



2025-2030

BLACKPOOL ZOO

Conservation Strategy



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Chapter One: Introduction



Mission

“To continue to contribute towards protecting global biodiversity by supporting conservation projects in-situ and ex-situ.

To incorporate education, research, the promotion of sustainable actions and the continuous development of zoo breeding programs in securing the future of species.

We seek to maximise our impact through collaborating with local organisations, institutions, and international charities, ensuring our efforts are received by a vast audience.

Our learner - dedicated approach to conservation aims to instil empathy and inspire action amongst a wider community.”





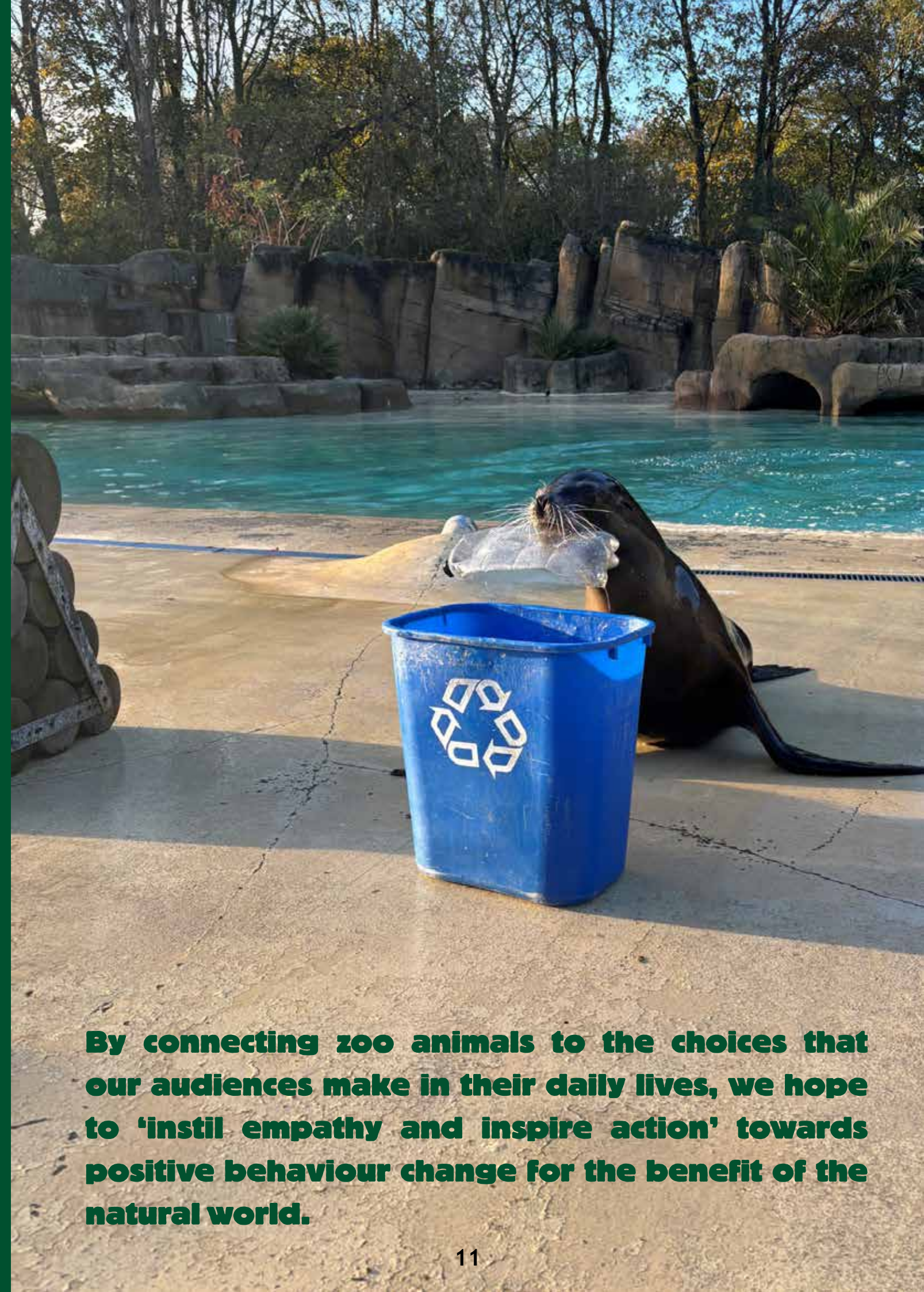
About Us

Blackpool Zoo is a family attraction committed to the conservation of our planet and its wildlife.

With over 1,000 animals and operating under a well-established global leisure park operator, we represent a unique opportunity to connect people and nature, inspiring multiple generations of conservationists to take action. Formulating this strategy ensures our contribution to the continued survival of some of our planet's most threatened species and habitats through targeted and justified conservation action.

Current ways in which Blackpool Zoo is contributing to conservation includes:

- **Breeding of species ex-situ** - Over 30 of the species that we care for are part of the European Endangered Species Program (EEP). This means that we can continue breeding efforts to increase their population size and encourage genetic diversity within our collection, and across a wider network of zoos.
- **Caring for vulnerable species** - In today's world, many species are unable to exist safely in their natural habitat. We act to provide the highest possible standard of care to each individual species at the zoo, to ensure their long-term survival, and that of their species.
- **Delivering accessible conservation and sustainability education** - Our educational programmes are an integral part of our commitment to conservation. We aim to address some of the biggest threats to species around the globe through targeted and necessary education. Blackpool Zoo prides itself on being a 'Zoo for All', as an accessible and welcoming space for all of our visitors to learn in a way that is inclusive and memorable. Conservation, sustainability and accessibility are at the core of our education strategy.
- **Supporting partner organisations working in-situ** - Supporting our partner conservationists in the field (in-situ) directly parallels the work we do in Blackpool (ex-situ). We partner with conservation organisations who help to conserve threatened species across the globe, providing financial support, alongside educational outreach amongst our zoo community.
- **Inspiring positive action towards conservation and sustainability** - Our zoo learning programs encourage our audiences to become more environmentally responsible. Actions such as recycling, or switching to sustainably-certified palm oil products are simple solutions to some of the biggest threats to species globally.



By connecting zoo animals to the choices that our audiences make in their daily lives, we hope to 'instil empathy and inspire action' towards positive behaviour change for the benefit of the natural world.



One Plan

Zoos are recognised within global biodiversity policy for creating positive environmental impact amongst our communities.

Our actions are reflected in progress made towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to which the health of our planet depends upon. In-line with such policies, we commit to taking holistic action for people, wildlife, and the environment, to create a lasting impact towards a sustainable future. The One Plan Approach proposed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature unites us with the entire conservation industry by our commitment to secure species populations which are managed, and those remaining in the wild, through a holistic and collaborative approach. As a member of BIAZA and EAZA under the WAZA network, we recognise our efforts as a valuable piece of a much larger puzzle that is species conservation, and sharing our strategies and findings with other stakeholders crucial.

With this strategy, we aim to strengthen our efforts for conservation. Through a multi-faceted approach, we will combine relevant conservation and sustainability framework with a progressively high standard of ex-situ conservation, whilst advocating for the support of efforts in-situ. The success of our strategy will be delivered through our team of diverse zoo staff, mobilisation of educational and financial resources, as well as our capacity to collaborate with and impact our wider zoo community.

By providing opportunities for our community to follow us on our conservation journey, everyone will understand that we are a zoo committed to conservation in every aspect.

Our Achievements for Conservation (2014-2024):

- **Over £250,000** donated to global conservation efforts in-situ
- **Partnered with 18** conservation organisations working in the field
- **Successful breeding of endangered species including Bornean orangutan, Amur tiger, and Red panda**
- **Developed leading ex-situ conservation projects 'Project Elephant' and 'Project Feline', our long-term commitment to elephants and big cats**
- **Over 3.5 million visitors, including 300,000 school students** connected to conservation messages
- **Over 300** research projects conducted to inform our conservation efforts
- **Our 'Zoo for All' commitment to providing an inclusive, friendly and fun learning environment for visitors and staff alike**





Learning Framework and Initiatives

'To mitigate the extinction of biodiversity through quality conservation education that raises awareness, connects people to nature and encourages sustainable behaviours in the millions of people that engage with EAZA zoos and aquariums annually' – EAZA (Conservation Education Mission Statement)

Achieving our conservation mission relies upon delivering positive learning experiences that nurture support for preserving wildlife.

Blackpool Zoo is committed to continuously acting under the WAZA Conservation Education Strategy through delivering quality conservation education that leaves a lasting impact. We do this by collaborating staff knowledge and expertise with in-situ and ex-situ conservation, science, and research to bring real-life conservation stories to life.

Blackpool Zoo offers experiences of enjoyment and empathy surrounding animals, whilst building on people's knowledge of conservation and the natural world.

Delivering elements of experiential learning allows us to help the public to understand and value zoos for their role in saving animals. As a result, we can inspire lasting environmental behaviour changes to impact conservation.

Crucially, our learning framework and initiatives demonstrate a range of delivery approaches that cater to different audiences' needs and diversities, whilst providing learning opportunities on-site, off-site, and online.

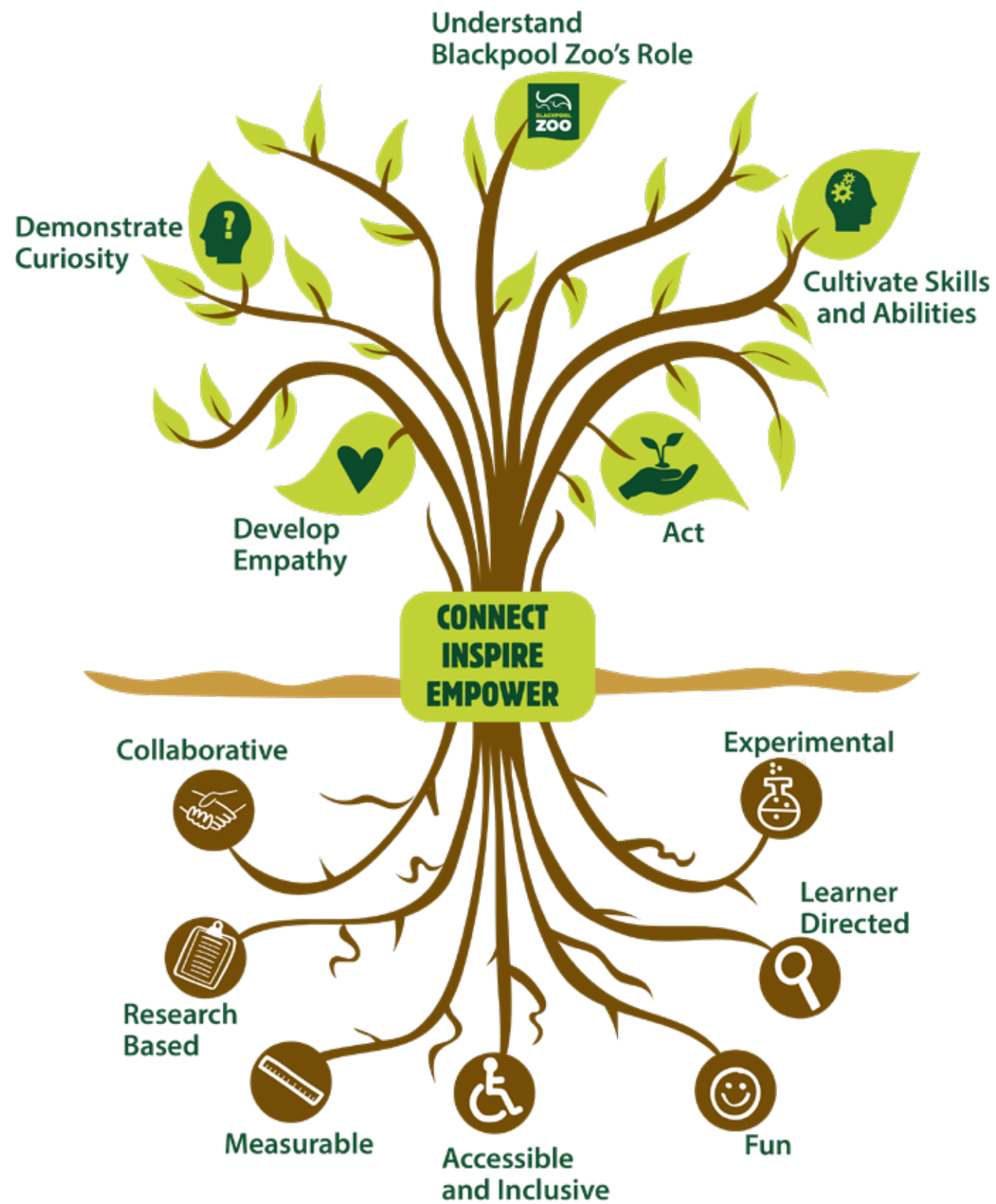
Our aim is to ensure that Blackpool Zoo audiences retain 3 learnt conservation facts and 1 positive behaviour change after a visit to Blackpool Zoo.

This is a measurable target for us to aim for when connecting our audiences to conservation. Success in generating a positive impact will be measured using social research such as visitor feedback and qualitative analysis, to measure understanding and continuously feedback our findings into improving our approach.



'Zoos and aquariums should promote diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive conservation education' – WAZA (Social Change for Conservation)

Connect, Inspire and Empower



- **Demonstrate curiosity** about animals, nature, conservation, and science
- **Develop empathy** for animals and nature
- **Understand Blackpool Zoo's role** in animal care, welfare, conservation and science
- **Cultivate skills and abilities** to positively impact the environment
- **Act** on behalf of the local and global community



At the Zoo

Conservation Station

Our mobile conservation station enables staff to move around the zoo with some of our fascinating wildlife artifacts and activities. Each item has a powerful conservation message that helps to educate and inspire the next generation of conservationists. By providing our audiences with a tactile way of learning, we hope to make conservation education more accessible, whilst facilitating a deeper understanding that is going to be memorable.

Between 2023 and 2024, our staff spent 156 hours talking to visitors about conservation, using our mobile station.





A Future That's Wild: Conservation Summer Camp

Conservation Summer Camp is for aspiring conservationists who are interested in working in a zoo, conservation or education setting. Targeted at young people aged 15-17, we are offering the opportunity to learn about wildlife conservation in an environment that's fun, friendly, and inclusive.

This program empowers students to take an active role in conservation through the development of life and career skills, connection with peers and professionals, and thoughtful exploration of environmental challenges and solutions.

Students will explore modern conservation issues and solutions through activities, challenges and inquiry-based learning, whilst also earning 30 hours of work experience to help with career starting in conservation.

Wildlife Crime Learning

Working in partnership with the Lancashire Police Rural Taskforce, we have begun to create an adaptive, in-depth learning program to educate a diverse, multi-generational audience on the effects of one of the biggest threats to species globally; wildlife crime. Using powerful artifacts and resources provided through partnerships with conservationists in the field, we hope to bring real-life conservation stories to life for our audiences.

During our high-season, wildlife crime learning will take a prominent position in our activities program, during interactive demonstrations. Students of all ages visiting the zoo will also be able to attend thought-provoking workshops exploring wildlife crime and conservation, where we will raise awareness of this issue.

Conservation Matters

Conservation Matters is an initiative which enables zoo staff to stay updated with all elements of conservation happening within and outside the zoo.

As part of our commitment to develop staff learning and engagement with conservation, our teams can read about significant progress made by the zoo and our international partners, through research, collaborations, educational resources, and eco-tips to help with becoming an ambassador for wildlife, all in our monthly newsletter. During monthly meetings, we seek to recognise the conservation champions amongst our staff who go the extra mile for conservation and who inspire others to do the same.





Beyond the Zoo

Updates from the Field

We're casting a virtual spotlight on the reality of conservation action through our partner organisations...

Our social media channels will be used to inform and inspire audiences on how we are working collaboratively to secure the future of some of the most threatened species globally. By sharing inspirational stories and measurable success direct from wild, we hope to convey the value of in-situ conservation, increase our support as a community, and bring us one step closer to our targets for protecting wildlife and wild spaces.

Four steps to communicating in-situ conservation to our community...

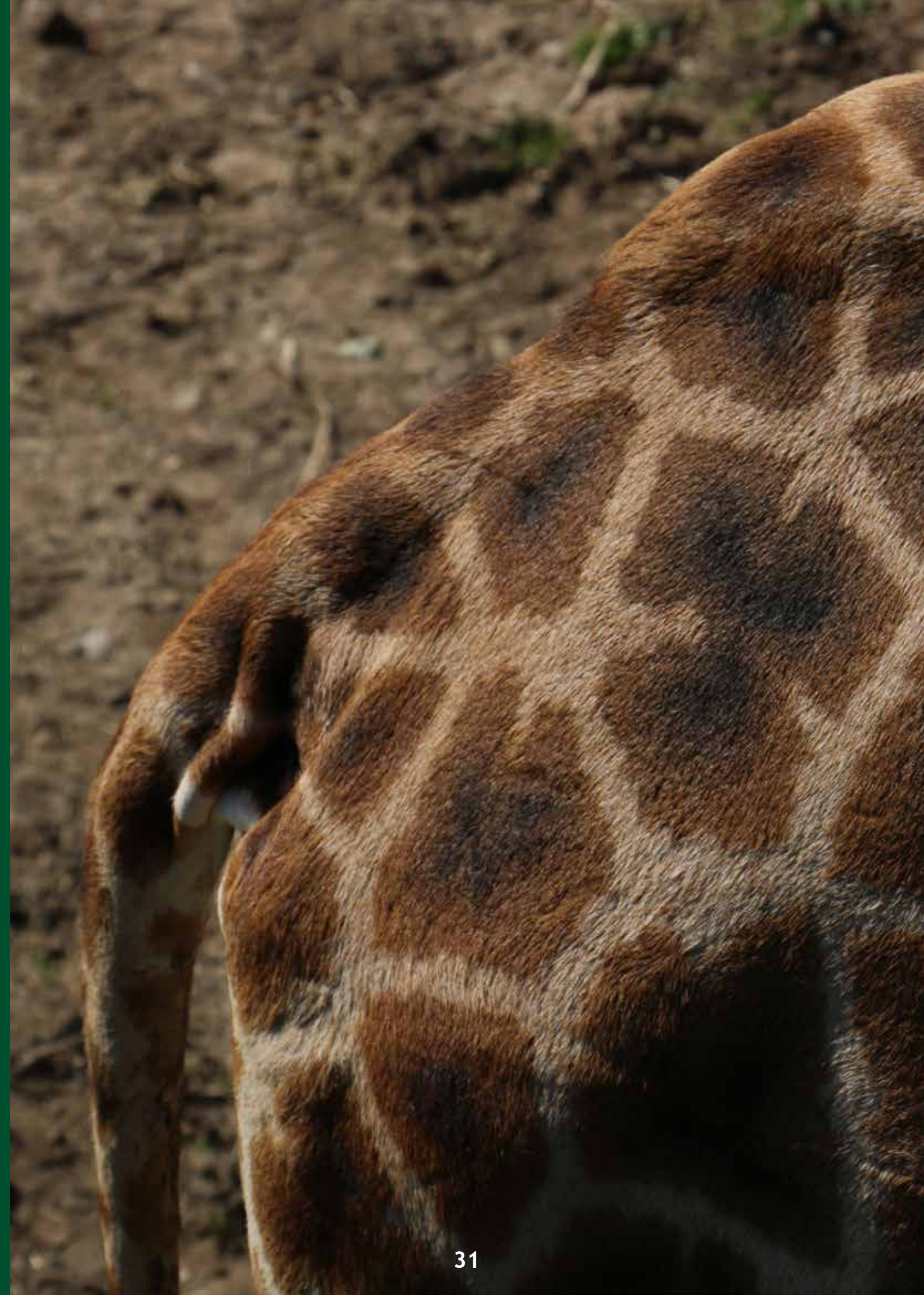
Step One – Introducing the organisation and our partnership: Introduction to the organisation, our partnership and contributions, the organisation's current stage of achieving their mission.

Step Two – Successes and challenges: A case study
One element of the organisation's work that has faced adversity but has achieved so much for the wildlife and wild spaces it aims to protect, including how we have contributed to its success.

Step Three – A community of conservationists: Hear from our staff Hear from one of our dedicated staff members about how this organisation's mission aligns with our own, and their day-to-day work as a conservationist.

Step Four – Join us in making a difference: How to help Positive behaviour changes that you can adopt to help become an ambassador for this organisation, contributing to their overall conservation impact for the benefit of the species and habitats.

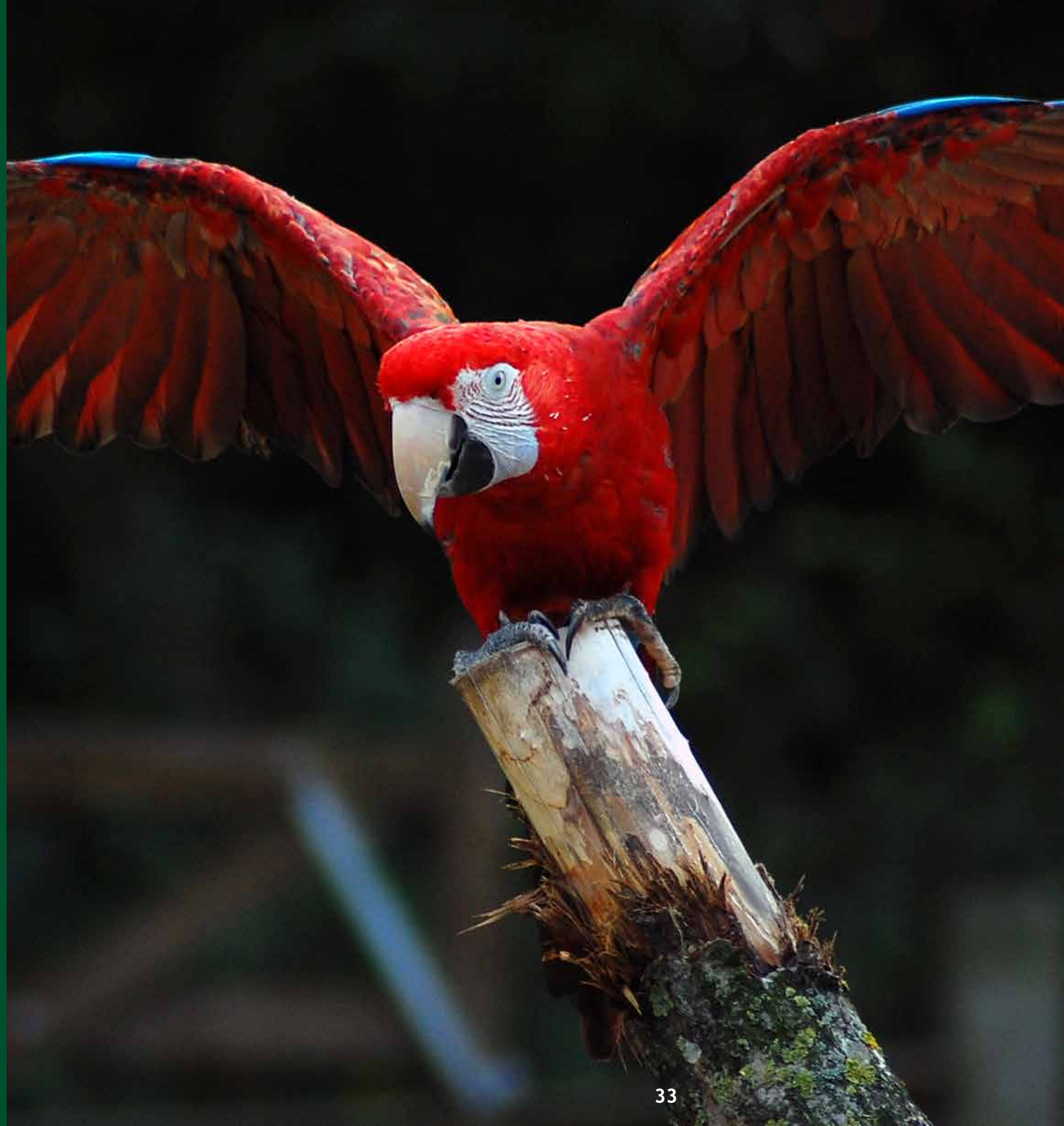
Updates from the Field: Successes and Challenges will continue annually as our partnership with each organisation progresses. Upon receiving regular updates from our supported projects, information will be channelled into regular social media outreach as case studies and success stories from the previous year. This way, we can ensure that the positive impact of our zoo community's support is understood, and the value of conservation maintained.



A Future That's Wild: Conservation Podcast

**A Future That's Wild is
Blackpool Zoo's official
conservation podcast.**

Expect to hear from zoo experts, partner conservationists working in the field, and other local organisations who we are collaborating with for conservation. We present an alternative method of communicating conservation messages through distance learning in the 21st century, and a valuable resource to learn about the wildlife and wild spaces we work to protect.



Chapter Two: Goals



Goal 1: Protecting Wildlife and Wild Spaces

Goal 2: Collaborating Locally for Conservation

Goal 3: Conserving UK Native Species and Habitats

Goal 4: Understanding our Community Impact

**Goal 5: Facilitating Staff Engagement and Commitment
to Conservation**

Goal 1:

Protecting Wildlife and Wild Spaces



At Blackpool Zoo, we strongly believe in safeguarding global biodiversity through capacity building with conservation partners in-situ. This means we have partnerships with conservation organisations whose work we support conserving vulnerable species and habitats in the wild.

Our supported projects are diverse - spanning 11 countries and four continents across the globe. A combination of cutting-edge conservation methods, these include efforts patrolling biologically important habitats, conducting priority research and monitoring, rescue and rehabilitation of vulnerable animals, wildlife crime investigation, educational outreach and sustainable livelihood development.

We always seek to collaborate where we can establish an achievable and measurable conservation impact, which is determined by re-assessing each project annually to report the impact on biodiversity that has been gained. Regular communication with conservationists in the field means we can align project outcomes with our strategy, and devise plans that are SMART as we aim to strengthen our efforts for conservation moving forward.

We will continue to provide financial contributions to in-situ projects through fundraising and our conservation fund, educate our zoo community and raise awareness of conservation efforts in the field, and promote our partnership through an enhanced communication strategy. Moving forward, we aim to allocate an increased volume of financial and staff resources towards supporting our partners in the field and achieving our targets for in-situ conservation. We will increase opportunities for Blackpool Zoo staff to learn, collaborate and contribute to conservation by sharing stories from the field and build connections to maximise sharing of expertise amongst our organisations.

OUR CONSERVATION PARTNERS

Take a look at the charities we support here at Blackpool Zoo



Goal 2:

Collaborating Locally for Conservation

Mirroring our international collaborations when working locally is key to generating a positive impact for nature within our communities. In turn, we hope to inspire support for conservation both in the UK and internationally.





Delivering this integrated approach to conservation will stem from uniting local skills and knowledge in wildlife conservation, working with stakeholders in policy, academia and the private sector. Blackpool Zoo is a hub of education, conservation and sustainability within Lancashire, and we will ensure to act as a community resource for people and organisations who share similar goals for nature. Through capacity building and resource sharing, we can collectively achieve our missions for biodiversity conservation in-line with the **One Plan Approach**.

Through connecting like-minded people in our community who are willing to act for conservation, we may protect an increasing abundance of species and habitats. We will establish projects that have a far-reaching impact, by contributing to science and education on a multidisciplinary scale. We seek to improve our learning programs with local knowledge where appropriate and subsequently connect a wider audience to conservation.

The partnerships we establish now will benefit our future zoo conservationists and yield many in-situ and ex-situ conservation opportunities hereafter.

Currently, there are 30 local nature reserves, 2 national nature reserves and 72 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) within Lancashire. Upcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and funding from the Environmental Land Management programme extends to Lancashire in 2025.

This framework will deliver opportunities for local businesses and stakeholders to collaborate on nature recovery effectively within Lancashire, utilising local knowledge to define priorities. We intend to work closely with Blackpool council to advise priority action for some of the sites, including Blackpool Zoo.

We will step up to deliver on priority actions where appropriate, alongside other local organisations who share similar goals for conservation.

Blackpool Zoo and the Lancashire Police Rural Taskforce are partnering to raise awareness of wildlife and heritage crime, and the impacts for conservation. Building on public understanding, support, and actions to reduce the threats to wildlife is our goal and will be achieved by uniting various expertise in this area. We will also initiate training and professional development for zoo and police staff to share knowledge of protecting wildlife through a range of delivery approaches.

Through our partnership, we will be exploring specialisms such as CITES enforcement methodology, which is vital to regulate trade in endangered species.

Goal 3:

Conserving UK Native Species and Habitats



Blackpool Zoo is committed to helping conserve our UK native species and habitats by supporting local wildlife and habitat restoration efforts within Lancashire. Working alongside our local wildlife trust and similar organisations, and Blackpool and Fylde councils, we will help facilitate local nature recovery efforts. Within our community's green spaces, we will fund and deliver targeted research of native flora and fauna, take an active role in habitat management and restoration, and promote comprehensive native species education to diverse audiences. Being located on the shore, we will also impact coastal habitats through community conservation like beach cleans and sand dune restoration effort.

The BIAZA Native Species Working Group will act as a standard for planning and methodology when conducting native species research and practical management. Their online resources and practical guides will complement the extensive knowledge of our staff and local community in the process.

Community underpins our native species efforts, as we encourage local people to take an active role in protecting nature through our work. We will inspire action amongst our audiences through our presence in the field and by promoting our conservation efforts online and around the zoo.

Demonstrating the value of native species will also help us to provide alternative, positive learning experiences for local people to connect them with nature, enable learning of new skills, and support wellbeing.

For staff, learning opportunities off-site will allow us to upskill in areas working with native species. Multiple departments will increase their skill set to complement those acquired working with exotic species, including in habitat management and promoting native species education.

Marton Mere: A Community Project

Marton Mere is the only local nature reserve in Blackpool and is a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) situated less than one mile from the zoo. Blackpool Zoo is working in partnership with Blackpool council and the Friends of Marton Mere volunteer group to deliver a community-driven nature recovery project in the heart of Blackpool. Acting within the local council's 10-year habitat management plan, we are helping to maintain the current conservation status of the site and increase its suitability for native wildlife. Our presence at the mere means we are able to take part in regular site management, wildlife monitoring and surveying, nature-based events and deliver native species wildlife learning to visitors. We aim to use our platform to increase public knowledge and attitudes towards the site and encourage uptake in conservation efforts from the community.

Ultimate goal:

To establish a community-driven native species conservation project in partnership with other major stakeholders, working to conserve and promote Marton Mere SSSI, Blackpool Zoo and the surrounding habitats for biodiversity.





New initiatives that we will deliver to increase our efforts for native species:

- **A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the Blackpool Zoo site**
- **Increased interpretation and native species presence at the zoo in wildlife garden areas**
- **Native species workshops available to schools, businesses and corporate groups**
- **Native species research projects available on the Blackpool Zoo priority research list**



Goal 4:

Understanding our Community Impact

To truly inspire our audiences to value conservation, we seek to connect every demographic to the importance of nature to all our lives. Understanding and supporting the needs of different demographics in their own learning experiences will enable us to achieve this. We will maximise engagement of a diverse zoo community through an evaluative approach to developing learning experiences.

For our visitors, this will include maximising opportunities which deliver a measurable impact in instilling conservation messages. Collecting feedback and subsequent qualitative analysis will allow us to draw conclusions on how to create better learning opportunities for each of these demographics. Ultimately, we will develop our learning programmes to engage and empower people to continue to act positively for nature following their interaction with the zoo.

Internships, student placements and seasonal job roles provide a unique opportunity to investigate how working in a conversation environment at Blackpool Zoo leaves a measurable impact upon staff pre- and post-employment. We will work with these staff to improve professional development and knowledge intake in short-term positions. For permanent staff, we will evaluate changes in understanding over time utilising similar qualitative feedback and collaborative discussion. We commit to dedicating time and effort into exploring opportunities with staff engagement and commitment to conservation through understanding a variety of learning requirements.



Goal 5:

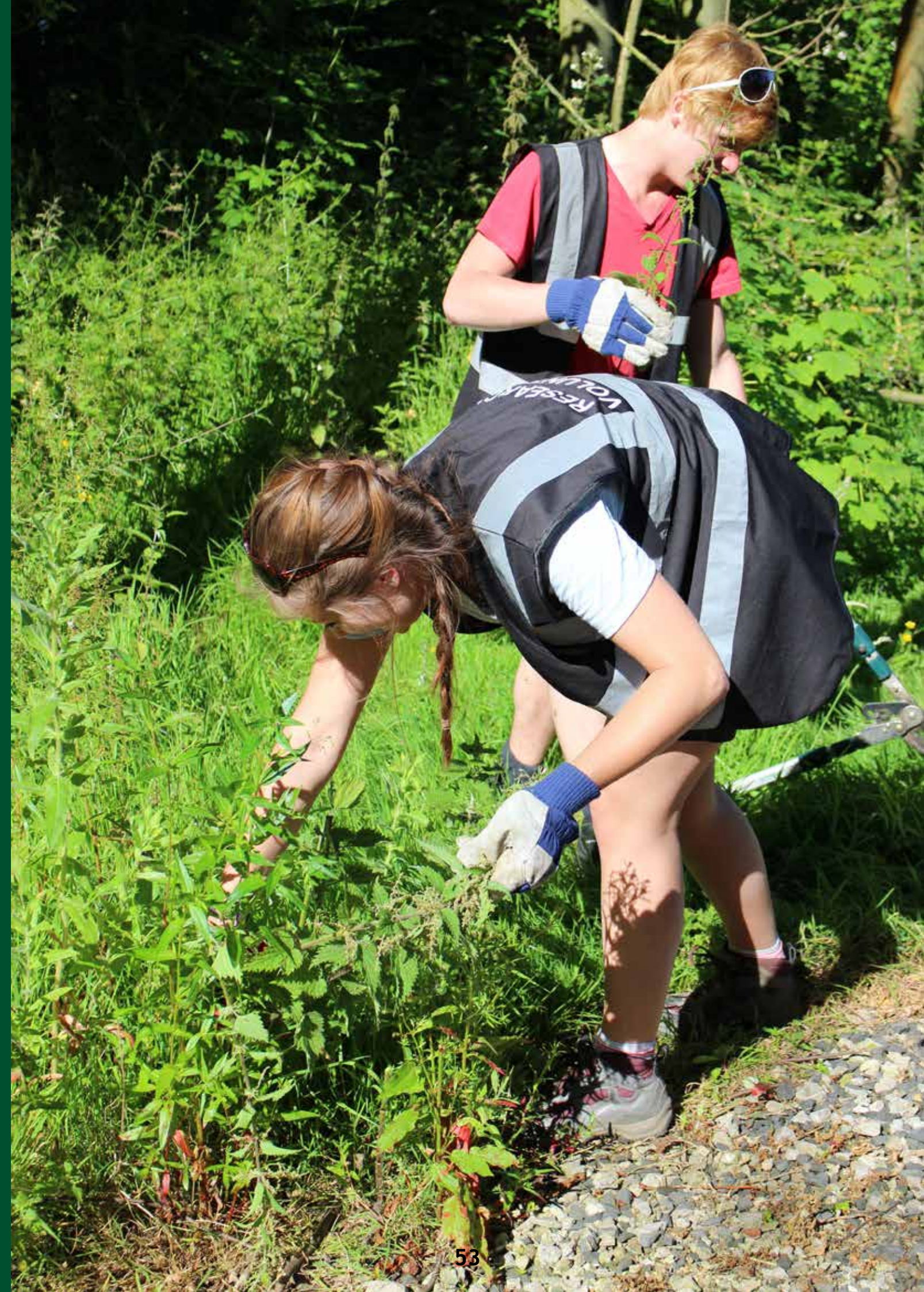
Facilitating Staff Engagement and Commitment to Conservation

'To be truly successful the ethos and ethic of care for the natural world must be embedded in all departments. Every visitor must feel that this is a team committed to the cause of conservation.' – WAZA (Committing to Conservation)

We hope to create a culture of conservation within our zoo through uniting staff who are committed to being ambassadors for nature. This must be recognised by our audiences to whom we are inspiring to value conservation. Uniting a diverse range of skillsets held by zoo staff is also largely how we will strengthen our efforts moving forward.

Blackpool Zoo will deliver opportunities for staff to become more actively involved in conservation that are accessible on-site, off-site, and online. We will dedicate time and resources into improving staff knowledge, applicable skills and potential to deliver conservation initiatives.

Capacity building with other local organisations will lead to upskilling in areas crucial for achieving our strategy goals and initiatives. Furthermore, increasing staff knowledge of key topics and Blackpool Zoo efforts in-situ and ex-situ will foster a greater appreciation for the value of conservation. We will deliver an enhanced communication strategy for staff to achieve a measurable impact and celebrate conservation successes amongst our ranks.



EleFest: A Night of Conservation and Celebration





Staff commitment is paramount to deliver EleFest, our biggest annual fundraising event held in aid of elephant conservation.

A collaborative effort between staff from across the zoo, EleFest brings together the creative and passionate conservationists amongst our teams who love to make a difference.

EleFest is a joyous and momentous event with community at its heart. Thousands are connected to inspiring conservation messages that encourage action towards a more sustainable planet, starting with the youngest in our community.

With the support of zoo staff, pupils from our partner school at Blackpool Gateway inspired 2024 audiences with poems expressing their wishes to see elephants protected for the future.

*“Elephants are gigantically soaring strong,
stamping their feet as they happily prance along.
Have you seen elephants dance and roll in glee?
Promenading around by the family tree?
Some infant elephants, so I’ve been told,
can play football and be very bold!
Elephants aren’t as small as a mini mall.
In fact, they are the most famous big grey thing
of all!”*

Blackpool Gateway Academy
Elefest 2024

Chapter Three: Communication Strategy



Our Communication Strategy

Our communication goal is to foster a greater awareness of our conservation work and that of our partners to our zoo community.

We recognise the importance of keeping our audiences updated with conservation that happens from within the zoo and in the field. This includes staff, visitors, and followers alike. We understand that for some, a visit to our website or viewing a social media post is all the interaction they may have with Blackpool Zoo. For others, maybe a visit to the zoo is feasible, but access to social media is a limiting factor. All methods of communication must be equally as engaging, informative, and accessible to a range of demographics. Inclusivity and accessibility underpin all aspects of how we communicate conservation to our community. Our 'Zoo for All' mantra perfectly summarises the way in which we seek to incorporate educational elements designed around every visitor.

We will deliver an enhanced communication program incorporating all elements of our conservation work moving forward. Methods of interpretation, such as educational talks, signage, formal teaching, and social media outreach will be reviewed for valuable conservation messages. By gathering social research, we may adaptively select how we engage and empower our audiences through our conservation efforts. We aim to increase the amount of content, where appropriate, that is visible to our zoo community through these outreach channels. Content used to enhance our presence in the field of conservation will arise from progress made at the zoo and through liaising with our project partners both in the UK and internationally.

Over the next five years, we will also incorporate various alternative communication initiatives, including an annual impact report for visitors and staff to explore.



Chapter Four: Priorities





Goal 1: Protecting Wildlife and Wild Spaces

1.Strengthen our relationship with our partner organisations by scheduling regular exchanges to discuss project progress and outcomes for conservation.

(Year One-Five)

2.Review our current conservation partnerships and devise SMART plans for supporting each based-on impact and our strategy.

(Year One)

3.Raise the profile of our partner organisations and specific projects amongst zoo audiences, including staff, using inspirational stories and updates from the field to build connections

(Year One-Five)

4.Increase our capacity to maximise fundraising for conservation projects by allocating time and resources into exploring alternative methods.

(Year Three-Five)

Goal 2: Collaborating Locally for Conservation

1. Increase awareness amongst local stakeholders of our conservation goals and our desire to collaborate to achieve a greater impact.

(Year One)

2. Work with Blackpool council to devise how we can contribute to species recovery planning within Blackpool.

(Year One)

3. Establish new collaborative efforts that protect species and habitats beyond those currently supported by the zoo.

(Year One-Five)

4. Seek out local skills and knowledge to integrate into conservation projects that we support.

(Year Three-Five)





Goal 3: Conserving UK Native Species and Habitats

1. Increase our capacity to carry out native species research and practical management by investing in staff and relevant resources.

(Year One-Five)

2. Allocate staff time to progress native species conservation efforts and to manage projects and relationships with other stakeholders.

(Year One-Five)

3. Increase the value of conserving native species amongst zoo audiences and staff by delivering an enhanced communication strategy. (Year One-Five)

Goal 4: Understanding our Community impact

1. Deliver a range of learning opportunities both at the zoo and online to increase public knowledge and understanding of conservation.

(Year One-Five)

2. Develop accessible ways for audiences to provide feedback on their understanding of conservation after a visit to the zoo.

(Year One-Five)

3. Evaluate all temporary employments with questionnaires to reveal impacts on understanding of conservation after leaving the zoo.

(Year One-Five)

4. Hold workshops for staff to explore and feedback on learning opportunities in improving understanding of conservation.

(Year Three-Five)





Goal 5: Facilitating Staff Engagement and Commitment to Conservation

1. Collaboratively develop conservation at the zoo through establishing and maintaining staff working groups, where appropriate.

(Year One-Five)

2. Encourage staff to take an active role in conservation by scheduling regular nature activities on- and off-site.

(Year One-Five)

3. Coordinate staff participation in local nature recovery efforts.

(Year Three-Five)

4. Provide opportunities for staff to upskill in areas of conservation by organising inputs from organisations who can share expertise.

(Year Three-Five)

For the team at Blackpool Zoo conservation is not just a goal, it is a shared mission that drives every aspect of what we do.

Through our work in education, research and collaboration, we aim to secure a better future for wildlife with lasting success. Success depends on a united team, with every department and visitor sharing the same dedication to conservation.

Our ethos and ethic of care will resonate across every department and every interaction as we strive to ensure every visitor feels the passion and purpose behind our efforts.

We will continue to champion our triumphs, embrace challenges, and move forward as a community driven to make a lasting impact for wildlife and the planet. Together we will shape a future where wildlife and humanity thrive in harmony.

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Author: Kristian Bold, Research & Conservation Officer

Design: Heidi Cannon, Interpretation & Visual Design Officer

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