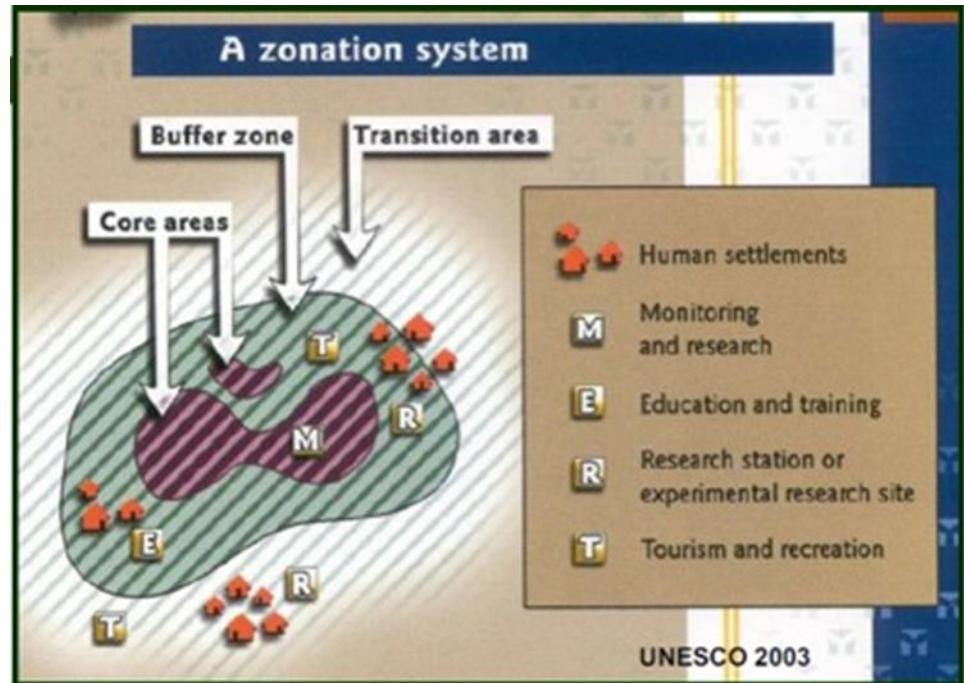




Forest Economic Partnership Biosphere Reserve Project Update June 2020

Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve (BR)

- Biosphere Reserves are a UNESCO designation
- They take 3 years from nomination to acceptance against international standards
- Decisions typically in September each year
- A means to balance the environmental with economic for benefit of all.



Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve (BR)

- We have an idea of the economic benefits of a Biosphere Reserve, the question is there wider community backing?
- Stakeholders will be aware of the [Economic Case for BR](#) published by FEP's Biosphere Reserve Action Group (BRAG) last year which showed a range of economic benefits from adoption
- The next steps are to engage with the wider community and key stakeholders to set out:
 - Set out what a Biosphere Reserve is for
 - Identify the potential benefits and risks of a BR here
 - Seek the community and stakeholder views on a potential FoD BR

Community & Stakeholder Engagement

In conjunction with FoDDC, FEP submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery for funding for £10K to support community and stakeholder engagement to assess that wider appetite for a Biosphere Reserve through a range of face to face and on-line activities for potential partners and the wider public.

Both FoDDC & FEP committed staff resources to be used as match, effectively doubling the total value of the project.

The Project would:

- Develop partnerships, use online surveys, short videos and facilitated workshops.
- Raise the shared knowledge on Biosphere Reserves
- Develop a potential business model for a perspective Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve.

Once we have engaged with the community we will understand whether this is something our local community will support and encourage.

Original Timeline for Heritage Project



**April 1st 16.00
Notification that all
applications voided
as monies diverted
to covid-19 response
projects.
No new funding
rounds till October
2020 earliest**

As BR provides a balanced solution, where next?

Heritage Lottery funding bids closed until earliest October 2020. The likely focus then is probably on support and rescue of existing ‘heritage’

If the bid had proceeded, it would have formed the basis of a much bigger bid for £200,000 to fund the staff and expenses for 2 year development & engagement programme

Questions:

1. Is there a realistic appetite to undertake the initial work on a voluntary basis?
2. Are there any alternative sources of funding for this work as part of the green underpinning that has been talked about in the covid-19 response work?
3. Could parts of the development programme be funded in other ways?

Please send thoughts to FEP@fdean.gov.uk for discussion on 30th June or to join BRAG.