

Promoting, developing and supporting tourism in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean

BOARD DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

At the AGM we have to elect and re-elect Directors to the board of the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association.

There are 6 spaces available and 6 members who wish to join the board of Directors; 3 current board Directors who are seeking re-election and 3 members of the Association who have put their names forward.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS SEEKING RE-ELECTION

Gill Hands



Current positions

Board member of Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association (Director) and Vice-Chairman.

Brief experience

Gill has over 30 years of experience in running a hotel and leisure business. Prior to running the family business Gill was employed by Crest Hotels as a hotel Manager. Tauber Hands Ltd was set up in 1986 and has operated four hotels and a holiday cottage leisure complex over the years. Gill has been operating at The Speech House Hotel since March 2010 and is actively involved in promoting the Forest of Dean as a destination for leisure and commerce.

Key skills

Gills skills are general to operational management and include marketing, finance, training, customer service, strategy, etc.

Reasons for being a board member

Gill is keen to raise the profile of the Wye Valley and the Forest of Dean as a destination, as this will have an impact on generating greater wealth for the area. As such Gill is representing the Association at the Forest Economic Partnership meetings and is actively involved in the Inspire the Forest project.

Gill has been an active member of the Board over the last two years and would like to continue in this role. Before that as a co-opted member of the Board.

Liz Marshall



Current positions

Board member of Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association (Director) and Treasurer.

Brief experience

I have lived in the area all my life having only moved away briefly to go to University before returning to live and work. I started Inspire2Adventure along with my husband Paul offering outdoor adventure activities in 2001. I have continued to grow and develop Inspire2Adventure to become a multi-activity outdoor adventure provider offering visitors the opportunity to experience the adventurous side of the area. Along the way, I have learnt how

important it is for a small business to collaborate with others, embrace social media & digital marketing, the importance of networking, and to effectively manage finance.

Key skills

Finance, business development, social media, collaboration & networking.

Reasons for being a board member

I have been a member of the Association since 2005 and am keen to not only raise awareness of the area to encourage more visitors, but for locals to experience activities and attractions on their doorstep. I would like to promote collaboration, increase membership, help develop the area as a destination, events, and campaigns.

Yvette Farrell



Current positions

Board member of Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association (Director) and Co-Chairman for 6 months. I have recently taken on the Board responsibility for Membership.

I grew up on a country estate learning first-hand from game keepers how land should be managed, equilibrium achieved and how the land and its food can have a place in the world of business.

I worked in Horticulture for 16 years gaining extensive plant knowledge, the associations with food and applied my knowledge within the corporate world. I secured the contract for supply of floral decorations to Number 10 Downing Street, Houses of Parliament and all the major UK airports with a portfolio value of £1.2million. I have run market stalls, sold top quality coffee, owned my own crew catering business for festivals and have run an award-winning Organic Farm

shop with Cafe and Deli.

I have supported adults and young people with learning difficulties and, to date, run a popular activity-based group on a Thursday evening for adults with Learning disabilities in my local community

I am an active and founding partner in the award winning Sixteen Community Café in Coleford. I am very proud of the café's achievements in working with and for venerable individuals and assisting with finding paid work placements. The café has been running as a Social Enterprise since May 2015 and all profit is

used for providing work placements for people with learning disabilities, mental health, excluded and isolated individuals.

I opened Harts Barn Cookery School in 2011 and have, through recession, developed a thriving business offering cookery and dining experiences and developed 'A Taste of the Forest' - a cuisine based on ingredients from local suppliers and natural products (wild boar, wild garlic and more).

I am particularly proud of rescuing 'Speech House Pudding' from obscurity and presenting it on main stream ITV Countrywise programme (see our website for a video).

I have assisted in putting the Forest of Dean on a National and International food map bringing groups, families, TV/film crews, Chefs and individuals to the Forest for the first time.

Key skills

I have developed many skills on my journey including marketing, finance, branding, business improvement, product development and innovation as well as an extensive knowledge of food and drink.

I also have a working knowledge of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn).

Recognised as Forester Business Person of the Year 2015 with Harts Barn Cookery School winning Small Business of the Year in 2016, Finalist in 2015 Woman of the Year (Gloucestershire Women in Business Awards), South West Rural Enterprise Finalist in 2018.

Reasons for being a board member

I have been an active member of the Tourism Association for 8 years and as a Board member for 3 years and have enjoyed being part of a vibrant, active organisation that has brought benefit to me personally, my business and the Forest of Dean.

In that time, I have witnessed the area becoming internationally recognised and its enhanced importance in the tourism world which has led to an increase of tourists visiting the area. The Wye Valley and Forest of Dean has so much to offer the tourist trade

As I have experienced first-hand the benefit, collaboration amongst members can bring, as a board member I would support and encourage greater interaction between members and actively encourage new members to join.

I am already a passionate ambassador for the region, not just for its food but also the history, nature (I am also a trained Horticulturist) and its geography. I am very proud that the Cookery School is part of the Uncover the Cotswold project providing experiences to the Travel Trade.

I have been a good representative on the board for the region's increasing profile and have many years of experience with the Board, bringing new ideas, events and initiatives. I would like to continue to be an influencer for the good of the association and have an opportunity to continue the Membership role I have just taken on at Board level.

MEMBERS SEEKING ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Annah Todman



Brief experience

Annah is the owner of Wanderlust Camper Co – campervans for hire, based in Dymock, Gloucestershire, who are entering their third busy season, aiding many family trips across the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley and further afield.

With over 20 years' experience in marketing, Annah has been able to apply her experience to strengthen and grow her business, and proud to be finalists in two awards since in her first 18 months of trading.

Since graduating with a marketing degree, Annah has held several executive positions, agency and client side, on behalf of a diverse range of SME's. With broad experience of marketing both on and offline, media buying, print and production. Annah's previous positions, prior to starting her own business was marketing manager for a property website and an online energy management website securing excellent knowledge of user experience, content and search engine optimisation.

Key skills

Marketing, social media, search engine optimisation, business development, print and production

Reasons for wishing to remain a member of the board

I would love to be actively involved in promoting the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley for all, recognising the advantages of joining the dots, collaboration and strength in working together with a common goal of promoting the region's diversity. Having only lived in the area for just 5 years, for me it continues to be a voyage of discovery and it's really exciting to be part of this fantastic region. I would love to offer my experience and enthusiasm to promote the area to visitors.

Leanne Pogson



Brief experience

My life has come full circle. I was brought up in the tourism industry, my parents owning hotels and restaurants UK wide. My very first business was born out of the tourism industry lighting the entrepreneurial spark that I still have many years later. I have lived on the edge of the Forest of Dean for 20 years spending over 25 years learning my craft as an employee in differing industries. I founded my business in 2017 and now run my creation, Leap HR Ltd from an office base in Cinderford.

Key skills

All things HR from Resourcing to Retention; from Performance Management to Team Building; from Auto Enrolment to GDPR; and from Investigation to Negotiation; I can support businesses physically and

virtually in all people matters.

Reasons for becoming a board member

My passion is borne out of ensuring that all people are treated fairly, transparently and with respect and integrity. It doesn't matter whether these people are employees, agency, casual, temporary or permanent workers, suppliers or customers, ALL people deserve to be treated in a way that is fair and equitable. I truly believe that managing people doesn't need to be complicated, with simplicity, trust and honesty being key features that I embrace in my business. The Forest of Dean is a true gem of the UK and we need to encourage people to visit and return again and again, through great customer service and the delight that they get when they are here. I am a member of the Forest Economic Partnership (FEP) and am proud to have launched the very successful Forest of Dean's Women in Rural Enterprise group late last year.

Louise Lawrence



Brief experience

General Manager – Carlauren Lifestyle Resorts

Dean Valley Manor, formerly Lindors Hotel was purchased by Carlauren Group in August 2018 from the Christian Guild and they have plans for complete refurbishment, additional accommodation and a spa facility.

After visiting the area regularly as a child to visit family, Louise moved to the area permanently in November when taking up the GM role with her young family. Drawn to the area by the countryside living but yet still having great accessibility with an abundance of attractions and amenities.

Louise has been in hotel management for 15 years with mainly country house hotels, working for groups including Oxford Hotels, Macdonald Hotels, Bespoke Hotels and Hallmark Hotels.

Key skills

My career has mainly concentrated on sales, business development, marketing and revenue.