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**Datganiad i'r wasg/Press release**

## New forestry collaboration to reduce timber traffic in Tywi Valley

A pioneering collaboration between Natural Resources Wales, private forestry companies and three Welsh local authorities has been struck up to reduce the amount of timber carrying lorries travelling through small villages in the Tywi Valley.

The collaboration, which is the first of its kind in Wales, will mean that a number of small villages and rural roads in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys will see a significant reduction in the number of lorries passing through.

Each of the organisations has bought into a new 'Timber Transport Fund' which will allow them to establish, manage and maintain a shared network of internal forest roads.

The first project to be delivered as part of the collaboration has seen an eight mile stretch of the Cwm Henog forest road upgraded, which could reduce timber traffic in the Upper Tywi Valley by about 35,000 tonnes, the equivalent of 1,500 vehicle movements every year.

Five other projects have also been identified across the 13,500-hectare Tywi forest complex which will create new access roads and link existing roads to allow hauliers better access to main highways.

These roads will provide better access to the main highways, meaning that in some areas, lorries will no longer need to travel along small rural roads and through small villages.

Graham Hillier, from Natural Resources Wales said:

"Commercial forestry is worth approximately £370 million to the Welsh economy, with the Tywi Forest responsible for 15% of Wales's timber production each year alone.

"Timber production from the Tywi Forest is anticipated to increase threefold from now until 2026, so this new collaboration is great news for business, allowing private forestry companies to transport timber more efficiently.

"It's also a great solution for people living in small rural villages, who will experience less disruption and noise from these large lorries passing through their communities."

Carmarthenshire County Council Executive Board Member for Street

www



YouTube

Scene Cllr Colin Evans said:

“We are delighted to be part of this project to deliver this new access road and reduce the impact of timber traffic to the communities of Rhandirmwyn and Cilycwm.

“The council has been proactively working with Natural Resources Wales to find a solution to the problem and has committed to part fund the project for three years.

“Not only will it be of huge benefit to these communities, reducing congestion, noise and pollution, but it will also help to reduce the pressure on the highway network and the associated maintenance costs.”

The existing internal forest roads are owned by a number of different organisations both within the public and private forestry sector, meaning that some hauliers have not had access to certain forest roads.

The collaboration includes Natural Resources Wales, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys County Councils, UPM Tilhill and Aitchesse Limited.

An initial agreement for three years has been established with each organisation contributing to the Timber Transport Fund.

***Ends***

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*During office hours and evenings or weekends*

## Notes to Editors:

The six projects to benefit from the Timber Transport fund include:

	Area	Benefit to community
1	Upgraded eight mile stretch of road between the southern end of Llyn Brienne reservoir to the A483 .	Reduced timber traffic through village of Rhandirmwyn
2	Vegetation management and culvert clearance at the Nant-yr-Hwch Road in Powys.	Improved sight lines enabling safer driving for motorists along narrow road alongside Llyn Brienne
3	Culvert improvement works at Bron Helem Road, Ceredigion.	Improved safety for motorists
4	New forest road from Tywi forest linking onto minor road that joins the B4348	Reduced timber traffic flow through village of Pontrhydfendegaid and lessening impact on natural heritage of Florida Strata Abbey.
5	A new forest road from Nant y Stalwyn Forest to Nant-yr-hwch Forest	Timber traffic taken off stretch of minor rural road
6	An agreement to share access between the network of forest roads at Nant-yr-hwch Forest, currently under management of five separate owners.	Timber traffic taken off stretch of minor rural road

- Natural Resources Wales brings together the work of the former Countryside Council, Environment Agency Wales and Forestry Commission Wales, as well as some functions from the Welsh Government. Its purpose is to ensure that the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, enhanced and used, now and in the future. Natural Resources Wales is a Government sponsored body.
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