

# Summary of Objectives for the Presteigne Woods Forest Resource Plan

## Location & Settings:

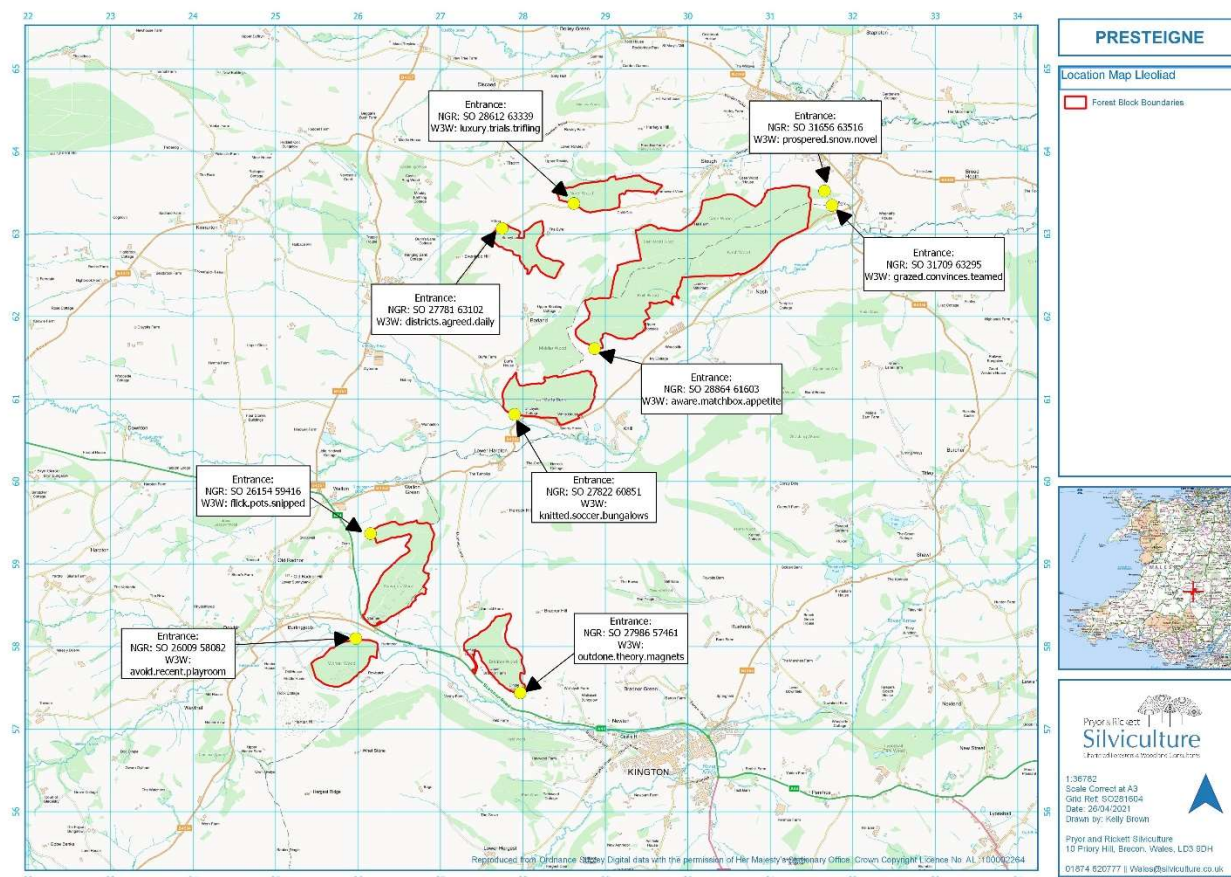
The Presteigne Woods forest is 443ha over 7 distinct woodland blocks that sit in the Lugg catchment on the border of England and Wales:

- Nash Wood 215ha
- North Wood 30ha
- Benbow Wood 24.9ha
- Burfa Bank 50.7ha
- Navages Wood 58.2ha
- Worsell Wood 29.4ha
- Bradnor Wood 35ha

The Forest Resource Plan represents less than 1% of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate with mostly harvester/forwarder working and scope for thinning crops to produce high value sawlog products. The forest neighbours are medium scale intimate mixed woodlands of similar character. Much of the forest was established on higher elevation, wetter soils in areas that still allow for a wide choice of tree species despite vigorous weed competition and moderate windthrow risk.

This Forest Resource Plan aims to diversity tree species where possible, particularly through thinning with seeding thinnings to create light conditions that promote natural regeneration of a range of trees species. The landscape is dominated enclosed farmland as a backdrop to tourism and peri-urban enterprise. Phytophthora ramorum has avoided the larch crops to date but clear-felling of larch to promote species diversification has been planned for many years. All seven woodlands require annual thinning interventions with well-timed and publicised clear-fells.

The woodlands in this Forest Resource Plan demonstrate high timber productivity at small to medium scales adding to the protection of water quality, landscape and outdoor recreation.



## Summary of Objectives:

1. Promote the **long-term resilience** in woodland ecosystems as directed by:
  - [Natural Resources Wales: Purpose & Role of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate](#) –Key Priority3
  - [Mid Wales Area Statement](#) – mitigating Climate Change and improving Biodiversity
  - [State of Natural Resources Report \(SoNaRR\) for Wales 2020](#) - SMNR aim 2.

This objective will be achieved by writing a Forest Resource Plan that complies with the UK Forestry Standard and UK Woodland Assurance Standard. The subsequent forest operations and programmes of work are delivered safely and without adverse environmental impact. **The mid-term review of the approved Forest Resource Plan must evaluate whether delivery was safe, clean and efficient and whether the Opportunities Map enabled additional work in the forest.**

2. Maintain and **enhance priority habitats and support protected species**, with a focus on ancient semi-natural woodlands, SSSIs and Dormice. Opportunities to expand natural habitats and habitats for protected species will be mapped for future resource planning. The implemented Forest Management Systems and Indicative Woodland Type maps will drive programmes for thinning and bog restoration in sites where the most positive impact for biodiversity can be achieved. **5-year monitoring of habitat & species composition from the subcompartment database, completed thinning and clear-felling records with comparisons to production forecast data. Records of habitat improvement works on Ancient Semi Natural Woodland with subsequent monitoring on site.**
3. Maintain a **sustainable supply of timber** of approximately 2632m<sup>3</sup> of timber per year for the approval period of the plan. The implemented Forest Management Systems map will drive programmes for forest infrastructure, first thinnings, biodiversity thinnings, landscape change, species and woodland structure diversity along with biodiversity connectivity. **5-year monitoring of habitat & species composition from the subcompartment database, completed thinning and clear-felling records with comparisons to production forecast data.**
4. Evolve the forest structure to buffer against possible **safety, pollution and tree health issues** such as hazardous trees, damage by deer and riparian buffer zones. The Indicative Woodland Type map will promote species diversity when restocking and the implemented Forest Management Systems map will drive programmes for removing liabilities such as Larch infected with Phytophthora ramorum, hazardous trees adjacent to recreation facilities and improving light conditions in riparian buffer zones. **5-year monitoring of habitat & species composition from the subcompartment database.**
5. Management of **vegetation and open-space** to promote structural diversity in rides and roadsides, manage invasive species and over grazing to favour regenerating trees in the right locations. The implemented Forest Management Systems map, rides, roads and permanent open space will drive programmes for wildlife and vegetation control that where possible will take advantage of commercial opportunities e.g. harvesting roadside brash. **5-year monitoring of habitat and species compositions from the subcompartment database and records of completed vegetation control operations.**
6. Maintain and enhance the **recreation facilities, cultural heritage features and landscape value** of the forest by implementing the Forest Management Systems map which has been tested in 3D visualisation and assessed by internal and external stakeholders. **5-year monitoring of clear-fell and restocking implementation in the subcompartment database against the Forest Management Systems map. Reflect on operations to improve or maintain recreation/heritage features and analysis & recommendations from studies into improving Natural Resources Wales's offer with regard public recreation, landscape and cultural heritage.**

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

- Throughout the coming plan period Presteigne Woods will remain an important productive woodland, providing a sustainable supply of timber to support employment and the Welsh economy.
- Species and structural diversity will be significantly enhanced, providing greater resilience to pests, disease and climatic changes.
- Areas of 'Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites' (PAWS) will undergo a slow and steady conversion back to native broadleaf woodland, with connectivity between these remnant features being maintained and enhanced through the management of adjacent crops.
- The expansion of riparian corridors of native broadleaf and successional woodland, will further improve habitat connectivity and provide enhanced buffering against surrounding designated sites.
- An incremental 'Low Impact Silvicultural System' (LISS) approach will be favoured wherever the physical constraints of access, exposure and management history of existing crops will allow.
- The rapid spread of *Phytophthora ramorum* will require the accelerated removal of all larch crops from the area within the next 10 years.
- Maintaining an appropriate landscape setting around the various Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMS) present throughout the valley, the identification and preservation of other heritage features and the provision of healthy access opportunities for the community will remain as important objectives.