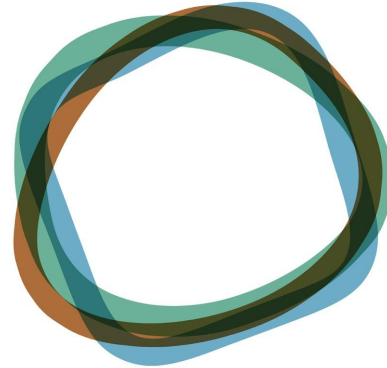


THE FOREST WE WANT



Considering the Forest of Dean as a Biosphere

Biosphere Reserve Action Group
Transport, Infrastructure, Bridges and Borders Sub-Group
Forest Economic Partnership

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Introduction

In 2018 the Forest of Dean District Council became the first rural council within the UK to declare a Climate Change Emergency followed by a Biodiversity Emergency in 2020 with a goal for the District to be net-zero by 2030.

In 2019, the Forest Economic Partnership (FEP) was presented with the question "what if the Forest of Dean became a Biosphere Reserve?"

FEP is a voluntary community partnership with the vision of making the Forest of Dean a vibrant and thriving place to live, work and do business. Membership is open to anyone who lives, works, plays or studies in the Forest of Dean District or is interested in participating in FEP's activities.

FEP's mission is to deliver a thriving economy in the Forest of Dean District by connecting business, Councils, people, ideas and resources.

Biosphere Reserves are an international designation allocated by UNESCO.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in education, sciences and culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in the 2030 Agenda, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

There are currently 714 biosphere reserves in 129 countries across the globe, with 7 within the UK.

These sites promote solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are learning areas for sustainable development under diverse ecological, social and economic contexts, touching the lives of more than 250 million people.

Members of the Office for National Statistics worked with FEP to research the economic effects of adopting a Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve. Their report indicates that for every £1 spent creating a Biosphere Reserve there would be a £3.89 return on investment.

The status would protect the Forest of Dean's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and ancient monuments. It would not introduce any new sets of plans, but work with those already in place to drive sustainable development.

Reserves enable the community to work together to create a shared vision for future developments in their area.

This can include education and research, where local schools will be able to develop workshops and universities can carry out research on the Forest of Dean as a Biosphere Reserve. There is also potential for community-led projects such as sustainable coppicing that promote healthy woodland growth.



Before progressing to a formal application for the district to be nominated as a Biosphere Reserve with UNESCO, there is a requirement to demonstrate evidence of community engagement and support. This report details how FEP approached the first phase of community engagement:

Art can be a vehicle for inquiry and understanding which gets to the root of cultural and community identity and can communicate the urgency of environmental fragility by stimulating curiosity & discussion both online & off in a unique way. This engenders, and nurtures, a sense of place, community, culture & nature to communities of all ages.

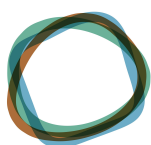
Funded by Arts Council England and in partnership with Forest of Dean District Council, Forest Economic Partnership set out to use art to gauge public opinion on a Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve and to provide information to people on what it really means.

Forest Economic Partnership commissioned two artists to engage the Forest of Dean community in a creative interpretation of landscape & place through an artist's film and an audio work.

The project focused public attention on the potential of a Biosphere Reserve (BR) designation for Forest of Dean.

A survey was designed by Forest Economic Partnership to collate the public's views.

The following report analyses the survey data to give an informed opinion on whether those who live, work and play in the Forest of Dean are receptive to the Forest of Dean becoming a Biosphere Reserve.



Engagement

In 2018, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) reported that the population of the Forest of Dean was 86,543.

The target of the project was to engage with a minimum of 5% of that population (approx 4300) and for 10% of this figure to complete the survey (430).

Forest Economic Partnership used a number of different media platforms to boost engagement in the project.

Platform	Content Views
Instagram	421
Facebook	6899
Twitter	7118
TikTok	1592
YouTube	653
Total	16683

This total excludes views from posts shared by third parties, project partners and the Artists.

Platform	Content Streams
Spotify	83

Platform	Total Survey Responses (Including incomplete data)
Survey Monkey	602

As part of the Arts Council funding agreement, Forest Economic Partnership aimed to engage directly with 40 Individuals and/or businesses.

Throughout this process, the Forest Economic Partnership directly engaged with over 40 individuals and/or businesses through FEP Stakeholder meetings, Interviews, Roundtable discussions and Listening to Business visits conducted by the Forest of Dean District Council, some of which are credited within the films and podcasts.



The Survey Respondents

Out of the 602 responses to the survey, 519 of these responses were complete and have informed this report.

These respondents were broken down in to the following generational categories:

Generation	Year Range	Age Range	Respondents
Generation Z	1997-2012	9 - 24	9
Millennials	1981-1996	24 - 40	86
Generation X	1965-1980	41 - 56	174
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	57 - 75	230
The Silent Generation	1928-1945	76 - 93	20

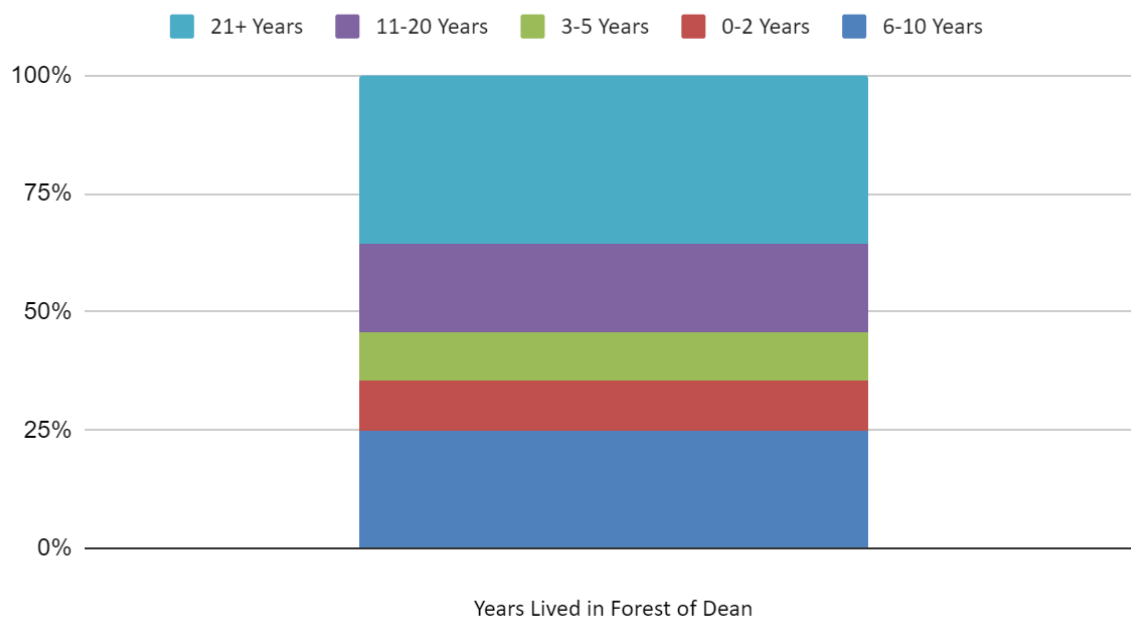
494 responses were from people currently living within the boundaries of the Forest of Dean District. It is noted that those completing the survey from outside of the district mostly resided in neighbouring districts and counties including Gloucester, Chepstow and Bristol.

Here we show the number of Forest of Dean-residing respondents along with the length of time they have lived within the district.

Generation	Total Respondents from FoD	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	21+ Years
Generation Z	9	2	-	1	1	5
Millennials	79	18	16	11	9	25
Generation X	165	26	18	33	39	48
Baby Boomers	223	13	19	35	50	105
The Silent Generation	18	-	3	-	2	13
Total	494	59	56	136	101	196

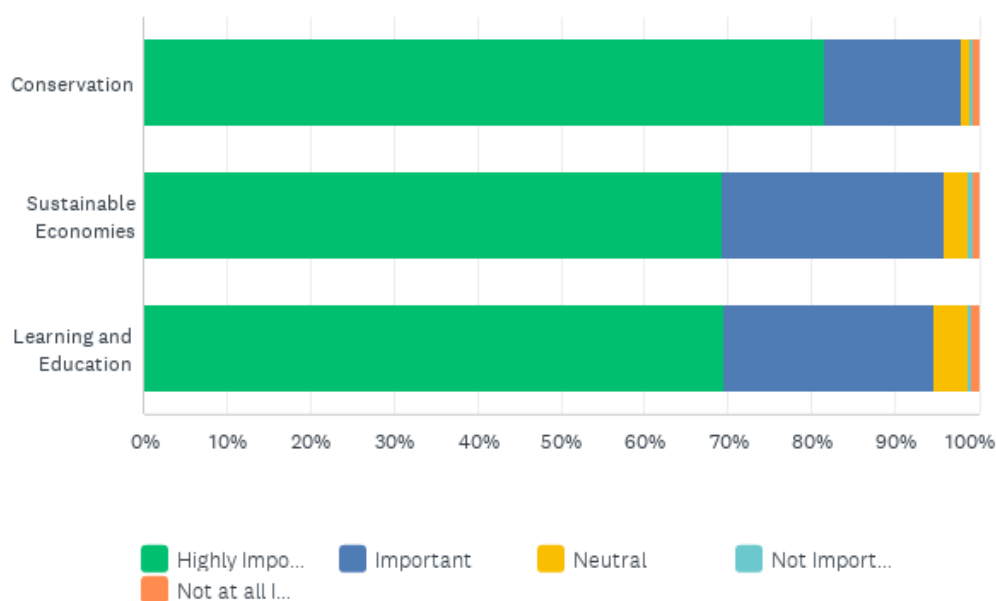


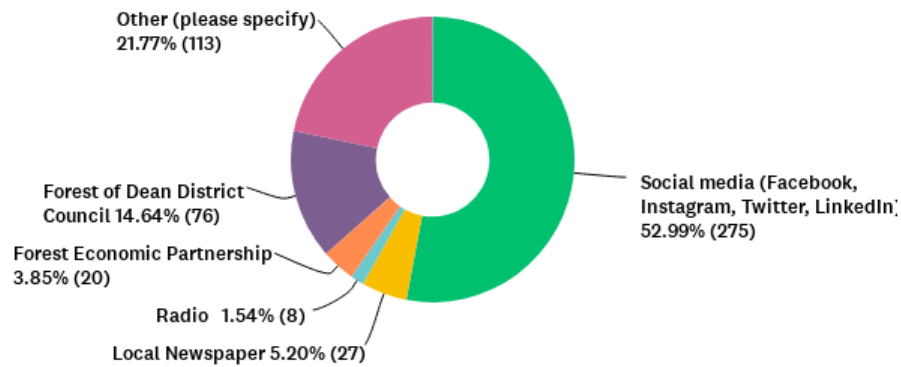
Survey Respondents



This data shows that the largest percentage of respondents have resided in the Forest of Dean District for over 21 Years. This information presents a great starting point for the next stage of the research and to test the biosphere concept in more detail with people who have been living in the area for a considerable time.

Question 5 of the survey enquired where people heard about the survey. The survey was published on a number of social media platforms, in schools, advertised by Local Radio stations, by partners and by the BBC Points West news programme.





The “other” responses included word of mouth, parish councils and other organisations such as Forest Food Hub.

Social media drew the largest number of responses at 52.99% of respondents.

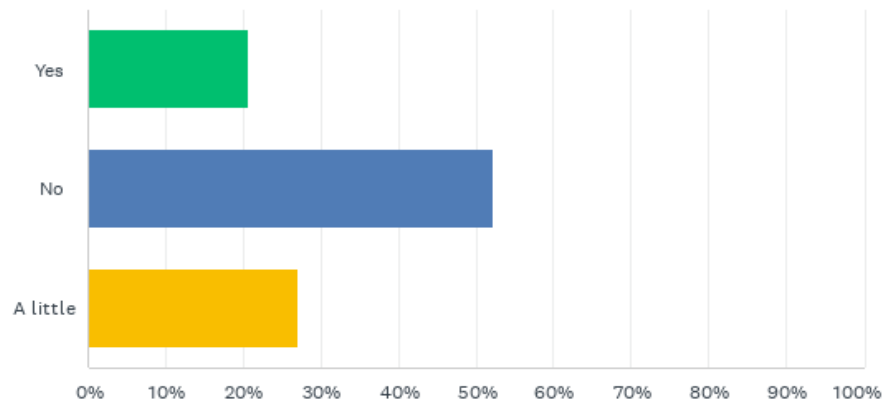
Respondents were asked if they had seen or heard the Forest We Want Videos and/or Podcasts. 515 of the respondents answered this question with 223 of those responses indicating that they had viewed the videos or listened to the podcast. This equated to 43.3% of those who answered the question.

Out of the 223 people who answered this question 108 felt that they were engaged by The Forest We Want video(s) or podcast and 120 stated they found it informative and it increased their understanding of the potential of a Biosphere Reserve in the Forest of Dean.

Respondents were asked how much or little they knew about Biosphere Reserves prior to engaging in the survey.

52.23% of respondents did not know anything about a Biosphere Reserve prior to the engagement.





With 27.18% knowing a little about the concept.

Having received responses from a mixed range of age groups, some with an understanding of the Biosphere Reserve project and some with no prior knowledge as well as submissions from both Forest of Dean dwelling respondents and those out-of-district it is felt a fair representation of the views of the general public has been given during the survey period. This exercise can be said to have raised awareness about biospheres within the community as for more than half of the survey respondents this was a completely new subject for them.



Biosphere Reserve Aims & Objectives

Biosphere Reserves have three major aims:

- Conservation of countryside, ecosystems, species, and genetic variation.
- Sustainable Economies – Protecting and improving the local economy for the local population.
- Learning and Education - Capacity building for research, monitoring, learning and education, and training activities related to the promotion of conservation and sustainable development

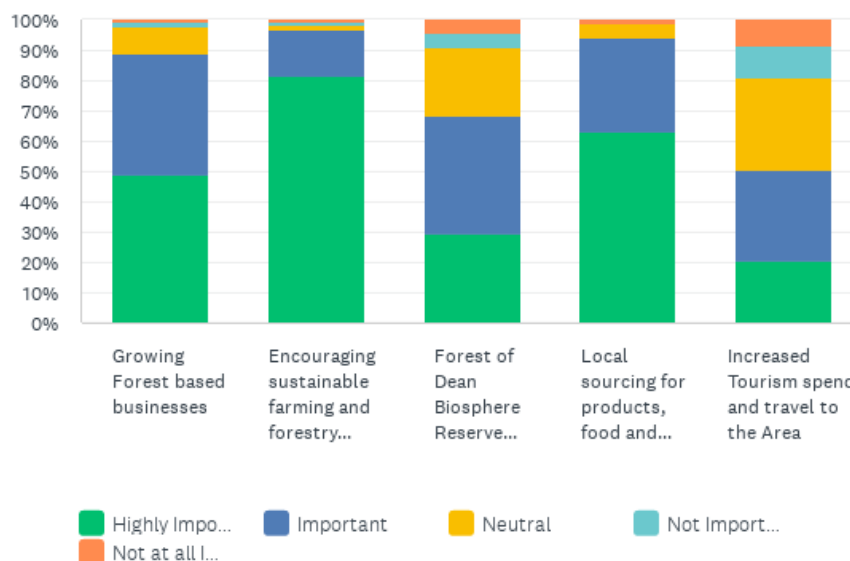
Respondents were asked how important these concepts were to them.

Respondents priorities were in-line with those of the Biosphere Reserve with only 6 respondents stating these have little or no importance to them. The majority of respondents were most concerned about conservation, with 421 respondents deeming this as highly important and 84 as important.

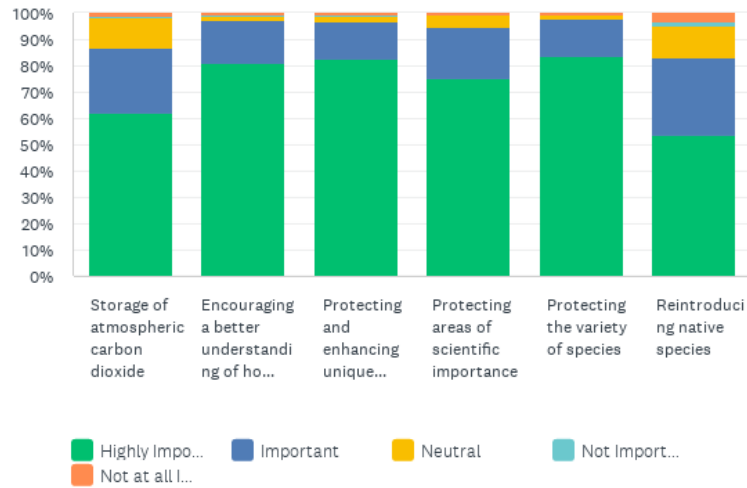
UNESCO designations are world renowned by the countries, communities, businesses and organisations that are associated with it. For example, many biosphere sites have used their UNESCO status to market and promote tourism and local produce.

The respondents were asked how important the following economic, ecological and environmental sustainability concepts were to them.

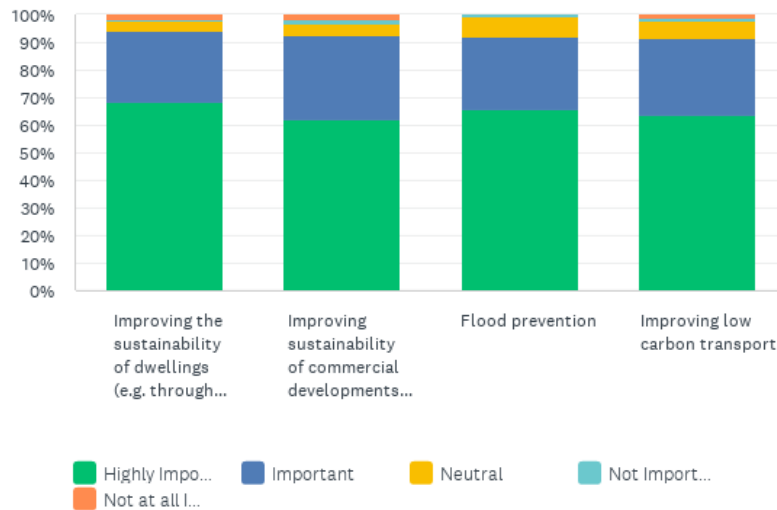
Q11 How important are the following economic concepts to you?



Q12 Biosphere Reserves encourage a wide number of ecological benefits. How important are the following to you?



Q13 Practices used in a Biosphere Reserve can increase environmental sustainability in housing developments and infrastructure. How important are the following to you?



	Highly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important
Growing Forest based businesses	49.13%	40.00%	8.54%	1.55%	0.78%
Encouraging sustainable farming and forestry practices	81.66%	15.25%	1.74%	0.58%	0.77%
Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve branding on locally produced products	29.32%	39.03%	22.72%	4.47%	4.47%
Local sourcing for products, food and materials	63.39%	30.64%	5.01%	0.00%	0.96%
Increased Tourism spend and travel to the Area	20.54%	30.04%	30.43%	10.66%	8.33%
Storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide	62.02%	24.61%	11.63%	0.78%	0.97%
Encouraging a better understanding of how we can work with nature, not against it.	80.89%	16.60%	1.54%	0.39%	0.58%
Protecting and enhancing unique habitats	82.43%	14.67%	1.93%	0.19%	0.77%
Protecting areas of scientific importance	75.19%	19.57%	4.46%	0.00%	0.78%
Protecting the variety of species	83.82%	14.07%	1.54%	0.00%	0.58%
Reintroducing native species	53.67%	29.73%	11.78%	1.74%	3.09%
Improving the sustainability of dwellings (e.g. through green roofs, better energy efficiency, rainwater and greywater recycling)	68.67%	25.34%	4.06%	0.58%	1.35%
Improving sustainability of commercial developments (business use)	61.90%	30.75%	4.26%	1.55%	1.55%
Flood prevention	65.76%	26.26%	7.20%	0.58%	0.19%
Improving low carbon transport	63.83%	27.66%	6.19%	1.16%	1.16%

The data shows clear support for a number of initiatives and concepts that respondents would back which aligns with both the economic and environmental aims of a Biosphere Reserve.

It is important to note that a Biosphere Reserve designation can constrain certain activities within the District and so there are some negative consequences for consideration alongside the many positives.





Respondents were asked to voice concerns that they would have if the Forest of Dean District was to become a Biosphere Reserve. The word cloud below shows the key words used repeatedly in these responses. The full responses can be found in appendix 2.

The key concerns about the Forest of Dean District becoming a Biosphere Reserve included: the economic effect on those already living within the District; what effects it will have on First Time Buyers; the affordability of suitable housing; the restrictions it might place on publicly accessible Forestry England land; overtourism and the effect it may have on road & parking infrastructure that is already operating at full capacity.

To provide some local context in relation to these concerns it is useful to reference the 2010 'Hands off our Forest' campaign group which formed to fight the Government's proposed sale of publicly owned land in the Forest of Dean. This was a widely supported campaign across the District and their concerns still resonate with residents today. The "Hand off our Forest" campaign shone a light on long held beliefs that have roots in ancient rights and privileges of the residents and Freeminers of the Forest of Dean stating "The rich cultural, historical and natural diversity of our forests and woods, and full access to them, is best protected under the continued steward-ship, fully resourced to sustainably manage and expand our multi-purpose public forest estate now and in the future".

Rightmove reported that open market sales in Forest of Dean over the last year (2021) were 11% up on the previous year and 25% up on the 2018 peak of £246,199 following the removal of the tolls on the Severn Bridge and the move to home based working during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Whilst housing market prices are not parameters that can be controlled by the introduction of a Biosphere Reserve, there are concerns stated from respondents around the increase in the purchases of holiday lets and second homes in the area.

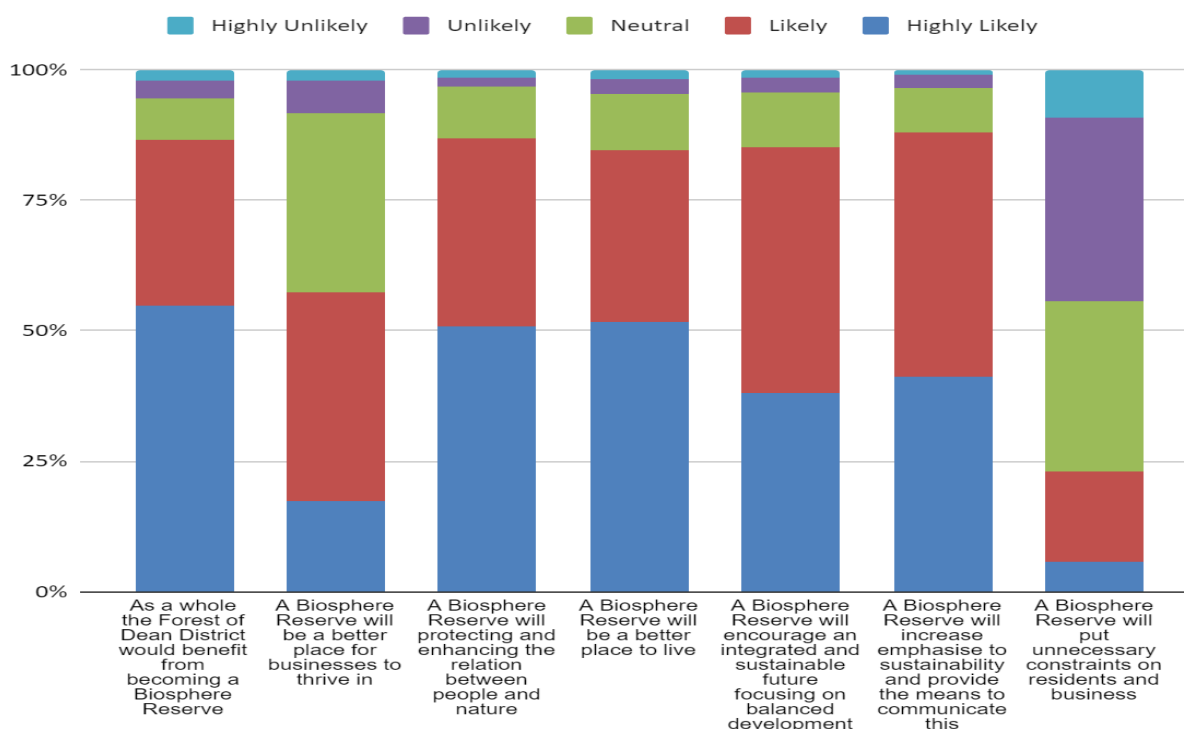
In 2021 the Forest of Dean District Council Cabinet agreed a new Housing Strategy reflecting the Office of National Statistics' guidance which states the district will need to find



room for an additional 6,000 households by 2024. Sustainable residential development is a key focus for Biosphere Reserves and the residents of the Forest of Dean.

Respondents were asked the following questions to gauge whether they believe each is more or less likely as a result of the Forest of Dean becoming a Biosphere Reserve.

	Highly Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
A Biosphere Reserve will put unnecessary constraints on residents and business	5.63%	17.28%	32.82%	35.15%	9.13%
A Biosphere Reserve will increase emphasis on sustainability and provide the means to communicate this	41.17%	46.80%	8.54%	2.52%	0.97%
A Biosphere Reserve will encourage an integrated and sustainable future focusing on balanced development	38.06%	46.99%	10.68%	2.91%	1.36%
A Biosphere Reserve will be a better place to live	51.55%	32.95%	10.85%	2.91%	1.74%
A Biosphere Reserve will protect and enhance the relationship between people and nature	50.97%	35.80%	9.92%	1.95%	1.36%
A Biosphere Reserve will be a better place for businesses to thrive in	17.28%	40.19%	34.17%	6.21%	2.14%
As a whole the Forest of Dean District would benefit from becoming a Biosphere Reserve	54.86%	31.71%	7.98%	3.31%	2.14%



Conclusion

This is the first time that the Forest Economic Partnership has contemplated using a creative, arts based approach to help raise awareness about a particular topic. The innovative film and sound based technique has helped to draw people to The Forest We Want survey at a time during the Covid-19 pandemic when online surveys and questionnaires abound. FEP has exceeded the target audience for online engagement and for the survey and so this new approach has been a successful one and something that FEP will consider repeating if face-to-face conversations are not possible in future.

Whilst for most respondents, the concept of a Biosphere Reserve is a relatively new one, the survey responses that are deemed to be highly important, align with the defined aims and objectives of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Responses to the survey suggest that the predominant view is that as a whole the Forest of Dean District would benefit from the concept of becoming a Biosphere Reserve and would recommend moving forward to look at obtaining the designation.

However, any community engagement and consultation work going forward should carefully consider the questions and concerns of the respondents highlighted in Appendix 2 & 3. The concerns highlighted about house price increases and over-tourism for example do evidence some of our base assumptions upon starting this exercise. The survey data will help frame further research and consultation needed and provide a rationale to target particular stakeholders and employment sectors. Innovative thinking will be needed to mitigate these concerns to facilitate affordable housing solutions and to disperse our growing visitor economy across the district in a sustainable way.



Appendix 1 - Survey Questionnaire

* 1. Please confirm which age group you fall into:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 2012-Date | <input type="radio"/> 1946-1964 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1997-2012 | <input type="radio"/> 1928-1945 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1981-1996 | <input type="radio"/> 1901-1927 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1965-1980 | |

* 2. Please confirm the village/town where you live

* 3. Please provide your postcode

4. How long have you lived in this area?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0-2 Years | <input type="radio"/> 11-20 Years |
| <input type="radio"/> 3-5 Years | <input type="radio"/> 21+ Years |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 Years | |

5. Where did you hear about this survey

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) | <input type="radio"/> Radio |
| <input type="radio"/> Engagement Event | <input type="radio"/> Forest Economic Partnership |
| <input type="radio"/> Local Newspaper | <input type="radio"/> Forest of Dean District Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |



6. Have you seen, or heard the Forest We Want video(s) or podcast?

- Yes
- No (Please go to question 9)

7. If yes, On a scale of 1 (extremely) to 5 (not at all) how engaged did you feel by The Forest We Want video(s) or podcast.

1 _____ 5

8. If Yes, on a scale of 1 (extremely) to 5 (not at all) did you find The Forest We Want video(s) or podcast increased your understanding of the potential of Biosphere Reserves?

1 _____ 5

9. Did you know anything about Biosphere Reserves prior to today?

- Yes
- No
- A little

Biosphere Reserves have three major aims:

- Conservation of countryside, ecosystems, species, and genetic variation.
- Sustainable Economies – Protecting and improving the local economy for the local population.
- Learning and Education - Capacity building for research, monitoring, learning and education, and training activities related to the promotion of conservation and sustainable development

10. How important are these aims to you?

	Highly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all important
Conservation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable Economies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning and Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

UNESCO designations are world renowned by the countries, communities, businesses and organisations that are associated with it. For example, many biosphere sites have used their UNESCO status to market and promote tourism and local produce.

Members of the Office for National Statistics worked with Forest Economic Partnership to research the economic effects of adopting a Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve. Their subsequent report indicates that for every £1 spent creating a Biosphere Reserve there would be a £3.89 return on investment.



11. How important are the following economic concepts to you?

	Highly important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all important
Growing Forest based businesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging sustainable farming and forestry practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve branding on locally produced products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local sourcing for products, food and materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased Tourism spend and travel to the Area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



12. Biosphere Reserves encourage a wide number of ecological benefits.

How important are the following to you?

	Highly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important
Storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging a better understanding of how we can work with nature, not against it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting and enhancing unique habitats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting areas of scientific importance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting the variety of species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reintroducing native species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Practices used in a Biosphere Reserve can increase environmental sustainability in housing developments and infrastructure.

How important are the following to you?

	Highly Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important
Improving the sustainability of dwellings (e.g. through green roofs, better energy efficiency, rainwater and greywater recycling)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving sustainability of commercial developments (business use)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flood prevention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving low carbon transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Biosphere reserves aim to achieve balance in an area by putting in place planning schemes through appropriate zoning. A Biosphere Reserve in the Forest of Dean could help shape planning policy for the district.

Each biosphere reserve includes:

- Core area(s): securely protected sites for conservation and enhancement.
- Buffer zone(s): which typically surrounds or adjoins the core areas, and is used for cooperative activities, compatible businesses and environmental education, recreation, ecotourism, and applied and basic research.
- Transition area: area with a central function in sustainable development which may contain a variety of agricultural activities, settlements and other uses.

A Biosphere Reserve designation can constrain certain activities within the District and have some negative effects, such as; constraints on developments and business expansions around the Site of Special Scientific Interest; over tourism; affordability of housing and the District being seen as a regional park.

14. Do you have any concerns about these activities in the Forest of Dean District?



15. Overall do you think the following are more or less likely as a result of being a Biosphere Reserve

	Highly Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
A Biosphere Reserve will put unnecessary constraints on residents and business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Biosphere Reserve will increase emphasise to sustainability and provide the means to communicate this	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Biosphere Reserve will encourage an integrated and sustainable future focusing on balanced development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Biosphere Reserve will be a better place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Biosphere Reserve will protecting and enhancing the relation between people and nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A Biosphere Reserve will be a better place for businesses to thrive in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a whole the Forest of Dean District would benefit from becoming a Biosphere Reserve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Do you have any specific questions you would like to raise on the concept?

17. Would you be interested in taking part in any additional consultations around the specifics of a Biosphere Reserve in the Forest of Dean? If yes, please complete the following

Name

Email Address



Appendix 2 - Concerns to the Forest of Dean becoming a Biosphere Reserve

The below data, is the unedited responses to question 14 of the Survey “Do you have any concerns about these activities in the Forest of Dean District?” Although listed as ‘concerns’ you will see that responses listed are both supportive and against the introduction of a Biosphere Reserve.

Increased tourism in the form of bikes has drastically altered forest . Noise and feeling of being able to safely walk around . Disturbance to nature . Been a local forester all my life but stopped visiting in recent years .
Increased tourism could be destructive.
The value of forestry cannot be underestimated. Loss of forestry and open space affects physical and mental health.
I have very big concerns over the amount of new properties that are being built in the forest.
No... Development needs constraining
I want the Forest of Dean protected. That is the priority
Potential impact on levels of affordable housing
Affordability of housing
Forest planning department are useless
Business expansion needs to be done as much in benefit with our environment as it does for human financial benefits
I have concerns about the core areas - where these will be and what that means to people's ability to access the forest and roam freely as we can do now
I think the benefits outweigh the negatives and there appears to be a focus on improving education and encouraging sustainable business development which should be mitigated.
Generally no, having lived in a National Park, I understand the constraints and welcome them; however, affordable housing is key to the success of any community.
No, I think there is always a balance to be made and at the moment wildlife, their habitats and our changing climate needs us to do more.
Any development affecting SSSI's can be dealt with using existing planning legislation. Sustainable development should be a requirement in law for developers to meet minimum standards, this will not be done on a voluntary basis by organisations required by their shareholders or governing bodies to make a valid business case to invest in housing/commercial development. In terms of coal mining, although this is one of the Forest's founding industries this needs to be consigned to the history books - we need the biosphere to prevent any further fossil fuel extraction - not sure Foresters are ready to give up this ancient right & privilege. Are the Verderers on board with this?
Affordable housing is important in the Forest.
Over Tourism is a real concern. Please don't let us become like the bottlenecked New Forest
Yes, in an area such as the Forest of Dean there needs to be a limit on building, on covering our soil in concrete and tarmac. This is a very special place
The level of bicycle based tourist activity is now having a detrimental effect on the green path network in the forest



affordability of houses, over tourism
Concern that the district May be less accessible. Being able to freely enjoy the nature & surroundings of this wonderful and unique forest is one of the joys of living here. I would be concerned if access for those living in the forest became restricted.
Mainly the price of housing
Yes - development of green space for housing
That it won't happen
I wouldn't like to see an increase in tourism because I don't think the Forest of Dean has a good enough transport infrastructure to support this
Over active green influence and dogma
I am concerned about housing costs increasing so local people can't afford to live here
Yes ! You're going to sell us out to tourist's! Foresters don't want this !
Over tourism is a concern - balancing Reserve focus with increased footfall, for example.
Increase in buildings and traffic
The Forest is used widely for recreation (cycling, walking, riding) which is a big attraction. If areas are cordoned off for conservation this could impact the way locals and visitors use the Forest.
artificial constraints on agriculture
I think the natural resources of the Forest of Dean are currently under threat from requirements to meet housing targets, people need places to live but the targets don't currently encourage sustainable building..
There should be limits on growth, as resources are finite
Lose of freedom to explore the forest
Not really.
Yes. Too much new housing would concern me
Over tourism is a concern
Affordability of housing for young people
Over tourism
Yes I do. I am very concerned about the level of pollution, and building too many houses on farmland.
Availability of affordable housing.
The FoDD is already over-developed and becoming a future `Garden City'!! Road traffic - A48 Chepstow to Gloucester and beyond is at/over capacity! Act now may have some hope but until greedy corporate industry and developers are controlled, nothing will change. Technology moves on but human beings, greed will never change.
Yes. The Forest has long been a working landscape. It should not be transformed into a museum.
Creative solutions using youngsters. There is a core of older dominant men who can limit creativity
Affordability of housing
Concern about too much tourism affecting the natural habitat.
Increasing house prices excluding local people. The economic benefits should bring in better jobs for local people not more seasonal work
The forest of Dean is a living working landscape. Tourism can be a part of that but they need to come and see what is here not a chocolate box version



Concerns we are losing green areas. We need to prioritise forest preservation over human convenience
No - The Forest has very little protection at present so anything which will help to enhance it's biodiversity, ecology and wildlife is something to be supported
Overtourism and my home being seen as a regional park
No concerns, the positives outweigh the negatives
Tourism, business will increase transport and rubbish
Affordability of housing given high rates of poverty among local residents
Happy to see constraints on developments and business expansion. With increased tourism we need better transport links, with park and ride facilities to minimise the use of cars.
Too much self and commercial interest when it comes to tourism. Reduce holiday lets / double-triple rateable values. Remove Go Ape and other unnatural tourist attractions.
I would be concerned that there might be too much tourism. Also that the prices of housing would go up too much
Would be very concerned if we became a tourist hot spot. The Forest of Dean I was born into has changed to much with regards to tourism
Negative impact of tourism to the area, overcrowding, current lack of transport links, gridlocking the area, driving up local prices & pricing future Forester generations out of the market
How tourism will affect the road network.
HGV's using quarries, factories & animal food Mills on rural broads
Too much tourism might damage the forest
house prices increasing
Just take action, do it.
Yes. We need to ensure local people are not priced out of the area
Increased tourism
No- it would be good to prevent large expansion of towns within the forest and protect the forest
Increased house cost could price our locals, can there be pockets of local connection properties which are below market price
no, I would be interested if it will constrain further SSSIs being designated?
No concerns as long as the freemining tradition continues
Over tourism
Affordability of Housing
my freedom to walk/cycle the forest
Providing affordable housing, employment, improved roads and public transport, access to health care and improving the lifestyles of the people living in the area has to come first. If you want to help improve the environment go and save a rainforest.
too much development will destroy the character of the forest
Over tourism
Housing affordability for young people
NO FURTHER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
Affordability of housing. Don't want it to push people out.
I am concerned about any activity that has any negative impact on the balance of nature, however small



To many housing developments
Concerned about increased tourism
Increasing Tourism...Increasing car journeys
Worried about how much new housing is being built
No concerns other than, it is not just all about tourism.
Everything I clicked is highly important. We need locally grown food in all towns and villages and more sustainability and community as high priority. It's sad to see the ways things are going. Cinderford desperately needs to be green spaced with more local produce. I could go on and on lol.
Over tourism could negate any positive impacts made
Increase in tourism to the area, carbon increase of cars etc.
I love the forest and enjoy the unrestricted access to it if these activities will mean that large areas will become no go areas for the public then I will not be interested in these activities
Restrictions in place could limit the growth of businesses and good jobs in the area
Expansion of tourism could be problematic
Very concerned to protect local biodiversity from development impact so new employment should be about employment in nature related activities.
Using the designation to control residents and encourage it as a tourist destination
Yes, potential for restricted development
Affordability of housing - but that is a bigger issue and should not attempt to be solved by building more houses.
Affordability of housing for children's generation
Residents must retain the right to walk in the woods.
Restraints on housing development should be a huge plus. These areas should have limited development to protect the things that matter: growing more trees, more diversity in environmental locations such as restoration of heathland and importantly no ridiculous ideas of a new town of 4000 houses. People want to visit here to see nature, greenery and openness, not houses. More of that and tourism will flourish. More houses and they won't.
Yes, leave the Forest alone!We the Foresters are not buying it.
No, we need to protect where we live for us now & the future
Yes Their housing policy on Green fields
Increased tourism and the negative effects that brings. Lack of economic responsibility, i.e. increased house prices. Lack of local investment.
Constraints on development and increase of tourism
Too much Tourism.
I make part of my living through tourism. But whatever action is required to support the Biosphere to preserve what we already have.
Very concerned to protect local biodiversity from development impact so new employment should be about employment in nature related activities. There needs to be a professional audit of the species and populations here as the starting point for any further implementation of a biosphere.
Encouraging the continued use of coal mining and coal usage as a ' heritage ' activity over tourism; affordability of housing and the District being seen as a regional park.
No, I support those
No, not at all, this is something that needs to happen for the wider good



The Forest is used widely for recreation (cycling, walking, riding) which is a big attraction. If areas are cordoned off for conservation this could impact the way locals and visitors use the Forest.
Building and tourism should be constrained there is too much having a negative impact already
I am concerned about excessive tourism. I do not want the F of Dean to become any more of a visitor attraction than it is already. anior attraction
Foul rivers , pollution , rapidly becoming the dirty old man of Europe again .non existent M.P
We won't less people on mountain bikes in the forest that brings in more air pollution
Some would need to know more detail about potential impacts.
The extent to which the biosphere influences increased economic activity and quality of life and communities throughout the district
I worry about the affordability of housing. In certain areas it is already very expensive to buy a house.
Overdeveloped tourism
Affordable housing is a concern for local young people. I would also be concerned about over tourism and that affecting the natural habitat. Contrary to this tourism will provide for a better economy, which the Forest needs
Over tourism must be managed; social housing should be at the core of this.
Housing is already a major concern. I would like to see something to limit the numbers of second homes and holiday homes and to promote full residential use.
Increased housing costs could stop young local people being able to afford their own home. Some local businesses with high pollutant output may be forced to close, meaning loss of jobs for people.
The Forestry Commission needs to clean up areas post logging much better.
Affordable housing
I think constraining unsustainable developments would be a very good thing. Housing is already completely unaffordable - we need to limit the numbers of second homes to manage that.
Keeping some low cost housing and charging for tourist facilities (car parking etc) but allowing locals free access
It's all good to me
Concerned about designation of land for building, e.g. new hospital on a green play site that could have been situated in a more appropriate location for nature, the community and best serving the population. Concerned about protections for forest being eroded or legislation passed by government that could lead to sell off/more building etc
Must provide jobs for locals. Need a smart spa hotel to attract more affluent visitors.
Over tourism. Availability of housing to local people
I want the beauty and nature to be preserved and to not build extra houses
No, it needs protecting
Overtourism
Infrastructure, in particular roads and public transport will need to improve in order to accommodate increased tourism and jobs.
Mess being left by cycling biker tourists and the animal tracks being used by the same now pushing away natural animal movements.
AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING



less tourism as they bring rubbish and don't always appreciate the quiet beauty
Hearing of forest being removed for housing developments
Would like to see less forest clearing for housing etc. Lots of brownfield sites available
Rising house prices
Affordable housing or rather a lack of it, is a concern for young people in the forest
Yes over development of land and forestry
Yes, mainly affordable housing. Also negative impacts of increased tourism.
No - the advantages of a Biosphere greatly outweigh the disadvantages. We face a climate and biodiversity emergency. Carrying on as before would be a disaster. If you were in a car running away down a hill towards a precipice, you would not wish just to put one the brakes - rather you would want to stop and reverse back up the hill. For too long we have followed the outmoded model of growth which has led to our present danger - we should be moving to new industries, not trying to continue with the old ones,
Any increase in tourism should be directly linked to local benefits - pimping the Forest without ensuring that local people directly benefit financially and socially would be a very bad idea.
Concern about building outside village development envelopes
I would be concerned if a proposed development was in conflict with wildlife habitat/Site of Special Scientific Interest
Increased tourism destroying the land under foot and increase in traffic, carbon monoxide, more accommodation builds and building for bigger bigger roads
No, these are all sensible ideas
Cycling
Some
How it may affect the price of housing for locals
No, building on what we are
I have concerns about affordability of housing relative to local wages
Excess Building on green land sites and large factory style agricultural units eg poultry units.
No, happy to work/live within them
No not really as long as common sense is exercised
Affordable housing/growth of sustainable 'green' jobs
Yes, that the players and interested parties are usually those that are born and bred in the Forest and there will always be resistance to change. They will need to be on board and educated into joining the ride.
I do feel that Dean Forest needs a positive forward thinking approach for its future which is inclusive for everyone.
There isn't enough detail in this questionnaire, perhaps if you have watched the promo you would have. We don't know how large the Site of Special Scientific Interest would be so it's difficult to comment on. Tourism is a positive and a negative, this isn't clear on what negative constraints could impact tourism.
Affordability of housing
Already think it's too built up too much traffic
High House prices
The impact on areas designated transition



There is currently an issue with over development in the FOD, and poorly designed developments that belong in urban locations. There is a failure to assess the Uluru of the development in an area where there is insufficient infrastructure to support it
Proposal to build 5000 houses near me adding to existing pollution, traffic, flooding whilst providing no jobs and little infrastructure. Needs to be small scale development in every parish using local small/medium building firms and suppliers rather than multinational mega builders
Why are we cutting down established oak and beech trees that surely support biodiversity?
none specifically
Yes, limiting businesses which are important to the area as employers.
Too much emphasis on cycle tracks.
Yes, concern about overdevelopment and its negative impact on the environment
Only in respect of 'over tourism' as much as we need and encourage tourism we do not want to ruin this beautiful area for the locals who have lived and cherished this place for a long time
Housing development puts pressure on habitat, impact on flooding and runoff, overloading sewerage infrastructure, increased pollution. Forestry operations wrecking the land. Nonnative species encroachment. Overuse for leisure activities - mountain biking, increased littering.
Housing affordability. Over tourism
Too many houses!
I'd love to reverse the decision to expand the quarry that is going to damage the Slade Brook SSSI
Not many places for school visits parking accommodation
I wouldn't want to have too many tourists as this would put a strain on the forest.
Increase in tourism/ traffic/ increased house prices/
I think the Forest should be left as it is
Yes. The amount of seemingly indiscriminate housebuilding. All about making more money for the already-rich greedies, with no consideration for the green belt / infrastructure (or lack of it) / residents' peace and quiet . with
Housing: should be focussed on needs of local people, not a cheap dumping ground for people rehoused from cities that are nowhere near, and have nothing to do with, The Forest
Over development of some areas is a concern and the lack of infrastructure to support new developments
More respect is required to respect the mining heritage of the area. People moving into the area tend to overpower and change local traditions.
I do, the Forest of Dean should be protected as a national park from over development and further, should be designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty. Otherwise it is at risk of over development or damage to the forest area and forest quality.
Excessive tourism may bring more pollution to the area via too many cars and poor roads
Yes, affordable housing is crucial to keep the unique nature of the forest
Over tourism and increasing house prices
Yes, particularly over tourism and increased housing costs. As a land worker who practises sustainable agriculture it is only just affordable to live in the area. One of the things that make s the place what it is is the lack of footfall, tourism is already increasing in the area



due to Staycations which makes the area more attractive to Airbnb investors which removes housing from an increasingly expensive housing market.
No, sensitive allocation of spaces for each requirement would be a positive move
Forest economy needs to be integrated with the bioregional resource much more closely
Housing costs; but really there needs to be a more sustainable national solution to this too.
I don't see increased tourism as a positive
Affordable homes essential in small villages
Some concerns
Over tourism would have negative effects on the Forest
Not as such
Deforestation
Only that we might not be able to things quickly enough
Yes, if developments within the buffer zone inhibit or destroy the existing flora/fauna.
It would undermine the sustainability angle if local people were no longer able to afford housing in the area
That concepts like sustainable development are not understood and harmful developments continue to take place.
Some, I objected to National Park status for the FoD as it would be undermining the needs of local people and businesses.
We do worry that there will be large developments and areas of deforestation
Tourism needs to be carefully managed.
One concern is whether the council would be willing to take likely unpopular measures (unpopular with central government and wealthy residents) in order to stem the impacts that this designation would have. Would they be willing to prioritise the rights of animals over private property, for example accepting that flooding caused by the reintroduction of beavers to the biosphere as a whole and not relocating them if they cause damage to private/personal property.
Government new housing figure is impossible to build without losing what makes the forest of dean special
I would like to see concessions for local people if tourists are attracted to the area. Parking should be free, or much cheaper if you are local and want to visit the forest. Green areas should be protected from development as there are plenty of brown sites with building potential.
Yes affordability of housing , tourism that impacts on the environment but doesn't contribute to local economy/jobs
The historic environment is not well enough protected and the FoD needs a full time permanent Building Conservation Officer in post.
Some
Need to BALANCE change with development and not constrain everything
I would welcome an intelligent response to balancing the income tourism brings us with the protection of biodiversity
Too many recreation day visitors especially now due to lockdown.
Very concerned about constraints on low cost housing and increased tourism. Neither of which would be beneficial to the local community.
If people want a green government they would vote for it but they dont want one



Not particularly
Overtourism in the Forest is a real issue and public areas can be over crowded in the summer month and with tourism comes add pollution. house prices for local trying to get onto the ladder is a rea lo concern and enabling locals to be able to stay local should be a priority
I think it will help with the development of our property as we want to make it more economically friendly but are told we can't do certain things with our pre-application as it "will look out of place" with the street. I feel like some rules are very outdated and this might help. I am concerned about the increase in tourism as the forest of dean is already a popular location and local people do struggle to enjoy the high tourism areas at times.
Affordable Housing / loss of Local Business
I'm concerned that driving up house prices will affect the lowest paid in society and prevent them from obtaining affordable, secure housing.
Yes. It should not be seen as a way to stop houses being built. Section 79 planning and encouraging individuals to build eco friendly homes partnered with their land/gardens should be strongly encouraged.
Affordable housing
No, if the zoning is done correctly then the negative effects should be minimal
The massive increase in house building in the Forest which is a poorly connected area is already massively affecting residents. Roads are backed up for miles at peak times. Chepstow (although outside the district) has some of the worst pollution in the country now. Growth needs to be properly managed and rural areas protected not developed without constraint or proper consideration. The whole beauty of this area is its rural, wild, peaceful nature.
some, I hope that the value of nature can be viewed as more important than profit
Increase in house prices for local younger people trying to get onto ladder.
Areas of importance seem to focus on the obvious areas and not other areas such as our estuary mudflats and salt water marshes
I think these 'constraints' could be viewed as opportunities. I do not believe it has to be one way or the other. It's possible to achieve these goals without a detrimental affect on business and tourism as long as this is mitigated for in any future planning and development



Appendix 3 - Questions about the concept of a Biosphere Reserves in the Forest of Dean

The below data, is the unedited responses to question 16 of the Survey “Do you have any specific questions you would like to raise on the concept?” You will see that responses varied between actual questions and statements from a mix of those both supportive and against the introduction of a Biosphere Reserve.

Increased tourism must be carefully controlled, nature must come before profit otherwise it's just another theme park.
I am not local so I do not know what the position is at the moment.
Yes, I am worried about the impact of housing developments and tourism on the forest.
Will other Biospheres be created in the UK?
I like some of the ideas but I am concerned that this might restrict our access to the forest and our ability to roam freely
Who would manage it? My experience of the FOD council is very poor, especially of the planning department and committee. Would there be competent professional support in place to deliver it?
Not sure all business sectors will view BR designation as a place they will be able to thrive in - some may view this as being a barrier to investment and growth without financial help to become more sustainable. The business benefits need to be expanded upon and linked to examples of how this works for a range of industrial sectors in other UK biospheres.
It is extremely important that the Dean Ridges and Leadon Vale are incorporated in the Biosphere. To limit its extension would jeopardise the wider region's crucial part in the wider Severn Treescapes/Wentwood to Wyre natural corridor.
The key is getting people on board with the initiative, and making sure any concerns are appropriately addressed. If implemented well it could be a tremendous benefit, but poor management would lead to negative impacts.
Would becoming a biosphere reserve limit or impinge on any present or previous designations? Such as AONBs and SSSRIs?
How will it impact local traditional ways of life, like sheep badgering?
Why should business be based only on growth and money? This is the very reason we're in big trouble. Is my business truly serving the surrounding community in an ethical manner?
I live in a conservation area and find the whole concept outdated and problematic - with a focus being on aesthetic rather than environmental concerns. I would like this to change
I think the danger here is following a global agenda regarding the United Nations on sustainable development that will only suit the elite and others who are in the pockets of the elite. Also if we follow a net zero policy on carbon how are plants and animals meant to survive as the ecosystem is based around the aspiration and respiration of carbon dioxide and oxygen?
I'd like to get a better understanding of the tangible benefits for both the people and nature of the Forest of Dean District of becoming a designated Biosphere Region, and also potential risks/negative impacts. Also, if FoD did go down this route how would the transition be managed and planned, what governance structure would be put in place, how and when impact of biosphere zoning would be assessed and reviewed, how any lessons learned would be shared and used to inform



improvements. Also, how would you ensure that voices of lifelong residents / communities of the area are heard and considered equally alongside those of the advocates for change?
What restrictions would be imposed on residents and motorists
How will the different councils work together? Would it be a Unitarian style council, or does it operate as a committee or board? Is it non political?
It won't benefit the forest at all, you will just close off area's to the public, causing house prices to rise.
How would local people be affected/brought 'onside'?
Who will monitor this
Any kind of development of the region needs to be balanced between the needs of different groups. Often it appears that the group with the most money wins out. I'd be interested to know how being a biosphere reserve would prevent this happening.
I'm not clear if "Forest of Dean" encompasses the council area or only the forest areas.
How do all the different political parties/voices view the Biosphere concept?
How to ensure we encourage local businesses to maximise branding, market opportunities and encourage sustainable tourism and business practices.
As a teacher at a local primary school, I think this is an exciting prospect to be a part of (especially given the recent commitment shown by the new education secretary). Would there be any funding and/or information distributed to local primary schools to enable them to adopt this concept in the curriculum right from the early stages. Our current 5 year olds could be very well equipped to support this in the future, if teachers can embedded the principles now.
How would access to the forest be affected to it's resident and tourist users on foot, hoof and wheel?
How long will it be until this becomes a wonderful reality for us?
How will it affect the most deprived and poorest?
What would it actually mean for farms, particularly the intense arable farms? And what about the quarries?
Is there any money associated with this idea or is it just a label?
Does it give any more legal protection than currently?
How do you communicate that what look like restrictions in the short term will have huge benefits in the long term?
Local sustainable, regenerative agriculture producing food needs to be developed and encouraged
I'm already concerned about how much forest is being removed to create heathland projects - would biosphere status accelerate the removal of woodland areas?
Benefits will be to the few who own business not the employees. Majority forest residents probably work outside so biosphere will be limiting
Is the objective, primary or otherwise, to develop forestry based business (such as glulam) and/or will this involve private enterprise taking more ownership of woodland? In other words, is this just selling off the Forest for commercial gain disguised by green headlines?
Can assurances be given that planning decisions for residents will be unaffected?
Will businesses be restricted by new rules depending on the 'zones' they find themselves in?
Who will be making the money from what appears to be a project motivated by self interested cloud 9 parties.



I would have serious concerns over new inflexible rules and restrictions being imposed upon us by outsiders who know little of the forest and it's ways.
Main area of concern is the current transport infrastructure would not cope with an increase to tourism to the area and potential in future to make the Forest an unaffordable place to live for current inhabitants
How would tourism be controlled? The area doesn't need more polluting, road damaging, environment damaging tourists
It's great introducing this. I want to see outputs where planning applications match this. Roadworks are done by economics people not single issue road engineers & tourism is encouraged as an economic delivery vehicle for prosperity over heavy industry that creates numerous HGV movements. The latter can be moved to the periphery of our council area if companies really want to stay here.
How do we deal with setbacks? It seems a bit too optimistic to say it will benefit everything (just development around SSSI has been flagged up as a possible negative). A lot will depend on having the right people / team to problem solve
I have been looking after our rare flora on our smallholding for over twenty years and see this as a wonderful opportunity for other spaces to become as beautiful and diverse as ours.
will it affect local people's abilities to roam/cycle in the forest
How much is this costing and could the money be put to a better use?
How soon might this come about?
WILL THE PROPOSAL INCLUDE FULL TIME STAFF AND WHERE WILL THESE BE SOURCED
I would like to know
More about how it will affect housing affordability and quality of life for people on low incomes
Disruption during works and car exhaust pollution
The Forest of Dean is a unique region, from environment, wildlife, and especially culturally. The area should have at least had National Park status long ago, with significant funding to protect and extend woodland cover, extending the Forest North South and West.
I have had discussions with Tony Juniper at Natural England suggesting ideas to achieve the ambitious target of planting 1.5 billion trees in England over the next few years, which will need an army of volunteers and environmental professionals to achieve this. Proposals of creating an Environment Cadets service have been discussed. He will need a lot more pushing on this from me as they are vague about the plans.
On this point, I would like a clear blueprint on how local people, especially people in the ages 12-25 age group have a clear opportunity of participating in this.
Reason I say this is because some of the local Foresters Forest projects are not easy to engage with, communication is at best patchy and has switched many participants off from getting involved. Could do a LOT better.
The local people, especially the kids are at the heart of this, do not forget this.
Biodiversity in people's gardens and public spaces. Basically more trees and plants in urban areas, green walls. Use unused churches, school buildings etc for community classes on day and eve. Using the towns more for community get togethers, local fairs. Getting the message out to every age bracket to get involved! School projects to educate the kids more. Etc
How many people who don't have access to IT who have lived here all their lives will be consulted.



When we are told that "for every £1.00 of costs the Biosphere Reserve option yields £3.89", why aren't we told that this is a return over a 30 year period?
This sounds like you will be taking away people's rights to roam freely in the Fod which would be a problem for many people especially local people
Could Biosphere Reserve status prevent expansion of factory farming in the FoD?
Can I be sure that environmental concerns will always trump economic ones? It's the Environment stupid should be our watchword.
All motherhood and apple pie statements
Recognition and understanding of local cultural history must be part of this. I am concerned that 'ancient monuments' are too narrow. There is built heritage remaining in the area that should be preserved, adapted and reused rather than demolished.
I would like to learn more and if possible help.
We must stop building houses on the green belt of the Dean. Knock down Cinderford and start again.
Why this all of a sudden ? Why are you trying to sell the forest out? We don't need anymore tourism, we don't want anymore people from other places buying their second homes here. Things are fine as they are leaving it alone, stop trying to sell Foresters out of their Forest !
Should include housing policies espn the building of large estates against controlled infill. These developments on green fields destroys habitats and create unnecessary pressure on the local environment
Plans for economic sustainability. I.e. how the money raised from increased tourism will be spent.
If you proceed to treat the forest as a tourism hub you will out strip your children when it comes to the housing market later, this will only bring people in from other places to buy their second homes here ! Like Cornwall and The Cotswolds, we don't need this for our forest !
The conservation objective should be treated as the most important of the three. Much development has gone ahead with a damaging effect on nature. The biodiversity emergency declared by FoDDC should be the founding block of all future programmes.
will a government be able to override the objectives and force councils to allow more building by commercial companies.
No, but will seek to continue to learn.
No but I would welcome more information as it becomes available, I fully support the move
I don't know much about this or what it would mean in practice. The opening page said it would improve the economic status of the area but then went on to say that it would make housing more expensive which sounds contradictory
I have a lot of concerns. There appears to be very little actual information easily found. There doesn't seem to be much joined up thinking and a lot of contradictions. The council claims to be onboard to protect nature and the special areas yet give permission for development in areas clearly not suitable and continually ignore plea's from local residents. Money clearly talks more than protecting the environment which would make me question what monetary benefit does this Biosphere concept really bring, who actually benefits and will any of the ecological benefits really happen?
The FoDean is a relatively small area compared to the I of Wight/Isle of Man, and it is hard to see how the Core areas and Buffer zones could be clearly drawn. The towns and villages are so close together....and merge into the farmland and forest areas.



Is the Javelin project working?
How are you going to stop all the traffic associated with mountain biking that is piloting the sire in the forest and environment when you can do that you may stand a chance
Is the intended boundary of the biosphere coterminous with the district council area or smaller?
What would be the impact on the production of fossil fuels in the forest and would domestic wood-burning be restricted/stopped?
Affordable housing is a huge concern, especially if we want young people to remain or come to the area to live and work.
How will it be funded?
Less softwood logging and more long term deciduous planting for tourism and locals to enjoy the forest is needed.
How is the discontinuity between the Forestry's national drivers (profit at all costs) and the biosphere intentions to be managed? FE is still planting monocultures and allowing the use of huge machinery...
Would this add another layer of local bureaucracy to housing or planning or will it replace the existing procedures?
If tourism is increased then transport infrastructure needs to match this
What type of community engagement is being done around this (apart from survey) would be interested in being involved in this
Will there be a new bridge over the Severn to reduce A48 traffic jams? Will public access to woodland be maintained? Will bridle paths be protected? Will farmers be compensated to farm more sustainably? Will there be a train station @ Westbury on Severn?
There needs to be measures in place to ensure equality so that current and new residents can thrive. There needs to be a long term vision which is clearly communicated and active engagement with residents.
How can I help be involved?
Biosphere Reserve and the emphasis of it needs to be taught and discussed to a larger public audience starting from school age where a definite captive audience is available. The wider FOD community will take some notice but tourists will take very little notice if they live out of the area. Changing to a Biosphere will take a couple of decades.
first stop new builds taking the forest and preserve
Only that, as with a lot of these things - there will be a lot of labelling and paperwork without much meaningful change 'on the ground'
Would you consider the encouragement of eco-living? Not just making existing homes more sustainable, but looking to new eco-builds, tiny homes, van living etc that solves both affordable housing issues and allows low impact lifestyles.
The most important factor is taking people with you. There is a high possibility that those filling this survey out are already the converted; an unfortunate bi-product of survey response. Education is paramount to changing the pre-established beliefs/lack of interest/fear of a change in the level of quality living to those who are unsure of supporting any conservation project because of this.
Was any professional advice sought in constructing this questionnaire?
I welcome the use of the ONS for economic analysis. What other expertise is being recruited. Is the appointment of suitably qualified staff or consultants now a priority - since the FODDC has declared



a climate emergency?
What is the process/criteria for becoming a Biosphere and who decides?
How will businesses and households be engaged to encourage sustainability?
Not in addition to the views expressed above
How does the FODDC feel about it?
If it is thought that tourism will increase, is this considered to be sustainable and would the inevitable increase in litter and cars be taken into account when the Council is planning its services?
How long does it take to achieve, years or decades?
Who will this plan benefit the most, locals or outsiders, wildlife, also why do people like to interfere with things that already work
Not at this point but might in the future
Who is going to manage it? The Forestry Commission is the wrong fit.
Yes I do. This is a plea for all cyclists in the area. Along every road should be a cycle path that is able to take two side by side. This is now the 21st century and all life is precious. Let's get this into any plans for the forest area. I am not a cyclist myself as I feel it is too dangerous on all forest roads. After all, surely ameliorating the effects of global warming is to ensure the survival of the human race. The Earth will recover in a few thousand years without us.
No, however my dream for Dean and has been since I have lived here would be to have a similar setup to the Eden project in Cornwall to also include water pools for leisure and a designated high quality space for learning the arts. It would be fab to put the Forest well and truly on the map. Of course all of this would have to be achieved in a sustainable way and could be used as a way to inform as well as enjoy. Thanks for listening.
Will there be any changes or impacts on the roads in the FOD - improvements, bypasses, restrictions
Where would the zones be
I would like to understand more specifically what this designation would mean for local businesses and their planning applications.
What is the next step?
Litter and fly-tipping - how do we prevent this? Recycling schemes.
It could be a better place for the wildlife stop and he fly tipping
How hard would it be to get planning permission for the green sustainable homes
What will be the impact on control of populations of wildlife: e.g. the Wild Boar population needs to be managed / culled to be acceptable to the local population.
Any 'biosphere' needs to be managed well and not a short term political stunt, nor a token gesture that will be forgotten about in the near future.
where would the core areas be?
Not at this point as there have been many projects like this that have just faded like a sun set.
Is consideration being given to designating the Forest an AONB or a national park?
Would there be any volunteering opportunities involved in this?
How will this affect affordable housing for families already living in the area given that it would increase the demand for houses to meet the increase in tourism?
With increased demand comes higher prices. Many businesses would want to move here to make the most of the branding. What impact will that have on local businesses?
Have you thought that conceding a few Biosphere Reserves could give the industrial farmers the



excuse to carry on as normal in the entire country?
Each concept has to have protection at its very heart, if that is not the case then how can it ever be of benefit
How do residents voice a comment? How will this be communicated to all residents in the Forest of Dean area?
Not at the moment.. Would like to investigate topics further
As residents and businesses will need to adapt, will there be support (financial and otherwise) for this? I hope so, as many may find it difficult.
Why wasn't this brought in decades ago?
The recent case of planning permission for a large scale housing development on green land at Berry Hill, the opinions against the development by local people and local councils were overridden by the Government. Would this Biosphere status truly give the local community the ability to protect the area against such destruction of very limited farming land within the Biosphere? Would the 'governing body' of a biosphere have the same level of draconian powers to stop and delay small scale private and business development / expansion in the same way as a National Park Authority has?
it would be good to get the message out wider to the communities, and older generations who maybe don't use social media etc, and also get their take on it
How far would the reintroduction of species go? Would the aim (correctly) be to reintroduce all animals or their modern or nearest relatives that once called the forest home, including predators and larger mammals? Would large taxes or even bans on second or more homes, as well as rent controls in the biosphere be considered to prevent locals being priced out of the area?
Would the forest still be accessible for cycling and walking
Can there be something put in place to make sure not all homes are made into holiday homes. Can this involve getting a Buildings Conservation Officer in post so the heritage is better protected as well.
The quality of English in this document is such that it brings doubt on the belief that can be placed on this project. Sections look like they have been cut and pasted from elsewhere and not written for and to convey information to the average Forester.
Tourism has already increased since the pandemic, it needs to remain at a sensible level. Overtourism is not welcomed. We have already stayed at home during weekends and holidays to avoid crowded spots which are right on our doorstep. Any new scheme of Any Kind needs to put locals first.
Just adding another layer of bureaucracy and control by the back door.
I'd be concerned about how much "over tourism" there would be, surely that would have a detrimental effect on nature?
How to tackle the affordable housing issue and make the Forest an enjoyable place to live for all residents, irrespective of their income.
Will it affect local taxes?
Would the designation attract funding for sustainable development, such as green roofs, heat pumps, solar panels, and would these be strongly encouraged along with section 79 sustainable homes



Will there be financial and educational support or subsidies for local businesses transitioning to a more sustainable way of operating?

Working from the ground up would mean education in schools, to raise awareness in future generations. Is this part of the strategy?

Business growth could look like education and training programs delivered in relationship to the forest, biodiversity and sustainability rather than tourism. Is this being considered as a way forward?

Thankyou

Would farmers and landowners be advised how to successfully integrate with the concept

How can I get involved in the initiative

When can we start? 😊

How would projects be funded ?

Who would be in charge of the project? Who are the stakeholders? What are their roles? How are they influenced by time and financial constraints?

