



**INSPIRING
FOREST**



FOREST
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
Delivering a thriving economy

Forest Economic Partnership
Inspiring Forest (IF) Project Update
June 2020

What is the IF Project as Agreed?



Inspiring Forest Project

IF is a project being delivered by the Forest Economic Partnership. It addresses key issues to:

1. Raise aspirations amongst the young and all ages across the Forest.
2. Raise awareness of the businesses in the District and of the types of jobs available.
3. Increase awareness of the skills required for jobs locally at all levels.
4. Create closer links between schools/colleges/universities and business.
5. Reduce youth disaffection by applying the 4 business touch principles in mainstream education.
6. Reduce difficulties around arranging work experience and other business-school engagements.
7. Raise awareness of sector potential and assist businesses to manage their talent pipeline.

The IF Project

IF aims to hold a 3-year rotating programme of inspirational events to:

- celebrate the strength and diversity of District business
- showcase the skills & opportunities available for young people here
- enable individuals to consider a full range of employment opportunities

Target Sectors:

- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing;
- Professional, Scientific & Technical;
- Construction;
- Business Admin & Support;
- Manufacturing;
- Retail; Arts & Entertainment;
- Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services;
- Information & Communication;
- Transport, Storage & Logistics

The IF Approach

- Experience-based activities that reflect the core skills needed in the sector regardless of size of company.
- Inspirational information about opportunities and pathways in sector.
- Information on the size and nature of the sector in the District and where in the world it serves.
- Recognition that the event is the start of conversations.

The Intended IF Events

District Inspiring Forest Festival (DIFF)

District-wide Festival of businesses and skills in a suitably large space. Day-long event targeting any student and adult. Space organised into 10 business sectors. First DIFF proposed in autumn 2021.

Local Inspiring Forest Events (LIFE).

Hosted by secondary schools, focusing on students and parents. We're looking for c4/5 sectors at each LIFE as space is smaller in each school hall, The project starts with 2 LIFEs; Dene Magna 30th March 2020 and another Summer Term in the South of the District.

What Inspiring Forest (What IF).

This is a branded single company visit to a primary school.

Dene Magna 30th March.....

The volunteers of the IF Action Group worked with Dene Magna to organise the first LIFE for 30th March for the over 800 students.

Preparations were at an advanced stage:

- 26 organisations in 4 sectors worked together to create a range of activities for the main sports hall to engage & showcase their sector
- prototyped the safeguarding, health & safety and other necessary systems to create stands, show guide and spaces to inspire.
- resolved many of the practical issues around holding the event and communicating to the whole school community

Dene Magna 30th March

And we all know what
happened in the middle of
March !

So LIFE abandoned with all the hassle that involved. So some thanks and drafts follow.

Thanks to Sector Co-ordinators



Each sector had a lead organiser to pull together the activities and liaise with businesses in the sector to take part and supply copy. As the potential for pandemic became clear this was not an easy task!



Sponsors of IF and LIFE@DM



Funding is needed by IF to convert school halls into inspiring spaces. Capital funding was provided by Gfirst and FoDDC. Funding for this LIFE was provided by other sponsors



Thanks to 26 Participating Businesses

Make UK

Kohler Mira

Mabey Bridge

CITB

Gloucestershire Construction

Training

National Composites Centre

KW Bell Group

MF Freeman

Speech House Hotel

Pedalabikeaway

Harts Barn Cookery School

Hillside Brewery

Forest Wellbeing

Body Awareness Therapies

Cosmic Teapot

Deborah Iles Therapies

Elly Adams Bowen Therapy

Forest Bathe

Forest of Dean Hypnotherapy

Forest Retreats

Greenhill Therapies

Helena Arguelles

Magic Hands: Calm Minds

Rachelle Strauss – Allergy Therapist

Holistic Upholdings

TLS Sports Massage and Remedial Therapy

Draft Stands at Abandonment



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Inspiring Forest

Transport & Storage

- c300 businesses employing 4% of population
- Logistics is a key Forest sector with major distribution hubs.
- Companies range from family businesses to national's eg The Range

ICT

- Cyber and ICT is a growth sector for individuals and businesses
- 3% of population identified specifically in this sector in over 200 organisations.
- Major server farms to individual start-ups

Workforce

Of the 86,500 people who live in the District, 44,700 are economically active. This is 86.4% of 16-64 year olds above the national average of 78.9%.

A third of those who are employees don't work in the District.

Both weekly and hourly paid workers earn close to the national average pay.

Business Admin & Support

- 6% employed in 320 businesses.
- From individual virtual assistants through to major financial services call centres.

Health & Wellbeing

Our 10 Key Business Sectors are essential in creating the uniqueness and vibrance of the Forest.

Our people, young and old bring their skills and talents to exploit the many opportunities on offer.

The Forest has an inspiring past and present. Its future starts with conversations today.

Manufacturing

- 16% of the Forest employed population is in manufacturing, twice the UK urban average of 8%.
- Parts of Forest were once most heavily industrialised in UK and the source of world-leading manufacturing businesses.
- Still continues with EMs exported every year through bulk and niche products.

Construction

- Over 500 construction companies.
- From owner operator trades to national players.
- From house builders and renovators to specialists in every aspect of construction.

Food & Hospitality

- 7% of the working population is employed in tourism.
- Brings £85 M to the area and 7.1M visitors.
- Over 350 individual hospitality businesses.

Agriculture and Forestry

- 7% of working population in 650 businesses.
- Essential core of the District maintaining the landscape and sourcing distinctive sectors.
- Rapidly emerging Agritech sector based at Hortury.

Professional, Scientific & Technical

- 600+ individual businesses operate in district
- Employers 9% of population.
- Higher level skills delivered nationally and internationally.

Enterprises

Of the 4,500 business units in the District of the Forest of Dean:

- 68% employ less than 10 staff
- 10% 10-49 staff
- 2% 50-249 staff
- And there are 'officially' 5 businesses with more than 250 staff.

Retail

- 12% of the working population
- Over 300 businesses.
- Traditional core of high street combined with online.

Forest Economic Partnership

NB These drafts are works in progress subject to approval of the Sectors and Action Group. They are not the finished article

Draft Stands at Abandonment



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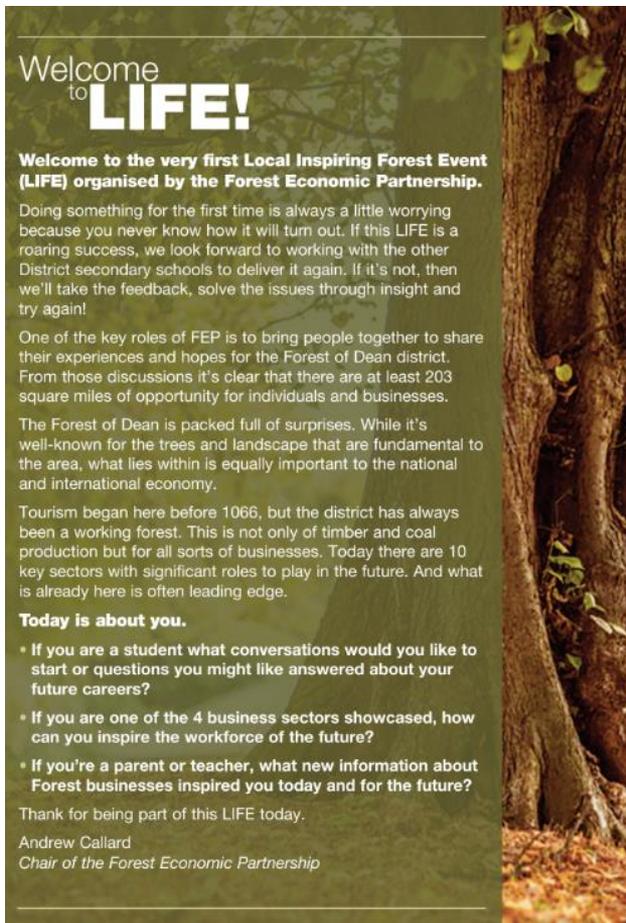
Hospitality & Tourism	Tourism	Forest Facts	Career Paths	Opportunities	Hospitality & Tourism	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7% of the working population is employed in tourism. Brings £385 Million to the area and 7,117,800 visitors. Over 350 individual Hospitality and Tourism businesses. Hotels, guest houses, B&Bs. Camping, glamping, caravans, lodges and retreats. Outdoor activity centres for hiking, canoeing, riding, biking. Restaurants, cafes, pubs and food & drink production. Attractions, historic buildings, natural landscape, daffodils, birds and bluebells. Travel to, from and within Forest by all means. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest has been a site for tourism since the Anglo-Saxon hunting lodge before 1066. Ross is the birthplace of mass tourism as Georgians and Victorians tipped down the Wye. The Severn bore is the world's second biggest tidal surge. While the district has recently been declared a National Landscape. Severn and Wye Snockery jugs over £5M and employs over 200 staff across its restaurant and food production businesses. A former Hotel Receptionist is now MD of a £0.5M turnover company servicing high end commercial ovens across the sector. 		

Health and Well-being	Well-being	Forest Facts	Career Paths	Opportunities	Health and Well-being	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12% of the working population in the area is employed in the well-being sector. Caregiving is the specialist skill in greatest demand in the Forest. Average annual salary for health and well-being employees in Forest £33K. 45% of health and well-being workers are part-time. 300+ individual well-being practitioners have chosen the district for their base. 10 GP surgeries employ 35 GPs & 240 clinical/non-clinical staff. 2 hospitals with 2000 staff. Over 80 pharmacies. 45 dental practices. More than 20 care homes. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tessa in Crisis is based in the Forest but covers the whole of Gloucestershire. Forest Networks listed by Guardian in January 2020 as top 10 UK retreats. Helena Argueles, a kinesiologist based in Avon, travels to Bali and Dubai to speak about her therapy. Ex-Deane Magno Student studying for MSc in Global Health at KCL. Autumn assignment on Covid 19. Ex-Forest High student studying Epidemiology accepted at Imperial for MSc. <p>Either likely to work with World Health Organisation or LINESCO.</p>		

Construction	Construction	Forest Facts	Career Paths	Opportunities	Construction	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.5% of the working population in the area is employed in Construction. Construction activities forecast to grow by 2.2% in next few years. An ageing workforce opens up a range of opportunities. Over 500 construction companies in the Forest. From micro businesses with less than 10 to large organisations employing 500+. From house builders and renovators to specialists in every aspect of construction, from planning to ecology. Working for a Forest construction company may mean rarely working in the Forest itself, but nationally and internationally. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former head carrier Keith Bell founded Bell Contracting. Now driven by the next family generation and employs c500 staff directly and indirectly. Significant apprenticeship programme. Family run business MF Freemans established in 1966 operates divisions across residential and commercial property development, contracting and civils, plant hire, farming, forestry and leisure. Ex-Dean Academy student completed a plumbing apprenticeship and is now balancing a paid job in the trade with building his own private business. 		

Manufacturing	Manufacturing	Forest Facts	Career Paths	Opportunities	Manufacturing	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.9% of the working population is employed in manufacturing. Twice the UK urban average of 8%. Parts of Forest were once most heavily industrialised in UK and the source of world-leading manufacturing businesses. Still continues with EMs exported every year through bulk and niche products such as the wiring for Tesla cars. 280 businesses classified as manufacturing. Range from 5 large employers through well-established medium sized businesses to start-ups/micros. Important sectors include metal engineering, automotive, high and low tech materials, shopping carts, paving slabs, natural food flavourings, kitchens, food and drink... 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1856 Muthet perfected the Bessemer process at Dark Hill enabling burgundy steel and the global expansion of railways. Ex-Wydean student Neill Rickalls took Versarien from a Littlehampton start-up to stockmarket listing for advanced materials in 3 years in 2013. Luciozade Ribena Sumbary employs 330 Coleridge-based staff and exports across the world. It takes 90% of the UK blackcurrent crop including the 50% grown around Newent. Forest business recycles weekly over £3M of recoverable materials. Watts Liefthane has significant exports of key innovative products to China despite China being world's largest producer of PU. Mobey Bridge is a world leading bridge builder and has supplied modular bridging solutions to over 150 countries. 		

Draft Show Guide at Abandonment



Welcome
to **LIFE!**

Welcome to the very first Local Inspiring Forest Event (LIFE) organised by the Forest Economic Partnership.

Doing something for the first time is always a little worrying because you never know how it will turn out. If this LIFE is a roaring success, we look forward to working with the other District secondary schools to deliver it again. If it's not, then we'll take the feedback, solve the issues through insight and try again!

One of the key roles of FEP is to bring people together to share their experiences and hopes for the Forest of Dean district. From those discussions it's clear that there are at least 203 square miles of opportunity for individuals and businesses.

The Forest of Dean is packed full of surprises. While it's well-known for the trees and landscape that are fundamental to the area, what lies within is equally important to the national and international economy.

Tourism began here before 1066, but the district has always been a working forest. This is not only of timber and coal production but for all sorts of businesses. Today there are 10 key sectors with significant roles to play in the future. And what is already here is often leading edge.

Today is about you.

- If you are a student what conversations would you like to start or questions you might like answered about your future careers?
- If you are one of the 4 business sectors showcased, how can you inspire the workforce of the future?
- If you're a parent or teacher, what new information about Forest businesses inspired you today and for the future?

Thank for being part of this LIFE today.

Andrew Callard
Chair of the Forest Economic Partnership

Part of draft show guide which was due to be provided as a hard copy and in pdf on the school virtual learning environment after the student assembly due on 27th March.

This would have been preceded by a staff briefing session and a student briefing in their tutor groups. A letter would have also been sent to parents about the event the week before.

IF: The Future- 1. Meeting Issue

IF assumed and encouraged **physical meeting** to create productive relationships between:

- Schools and businesses
- Teachers and businesspeople
- Businesses and students/pupils
- Businesses and school communities of parents, siblings and students
- Business and the whole population

Would it work as well in a virtual format?

IF: The Future- 2. Funding Issue

IF requires significant resources to be delivered. While volunteer time can be expended in organising the events; the main driver to deliver the whole project needs to be a paid role to reflect the time consumed to deliver on a set date.

The main funders are currently for capital items necessary for physical events.

Given covid-19 what are the likely funding channels that might be available to deliver a medium-long term solution rather than 'solve' the immediate?

Or is there a necessary focus shift to the shorter term and an older audience?

IF: The Future- 3. Technology Issue

Could the aims of IF be delivered through digital technology?

If it is not possible in the medium term to meet physically and partake in activities due to covid; could there be a virtual solution? This could combine 'videos' with 'games-based activities' and safeguarded discussion rooms.

BUT whether this is a bought in or a developed system it would require significant funding to create a secure and inspiring system.

IF: The Future- 4. Target Issue

From the outset IF was about all ages but had a focus on those in education as a first step

The data suggests that those that will be most affected by covid-19 are the 16-24 year olds and those over 50 in terms of employment prospects.

While the objective was long term change, do we also need to consider short term needs and possibly funding opportunities.

IF: The Future- 5. Data Issue

In times of intense uncertainty and change, is there the appetite/bandwidth from businesses, education providers, individuals and volunteers to drive such a project forward?

Data suggests that the District could be hit particularly hard with its concentration of small companies and separately with its tourism, manufacturing and services focus.