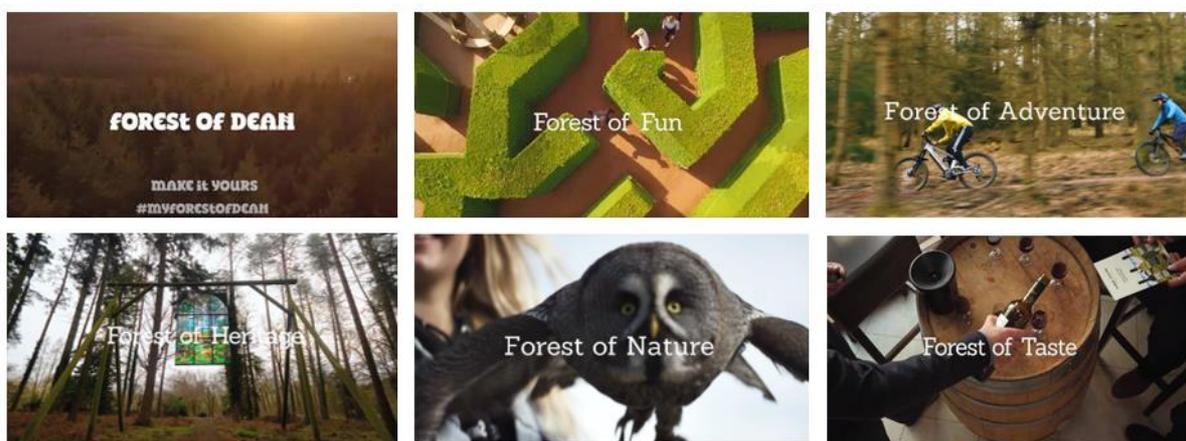


Forest of Dean... Make it Yours destination launches new tourism promotion campaign



- *New promotional video to help boost 'day and stay' visitors in 2019*
 - *Kicks off first spring of toll-free Severn crossings*
 - *Specifically targeting Bristol and South West visitors*
- *Showcasing distinct themes of how to enjoy the Forest - Fun, Heritage, Adventure, Nature and Taste*
 - *Campaign hashtag #MyForestofDean*
 - *To help deliver increase of 15% visitors in 2019*

A new tourism promotion campaign from Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Tourism has just been launched which looks to further communicate the appeal of the area following the lifting of the Severn Bridge tolls. Initially it will specifically target visitors from Bristol and the South West, using the tagline **Forest of Dean... Make it Yours**.

At the centre of the activity is a new 60 second video showcasing everything on offer in the area, just across the bridge, and uses the themes *Forest of Fun, Forest of Heritage, Forest of Adventure, Forest of Nature and Forest of Taste*.

This activity has been supported by funding from the *Forest of Dean District Council* and demonstrates their ongoing commitment to supporting tourism growth.

The video will be promoted heavily across social media throughout April, targeting the key geographical areas looking to entice millennials, friends, families and older visitors alike. It aims to showcase the region as a natural outdoor playground where you can ‘make it yours’ through heritage, adventure, nature, taste and of course, a lot of fun along the way.

“We really feel this video is punchy and fast paced. We wanted a fresh approach to promoting the area to help us lure more visitors across the bridge, especially millennials, now that the monetary and psychological barrier of the tolls have gone. We teamed up with a team of young filmmakers from [Dream Beach Life](#) who have worked with brands such as STA Travel and Western Australia in the past and they were totally blown away by the different activities we can offer our visitors.

“We made the bold prediction in December that we could increase our visitors by 15% this year which is still very much what we are aiming to achieve,” said Helen O’Kane, Co-Chair for Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism.

“The film documents different groups of people enjoying the Forest of Dean and aims to showcase our diversity, something which we think most people just don’t realise. It shows just how much fun you can have, how you can wander through ancient woodland, cosy up in a forest cabin with a hot tub, taste delicious artisan food and award-winning wines, or try something new such as kayaking, mountain biking, caving, archery or even handling a hawk,” added O’Kane.

From a heritage railway which younger visitors will adore, to open-air sculpture trails, craft centres and pretty pub gardens, the footage aims to bring the Forest alive and gives potential visitors lots of ideas of what they can do in the area.

To help share the video and target teetering visitors, the campaign has recruited a number of key digital influencers and bloggers from Bristol and the South West with well over 200k follows on their social platforms between them to help spread the word. Personalised visits have been arranged for each of them over the coming weeks where they will share their day trip or a short stay across their social channels alongside the campaign video using the campaign hashtag, #MyForestofDean.

To view the new campaign video, go to www.wyedeantourism.co.uk/myforestofdean

-ENDS-

**For more information and images contact Fiona Reece at Travel
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Notes to Editor:

The following Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism members are featured in the video:

Pedlabikeaway - <https://pedalabikeaway.co.uk/>

Forest Deli - <https://forest-deli.co.uk/>

Farmers Boy Inn - <https://farmersboyinn.co.uk/>

Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail - <https://www.forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk/>

Inspire 2 Adventure - <https://www.inspire2adventure.com/>

Tudor Farmhouse - <https://tudorfarmhousehotel.co.uk/>

Three Choirs Vineyard - <https://www.three-choirs-vineyards.co.uk/>

Forest of Dean Adventure - <http://www.forestofdeanadventure.co.uk/>

Forest Holidays - <https://www.forestholidays.co.uk/>

Puzzlewood - <https://www.puzzlewood.net/>

Perrygrove - <http://www.perrygrove.co.uk/>

Hillside Brewery - <https://www.hillsidebrewery.com/>

Chepstow Racecourse - <https://www.chepstow-racecourse.co.uk/>

Clearwell Caves - <https://clearwellcaves.com/>

The Speech House - <https://www.thespeechhouse.co.uk/>

The aMazing Hedge Puzzle - <https://www.mazes.co.uk/>

Wye Valley Butterfly Zoo - <https://butterflyzoo.co.uk/>

International Centre for Birds of Prey - <https://www.icbp.org/>

About Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism

Campaign hashtag - #MyForestofDean

Social media handles:

#DeanWye

Instagram @deanwyetourism

Facebook @WyeValleyForestofDean

Twitter @DeanWye

Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism is predicting that day visitors to the region could increase by as much as 15% in 2019, translating to almost an additional one million day trips and £30.2* million in anticipated visitor spend.

The area currently welcomes around 6.2 million day visitors spending an estimated £187 million.

Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism (WVFDT) was formed in 2006 and is the official Destination Management Organisation representing the interests of almost 400 members. The area covers the three counties of Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and Herefordshire and is the only cross border tourism association in the UK working with tourism businesses and stakeholders in Wales and England.

Managed by a 11-strong voluntary board, supported by professional advisors, the Forestry Commission and the AONB, it is funded by member subscriptions, the Forest of Dean District Council, Monmouthshire Council (via VisitWales), the Forestry Commission, and grant funding for specific projects.

Tourism in the [Forest of Dean](#) and [Monmouthshire](#) contributes £141.5 million and £158.1 million respectively to the local economies. WVFDT members include tourist attractions, accommodation providers, outdoor activities, pubs & restaurants, food producers, events and services.