

Revitalising Rosliston Forestry Centre Vision and Project Plan 2023 - 2028

Mission Statement

To be an environmentally and economically sustainable exemplar outdoor visitor attraction and working woodland destination, which empowers people to improve their wellbeing and engage with the natural environment.

Aims.

It will offer excellent value and satisfaction to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds wanting to have fun, learn, contribute and make lasting memories in the countryside.

People visiting the site will:

- be inspired to explore and learn about nature
- gain health and wellbeing benefits
- be encouraged to develop environmentally sustainable behaviours
- develop a greater understanding of the importance of a species-rich natural environment and the role of multipurpose, sustainable woodland culture and economy.
- want to return!

Achieving the vision – background

Opened in 1994, Rosliston Forestry Centre (RFC) was the first community woodland with a visitor centre created in the National Forest.

The 154 acre site is owned and managed by South Derbyshire District Council and Forestry England. Both organisations share objectives around people, environment, economic progress and sustainability. The site is a key attraction within the National Forest and is warmly referred to as a 'jewel in the crown of South Derbyshire'.

A new 30 year lease has been signed with Forestry England which runs from 2023-2053. Following the signing of the lease a public consultation exercise was undertaken in June and July 2023 to gain people's views and aspirations for the site.

Achieving the vision – Stakeholder statement

Our main stakeholders for the site are the National Forest Company and Forestry England with similar objectives to SDDC's 'Our Environment, Our People and Our Future' and a collaborative approach between these organisations will be a significant driver in continuing to move the site forward.

Demonstrating sustainability and contributing towards the Council's Climate and Environmental Plan for reaching carbon zero by 2050 are key to the vision – including promoting sustainable management and behaviours and celebrating enhancing biodiversity.

The shared values across these organisations include professionalism, integrity, respect, creativity, teamwork, commitment, achieving excellence and having pride in our place. These will be the cornerstones of the vision.

The organisations intend to ensure Rosliston Forestry Centre remains safe, accessible, provides good value, offers excellence across the board and remains an attractive and exciting destination, striving to become environmentally and economically sustainable in the longer term.

Partnership working with other organisations and sites within the Forest will maximise shared environmental and tourism benefits eg developing a greenway path network between sites and towns

Recreation, health, volunteering, education and conservation are an important part of the site. South Derbyshire District Council runs the national award-winning Environmental Education Project and Get Active in the Forest services from the site, encouraging participation in a wide variety of activities for all abilities and ages.

Opportunities span families, businesses, education sectors, voluntary and community organisations and cater for the individual too.

To ensure our quality is maintained and improved the site will be put forward to the internationally recognised Green Flag Award for an annual independent assessment and Green Flag principles will be at the heart of the Centre’s management plan.

Achieving the vision - principles

- Putting Our Environment, Our People and Our Future at the heart of the vision.
- Working collaboratively with partners, the local community and visitors.
- Targeting investing in the site in line with community and partner ambitions.
- Developing a 30 year management plan for the site which is reviewed every 5 years.
- Managing the facilities to make best use of space and future opportunities.
- Creating a place where visitors want to return time and time again, providing a fresh but relevant offer - encouraging repeat visits to the centre, the district, and the National Forest.
- Creating a biodiversity rich working woodland
- Using the Green Flag Award to ensure a quality visitor experience is maintained.
- Enabling and promoting sustainable travel methods to connect to towns, villages and other sites
- Boosting Tourism to maximise the site’s potential at the heart of the National Forest.

Project Plan 2023-2028

The following action plan is based on the results of the public consultation exercise and condition surveys.

Task	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
Develop management plan for the site	Staff time					
New signage	53K					
Glade Marquee improvements*	58K					

Appendix 1

New entrance feature	10K					
Lodge improvements inc WIFI		75K	50K			
Pathway improvements (walking/ cycling)		150K				
Play Area improvements				200K****		
Enhance fixed engagement assets on site eg sculptures, public science trail					20K	
Visitor centre improvements		250K				
Explore options for Eco house use of the bungalow**						TBC
Explore other camping options for the site						TBC
Explore option for visitor tree height viewing platform**						TBC
Explore options for an onsite repair shop / men in sheds**						TBC
Replace heating system to lodges and site buildings		120K**				
Car Park power & lighting		60K				
Enterprise centre repairs		45K				
Water leak fixes		100K****	50K			
Klargester replacement			30K			
Site/ Off Site Vehicle		30K**				
External funding		250K		200K		450K
SDDC Funding	121K	580K	130K		20K	851K
Totals	121K	830K	130K	200K	20K	1,301K

*completed

**subject to external funding

**** will need additional capital funding