

Summary of objectives

The following management objectives have been agreed in order to maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems, and the benefits they provide:

- Diversify the species composition of the forest by promoting a more diverse restocking strategy, which will include more variety of native broadleaves and productive conifer crops.
- Improve the internal structure of the forest by developing age class diversity, variation of tree sizes and mixtures of species within stands.
- Diversify woodland types within the forest, by increasing the variety of coniferous woodland and the expansion of native and riparian woodland habitats, which will help to improve connectivity within the forest and provide opportunities for linking to woodland networks outside of the forest in Cwm Hirnant and around Bala Lake.
- Remove any larch infected with *Phytophthora ramorum* and plan for the eventual removal of remaining areas of significant larch under the Larch Reduction Strategy.
- Maintain the long-term commercial viability of the forest, by planning a sustainable supply of timber. Improve timber quality and diversify products to more local markets.
- Invest in forest infrastructure to provide better access to allow for more Low Impact Silvicultural Systems and thinning management.
- Safeguard current timber haulage routes and explore practical access routes to isolated forest blocks in the Hirnant Valley.
- Create a diverse permanent forest structure and ecosystem that includes riparian and native woodland, natural reserves and long-term retentions, with more successional woodland and open habitats along forest roads and rides where natural processes can take place.
- Increase the quantity of deadwood in the forest, which supports a diverse biota within the forest ecosystem.

- Manage the boundary between the forest and the Berwyn and South Clwyd SAC/SPA for the benefit and favourable condition of dry heath and blanket bog habitats and protected birds including raptors and Black Grouse. Consider different options for management such as native successional woodland buffer zones to minimise the impact of seeding conifers on the SAC.
- Expand the existing riparian woodland network to provide better buffering against harvesting operations and to help improve the water quality in freshwater ecosystems.
- Ensure compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive when undertaking operational activities by following best practice as outlined in the 'UK Forest Standard - Forest and Water Guidelines' to protect water quality and freshwater ecosystems within the forest.
- Plan smaller felling coupes and use Low Impact Silvicultural Systems where possible, to help minimise the impact on water quality in the wider Dee LIFE project area, by reducing the risk of sedimentation, peak flows, as well as reducing the visual impacts on the landscape.
- Restore all Ancient Woodland Sites through the gradual removal of conifers over time, using Low Impact Silvicultural Systems and thinning management where possible.
- Protect all monuments and historical features when carrying out forest management operations.
- Consider the visual impact of management operations and long-term proposals on views within Snowdonia National Park.
- Improve the visual and sensory and landscape habitat value of the forest by increasing native woodland along the Hirnant and Glyn Valleys.
- Maintain existing routes and recreation facilities in the forest.
- Maintain and improve opportunities for continued use of forest roads and public rights of way including other tracks and paths within the forest, for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Maintain Public Rights of Way affected by planned harvesting operations including, felling, thinning and restocking.

- Explore opportunities for working together with adjoining landowners, stakeholders and on projects such as the 'Dee LIFE project' to develop priorities and plans which will improve the connectivity and long-term resilience of ecosystems in the wider landscape.
- Continue to explore the potential for small scale hydro projects such as in Cwm-Hesgen.