



## Green light for forest tourism boost in the Borders

Monday, 26 March 2018

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Forest tourism in the Tweed Valley is set to step up a gear now that planning approval has been given for 56 secluded eco-cabins and 16km of new trails at Glentress Forest.

The £11.3 million tourism development is being managed by a partnership between Forest Enterprise Scotland and Forest Holidays.

The investment has the potential of generating an extra £1 million into the local economy each year and employment of up to 60 people.

The new trail network should be completed in a year's time, with the eco-cabins ready a year after.

Welcoming the planning approval, Sallie Bailey, Forest District Manager for Forest Enterprise Scotland said:

"This is fantastic news for both the Tweed Valley and the Scottish Borders as a whole.

"In the next two years we will see a real step change in what we can offer visitors to the area in terms of forest tourism.

"The project is a prime example of the private and public sector working together to bring a substantial investment to the region.

"Now the hard work begins to turn all the plans into reality, something we are very pleased to be doing for the area."

Forest Holidays will provide private sector investment of £10 million for the cabins project with the remainder being spent on the trails via funding from both Forest Enterprise Scotland and Forest Holidays.

The combined attractions are part of the award winning Glentress Masterplan project and were widely consulted on over the last two years.

A new mountain bike skills area will be built along with a number of new biking taster trails for all levels. The new trails will incorporate elements of the previous 'Freeride' area, as well as a new route for walkers. All the new trails will be situated around the Glentress Peel development at Castle Hill.

These new facilities will replace the existing skills and freeride areas at Buzzard's nest, where the cabin development is planned to be situated.

Forest Holidays is taking forward the new eco-cabin development which will be sensitively blended into the forest's surroundings.

Bruce McKendrick, Chief Executive Officer of Forest Holidays added:

"We are absolutely delighted that the planning committee recognised the important contribution Forest Holidays will make to tourism in the Borders.

"We now look forward to realising the many benefits that our cabin location will offer visitors to Glentress, the forest environment and local community.

"I am sure that our guests will delight in exploring this region and we are proud to contribute to the rural economy in Scotland, by supporting local businesses and helping to create a vibrant year-round tourist economy. We look forward to continuing to work closely with our partners in Forest Enterprise Scotland, with a shared enthusiasm to make the Glentress Masterplan a reality."

### Notes to News Editors

1. Forest Enterprise Scotland is an agency of the Forestry Commission and manages the National Forest Estate on behalf of Scottish Ministers.
2. Forest Holidays: Offering guests the chance to enjoy a peaceful getaway surrounded by picturesque British forests, Forest Holidays are positive experiences in Britain's amazing forests; connecting people, nature and local communities. Forest Holidays is a joint venture, public/private partnership with the Forestry Commission and has a 125-year lease on the land on which sites are based. The cabins are architecturally designed to fit sensitively within the woodland environment with modest central facilities. With nature at the heart of Forest Holidays' ethos, they provide year-round short breaks and holidays in timber cabins set within 9 locations on the Forestry Commission Estate, operating successfully in National Parks and other sensitive locations.  
<http://aboutus.forestholidays.co.uk>
3. Tha Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba na phàirt de Bhuidheann-Stiùiridh na h-Àrainneachd is Coilltearachd aig Rìaghaltais na h-Alba. Tha e an urra ri riaghladh agus cumail maoinneachadh is comhairle ri coilltearachd ann an Alba. Tha Iomairt Choilltean na h-Alba na fo-bhuidheann aig Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba a tha a' ruith Oighreachd na Coille Nàiseanta.
4. Media enquiries to Steve Williams, Forest Enterprise Scotland press office 0300 067 6508.

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