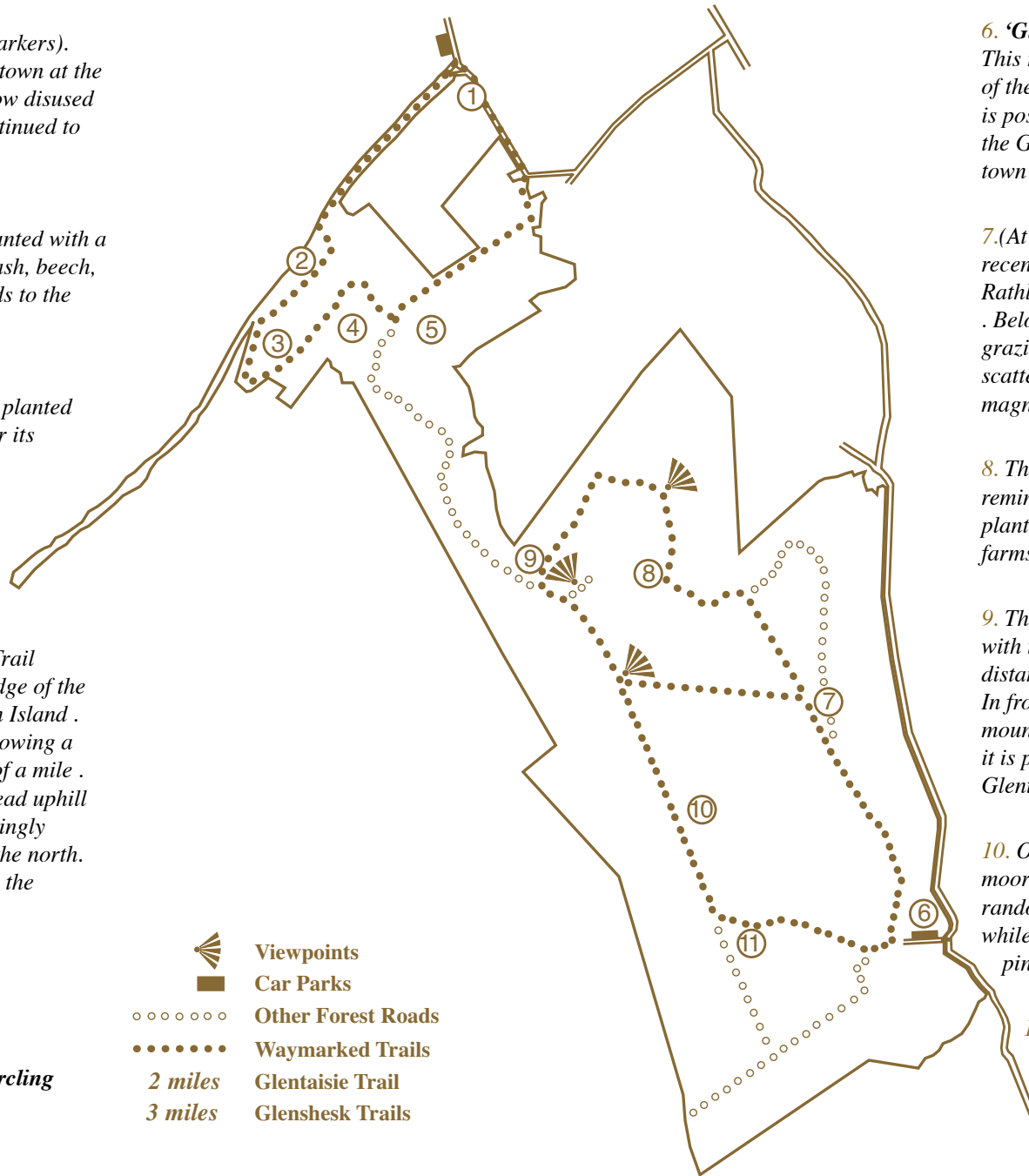
**3.** A small area of European larch planted in 1936. This has been retained for its contribution to the landscape.

**4.** First views of Glentaisie and the town of Ballycastle.

**5.** Road junction. The Glentaisie Trail leads to the left eventually to the edge of the forest and offering views of Rathlin Island. It returns to the town centre by following a steep downhill road for a quarter of a mile. Turning right at the junction will lead uphill to the top of the forest with increasingly panoramic views of the islands to the north. This route will eventually join with the Glenshesk Trail.

**FRONT COVER:**

**Buzzards can be regularly seen circling Ballycastle Forest.**



**6. 'Glenshesk Trail'** (Blue & Red waymarkers).  
This route begins from the car park at the top of the Cool Brae on the Drumavoley road. It is possible to walk through the forest to meet the Glentaisie Trail leading to Ballycastle town centre.

**7.**(At road junction). Emerging into the more recently clear felled areas, superb views of Rathlin and the Scottish coast are revealed. Below is Glenshesk with its patchwork of grazing and arable fields, woodlands and scattered farmhouses. The vista extends to the magnificent cliffs of Fair Head.

**8.** The ruins of the old farmhouse are a reminder of the days before the forest was planted, when this land supported many small farms.

**9.** This open area reveals views of Ballycastle with the farmland stretching away in the distance towards the North Antrim Coast. In front rises the huge bulk of Knocklayd mountain. By turning right at the road junction it is possible to walk downhill to join the Glentaisie Trail.

**10.** On the left is an area of open heather moorland. The small conifers scattered at random have seeded themselves naturally while the little knoll containing spruce and pine was planted in 1927!

**11.** Turning the corner down the forest road reveals distant views of Ballypatrick Forest clothing the gently undulating slopes of the Antrim plateau.

-  Viewpoints
-  Car Parks
-  Other Forest Roads
-  Waymarked Trails
-  2 miles Glentaisie Trail
-  3 miles Glenshesk Trails