

Community radio licence: key commitments

Licence outline: CR063

Station name	Forest FM
Community to be served	Residents of the East Dorset town of Verwood and surrounding rural villages (up to a 5km radius from the transmission site)
Licence area	Verwood and surrounding villages, East Dorset
Frequency	92.3 MHz

Character of service

Forest FM will be a truly local, non profit-distributing, community radio service for Verwood and the surrounding hamlets and villages of rural East Dorset. The station will 'belong' to the community and provide a means of access to the airwaves for local individuals, groups, societies and musicians, as well as providing media training and opportunities for young and old alike. Forest FM will truly be the voice of the local community.

Programming

Forest FM will provide an alternative listening experience, with a rural feel. It will be truly and unashamedly local and aim to create an atmosphere of local familiarity. The music output will predominantly be 'oldies', as detailed below.

- Between 0700-1900hrs, the balance between music and speech will typically be 70% music and 30% speech ('speech' excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails and sponsor credits). Outside of these times, the percentage of speech content may be less than this.
- Daytime music output will mostly be comprised of melodic soft rock and pop with a high percentage of tracks from the 50s, 60s and 70s. Evening music output will be comprised of specialist music programmes, and in particular country music, 50s and 60s rock & roll, jazz, classical, folk and specialist rock will feature.
- Speech output will typically include the following: short national news bulletins and more extensive local news reports; features on local issues and events, local places of interest, local schools and their activities, local clubs and societies; interviews and debates on events and issues affecting the community; interviews and sessions with local artists and musicians; information from statutory bodies and the voluntary sector relevant to members of the local community.
- The service will typically be live for at least 8 hours per day. (Live programming may include pre-recorded inserts, if applicable). Overnight output is likely to include non-stop music with repeated speech items.

Social gain objectives

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of community radio services that they are local services provided primarily (a) for the good of members of the public, or of particular communities, and (b) in order to deliver social gain, rather than primarily for commercial reasons or for the financial or other material gain of the individuals involved in providing the service."

"(a) the provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise underserved"

- Specific output will seek to serve local youth, the elderly, housebound and disabled members of the community. Dedicated programming will also serve local specialist music enthusiasts.

"(b) the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion"

- The station will encourage people to phone in with questions and concerns and encourage debate, both via telephone and through live studio discussions. It will attend and participate in meetings concerning local issues within the community and will interview members of the community and those who affect the community. Members of the community will be able to visit the station and record comments and snippets for broadcast.
- The station will go out on the streets and record residents' comments, it will hold on-air 'roundtable' sessions and broadcast them live or in recorded form. Comments will be invited via the station website (www.forestfm.co.uk), and most features and interviews will be repeated during the evening for the benefit of those members of the community unable to listen during the day

"(c) the provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) or education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service"

- During the course of its licence period, Forest FM intends to create a media centre with facilities for learning and the provision of radio training for the community. An emphasis will be placed upon up-to-date accessible and affordable technology, providing audio editing facilities, training in the use of interviewing techniques, the development of presentation skills and news gathering and preparation techniques. Facilities for recording live music will also be developed.

"(d) the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of the links within it"

- The station will operate an 'open-door' policy and will seek to be actively involved with local clubs and organisations. It will also support local businesses and tourist attractions. It will proactively go out and talk to

members of the community in person, and provide support and facilities at various of the events which it attends locally. Specifically concerning the rural / urban divide, the station will seek to make listeners aware of the rural environment which surrounds them and encourage those in the rural and farming community to share information.

- The station will have a fully functional, mobile outside broadcast unit with a PA system and radio link for live broadcasts. The station will actively support and publicise clubs' and societies' events. It will host phone-ins and live debates on local issues as well as using its website to provide information and invite feedback.

Additional social gain objectives:

- The station will provide a broadcast outlet for local bands and musicians who cannot get their music played elsewhere. It will be involved with local schools and support their fundraising initiatives and events. Specific reports on local events will be aimed at the elderly and housebound who are unable to attend such activities in person. A particular focus will be on purely local events and items that would be of lesser interest outside the station's transmission area.

Access and participation

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that members of the community it is intended to serve are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service."

- As a function of the station's 'open-door' policy, all members of the community will be able to apply to be involved with the station. A volunteer waiting list may build up so a number of hours per week will be set aside for new participants, who will be given time on a rotation basis.
- Studio and other facilities will be available by prior arrangement for training and for the production of broadcast material. Members of the community will also be invited to send in contributions that they have produced themselves as opposed to using the station's facilities.
- The station will actively promote its advisory committee on air and will solicit input from the community using promotional radio spots and items in the press. An annual survey of the station's performance will be carried out and published. Members of the community will be able to get in touch with the station via phone, e-mail, post and personal visits.

Accountability to the target community

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that, in respect of the provision of that service, the person providing the service makes himself accountable to the community that the service is intended to serve."

- An advisory board will be set up to allow representatives of the community to provide feedback on the station's performance. It may suggest improvements, changes and additions to broadcast output and in relation to other station activities. The advisory board will consist of up to a dozen people (a minimum of five individuals) of all ages, comprising members of the public, representatives of the town council, students and other individuals with a particular interest in the local community and the operation of the station. Only a maximum of two persons on the advisory board will be involved in the management of the radio station itself.
- Representative surveys will be carried out each year. Questionnaires will be provided to a representative sample listeners asking for feedback as to whether or not the station is meeting their needs and asking what changes they would like to see. The results of each survey will be made public via the station's web-site and available on request in printed form.

**All material in italics is direct quotations from the Community Radio Order 2004*

June 2006