# Hirnant Forest Resource Plan Summary of Objectives

Location & Setting

Hirnant Forest Resource Plan (FRP) includes the main forest blocks of Cwmwr and Cwm Gwnen which collectively have a total area of 257.21 ha (Cwmwr 128.88 ha and Cwm Gwnen 128.33 ha). These two forest blocks are referred to as ‘Hirnant’ so named after the small village of Hirnant or the Hirnant stream/valley which is located to the south of Cwmwr. The name Cwmwr or ‘footbridge’, has been taken from the surrounding farmsteads names which perhaps referred to a historic footbridge over the Hirnant stream.

The two Hirnant forest blocks are situated within the County Council boundary of Powys. Cwmwr is located on a steep hillside (Carnedd Das Eithin) and the Bwlch y Main ridge to the north of the B439, Abertridwr to Penybontfawr road. Cwm Gwnen is approached by a minor public road from the village of Penygarnedd B4391, north of Llanfyllin.

The surrounding habitat of the Hirnant FRP blocks consists of enclosed grazed farmland, commercial conifer forest blocks, which dominate the higher elevations and mixed broadleaved woodlands on the lower slopes and riversides. The Berwyn NNR, (SAC, SPA and SSSI) is situated 1.2km to the west and north of the Hirnant FRP, which consists of nearly 8000 hectares of open moorland within the Berwyn Mountain range.

Public access for the two woodlands is a mixture of open access on foot with a good network of public footpaths and bridleways linking the woodland blocks to the wider landscape.

Opportunities and Prioritises

* Increase structural diversity through reduced clear fell coupe sizes phased over time and long term retention areas.
* Continue to maintain a sustainable supply of timber production through the design and delivery of tree felling programmes and restock species choice.
* Removal of larch and diversify the forest species composition to increase resilience to pests and diseases whilst building a robust forest for future generations
* Increased successional /riparian woodland areas for the improvement of habitat resilience and landscape scale habitat linkages.
* Continue to protect and where possible enhance, lesser horseshoe bat roots and foraging linkages.
* Identify and protect important heritage features and investigate the possibility for future research projects to increase the understanding of this Forest Resource Plan’s wider cultural heritage.
* Maintain and improve visitors experience by providing a safe and enjoyable environment which changes more gradually over time. Investigate the funding opportunities for further on site interpretative panels and online learning resources.

## Summary of the main changes that will occur in the forest:

* The removal of all larch trees from the woodlands (20ha) due to the confirmation of *Phytophthora ramorum*
* Enhancement of higher conservation value areas by the management and expansion of the riparian zones and successional woodland.
* An increase of areas allocated to long term retention and natural reserves.
* The restoration of ancient woodland sites (6ha) by the removal of conifer and the creation of a native broadleaf habitat.
* Softening of conifer edges to lessen their visual impact on the landscape
* A decrease of Sitka spruce and an increase of other species of conifer and broadleaves in order to increase the woodlands resilience to pests and diseases