

## Job description - Deputy Gaveller - Forest of Dean (PB4)

### Job summary

The **Office of the Deputy Gaveller** is a unique position that is steeped in history, exclusive to the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire, overseeing the administration and legacy of mining within the Forest and the wider Hundred of St Briavels.

This role is rooted in the traditions of the Freeminers and the Freequarrymen, with the origins of the Deputy Gaveller role predating the 1838 Dean Forest (Mines) Act. The act remains the legal basis for the role and much of the resulting work is governed by the 1838 Act although it is also governed by more recent legislation and regulations.

The modern role of the Deputy Gaveller is to have oversight of the mining activity in the Forest of Dean, supporting the current generation of miners to achieve and maintain compliance with legislation, including safe operation of said mines. A core responsibility is the administration of [gales](#) - specific, legally defined areas of underground mineral rights that can be leased to individuals, known as 'galees,' for the purpose of mining. These gales may contain coal, stone, iron ore, or ochre, and under current regulations, must be worked using traditional mining methods. The Deputy Gaveller also manages the collection of rents and royalties arising from these leases.

The Deputy Gaveller maintains the official register of Freeminers, assessing applications from those who apply to register as a Freeminer to ensure they meet the criteria as laid down in the 1838 Act.

The Deputy Gaveller maintains active liaison with the individual mine owners and operators, the Freeminers Association, Forest of Dean Cave and Mines Rescue Group, and the Forest of Dean Caves Conservation & Access Group to foster effective and safe relationships to reduce risk of underground accidents and incidents and to support an effective emergency response - whilst recognising that Forestry England is not an emergency service, merely a responsible landowner.

**Due to restrictions within the Dean Forest Mines Act, the holder of the post of Deputy Gaveller cannot be a registered Freeminer.**

### Key responsibilities & accountabilities

As custodians of most of the land within the Forest of Dean, Forestry England holds the historical responsibility of administering and monitoring all mining within the Hundred of St Briavels via the Deputy Gaveller. The role also extends to oversight of the quarrying activity on land directly managed by Forestry England within the Dean.

The Deputy Gaveller has a vast and well-maintained archive of historical documents and plans upon which to rely, and the upkeep of those records is part of the Deputy Gaveller's remit.

#### Legal Oversight & Compliance -

- inspect and regulate mining activity across the Hundred of St Briavels in accordance with the Dean Forest (Mines) Act 1838, the Mines and Quarries Act 1954, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the 2014 Mines Regulations
- assess and process applications for Freeminer status; maintain and safeguard the official registers
- attend HM Verderers Court quarterly to report on matters of mineral interest

#### Operational & Financial Management -

- administer and review rents and royalties from coal and iron gales, including 21-year rent reviews and

liaising with the Area Land Agent and Coal Authority

- work in partnership with the Area Land Agent on leases related to mining and quarrying

#### **Stakeholder Engagement -**

- maintain active liaison with mine owners/operators, the Freeminers Association, the Forest of Dean Cave and Mines Rescue Group, and other relevant bodies
- provide advice internally and to the public regarding mining heritage, structural features, and safety issues

#### **Record Keeping & Archive Management -**

- maintain and preserve the Deputy Gaveler's archive of documents, plans, and records
- ensure digital and physical information systems are accurate, up-to-date, and securely stored

#### **Health & Safety Collaboration -**

- work with colleagues, contractors, and officials to identify and mitigate risks, including unsafe mine entries and quarry sites

The role is based at the West District Office in Coleford, Gloucestershire. Work will cover the Forest of Dean, requiring on-site presence, however we try to accommodate some blended home working arrangements depending on individual circumstances.

The West District team consists of over 160 employees, with 12 forest area and 5 visitor services hub delivery teams operating from Bodmin, Cornwall to Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

### **Skills, knowledge & experience**

#### **Essential professional and technical experience**

- the Deputy Gaveler role is a professional position requiring current membership of The Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining (IOM3)
- proven experience in mining and quarrying administration
- proven practical experience in mining, including working knowledge of mine safety
- the role requires flexibility and an ability to switch from one task to another according to the short and medium term priorities of the team
- the ability to analyse complex mining and quarrying issues and develop detailed solutions
- good experience in information/archive management

#### **Desirable professional and technical experience**

- the successful candidate will have experience working within a team and with external parties/stakeholders
- familiarity with Microsoft Office Suite (Outlook, TEAMS, SharePoint, Word, Excel) and GIS systems - training will be provided in Forestry England-specific systems
- qualification in Mining, Quarrying, or a closely related discipline

### **Qualifications**

## Essential

- member of IOM3 - Affiliate or higher
- qualification in Mining, Quarrying, or a closely related discipline

