



# **“REALISING THE POTENTIAL – AN ACTION PLAN”**

**Amended Version – January 2005**

**Forest of Dean Tourism Strategy  
2003 - 2008**

# “REALISING THE POTENTIAL”

## INTRODUCTION

This Action Plan provides a framework for activity to meet the aims and objectives of the Forest of Dean Tourism Strategy for the next five years. The Action Plan identifies lead responsibility and key partners, Forest of Dean District Council resource requirements, indicators for measuring performance and a timetable for delivery.

The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed annually by the Tourism Task Group at which time tasks may be amended, deleted or added, depending on progress and performance. It is to be noted that certain actions will be dependent on statutory planning and other regulatory matters and their inclusion in this Action Plan does not confer any consent on the Forest of Dean District Council.

## ABBREVIATIONS

FoDDC – Forest of Dean District Council, GCC – Gloucestershire County Council, RFoDTA - Royal Forest of Dean Tourism Association, RFoD Attractions Group – Royal Forest of Dean Attractions Group, SWRDA – South West of England Regional Development Agency, SW Tourism South West Tourism, WV Tourism – Wye Valley Tourism, HETB – Heart of England Tourist Board, Glos Tourism – Gloucestershire Tourism, Glos First – Gloucestershire First, FE – Forest Enterprise, CA – Countryside Agency, RFDC – Royal Forest of Dean College, FAN – Forest Artists Network, SW Arts – South West Arts, YHA – Youth Hostel Association, Town Regeneration Partnerships – Cinderford, Coleford, Lydney & Newent Partnerships, HEAT – Hospitality, Education & Tourism, LSC – Learning & Skills Council, Neighbouring LA’s – Monmouthshire County Council, Herefordshire Council, Malvern Hills District Council & Glos LA’s, Private Sector – Individual Businesses / Business People.

**OBJECTIVE 1: ACCOMMODATION : ‘To develop the range, quality and number of accommodation establishments in the area’.**

ACCOMMODATION ACTION AREA 1 - SERVICED ACCOMMODATION: To increase the number of bed spaces in the serviced sector and improve the quality of the existing bed stock.

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</b>
1a	Undertake an Accommodation Stock Survey	FODDC	RFoDTA, Glos Tourism, HETB, SW Tourism, WV Tourism. RFDC	Staff Time. £500 for Questionnaire materials.	Obtain detailed knowledge about the number, type and quality of accommodation operators - which will guide future marketing and development activity	<u>Completed</u>
1b	Secure development of Historic Country House Hotel / 4* Hotels	FODDC	SWRDA, Glos First, Private Sector	N/a	Establishment of one or two high quality new hotels within the District.	<u>Secure the development of at least 1 new 4* or 5* medium to large hotel within the district by 2008.</u>
1c	Promote the “Forester's Inn” concept.	FoDDC	RFoDTA, WV Tourism, SW Tourism, Private Sector	Staff time	Increased number of local pubs sourcing and purchasing local food.	<u>Establish pilot project and aim to achieve additional 5 pubs/inns offering local food by Mar 06. Establish Forest Food Guide by May 06.</u>

<b>1d</b>	<b>Upgrade the quality of the existing serviced accommodation stock</b>	Private Sector – individual enterprises	RFoDTA, WV Tourism, RFDC, FoDDC	Tourism Grant Budget (£15,000 pa)	More quality places to stay throughout the Forest in all sectors - improving income and customer satisfaction and encouraging more repeat visits. Support for accommodation providers to register and raise their 'quality standard grading'.	<u>Encourage 2% more accom providers per annum to participate in one of the Quality Assurance Schemes.</u>
<b>1e</b>	<b>Establish a Tourism grant/advisory scheme to assist accommodation providers to improve / upgrade their facilities</b>	FoDDC	RFoD Attractions Group, RFoDTA, WV Tourism, RFDC	Tourism Grants Budget (£15k allocation)	Higher quality accommodation and increased visitor numbers, improved customer satisfaction and higher revenue for the local economy.	<u>Completed</u>

ACCOMMODATION ACTION AREA 2 - TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SELF-CATERING UNITS

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</b>
<b>1f</b>	<b>Secure appropriately sited &amp; sustainable self-catering developments</b>	FoDDC	Glos First, SWT	N/a	Establishment of at least two new quality self-catering unit developments which satisfy the sustainability criteria of the Tourism Strategy. Supporting job creation, farm diversification and increasing local spend.	<u>Phase 1: Up to date self-catering accom occupancy survey conducted by Dec 05.</u>

ACCOMMODATION ACTION AREA 3: TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF FACILITIES ON CAMPING & CARAVAN SITES

Ref. No.	Action	Lead Responsibility	Supporting Partners	FoDDC Resources	Outcome	Specific Outputs & Targets
1g	Encourage the upgrading of facilities at camping & caravanning sites	FODDC	RFoDTA, WV Tourism	N/a	Improved facilities at camping & caravanning sites and higher quality grading. Greater customer satisfaction and repeat visits.	Encourage at least 1 campsite per annum to participate in NQAS scheme.
1h	Encourage provision of bunk house/hostel accommodation	YHA	Private Sector, FE,	N/a	More accommodation and facilities available to walkers/cyclists and backpackers.	Review of bunkhouse stock to be completed annually.

**OBJECTIVE 2: ATTRACTIONS : ‘To improve the range and quality of attractions’.**

ATTRACTIONS ACTION AREA 1: IMPROVING THE RANGE AND SCALE OF ATTRACTIONS

Ref. No.	Action	Lead Responsibility	Supporting Partners	FoDDC Resources	Outcome	Specific Outputs & Targets
2a	Establish an Arts Gallery / Venue(s) to	SWRDA	FoDDC, RFoD	Potential Capital	Arts community have gallery space to showcase work to local people	Year 1 (research)

	<b>showcase local artists work</b>	(research)	Attractions Group, RFoDTA, FAN, S W Arts	Programme Allocation.	and visitors – supporting arts community, small businesses, craft workers.	<u>Completed</u>
<b>2b</b>	<b>Develop a Forest Canopy Walk attraction which helps promote environmental interest in the Forest of Dean district</b>	FODDC	FE, SWRDA, FoDDC	Potential Capital Programme Allocation.	An imaginative and major new attraction with a strong environmental education theme which could draw in visitors from across the UK and overseas.	<u>Phase 1: Feasibility study completed by Mar 06.</u>
<b>2c</b>	<b>Secure a new rural studies / forestry centre within the Forest of Dean</b>	SWRDA	FE, RFDC, Hartpury College, FoDDC	Potential Capital Programme Allocation.	A centre of excellence for forestry / rural studies, local skills and resources having a strong environmental theme.	<u>Establish working group with lead and support partners by 2007</u>

#### ATTRACTIONS ACTION AREA 2: IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EXISTING ATTRACTIONS

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
<b>2d</b>	<b>Establish a Tourism grant/advisory scheme for attractions to improve / upgrade facilities</b>	FoDDC	RFoD Attractions Group, RFoDTA, WV Tourism, RFDC	Tourism Grants Budget (£15k allocation)	Higher quality visitor attractions with increased numbers of visitors, improved customer satisfaction and higher revenue for local economy.	<u>Completed</u>

**OBJECTIVE 3: ACTIVITIES ‘To develop the range and quality of activities’.**

**ACTIVITY ACTION AREA 1: IMPROVING CYCLING**

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
3a	Review and improve the provision and management of cycling routes throughout the District	FODDC	Town Regeneration Partnerships, FE, Glos CC,	N/a	Improved facilities and experiences for cyclists, including improved links between town and country.	<u>Develop new cycling package of routes, town links and supporting signage and materials by December 2006.</u>

**ACTIVITY ACTION AREA 2: DEVELOPMENT OF ART-BASED COUNTRYSIDE ACTIVITIES**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
3b	Support and encourage development of a range of art-based countryside activities such as photography, wood skills, open studios etc.	FoDDC	FE, FAN, RFDC RFoDTA, WV Tourism, Glos Tourism	N/a	Increased number of arts and crafts leisure opportunities for visitors. Support for implementation of the Forest of Dean Arts Strategy.	<u>New art &amp; countryside-based activity guide to be produced by April 2005.</u>

**OBJECTIVE 4: TOURIST INFORMATION ‘To improve the Tourist Information Service’.**

TOURIST INFORMATION ACTION AREA 1: TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
4a	Review the operation, presentation and location of the District's Tourist Information Centres and explore options for enhancing the service	FoDDC	RFoDTA, Town Regeneration Partnerships, RFDC.	Tourism Budget Allocation – amount depends on actions required following review.	Improved Tourist Information Centres offering a quality service for visitors and local tourist businesses	Review completed. Undertake refurbishment of Coleford TIC by December 2005.

TOURIST INFORMATION ACTION AREA 2: 'MINI' TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
4b	Develop a series of 'mini' Tourist Information Centres at outlying sites & tourist attractions.	FoDDC	Private Sector, FE	£5,000	A greater number of locations offering tourist information and advice, covering key tourist sites and attractions throughout the Forest of Dean district and adjoining areas.	Additional 2 new TIP's to be set up by Mar 06.

TOURIST INFORMATION ACTION AREA 3: DESTINATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
4c	Introduce a Destination Management System to improve tourist information.	Glos First / Glos Tourism	SWRDA, RFoDTA, WV Tourism, FoDDC	Potential budget allocation	Improved tourist information service for customers and local tourist businesses, more professional, and better resourced marketing activity. Tourist information available worldwide at any time via a web-based Destination Management System.	Launch new DMS by May 2005

TOURIST INFORMATION ACTION AREA 4: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND RANGE OF LITERATURE

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
4d	Review existing literature and improve the quality and range of leaflets, maps and trails	FoDDC & FE	Glos Tourism, RFoDTA, RFoD Attractions Group.	Tourism Budget allocation	Improved management of such activities, increased sales of maps & literature, wider access to the natural environment and outdoor activities for visitors and residents alike.	Produce new literature and guides on an annual basis

TOURIST INFORMATION ACTION AREA 5 : LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
4e	Review and improve literature distribution systems throughout the District and UK	FoDDC, RFoDTA,	WV Tourism Glos Tourism	Dependant on review.	Tourist information leaflets available in all target areas will improve visitor attendance at local attractions/activities and events.	<u>Monitor and review distribution systems on an annual basis.</u>

**OBJECTIVE 5: TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE ‘To improve and develop facilities for visitors’.**

FACILITIES ACTION AREA 1: TOURISM SIGNPOSTING

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
5a	Carry out a Signage Audit, and prepare a new Tourism Signing Policy	FoDDC	FE/GCC	Staff Time.	Greater sense of place, improved awareness of Forest of Dean & clear hierarchical signposting of tourism facilities.	<u>New Tourism Signing Policy to be completed by Mar 06.</u>
5b	Promote ‘Green Travel’ opportunities within new tourism development and work to establish ‘green’ transport interchanges.	Glos CC, Private Sector	FoDDC, Glos Tourism, RFoDTA, WV Tourism	N/a	Alternative transport options for visitors and transport interchanges at key sites.	<u>A new Green Transport interchanges with Dean Forest Railway and Forest Hopper will be launched in June 05.</u>

FACILITIES ACTION AREA 2: PUBLIC FACILITIES

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
5c	Review the range of public facilities available to tourists / visitors at key tourist locations and secure appropriate improvements.	FoDDC	FE, GCC	Staff time	Increase in the range of public facilities for visitors and local residents.	<u>Continue to improve facilities on an annual basis.</u>

**OBJECTIVE 6: SKILLS AND TRAINING : ‘To develop and promote training opportunities and skills development for those employed in the tourism & hospitality sectors’.**

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
6a	Support businesses and employees to improve their skills in marketing, IT, and customer care.	RFDC, HEAT & Business Link	LSC, FoDDC, RFoDTA, WV Tourism	N/a	Provision of a range of courses and training on offer to equip the industry with the skills required for first class tourism and hospitality businesses	<u>3 new courses to be established in 2005.</u>

<b>6b</b>	<b>Provide training opportunities for tourism sector businesses which address the Disability Discrimination Act and other statutory and regulatory matters.</b>	HEAT	SW Tourism, RFDC, Business Link	N/a	Greater awareness amongst tourism sector businesses of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and other statutory and regulatory requirements. Increased provision of facilities for disabled visitors.	<u>1 new course to be established in 2005.</u>
-----------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------	---------------------------------	-----	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------

**OBJECTIVE 7: MARKETING : ‘To establish the Forest of Dean as THE outstanding Forest destination in the UK’.**

**MARKETING ACTION AREA 1: MARKET RESEARCH**

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
<b>7a</b>	<b>Improve market research to inform marketing activity</b>	FoDDC	RFoDTA, Glos Tourism, SW Tourism, HETB, neighboring LA's, RFDC	Staff time	Establishment of baseline information to support production of Marketing Strategy.	<u>Establish visitor questionnaires at key points by May 05 and analyse annually.</u>
<b>7b</b>	<b>Undertake an annual visitor survey</b>	FoDDC & private sector	RFoDTA, WV Tourism, Glos Tourism, SW Tourism, HETB, neighbouring LA's, RFDC	Staff Time. Assume £500 pa for admin materials	Improved data available annually on visitor experiences of the FoD Tourism 'offer'.	<u>Undertake a comprehensive visitor survey by Dec 05.</u>

MARKETING ACTION AREA 2: MARKETING STRATEGY

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
7c	Improve marketing activity through production of a new Marketing Strategy and Action Plan	FoDDC	Glos Tourism, SW Tourism, WV Tourism, RFoDTA	Staff time.	Improved marketing activity, more visitors, greater visitor spend.	<u>Completed.</u>
7d	Identify and secure the necessary level of resources required for effective marketing activity	FoDDC	SWRDA, SW Tourism, Glos Tourism	Review Budget options.	More effective and appropriate marketing activity.	<u>Completed.</u>
7e	Investigate opportunities for additional senior personnel resources (particularly secondment opportunities) to support tourism development activity	FoDDC	SWRDA, CA, SW Tourism	Staff time	Increased awareness amongst potential investors as to the tourism development potential of the Forest of Dean. Increased support for existing operators enabling them to improve / expand their businesses.	<u>Completed.</u>
7f	Establish a themed approach to the promotion of visitor attractions & experiences.	FoDDC	RFoD Attractions Group, RFoDTA, Glos Tourism, WV Tourism	Budget allocation for new literature.	The packaging and promotion of attractions with common themes eg. Industrial heritage, coal mining, arts & crafts. Promotes 'short-breaks' & increases visitor numbers, diversity and visitor spend.	<u>New short breaks available for online booking by May 06.</u>

MARKETING ACTION AREA 3: TOURISM SITE PORTFOLIO

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
7g	Identify and market tourism site development opportunities to private investors	FoDDC & Glos First	SWRDA	Staff time.	Increased awareness of investment opportunities. New tourism development secured as a result of increased marketing activity.	Contact 3 <u>tourism/leisure developers by 2008.</u>

**OBJECTIVE 8: FESTIVALS & EVENTS : ‘To support the development of a year-round programme of festivals, events and arts activities’.**

EVENTS ACTION AREA 1: A CO-ORDINATED EVENTS PROGRAMME

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Supporting Partners</b>	<b>FoDDC Resources</b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Outputs &amp; Targets</u></b>
8a	Support, develop and promote a year round programme of events, festivals and celebrations throughout the area, through improved marketing and establishment of an ‘events forum’.	Town Regeneration partnerships	FoDDC, Festival /Events Organising bodies	Arts & Events Officer time. Existing budget.	A vibrant Forest of Dean events scene which is well promoted attracting visitors from across the UK,	<u>Events forum to be established by May 05.</u>