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## First class golfing? Try the Forest

TOURISM bosses are hoping to drive golfers to the Dean as part of plans to pitch the Forest as a top-class golfing destination.

The scheme would see courses and accommodation providers join forces to cash in on the lucrative golfing holiday market.

A similar scheme to set-up golf packages in Herefordshire has been a big success and it is hoped it could bring a new type of visitor to the area.

The idea has been put forward by the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism Association which is in the process of bidding for funding.



If successful, the packages would include courses both sides of the border including Forest Hills and Bells in Coleford, Rolls of Monmouth and St Pierre near Chepstow.

Forest of Dean District Council's tourism boss Paula Burrows has been helping set up the bid.

She said: "What we have tried to do is make sure that every package will include at least one Forest golf course. We are also in negotiation with accommodation providers such as Speech House and smaller bed and breakfasts, so there will be a range of choices."

And the newest accommodation on offer could come from one of the golf courses itself.

Forest Hills is set to build 20 new holiday chalets after the district council gave the project delegated permission.

Officers are now working with owners Ed and Alison Bretton on a few minor details before the scheme is given the full go ahead.

Alison said: "We are hoping to get work under way as soon as we can. It would be lovely if we can get some ready by the summer."

The chalets, sited next to the golf course, would offer golfers a place to stay next to one of the area's best courses, and a range of discounts.

Alison said the idea of bringing golf packages to the Forest could make a real difference for smaller courses like theirs.

She said: "It has been very successful in Herefordshire and we hope it will bring more people to the Forest of Dean."

"We feel a bit undiscovered here. The Forest of Dean is surrounded by larger courses and we are not as well known even though we have some great courses of our own."

